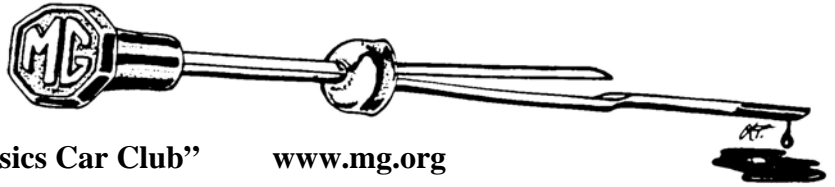


# The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

[www.mg.org](http://www.mg.org)

Volume XXXII, Issue 7

Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

July 2004

## MARQUE TIME

Cynthia and I missed the June meeting in Portsmouth but hear that the beer selection was awesome. Unfortunately ... we were on vacation in Newport Beach, California. I do not know where all these rich people come from. Porsches (new ones, not like my 1983 944) were a dime a dozen. Southern California is the place for convertibles. Top down weather all week. Didn't see any MGs.

I am awaiting the return of over 100 pounds of TD nuts, bolts, and other fasteners. They are being zinc plated in North Carolina. The shipping will cost more than the plating. While on this topic, I know the best way to get tools. Ask your spouse, significant other, mother, or anyone else who doesn't know much about what you want to get them for you as a present. Since they do not want to disappoint you, they will make sure that they have fully met your request. I mentioned Unified/SAE and metric taps (cut/clean up threads in nuts) and dies (cut/clean up threads on bolts) to Cynthia. Well, now I am the proud owner of two 45-piece sets. It's great! Already had Whitworth taps and dies, now I only need BA. (If all this nomenclature doesn't mean anything to you, just wait until you can be bored with my article on TD Nuts and Bolts.) Maybe it is about time to return Mike Ash's taps and dies that I borrowed about five years ago.

Still getting up the nerve to take some chrome in to get re-plated. Being a “saver” all my life, still find it difficult to spend money. The problem with chrome is that you cannot just refinish one area that is blemished or pitted. You must have the whole piece redone. Still attempt each time to polish out the imperfection but it doesn't work.

My son, Josh, has made some progress on his MGA. He finished the front end... well not quite. Cannot do the front brakes until he installs all new brake lines and cannot install new brake lines until new floorboard brackets are welded into place and cannot have the welding done until he receives new brackets. But there are plenty of other things for him to do.

Hope to see you at the July meeting.  
Andy

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Check [www.mg.org](http://www.mg.org) for the latest info!

- July 4 SCCA Solo II, Pungo Airfield  
[www.odr-scca.org](http://www.odr-scca.org)
- July 7 **Wednesday meeting at Frankie's Place for Ribs (Note new location)**  
**See map on back page.**
- July 7-11 NEMGTR GOF MK 76, Strasburg, PA  
Charlie Searles,  
[cseales@rochester.rr.com](mailto:cseales@rochester.rr.com)
- July 9-11 Historic Sportscar Racing at VIR  
[www.virclub.com](http://www.virclub.com)
- July 10-11 **Wine Tour Weekend**
- July 12-16 GOF Central, Dayton, OH  
Greg Garnett, [garnet-gl@muohio.edu](mailto:garnet-gl@muohio.edu)
- July 14-18 NAMGAR GT-29  
Cromwell, CT
- July 21 **Dipstick Deadline**
- July 22 **Ice Cream Social Run**  
**See page 3**
- July 31 Brits by the Bay, Pasadena, MD  
[www.tracltd.org](http://www.tracltd.org)
- Aug. 1 SCCA Solo II, Pungo Airfield  
[www.odr-scca.org](http://www.odr-scca.org)
- Aug. 3 **Tuesday meeting at Jim & Betty Villers**
- Aug. 8 **Drive out to the Eastern Shore**

(continued on page 2)

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES (continued from page 1)

Aug. 12-15 University Motors Summer Party  
Reunion, Grand Rapids, MI

### Aug. 17 Dipstick Deadline

Aug. 21-22 SCCA Evolution Driving School  
Pungo Airfield  
www.odr-scca.org

### Aug. 26 Ice Cream Social Run

## JUNE MINUTES

Doug Kennedy

With a hearty “danke schon” Herr President (temporary), Alan, opened the meeting promptly at 8:03 Stuttgart standard time. The Bier Garden and its fine assortment of beer served in a festive German atmosphere made for a fine environment. Ahhh... Germany. That reminds me of a layover I had once on a return trip from Tashkent Uzbekistan shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. I remember well a particular freulien at the festhause in Frankfurt. But enough of that now, it’s time to turn attention back to the meeting.

It was noted that Robert Davis’ father passed away over the weekend. A fine man that is missed.

Frank’s friend from the frigid north, Chuck, was in attendance.

Robin Watson reported that memberships are due soon.

Treasurer’s Report: Jim reported that we spent \$119.00, received \$238.74 and have left \$1322.39

Newsletter: Sue thanked Peggy for her hard work. She is also soliciting writers for many events. If you’re attending one or more PLEASE step forward to ink a few lines for her.

Anyway, it was a short layover and I was a long way from home, lonely, and in need of a warm bed. So I walk into this festhaus. Oh, meeting’s back on, back to the minutes.

Activities: The ice cream social at Hope Haven was a great success last month and the children appreciated the rides. The weekend wine tour is fast approaching in July. As of this date there is only one room left. We also need meeting hosts on October and Novem-

ber. Brits on the Bay is canceled this year because the venue is under construction but hopefully it will find a permanent home at Virginia Wesleyan College next year.

Regalia: Frank investigated new hats but is having difficulty. He’s looking at beverage coolies instead.

Anyway, I strike up a conversation with this fetching freulien and before I know it we’re really hitting it off. Of course, I don’t speak much German. Actually, the extent of my vocabulary comes from the label of a Heineken bottle. But, with her halted sense of English, I recognize that I might be able to wangle a dinner out of this. Rats, Alan’s talking again. Back to the meeting.

Alan’s car is coming along and everyone was feeling the positive vibes.

Greg Coogan drove his “B” here from Connecticut.

Back in Germany, overhearing the Americans at the table behind mine, I summon the nerve to ask for some pithy complimentary phrases. Ahh... they had just the suggestion for how to lay on the charm with “You look very nice”. Helping me with the pronunciation they proclaimed me ready to go. Whoops, I may have missed something, gotta listen closer to Herr President Temporary Alan.

Old Business: Euro

New Business: Euro (Robert Davis claims that means zero in German)

Picking back up at the festhaus I repeated my charming phrase over and over trying to polish up my best New Jersey/German accent. With my last bit of savoir faire I called the young lady over and offered up “Essen Mein Fleisch.”. Seeing the surprise in her face I happily exclaimed again “ESSEN MEIN FLEISCH!” About that time I noticed the Americans behind me laughing heartily. It was then that the remains of my beer were dumped in my lap and the object of my attention stormed away. The last thing I saw was a large bouncer, obviously a member of the German weightlifting team, heading my way as I beat a retreat back to the airport. It wasn’t until I returned back home that I discovered that “Essen Mein Fleisch” Really means “Eat my .....” You can fill in the blank. Oh well, so much for German-American relations.

The meeting adjourned after the Secretary kept his 75-week raffle losing streak alive. We retired (back) to the bier selections faster than a BMW salesman rushing to a busload of Yuppies.



# July Ice Cream Run

Thursday, July 22nd - 7pm



Meet in Sears parking lot at Greenbrier Mall - on Greenbrier Pkwy side.  
Destination is Bergy's Dairy on Mt. Pleasant Rd for those who show up  
late or don't want to participate in the drive there.



For information contact Robin at wof101@aol.com or 721-9277

## Membership & New Members

Robin Watson

*Total membership: 108*

Membership is now 108, up again by one from last month:

William Milholen II  
3 Nelson Maine  
Carrollton, VA. 23314  
(757) 864-7867  
Email: ns\_gp18@hotmail.com

William has a 74.5 B that he is putting in another engine at the moment. Hope to catch up with him one of these days at a meeting or an Ice Cream run.

Notice to Everyone:

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

Last month I made a comment about renewal time. It has now arrived and enclosed with this copy of the Dipstick should be a renewal form. If you do not get one please email or phone me and I will mail you one. I also mentioned about the delaying problems that arise from late renewals. There is a lot of time needed to add or remove members and pictures for the new Directory and this year, at the end of August, I will delete those who have not renewed so that I can go to print at the right time.

### Notes from the Editors . . . .

Susan Bond

I am writing this on the eve of departure for MG2004. I had not been thinking when I put the deadline date in last month's issue (overwork will do that to you) but

everyone heeded my e-mails and sent their columns in early. Peggy got back from Italy just in time to do the proof reading and get a map and flyer ready (which she did just before she came down with the flu, hope you are feeling better by now). I will put this in the mail on my way out of town in the morning and Robin will deliver it, pick it up and get it in the mail while I am gone. I just faxed the last plan I had to finish before I left, the B has been serviced, washed and is almost packed, and now it's my turn for a wash. There are times when I wonder if it is worth all the effort to take a few days off, but I still smile and relax a bit when I think about our St. Louis trip last year, and being able to do that when life is ganging up on you makes it all worthwhile.

PLEASE NOTE:

1. Change of location for next month's meeting.
2. Dues are due.



## Officers and Committees

President	Andy Wallach	622-8315
Vice President	Alan Watson	426-2600
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	Becky Watson	426-2600
Historian	Susan Bond	482-5222
Technical	Mark Childers	432-9155
Regalia	Frank Linse	461-7783
Clubs	Mike Ash	495-0307

## May Meeting

Better late than never, here are a few pictures from the May meeting held on the 5th at Robin and Olive Watson's estate in southern Virginia Beach. Nothing like MG yard-art to make the landscape complete!



Robin enjoys the view.



## June Meeting



Held on the 1st at the Bier Garden on High Street in Portsmouth, the meeting was a great chance to sample German food and beer and talk MGs on the patio on a nice spring evening.

## A Great Pit Stop

Chuck Hudson

The doors to the last work bay at ABACUS Racing were open...

Inside and to the right on the lift was a Civic that soon would be producing over 400hp from a simple chip and a tiny turbo. On the left was a generic "Ford Crown Vic" Jag sedan but the next two Jags were real Jags--both XKEs. One, a V12, was having a full engine and suspension rebuild



after sitting for over 15 years. In amongst these was a Midget with internal engine needs, an Alfa that was in for "Italian" maintenance and a very over modified BGT

which would soon have its V8 restored and ready for VIR. The Service bay isn't very deep but well cluttered with lots of bits and pieces. Way back



4 among those was a tiny spot of Carolina blue. Up on



jacks, wheels all dangling down and with the steering wheel askew sat Chuck Hudson's TC.

The usual suspects: Jim, Scott, Barry, Paul, Chuck, Alan, Robin, Frank, Scott, and Harry showed up on Saturday, the 8<sup>th</sup> a little after 9:30.

Chuck Botwright, General Manager, as well as Machine Shop manager, along with Rob Doddman, Racing and Service manager, had invited club members to see what could be done for a TC as well as to offer their services for any of our cars.

Chuck Hudson had asked ABACUS to "bullet proof" his 56-year-old British roadster as best possible. A titling of laughter, so British, was heard from Bob West who would be performing this miracle. Chuck wanted to be able to come home from meetings without asking a club member to follow as surrogate tail light bearer.

ABACUS Racing was founded in 1986 as PhaseOne Import Machine Service. It was to be just that, a machine shop. Then many of the owners who had brought in their classic and muscle cars for mechanical work began asking where they could go for painting and interior refinishing. From those requests PhaseOne began a complete classic car restoration service. But now the shop has returned to its strength and has taken its name from Bill Thummel's racing team, ABACUS.

Rob, who owns an MG Twin Cam among other types, was our guide through the Service bay.



They will do 8 to 12 full mechanical restorations a year as well as the mundane maintenances. There are also 6 race cars to prep during the vintage and SCCA season, from a 911 Porsche to a very sinister looking Jag XKR which is really a Ford in carbon fiber "clothing". The



usual suspects about this.

only Jag parts were the tail-lights. Ask one of the

Rob gave us a discussion and dissertation on heads, castings, valve angles, airflow, etc., and forthwith your dutiful scribe's head needed adjusting due to lack of engineering parlance. It was here we learned about 1.6ltr engines producing 400hp without blowing up. If John Thornley had only had the iron testing machines to supplement his men of iron.

Leaving the service bay we strolled to the Race shop, heads hanging low from all our new brain cell matter. Little did we envision what was to come.

Like Doug, our dutiful secretary scribe, says, "it was so technical you'd have to hear it and see it to believe it".

Here, Chuck Botwright, General Manager and engineer/machinist extraordinaire, met us and would carry on for Rob.



The Jag XKR had carbon fiber this and tube thickness that, moly material, tire specs and trash can sized mufflers because it was too noisy on the track. Even my notes appear as hieroglyphics. The air jack system was operational and made us all jump as this 2200 lb/600hp racer popped up off the ground. Bill Thummel, ABACUS's owner and founder, drives it and was there to greet us, making sure we were getting the whole enchilada.



Also, in the shop was an 1800cc MG powered Elva being prepped for a new owner. We were told that Hank Giffin has

many bits and pieces being "stored" here. Maybe even a complete racer. (Don't tell Stevie.)

Chuck then took us on to the Machine shop.

It was the last bay and I certainly didn't have much more room under my bonnet nor in my boot for any more intriguing and, for me, far too esoteric knowledge. All engine work begins in the Dirty room, with a bath in the high pressure chamber. From here it's

stripped further and glass beaded, if necessary, to remove scale, corrosion, etc. Determination will have been made in the Service bay of what work would be done by the Machine shop.

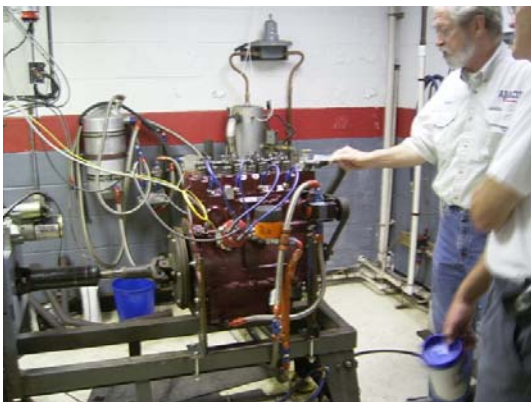


The TC had its head milled, the cylinders re-bored, bearings fitted, ports relieved and matched and all moving parts balanced. In general it went

through a good "D & C". She is "Eleanor".

This shop has the usual suspects of milling and boring machines, lathes and grinders. Those are the machines we would like to have in our garage for that once-only moment. All are computer controlled and guided for exact specifications. Here, also, is an airflow pressure monitor just to match inflow/outflow in the manifolds.

ABACUS Racing builds racing engines, hence the name and the reason for being. So, behind all the Machine shop machinery was a small dynamometer room set up to bench test and run in these engines to be race day ready. They would also be race day ready for any altitude or humidity condition expected at the track. ABACUS not only builds race engines for teams in the mid-Atlantic area but is at the tracks offering technical support.



Some questions were asked but I think most of the usual suspects were enlightened and humbled by the detail ABACUS is able to offer to create and maintain our MGs.

## A Very Special Ice Cream Social

Mark Hiby

Sunday, June 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm brought the Tidewater MG Classic's first ice cream run of the year. Wendy and I arrived a couple of minutes late as we had to first finish coughing up a lung to put 1.99 a gallon premium into our 73 B. When we arrived we found



Vince and Pam Groover in their 77 (I think) B, Frank Linse in his 59 A coupe, Robin and Alan Watson with Robin's 74 B, George and Peggy Craig in their 80 B, and the Johnson's in Jerry's 76 B. Shortly after we arrived Paul Thiergardt motored up in his 54 TF. After a brief bit of chatting about how the weatherman blew the forecast as they had been predicting mid 70s with a chance of rain instead of the sunny mid 80s, everybody took a copy of the directions from Alan and started out of the Greenbrier Mall parking lot. Robin and Alan mapped out a wonderful route to Hope Haven that wound through many fun roads of southeastern Chesapeake into the Princess Anne part of Virginia Beach. The group of seven cars managed to basically stay together throughout the trip including one cute moment at an intersection where a gentleman in a Ford Expedition waved us all on so we could stay together. I guess he really liked watching all the tiny old cars go by. A couple of miles later we pulled into Hope Haven. I was having fun putting down Hope Haven's long driveway while snapping pictures of the other cars as we pulled in.



Hope Haven is a Christian mission dedicated to helping the elderly as well as displaced families and children who need a place to live for awhile. Our recently elected Activities Chairperson, Becky Watson, had come up with the idea that these people would enjoy sharing some ice cream with the club and checking out the cars.



Becky and Olive Watson were already setting up shop in a very nice shady spot, complete with picnic tables, when the cars arrived. Becky had spent a tremendous amount of time making up ice cream treats like Muddy Tires, Very British, and Rainbow of Hope in handy little Styrofoam cups that could be quickly handed out to all the Hope Haven residents and club members that would soon be lining up.



It didn't take long for the kids and all to start showing up. About 20 kids and adults filed past

the cars and each kid seemed to already be picking their favorite car. The questions started right after that. How fast does it go? How old is that one? And my favorite question: "How does a big guy like you fit into such a little car?"

Becky, Olive, and Wendy then called everybody over for ice cream time. Becky and Olive handed out the ice cream cups



and Wendy took up the end of the line loading up the finishing touch of whipped cream and a cherry onto the sundaes. Seconds and even thirds were encouraged forcing Alan to trek back and forth to the freezer for more. Once everybody had their fill the kids were back over to the cars.

Frank's A and Paul's TF garnered the most attention at first but soon kids and adults were sitting in and looking under the bonnets of each car. Frank, Robin, Paul, and myself were fielding questions as fast

as we could from several adults as well as boys and one teenage girl who was really taken with Frank's A. The afternoon



ended with Frank, Paul, and myself giving rides around Hope Haven's grounds to several of the kids. While the club was packing up, the families and staff of Hope Haven gave us many, many

thank yous for bringing the cars and ice cream.

A SUPER, MEGA THANKS is in order for Becky Watson for organizing this won-



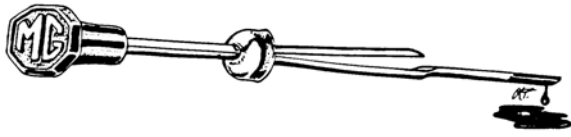
derful event. A very large thank you also goes to anyone who makes it this far reading my report, as I have never done one of these before.

Further proof that Murphy does have a law. While driving home after our enjoyable time at Hope Haven an SUV's tire threw a rock that cracked the passenger side of our B's windshield. So now I have something else to do at a future tech session.



"Safety Fast"

# The Dipstick



## The Tidewater MG Classics

Susan Bond  
541 Forest Road  
Chesapeake, VA 23322

Affiliated with



North American MGB Register

## FIRST CLASS

**July Meeting**  
Wednesday, July 7th  
**Frankie's Place for Ribs**  
5200 Fairfield Shopping Center  
495-7427

