

The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

www.mg.org

Volume XXX, Issue 12

Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

December 2002

MARQUE TIME

Thanks to Frank and Anna for hosting the November meeting in the house they designed themselves! On that dark and cold November evening, many of us huddled in the garage prior to the meeting to marvel at more of Frank's handiwork, including the MGB with its gleaming engine and engine bay, the restored dashboard resting on the workbench, and a desk he was building. I especially noticed the recently rebuilt and pristine front-end assembly on his 'B', a project I still need to tackle. Maybe I should have taken some "after" pictures to tape to the garage walls to serve as an inspiration and help motivate me to transfer all those brand new parts sitting in cardboard boxes on the garage floor to a similar looking front-end on my tired '79.

Thanks also to Mark and Debbie for pulling double duty by hosting both the club's annual Pig Picking in October and the Fall Tech Session at their mini-estate in Chesapeake.

As this is the last *Dipstick* of the year and a new year will soon be upon us, I'd like to take the opportunity to thank all those who have given their time and efforts to help make being a member of our club so enjoyable. First, thanks to all the members who have opened up their homes to host a meeting, a Tech Session, or one of the special functions throughout the year, such as the Wicker Basket Affair, the Pig Picking, and the Christmas Party. We had three meetings this year at different restaurants, each offering a little different atmosphere. I'd like to think that this is a good mix, as it takes a little pressure off of members and provides a little variety too. Many clubs hold all of their meetings at restaurants, which is ok, but I think holding many of our meetings in members homes helps to foster friendships and that feeling of "family" in our club. I certainly feel that way, and hope you do too. So, thanks again to all you members who invite us into your homes. I just hope we don't break too many things!

This year saw a club function of some kind (not counting the monthly meeting) just about every month. If there wasn't an actual club event, then there were car shows where members got together

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Check www.mg.org for the latest info!

Dec. 7 Christmas Party at Andy and Cynthia's
(see pages 3 & 4 for details and back page for map)

January 8, 2003 Meeting, location to be determined (this is a week later than usual, didn't think you would want to miss the football on New Year's Day)

Put these on your calendar NOW! (Check the web sites later when info is posted)

June 6-8, 2003, VIR "Gold Cup Historic Races", featuring an all-MG race and MG will be the co-featured marque, www.virclub.com

June 19-22, 2003, NAMGBR, St. Louis, MO
www.mg2003.com/

July 14-18, NAMGAR GT 28
www.namgar.com



MGA for sale

MGA 1500, white/red leather, complete ground-up restoration less than 4000 miles ago. All new switches, gauges, insts., top, tounneau, curtains, carpets, & many engine parts. Stereo/cassette & too much more to list.

Ira Cantin
irac@whro.net
757-626-3666

to caravan to and from. These club events don't happen by themselves. They require someone to coordinate, organize, and carry out. Thanks to Dan for the Spring Tour and the Ice Cream Socials, of which Alan and Barry also helped with. Thanks to Robin for organizing the Moonrise Bay Winery drive-out, a new and very enjoyable event. Mark and Debbie organized and procured the food for the Pig Picking, a relaxing afternoon spent eating and conversing with friends. Thanks in advance to Andy and Cynthia for hosting the annual Christmas Party, where we can help break in (not break) the new addition to their house. Some members may say there aren't enough events, some may say there are too many. If you have ideas for new events, or want to see changes to existing events, please let Dan or the rest of us know. In this busy world in which we live, it's sometimes hard to make a club event due to other commitments, lack of time, or just bad timing. At least by offering an assortment of varied events, members can choose to attend those based on interest or time.

Lastly, I want to thank the club officers who have given their time this year to help keep the club running. Year after year, these members perform their duties responsibly and professionally. This year, we especially owe a big thanks to Sue, Peggy, and Robin who have put in a lot of work to get this newsletter to look the way you see it today. A lot of members have contributed articles these past few months. Now that we know you can write, please continue to do so.

A few Saturdays ago I was running errands and noticed 2 MGB LE's around the Great Neck area in a span of a couple of hours. No, they weren't the same one! Another MG "spotting" occurred last month. I was going to help a friend move some furniture one Sunday afternoon. When I called ahead, she said she wasn't ready and asked to do it later in the week, after work. Since it was such a nice day out, I decided to drive over to Ghent for the Stockley Garden Art Show, an event I hadn't been to in a few years. While driving down Onley Street looking for a parking space, I happened to hear this loud, raspy but familiar sounding engine start up. I looked over to my left, and there was Greg Coogan in his yellow Midget leaving a parking space. I wished I had been driving my 'B' that day, as I would have whipped it around and pulled into the space he just left. What would have been the odds of two MGs meeting at the same place and time, and sharing a parking space?

Later that week I indeed helped my friend move some furniture. To repay the favor, she invited me to a wine tasting at the Bay Gourmet. The only catch was that I had to be the designated driver. I agreed, thinking that

I could still sample all the different wines, only in smaller quantities. We sat at a table with three other couples. As I was talking to the couple on my right about a lot in Chick's Beach that my brother once owned, and that they live near, my friend Susan was talking to the couple across the table from her. She had mentioned to them that myself and two friends had stopped at several wineries while driving our MGs on a return trip from Waynesboro. The couple remarked that they had owned an MG, and were friends with a couple in the local MG club. It was then that my friend nudged me and told me to talk to these folks. To make a long story short, they are friends of Peggy and George Craig, and once owned Peggy's rubber bumper 'B. It truly is a small world!

Here's wishing you all a very merry and joyous Holiday Season.

Safety Fast! Mike

NOVEMBER MINUTES

Doug Kennedy


El Presidente' Mike Haag opened the meeting promptly at 8:03. The darkness that greets us every year once daylight savings time ends had surrounded us as we took shelter in the Worrell's garage to share friendship, swap stories and tell a few lies. The assembled mass herded inside was held in rapt attention as Mike thumped his mighty gavel and thanked the Worrell's for their hospitality. Although the cold, windy, rainy (dare I say British) weather had scared many people away, those present were of fine enthusiasm and quickly settled down to sit on the edge of their seats waiting to jump in. There were no new members or guests so, after the Secretary was harassed by the evil younger Watson for missing the last meeting, we moved on.

Membership: Discussion then turned to the donation of a certain company that doesn't know it made a donation so we decided to be vague about the whole thing.

Treasurer's Report: In: \$290.00 Out: \$191.97 Balance: \$2397.40 Jim Enron-Villers found an error in the numbers and made the appropriate corrections. He mentioned that anyone was welcome to take over so we all quickly thanked him and shut our pie holes!

Minutes: Approved as written.

Newsletter: Outstanding, superior, excellent. More submissions are needed so pass on your stories, jokes, whimsical anecdotes, risque shots of you slumped over your car, etc. The pictures were also cited as a nice addition.



Join us
for our annual

Holiday Gathering
at
Cynthia and Andy's

545 Mayflower Road

Norfolk

on

Saturday, Dec 7th at 6:30pm


A sumtuous feast to tantalize the tastebuds
and celebrate our MG Friendships

Please call Cynthia and let her know by


Sun, Dec 1st what you will bring

(757)622-8315 or wallach@whro.net



Suggestions: Main dishes, Vegetables,
Appetizers, Fruits, Sides, Desserts



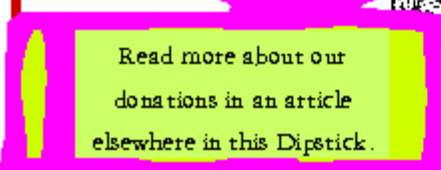
Please bring a
gift for a child
at the
"Dwelling
Place"



Please
choose a toy
rather than
clothes.



Wrap your gift and
make note on outside
of the gender and
age group of
recipient.



Read more about our
donations in an article
elsewhere in this Dipstick.

Gifts for boys
ages 7-12 are
particularly
needed.

Minutes (continued)

Regalia: Frank Linse was on his way so we moved on. Then again, there was speculation that “other” interests were keeping him home this evening.

Holiday Party: Saturday December 7th at 6:30. Call Cynthia to report what you’ll be bringing in the way of food. Andy will dispose of leftovers. There will also be a box present to donate charitable gifts for children to be distributed by the Dwelling Place.

January Meeting: Since the first Wednesday is New Year’s we’ll meet on the 8th and plan the rest of the meetings on that date. A discussion of the Tuesday-Wednesday rotation that ensued, Vince provided a history lesson and we decided to allow the President to figure it all out. Unfortunately, this was after a comment regarding the 4th of July, the fact that the English would be speaking German had it not been for American intervention, and the Watson family being held back from diving across the room to collegially strangle Dan.

Spares: Mark Childers arrived just in time but forgot his show and tell so we moved on while he retrieved it. Mike is looking at getting Mark to add some tech info to our website.

Spares Part Two: Mark reappeared with an old Lucas ignition module thingy. If you take off the back however you find that it contains a GM part that is easily replaced. So, if you suspect yours is giving you trouble you may be able to repair it via your local parts store. That means it costs \$12 instead of \$200 for the “genuine” Lucas replacement. Mark was also thanked for hosting the last tech session, thanks buddy!

Old Business: None.

New Business: None

Marque Time: George Craig was thanked for his great article in the Dipstick.

Jim Villers took his Mercedes to VIR but ended up towing it home with burned valves, blown pistons, a torn fluxed capacitor and few other problems. Several members even showed compassion and sorrow regardless of the fact that this happened to a Mercedes. Jim hopes to be back in action on the track soon. Jim’s also seen a lot of action there in a non-competitive format that has really increased his skills under close instruction. Grab him to tell you all about the opportunities via VIR.

Cynthia Faschini has been looking over the directory and commented that it looked unbelievable. Everyone agreed. Robin Watson then received a kiss from Cynthia for his efforts but the rest of us couldn’t agree with going that far.

Mike Ashe reported that Ira Cantin has given his MGA to his son and some parts to Mike. Mike is looking for the parts to go to a good home so let him know if you need some 15-inch wheels and knockoffs.

Terry Bond got a neat shirt at Hershey. He also reported a ton of MG goodies for sale. Ivy Lister found in the flea market an original Tea Pot to go with his Bentley’s set. Next year it is the second week of October.

Mark introduced Mitchell Gayton, Mark’s garage buddy who’s been helping him out and it is hoped will catch the MG bug.

The meeting was adjourned and we all rushed to the food like Republican Senators flying back to Washington to confirm their federal court judge nominees.

Christmas Party Gifts for Charity

As I recall, our Christmas Charity began about 6 years ago and has become a wonderful tradition. I don’t recall exactly who proposed the idea so many meetings ago, but many thanks to all who have contributed over the years. The YMCA women's shelter, Downtown Union Mission, Edmarc Hospice, Hope Haven, and at least one other that escapes memory have benefited from your generous spirit. This year it's the Dwelling Place, a Hampton Roads charitable organization that provides temporary housing for homeless families and has many outreach and continuing support programs designed to keep families together and to help them help themselves. This year we are going to help some kids have a brighter Christmas Day with toys. Sure, kids need underwear and lots of other stuff, but this Christmas they want and need toys. I can’t even begin to imagine what it must be like to be a 9-year-old without a home at Christmas time, much less a Christmas morning without a pile of presents under the tree. Lets make it a nicer morning for these kids.

Trish Manthei, executive director of the Dwelling Place called to tell us that they were positively elated to hear we are going to bring toys to these very deserving kids. Since she can’t predict the census with any certainty, here were some recommendations that will make shopping a little easier...

The Dwelling Place expects to receive a number of dolls and other girl-related gifts, and they also have a reading program that provides free books. Trish asks only that at least 75% of the gifts be appropriate for boys aged 7-12. Even a bagful of Dollar Tree gifts would be appreciated. They expect that there will be about 25 kids in the residences at Christmas. Please wrap all gifts and indicate boy or girl and appropriate age group. Regardless of how many gifts we give, the Dwelling Place staff and kids will be thankful. We will make an effort this year to get some photos for the Dipstick.

Thanks for your generosity,
Mark and Debbie Childers

TECH STUFF

Mark Childers

Curing "Dizzyez"

Occasional emails drift in from frantic do-it-yourselfers who can't get an engine to start after a simple plug and wire tune-up, or after installing a used distributor that came out of a perfectly good running engine. Symptoms include backfiring thru the carbs and after-pops in the exhaust, but no inclination to start.

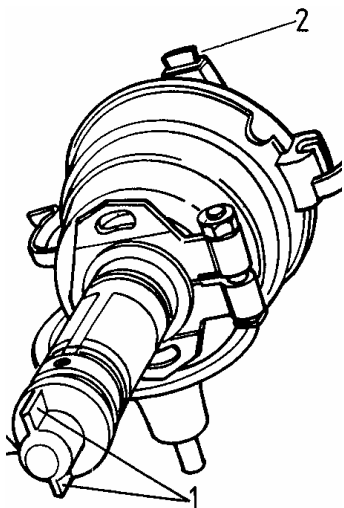
There are at least three common suspects to this mystery, presented in no particular order...

- Wrong pulley. January 1971 ended MG's traditional five o'clock Top Dead Center mark when the timing index was moved to an easily accessible 11:00 position. The pulleys are physically interchangeable; however, the later pulley has 2 small holes drilled in the face; early pulleys are smooth-faced. Possible, but not probable, especially if a timing light was used successfully prior to the swap.

- Distributor drive dog assembled 180° out. A distinct possibility if the dizzy has been worked on by an inexperienced mechanic, DPO/FPO* or do-it-yourselfer.

- Distributor drive is installed 180° out in the engine; more likely than the dizzy being assembled 180° out.

To eliminate the pulley as the problem, with the crankshaft keyway pointing up at 12:00 o'clock, the correct (later model) pulley will have the timing mark almost exactly 30° to the left (11:00 O'clock) when facing the engine from the front. A later pulley is also identifiable by two holes across from each other in the face of the pulley. If the pulley face is smooth, or the crank keyway is on top and the pulley timing mark is at the 5:00 position, then the pulley is from an early car. Reindexing the early pulley is easier than changing to the later version.



If the pulley is right for your vehicle, remove the distributor and orient it horizontally, rotor pointing up, vacuum advance module pointing at the ground, and the drive end pointing toward your face. The offset key on the drive dog should be to your left. If it's not, simply drive the roll pin out, rotate the dog 180°, and refit the roll pin. To eliminate the distributor drive, complete both prior steps. Bring number

one piston to Top Dead Center (both intake and exhaust

valves fully closed). To locate true TDC, use a long, thin screwdriver as a top dead center gage. Set the screwdriver tip on the top of #1 piston in such a position as not to bind on the plug hole. Rotate the engine at least 15 degrees counterclockwise as viewed from the front looking back. Slowly reverse direction until the piston causes the screwdriver to rise to its highest point then starts to drop. Repeat until you are certain the screwdriver is at its highest point before falling,

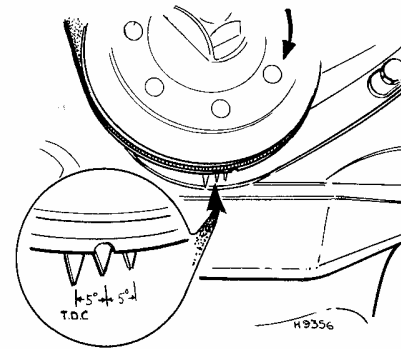


Fig. 4.9 The timing marks, with the pulley notch approaching 7 for pistons 1 and 4. Inset are the timing scale details. (Early arrangement) (Sec 11)

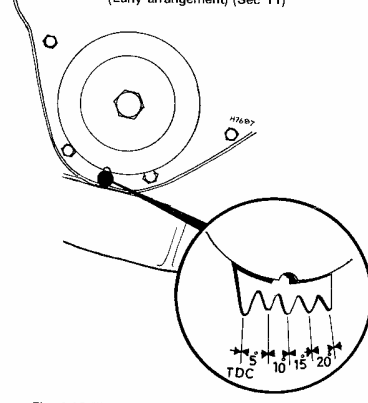


Fig. 4.10 Timing marks, later arrangement (Sec 11)

then mark the edge of the crankshaft damper pulley adjacent to the TDC index on the engine using a dab of paint. On later Bs, the TDC index is the pointer to the far right, as viewed from the front of the engine looking toward the back. If you have an early car with the 5:00 timing marks, TDC is farthest to the left as viewed head-on from the front. When the paint dries, rotate the damper to where you can GENTLY tap a notch with a chisel, or a grind with a Dremel tool,

then mark the notch with bright paint or whiteout. You may find that the new notch may be an inch or so away from the original mark due to the outer rim of the pulley migrating as aging rubber delaminates from the steel. If this problem is noted, either replace the pulley or remove it and use a small bead of high quality silicone adhesive to anchor the inner and outer rings to the rubber on both sides. Once the bead is in place, flatten and force it into the seams by dragging a razor blade or putty knife around the circumference. Paint a tell-tale stripe between the inner and outer rings as a future "migration" monitor.

Once the pulley/damper is right, install the distributor and note that the dogs mesh and the body drops into the retaining ring. The rotor *should* point in the vicinity of the traditional #1 plug wire tower. If so, all that is needed is to set up the static timing.

Turn the crankshaft about 30° counterclockwise, then slowly bring the TDC mark back up to the

10° BTDC mark on the index (10° is the middle pointer of the 5 that are on later cars. On early cars, 10° is the third pointer to the far right as viewed standing in front looking to the rear of the engine.

Once the 10° BTDC position is located, rotate the distributor body counterclockwise looking at the top of the rotor until the points rubbing block is to the left side of the cam. Connect a test lamp to the distributor side of the coil, and the other end to ground. With the distributor to coil wire connected and ign on, rotate the body of the dizzy clockwise until the exact moment that you see the light come on. Once the static timing is done, tighten the dizzy clamp, verify that the plug wires are in 1-3-4-2 order (anti-clockwise at the cap). Tighten dizzy clamp.

If the rotor happened to point in the vicinity of 7:00 then the drive dog is installed 180° out. So, if you don't really feel like going any farther, and are not all that anal about where the rotor points, so long as it starts and runs, then simply rearrange the plug wires to accommodate the alternate "#1" rotor position: PLUG 4 NOW GOES TO THE 1:00 (APPROX) POSITION, PLUG 1 GOES TO THE 7:00 POSITION, PLUG 2 GOES TO THE 10:00 POSITION AND PLUG 3 GOES TO THE 4:00 POSITION.

Got a few minutes to spare, and are up to the relatively easy task of reindexing the distributor drive? Start with the crank at #1 TDC. Pull the distributor, and remove the distributor hold down clamp from the engine. Note that if the clamp is properly installed, the bolt and nut are at the top of the clamp and the nut is adjacent to the dipstick. Remove the distributor drive by threading a 3 inch long 5/16x24 bolt (e.g. bellhousing bolt) into the hole that is centered in the drive, then rotate the drive assy slightly to clear the camgear. Withdraw the drive dog and rotate it 180° so that the smaller portion of the offset points to the bottom of the hole. Reinstall while slowly and gently pushing in; the drive dog will rotate into position and end up pointing roughly at the 2:00 and 8:00 positions. With the verified dizzy reinstalled, the rotor will be pointing approximately 1:00, at the real #1 plug wire tower---or my name is mud.

You may now proceed to the starting grid at Goodwood-on-Pungo, Mr. Mitty.

Safety Fast!

* PO: (n) popular acronym of endearment directed at the previous owner. (alt) DPO/FPO, et al: PO, modified by adding the initial letter of a descriptive expletive, usually, but not always, based on the severity of PO's natural tendency to plow ahead without any consideration to a logical thought process. There are several other modifiers, assigned to very special cases, and best kept out of earshot.

Notes from the Editors

Susan Bond

What can I say? We had a great car show season, a wonderful tour to the Lexington area, multiple tech sessions where lots of things actually got fixed, drive-outs to many corners of Tidewater, and we had fun doing it all. What a year! And what a great group of people to do all that stuff with!!! And on top of all that, you wrote about it so everyone could share the experience. Peggy and I have had a blast putting it all together and look forward to next year's activities. Keep up the good work, we love hearing from you!

I left for South Carolina right after the last Dipstick went to the printer. Between sorting, packing and drawing, I was kept busy. But I did take time out to go to the British Car Day at Patriots Point in Mt. Pleasant October 26th, put on by the British Car Club of Charleston. They had about 80 cars, including a spotless Rolls Royce with a rumble seat, a Vanden Plas Princess (looks like an 1800), another GT with dealer installed A/C (I took it off of mine long ago), a B with a Union Jack paint job and the usual assortment of B's, A's and TD's. It was a nice show, they lucked out and it only rained before and after, and I got to buy parts from the B Hive again, he hasn't been to Waynesboro for several years. If only I'd had my B there....



Officers and Committees

President	Mike Haag	496-7348
Vice President	Barry Tyson	488-7304
Secretary	Doug Kennedy	460-5037
Treasurer	Jim Villers	481-6398
Editors	Peggy Craig	382-7547
	Susan Bond	482-5222
Membership	Robin Watson	721-9277
Activities	Dan Kirby	430-9591
Historian	Susan Bond	482-5222
Technical	Mark Childers	432-9155
Regalia	Frank Linse	461-7783
Clubs	Mike Ash	495-0307

The “Almost” Lucas Night Rally

Mike Haag

The second attempt at a night rally in downtown Norfolk was scheduled for Wed, Oct 16th this year. Last year the event was cancelled due to bad timing and other commitments. Dan put together a route which he hoped would dispel the adage that “A gentlemen doesn’t motor about after dark”, but alas, he had to step down due to personal commitments. Not ready to admit defeat, Barry and Mike Pentecost stepped up to the task to finish the planning, do a trial run, add instructions and minor changes, and come up with some questions.

The weather for that evening was iffy, with a forecast of possible scattered showers in the area. Sure enough, as I headed west on I-264, I noticed a large dark cloud hanging directly over downtown Norfolk! Was this an ominous foreboding of things to come? Luckily, the rain didn’t transpire, the dark cloud disappeared as dusk turned to night, and the weather was fine for an evening drive. Speaking of driving, the worst part was finding the entrance to the Harbor Park parking lot. With never having driven there before, the main entrance off of Waterside closed, and the dimly lit streets, I was frustrated as I saw the parking lot but couldn’t see how to get there. I remember Barry said you could turn off of Tidewater Drive, but I missed it and circled around, only to end up going in the opposite direction down Waterside Drive. As I did a U-turn in front of Waterside, I punched the call button on the trusty ‘ol FRS radio, and Barry answered. He calmly directed me to the parking lot, much like an air traffic controller talking a lost, disabled airplane safely to terra firma.



Barry, Mike & Holy Pentecost and children, and Sue & Terry Bond were there to greet me. We hung around for approximately 20 minutes, in case any other intrepid MG adventurers showed up. Having decided that we were it, and with some of us getting hungry, we agreed to bag the rally and head straight to Doumar’s for dinner and ice cream. With a short drive around

City Hall and up St. Pauls’ Boulevard, we arrived a few minutes later. Luckily we got 2 empty tables in the back, and had an enjoyable meal of cheap hamburgers and conversation.



We all agreed that this event is definitely worth doing, and now that the legwork has been done, maybe it can be rescheduled at a time in the spring when more members are eager to begin the driving season. Thanks to Dan, Barry, and Mike Pentecost for putting forth the effort.

November Tech Session

Terry Bond

Somebody in southern Chesapeake is in tight with the weatherman! Our Tech Session on November 3rd at the country home of Mark and Debbie Childers saw a small turn-

out, but a none-the-less enthusiastic group of “techers.” Everyone enjoyed the chance to tour some back roads getting there.



We actually did some tech-stuff too. No major problems were encountered but a lot of preventive maintenance was handled including replacement of accelerator cable and diagnosing a vacuum problem on Susan’s B. Mark has a well-equipped workshop and enough parts lying around to nearly complete a car, but we were not that adventuresome. Still, a challenge presented itself in the form of a MGB roadster, sitting in Marks garage looking very sad because “it wouldn’t start.” That’s all the incentive we needed to begin scratching heads, foraging for spark plugs, and all the right tools. How many heads and hands can you cram under the hood of an MG? Well, we were determined to go for the record, but it was Mark who gave the word finally to “stand

back.” The starter turned, but narry a cough was heard. Take apart the carbs, take apart the distributor, put in a



new coil, change out the plugs and dump some fresh gas into the open float bowls – still not a sputter! Some quick thinking and a fresh coil wire was installed, and we were ready for action.

Just to be on the “safe” side, Vince decided (against Mark’s advice) to hold his hands over the intake on the carbs. Mark assured us he doesn’t like to do that in case of backfire. He was right. I’ve never seen Vince move that quickly! But – the car coughed, sputtered, and started! Success. We were not to be defeated, and Vince gets an extra bowl of chili for sacrificing himself to bring life to yet another Octagon!



Thanks to Mark and Debbie for playing hosts – the food was delicious and especially, the home-made soup! Seen milling about the garage were: Frank Linse, Frank Hurley, Vince Groover, Terry and Susan Bond, Bill Seib, and reports circulated that Harry Watson had even appeared earlier. See you next time!

Ambassador’s Choice

Craig Cummings

For those of you who couldn’t venture north to the Hunt Country Classic on the 20th of October, my wife Joyce & I are happy to report that it was a fine conclusion to the car show season. The weather was warm and sunny as Doug & Eiko Wilson (our week-end house guests) drove with us from our home in Alexan-

dria, to the car show venue near Middleburg. During the morning hours, we did get some rain, but fortunately it was never more than a light mist--just enough to settle the dust. (A touch of typical British weather to set the right mood for the event!)

The Svea Farm is a grand location for the event. Its endless acres of scenic, rolling hills are perfect for parking and displaying beautiful British cars. The fenced front driveway leading up to the house separates the two display areas. As in the past, MGs, Triumphs and Minis were on one side of the front lawn. On the other side were the Jaguars, Rolls Royce, Austin Healey, and similar marques. In total, there were nearly 175 entries.

This year, the counselor to the British Embassy, Mr. Robert Pierce, selected as his favorite, a daily driver from a traditionally “working class” British car category. I was totally surprised when my 1969 MGBGT was awarded the prestigious Ambassador’s Choice Award. The award is not the usual trophy for



the mantel, but an English wool throw blanket. On one side is a red plaid, and on the other side is a soft wool with an embroidered Hunt Classic emblem, and “Ambassador’s Choice, 2002”.

Having won this award, I can only offer the following explanation: I had a pretty car with an interesting story. My poor old car began its life with me as a bucket of parts in Las Vegas, Nevada, in 1992. It traveled to Italy in 1994, where it (and I) got into an accident and underwent a major refurbishment. Once it was repatriated back to the US (from Italy and Germany), it spent many active and inactive years in New Mexico. It was in storage in New Mexico for two years, while we were in Turkey (1999-2001). It became active again when we moved to Virginia in May 2001. We have been driving it ever since our return Stateside, in this very beautiful place called the Commonwealth of Virginia. Joyce (an Iowa native) and I (a Rhode Island native) are happy to call Alexandria our home. We are thrilled to be here. Cheers, Y’all! And Happy Motoring.

6th Annual Driver Days Car Show

Barry Tyson

The Saturday before Halloween, October 26th this year, has become an annual tradition to visit the village of Driver for the Driver Days car show. Driver, for those who have never visited the sleepy little village, is a place where time has stood still. It consists of a couple of general stores (one with outdoor and hunting gear), several antique shops, a garden feed and seed store, a fire station and several country churches. One of these churches, the Berea Church, is where the car show is held. It is a white clapboard church which



looks as if it belongs in a Norman Rockwell painting. The shady churchyard attracts an eclectic collection of antique, classic and hot rod cars. The only restriction is the car must be a 1975 or older model. I like this show because it is near my home so I know my MG can limp there and back no matter how much abuse it has taken during the many drives to this season of car shows. It also marks the end of the car show season. It is a relaxed, non-competitive car show where all kinds of car guys gather and talk about all kinds of cars. The car show is only a part of the Driver Days fall festival with mule cart rides, pumpkins, various re-enactors and displays, live music, food and lots of families.

And for the nominal entry fee of \$15 for my MG I received a grab bag chock-full of all kinds of interesting stuff. In addition to miscellaneous brochures, discount coupons for drag racing schools and hamburgers, here is a partial list of what was in the bag: the show tee shirt with great looking art work in color of a Mustang and a Chevy Nova racing at Suffolk Raceway (every year the art is of a different hot rod theme); a large dash plaque with more cool hot rod art; a USAC folder, lapel pin, decal and badge decal; Sunoco race fuel decals (a la Mark Donahue/ Roger Penske); Hemmings bumper sticker; and a Jimmy Buffet's Margaritaville.com bumper sticker (I believe with all the decals and stickers I could cover a considerable number of dings and flaws on my MG); and a nice refrigerator magnet of an Outer Banks lighthouse. My refrigerator needs more stuff on it for character--you can tell a lot about someone by their refrigerator artwork. I think women are impressed by a well-decorated refrigerator. Next, a January 2001 issue of Cars &

Parts, a coolie from Lowe's commercial services, a small poster of Tony Stewart in front of his Home Depot NASCAR race car, a Hot Wheels NASCAR model--a Dodge, No.44.GP. Not sure who drives that car. You need to remember you can never have too much NASCAR stuff displayed in your home (or double wide) if you live in the south. Also included was a Charlie Daniel's CD, suitable for listening to while drinking beer and admiring your NASCAR stuff. And if that wasn't enough they had a drawing for more stuff at 3 o'clock and if you showed up you were sure to win a prize. I really had my heart set on the radio that looked like a can of WD-40 but I ended up with a Fat Boys (a restaurant in Chucacuck) tee shirt and a Michael Waltrip NAPA racing cap.

Anyway, enough about all the free neat stuff. It was a crisp, bright fall day and the only other MG to show up was Ed Meadors with his Midget. We were parked beside the church with the other imports consisting of a Mini (the real one), several Volkswagens (one a micro bus, I can't remem-



ber if it was with or without hippies), a TR-3, and a pristine original, very early, small Datsun pick-up truck. The owner of the Datsun pick-up truck had acquired it from someone (surely a waterman) on Tangier Island. There were many unusual cars that spilled over the front yard of the parsonage into a vacant lot, to look at-- Studebakers, a Hudson Hornet Twin H-Power and other unusual cars. Where are all these cars hidden the rest of the year? There were two cars that caught my attention that were in the same club from Virginia Beach. The drivers were heavily tattooed wearing black and white tee shirts and driving large early fifties cars, one a Cadillac, lowered and painted flat black with the trim and bumpers painted flat silver. Pretty Gothic looking.

The food was good with homemade sausage biscuits in the morning and barbecue for lunch from the nice people at the Berea Church and a free bowl of chili for the car show participants at Rio Grande Traders in the afternoon. The company was fun, too, with a visit from Bill Seib and Leslie Paul and later Harry Watson from the club and some local friends I haven't seen in years. Lots of questions about MGs and the club. As the sun began to fade I headed home with the top down to take in the fall air and thought about the enjoyable fall day I had.

MGB Roadster Windshield Installation

Jim Villers

Photo by Frank Hurley

While reassembling my car after having the body painted, I decided to replace my pitted windshield. Getting the window frame off of the car is a lot easier than the process of replacing the glass and rubber seals. The disassembly of the window frame is accompanied with a little risk. Each of those little screws heads can be stripped and once stripped becomes an agent of the devil. Be sure to use a new posix screwdriver of the correct size (yes there is a difference between posix and phillips). Press VERY hard into the screw while twisting the screwdriver; the screws should come out. After removing the screws, a light tap with a rubber mallet should separate the frame. Keep a mental note of where each screw came from--there are short screws and long screws.

With everything apart, run a threading die on each of the screws and a tap down each of the threaded holes. Check that each screw threads easily into its proper position.

Measure and mark the center top on the windshield and measure and mark the center top on the glazing rubber. Place a small amount of window sealant in the groove of the window glazing rubber to seal the glass before it is slid onto the windshield. Begin at the top center and work the rubber onto the window. Keep the center top in position so that the corner cutouts in the seal correctly fit at the corners. At this point, there are several alternatives; I covered the rubber glazing with silicon grease, others have used a glycol lubricant (from a medical source), Moss recommends soapy water. A non-petroleum based lubricant is needed for the frame to slide onto the glazing rubber.



Press the top and bottom rails in place until you feel them seat. Place a small amount of windshield sealant around the joints on the pillars and press them onto the side of the windshield. Place a pair of ratchet straps across the pillar ends to pull each pillar towards the rails. A second pair of ratchet straps should be placed around the top and bottom rails, about six inches from the ends. This second pair of ratchet straps helps to reduce the bowing of the glass

when the first set of straps is tightened.

Work on one corner at a time. I did the two top corners first but I am not sure that it makes any difference. Tighten the ratchet straps that pull the pillars together and tap the frame with a soft rubber mallet. Slowly tighten and tap the frames until the holes align exactly. The ratchet straps can become very very tight when pulling the pillars onto the rails. Do not try to insert the screws until the holes are perfectly aligned; it is easy to cross thread these screws. After the screws secure the first corner, do the other corner on the same rail by repeating the procedure of tightening the ratchet strap and tapping with the rubber mallet. Continue to tighten and tap until all four corners have been aligned and the screws inserted.

There are no real tricks to inserting the bottom rail seal. Lubricate the rubber (I again used silicon grease) and just work it into the groove from one side to the other. Slightly compress the seal by sliding it to the center. Carefully trim the ends so that they seal against the pillar when unrolled. Reposition the seal so that there is a slight pressure of the seal against the pillar.

Installing the window frame to the car is another interesting exercise. Begin by insuring that the bolts thread easily into the frame. Place a little windshield sealant on the top and bottom of each pillar seal and slide them onto the pillars. Place the windshield onto the car; unroll the bottom seal at one end and press and work that end down until the bottom bolt can be screwed in. Pull the frame back and press it down until the top bolt can be inserted; leave both bolts loose. Unroll the bottom seal and press the windshield down to hold it in place. Several small plastic tools can be helpful to unroll the rubber without scratching the paint. Be patient, it is possible to set the bottom seal without scratching the paint. Setting the bolts on the second pillar is much harder than the first. I used a large "C" clamp between the bottom of the pillar and a ridge inside on the door opening. Use wood or a thick rubber pad to prevent scratching of the pillar by the clamp. With a little wiggling and judicious use of the rubber mallet while tightening the "C" clamp, the holes can be aligned and the bolts inserted. Check the alignment of the door wind wings and tighten the securing bolts. I might add, that the installation of the window to the car is made considerably easier with the help of a Club member or two.

MGs "South of the Border"

Mike Haag

The December 2002 issue of *Road & Track* magazine reports that, thanks to a trade agreement between Mexico and the European Union, MG Rover Mexico has been established to sell MG and Rover vehicles in that country. The importer has six dealerships now, and plans on increasing the number to more than 20 next year. The Rover 75 sedan and wagon, and the full range of MG vehicles will be offered for sale.

Maybe a dealership will be located in Tijuana, enabling those of us who occasionally travel to San Diego the opportunity to cross the border for more than just cheap beer and actually test drive one of these vehicles. If that's the case, I can't wait for the next trip out there!

The Origins of "MOWOG"

Reid Trummel, president & editor, Austin-Healy Club USA
www.healey.org
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submitted by Chuck Hudson

Many owners of British cars have long noted the word "MOWOG" cast into various parts on their cars. Some people have the mistaken impression that this stands for Morris Wolseley Group, but in fact it is much more complicated than that. Herewith is the full inside story on this fascinating bit of automotive history.

Actually the word "mowog," or in its more accurate form, "moh-wawg", traces its history to its original use by the Tutsi tribesmen on the eastern slopes of the Mitumbar Mountains in central Africa. Among the Tutsi, "Moh-wawg!" was an exclamation pronounced at the end of the hunt when a prey had finally been fallen. The ritual evisceration of the prey, originally performed immediately after the kill to prevent the spirits from claiming the carcass, was accompanied by the tribesmen chanting "Moh-Wawg!" over and over as both a celebratory incantation as well as to warn away any hungry spirits who might be considering stealing their bounty.

Over time, the word Moh-Wawg became associated with the first sight of the entrails of the prey as it was disemboweled, thus the exclamation, "Moh-Wawg!" was often heard not only when the animal's breast was split and the fear of losing it to the spirits had passed, but also when the prey was shared with other members of the tribe as a way of ritually connecting them to the kill.

The British connection to the word dates from the late 1880's when the "scramble for Africa" was in full swing, with several European colonial powers sending expeditions into Africa to stake claims in their competitive land-rush for new territories from which to extract natural resources, one of which was manpower, or as we might now say, "human resources."

The Viscount Abingdon, Great-Great-Uncle of Leonard Lord whom we would later meet as chief of Austin and then still later as Managing Director of the fledgling British Motor Corporation in the early 1950's, was among the British expedition leaders sent to central Africa to thwart a German attempt to gain control of the headwaters of the Nile. While charting navigable waters in the extreme western portion of what was then known as the German colony of Tanganyika, but would later be ceded to Belgium's King Leopold and incorporated into the Belgian Congo, the Viscount encountered the Tutsi people.

Abingdon was so impressed with the skill of the Tutsi in fabricating watercraft (not to mention tools for eviscerating fallen prey), that he befriended their leader whose name defies transliteration into the Roman alphabet, but which approximates the sound of a soft potato hitting a stone wall. This relationship eventually proved useful not only for countering potential German exploitation for the region, but also for furthering British claims that they could later barter for Belgian acquiescence in the Queen's establishment of key ports in the Gulf of Guinea on Africa's western littoral. These ports would later become indispensable as waypoints

for British maritime trade with India and indeed as far east as Singapore, and the establishment of the Dunlop wire wheel industry, which is a story that shall have to wait for another time.

In any case, so deep was Abingdon's affection for his hosts, or, as the French might call them, "cooperants", in Tutsi-land, that he eventually gave his third son the middle name of "Mowog," which was simply Abingdon's not-quite-correct transliteration of the original Tutsi exclamation, q.v. above.

The name went little noticed for many years until that third son, having later led an ill-fated World War I mission that unfortunately delivered his mess kit maintenance platoon into the hands of a German Army field Kitchen, was repatriated after the war. His heroic conduct as a prisoner, wherein he steadfastly refused to compromise British knowledge of field sanitation measures or of the impending deployment of "tanks" against the German lines, would earn him not only accolades in the home press, but would also bring him to the attention of the very British industrialists who had manufactured those tanks used in the battle at Ypres (which the British mispronounced as "wipers" and which, as you know, later led to the Lucas connection to electrical accessories).

During this time it was, of course, quite fashionable among the gentry to assume off-beat nicknames related to British colonial exploits, (see, for example, the Duke Winston "Mombasa-man" Rutherfordshire-hamptonson) and so "Mowog" was a ready-made natural for Abingdon's son.

Well, Mowog's popularity led him to a prestigious if not lucrative position in the nascent post-war British motor industry, and among his new corporate duties was securing new markets for British motor products. Germany had, of course, been (temporarily) laid low by the war, and so Mowog struck out into ex-German colonies in Africa to attempt to establish British hegemony there as a supplier of motor transport for the colonial infrastructure.

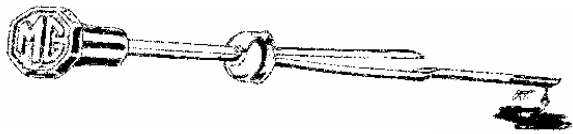
Naturally he took several lorries with him to Africa to rove the land (see also "Land Rover") and thereby prove their durability under the extreme conditions to which they would be subjected while serving with colonial administrators. Now, it seems that Mowog was also a bit of a history buff, as one might expect, and so he used the opportunity of a visit to eastern Africa to attempt to retrace his father's route into the interior to Tutsi-land. The lorries proved amazingly resilient as roads were literally constructed as they proceeded, and eventually they did arrive on those eastern slopes of Mitumbar. The trek had, of course, taken some toll, and only one of the original five lorries made it all the way, the others having been, um, cannibalized for parts and fuel en route.

As fate would have it, the exhausted but steadfast contingent finally did encounter Tutsi tribesmen just as their last lorry ran out of gas, upon which they opened the bonnet and the tribesmen were heard to exclaim, "Moh-Wawg, Moh-Wawg, Moh-Wawg..."

And the rest is history.



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