

# The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

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

Volume XXXIV, Issue 4

Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

April 2007

## MARQUE TIME

Greetings from 30,000 feet above Georgia! I am typing this while on my way to Dallas for two weeks. This is the first business flight I have been on in quite awhile, and I must admit I am pleasantly surprised as my perceived change of attitude of airline travelers. Beckey and I have flown a couple of times recently and I think when you are traveling with someone you don't take time "people watching". As a solo traveler this time, it struck me that passengers were not as rushed, not as impatient, and generally more courteous. Either that, or as I fast approach my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday I just don't care anymore. We'll see if I feel the same way after I have spent the next four weekends in the air.

My ace mechanic, Dad, has been troubleshooting a strong petrol smell permeating the interior of my 'B. He thought he had found it when he noticed petrol pouring out of a gash near the top of the tank. We got another tank from Jack Pavadilis, (thanks Jack) and that certainly helped but are still troubleshooting the light smell of petrol in the interior.

What a difference a year makes. I was reviewing last April's *Marque Time* and I had written about "Fred's Car Museum" in Appomattox. Now, one year later Fred's has closed and most of his cars sold.

Just a reminder, April's meeting will be at Andy and Cynthia's, and from what I understand, Cynthia has a brand new driveway, and believe it or not, does not want it christened with MG oil. (Imagine!) Fortunately there is ample on street parking. See you there!

*Safety Fast*  
Alan



## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

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

- April 1 TTR Poker Run to benefit CHKD, [www.tidewatertriumphs.org](http://www.tidewatertriumphs.org)
- April 4 **Wednesday meeting at Andy and Cynthia's (see back page)**
- April 12 **Dipstick Deadline**
- April 15 **Tech Session at Mark & Debbie Childers (see page 3)**
- April 20-22, The Gathering, Shelton Vineyards, Dobson, NC, [www.triumphclub.org](http://www.triumphclub.org)
- April 21 Azalea Festival Parade and Display (see page 2)
- April 22 CVBCC Show, Williamsburg, pre-registration required! [www.cvbccva.com](http://www.cvbccva.com)
- April 26-29, Classic Motorsports Mitty, [www.hsrrace.com](http://www.hsrrace.com), [www.ClassicMotorsports.net](http://www.ClassicMotorsports.net)
- April 29, Brits on the Green, Alexandria, VA [www.CapitalTriumphRegister.com](http://www.CapitalTriumphRegister.com)
- May 1 **Tuesday meeting at Jim and Betty Villers**
- May 6 RTR Show, Virginia Aviation Museum, Richmond, [www.richmondtriumphregister.com](http://www.richmondtriumphregister.com)
- May 6 British Car Show, Lewes, DE [www.bccdelaware.com/](http://www.bccdelaware.com/)
- May 12 **Dipstick Deadline**
- May 18-20, **TMGC Winery Tour (see page 3)**
- May 18-20, Carlisle Import and Kit Car show

## Upcoming Activities (continued)

[www.carsatcarlisle.com](http://www.carsatcarlisle.com)

May 19 Ocean Marine Boat Poker Run and Car Show to benefit March of Dimes, [www.oceanmarinellc.com](http://www.oceanmarinellc.com)

May 19 7th North American Cecil Kimber Run, Pittstown, NJ., [www.mgdriversclub.com](http://www.mgdriversclub.com)

May 26-June 3, Drive Your British Car Week [www.britishcarweek.org](http://www.britishcarweek.org)

## MARCH MINUTES

Michele Peters

We began our March meeting at 8:09pm at Frankie's Place for Ribs. We are getting to be quite a fixture there. After all, the food is really good and we can fit a lot of people in that back room. I thought I had the whole seating thing worked out to my advantage— I thought I had everybody convinced of the advisability of having me sit near the front of the room to ensure that I could do my job properly (I ask so little, really). I was nearly the last one to arrive and the folks at Frankie's pulled up a special table, all for me, at the front of the room. AWRIGHT, this meeting is turning out OK after all; I'm right up front. I'll be able to hear everything that is discussed and my Minutes will be more accurate. Well, I thought it was great until I looked around and realized that El Presidente and his Missus were sitting at the BACK of the room this time. Ugh! Foiled again! Does he do that on purpose?

A motion was made by El Presidente to approve the February Minutes, which were approved, once again by vigorous oral affirmations. Thank you wise and loyal readers.

**New Members and Guests:** Member Ronnie Hess, who isn't able to make many of our meetings (glad to see you, Ronnie) brought Mike Norman with him, who he credited with amazing MG mechanical feats. Welcome, Mike. Come back any time.

**Vice-President:** J.D. had the flu again, for the second month in a row. Beckey W. offered that J.D. needs a new excuse, but her husband suggested that he find a new doctor. Hopefully, J.D. will get the treatment he needs, whatever that may be, and join us next month in April.

**Treasurer:** Jim Villers, sans Betty, (miss you, Betty) provided the following information: Balance forward from January was \$1,684.32. Receipts included \$38 from Raffle and Regalia and \$40 from dues. Disbursements included \$11.80 to Beckey Hassler for Regalia and \$105.90 to Robin Watson for mailing and printing. Thus, our current balance is \$1,644.62.

**Activities:** Beckey Watson advised as follows:

## Azalea Festival Parade and Display

April 21, 2007

Celebrating the United Kingdom

The parade is 2 miles in length, starting from Harbor Park parking lot onto Waterside Dr.

There may be an opportunity to participate in a static show at NATO Fest, which is held at Townpoint Park immediately after the parade. More info will be given when details are in place.

RSVP Beckey Watson to reserve your place in the parade and/or static show: [MGactivities@aol.com](mailto:MGactivities@aol.com) or 757-426-2600

Log on to [www.azaleafestival.org](http://www.azaleafestival.org) for information on the festival. Details of the parade and NATO Fest can be found at [www.azaleafestival.org/events.asp](http://www.azaleafestival.org/events.asp)

Antique Auto Flea Market will be held this weekend on March 10 from 8:00 – 3:00 at the Ruritan Club in Hickory. Our club is renting space; you can contact Susan Bond if you are interested.

The Tidewater Triumph Club will put on a charity Poker Run April 1 at 2pm to benefit the Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters; minimum 10 cars, maximum 30 cars. Group will meet at Bagel Joe's in Greenbrier. Cost is \$5 to participate, with a \$25 gift certificate to Bagel Joes' to the lucky winner (oops! I almost typed "sinner").

Our April 4 meeting will be at Andy and Cynthia Wallach's home in Norfolk. Andy advised us that Cynthia told him to let everyone know that their new driveway is now an "Oil-free zone" so we have been directed to park anywhere except the driveway, or bring our own cardboard.

We will have a Tech Session at Mark and Debbie Childers' place on April 15.

The Triumph Club will also be driving to the Shelton Vineyards in Dobson, NC the weekend of April 20-22. The Sunbeam will be the featured marque. Steve Ward is the contact for this activity.

We have been invited to participate in the Azalea Festival parade in Norfolk this year, on Saturday, April 21, with England as the featured country. The \$50 fee has been waived, but don't get too excited; we don't all get a Princess. It is a two mile drive beginning at 10:00am at Harbour Park, so we should probably all assemble about 8-8:30am. I believe our final destination is Doumar's for ice cream (well, where else would one go in Norfolk for ice cream, really?).

The Colonial British Car Show will be held on April 22 at the Williamsburg Winery again this year.

(continued on page 4)

# April Tech Session

Sunday, April 15th

Starting at 10am until....



Mark & Debbie Childers

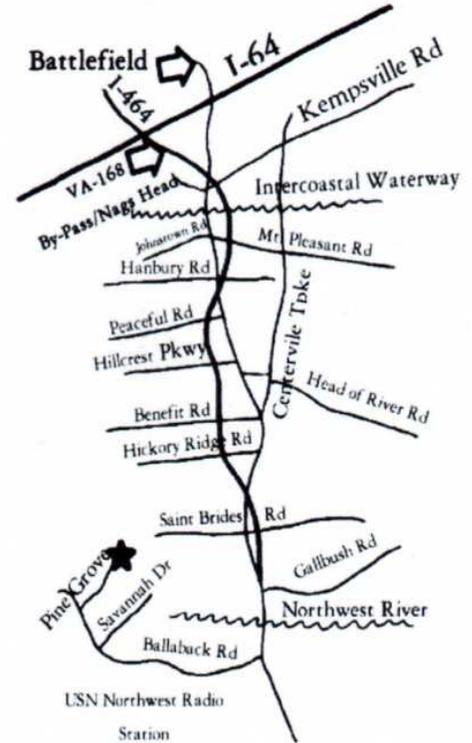
3909 Pine Grove Landing, Chesapeake

(past the USN Northwest Radio Station

off Ballaback Road)

432-9155

Email: [ifixmgs@cox.net](mailto:ifixmgs@cox.net)



We're on the road again....

## Annual Wine Tour

May 18 - 20

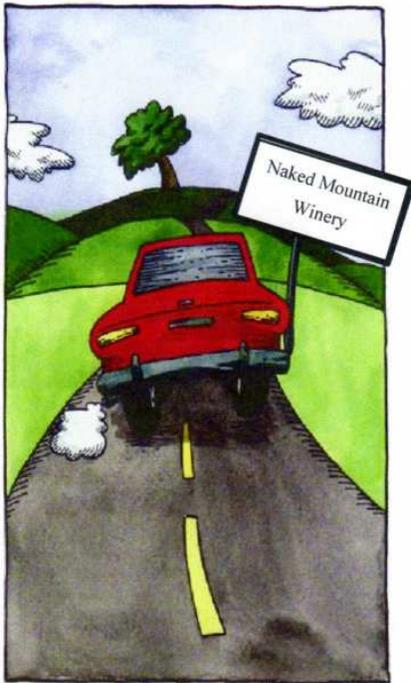
This year we're heading to the Warrenton area and the tour will encompass 3 days.

Limit of 12 cars

Contact Beckey to reserve a space and obtain more information:

[Mgactivities@aol.com](mailto:Mgactivities@aol.com)

757-426-2600



## Minutes (continued)

However, there will be no same-day registration this year; you must pre-register.

The Aviation Museum will be open for the Triumphs and a tour on May 6.

The TMGC 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Winery Tour is planned for May 18-20 this year at the Warrenton (northern Virginia) vineyard of the Naked Mountain Winery. The trip is limited to 12 cars this year. For some reason, which I completely missed (probably because I was seated about as far away from Beckey as possible), it was mentioned that anyone planning on attending the Wine tour needs to certify, with a doctor's note from the tech session, that their MG has a clean bill of health.

"Brits on the Bay" Car Show will be held on June 2 this year.

Peggy mentioned the GOF Marque 81 meeting in Ontario this year (OK, I have absolutely no idea if what I just typed has any connection to reality). Anyway, if you do have an idea of what I'm talking about, see Beckey for the brochure and further info.

**Clubs:** Mike was not absent but had nothing to report.

**Historian:** Susan passed around albums.

**Newsletter:** Basically, *The Dipstick* is going electronic. If you wish to receive a hard copy of the newsletter, an insert is going into this month's copy. Fill it in and send it on to Robin (or email or call him) to let him know you wish to continue to receive a hard copy. Those who don't respond to the insert will begin getting their *Dipstick* on-line. (My gosh, I can't believe it; this is the shortest paragraph on the Newsletter that I have ever written..whew!). Robin got his with dial-up service downloaded in about 2 minutes. He received 13 replies, all in the affirmative, that the membership liked the electronic *Dipstick*.

**Membership:** Robin reported that we are holding steady at 100 members.

**Technical:** Mark was actually with us. He brought along a "distance tube" and noted that this device will keep your lower control arm in good shape. Well, I'll take your word for it, Mark. Thanks for hosting the next Tech Session.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** John Terschak suggested that we bring unwanted parts, tools, antique car parts, kitchen sinks (huh?) for auction at our club meetings. Whatever the seller got for his item, 10% would go to the club coffer. Beckey thought one excellent causative effect of such a thing would be that our garages and sheds would actually get cleaned out. Maybe we could do this occasionally as part of a monthly meeting, or as part of a Tech Session. Think about it.

**Marque Time:** Jennifer and Mike Ash went on the Richmond club's Snowball Run to White Post,

VA. They took their mini, but regretted it because it actually snowed 2-3 inches and the dynamic stability control caused them to go off the road. Mike noted that the only reference in the British handbooks on this matter is "When using snow chains, turn off the DSC for a while."

Vince Groover mentioned that he has many MG car parts that he is looking to get rid of...come on over and take a look. You might find something you really don't need, but want anyway.

**Raffle and Regalia:** Ron Struewing won the mystery gift (a pewter model of an MGC) but Anita confiscated it; Bill Olcheski won the *MG Enthusiast* magazine, Pam Groover won the license place holder, Paul Thiergardt won the MG pin, Ronnie Hess won the MG stamp, and Susan Bond won the MG Logo blueprint. Hey, have you noticed that the same people win over and over again every month? I don't think I'm making this thing up, here. And yes, I did do an internship many years ago with Oliver Stone....

We adjourned around 9:00 PM...sorry, I didn't notice the exact time, I was too busy socializing. You gotta problem with that? So sue me....

## Officers and Committees

President	Alan Watson	426-2600
Vice President	J.D. Hawthorne	723-0630
Secretary	Michele Peters	482-1012
Treasurer	Jim Villers	481-6398
Editors	Peggy Craig	226-7755
	Susan Bond	482-5222
Membership	Robin Watson	721-9277
Activities	Beckey Watson	426-2600
Historian	Susan Bond	482-5222
Technical	Mark Childers	432-9155
Regalia	Becky Hassler	874-1477
Clubs	Mike Ash	495-0307
Webmaster	Mike Haag	mikehmg@cox.net

## Membership and New Members

Robin Watson

### Total Membership 101

We now have 101 members. On March 10<sup>th</sup> at the TRAACA Swap Meet, Bob Stein rejoined the TMGC after taking a year off while keeping busy with his many car projects. If you wish to update your 2007 Directory, Bob lives at 7500 Pennington Rd., Norfolk, VA. 23505, (757) 588-6200, posti@aol.com. He has a 1973 MGB-GT and a TD Replica, BCW Factory built. Also, I would like to report that I have been notified so far by 16 members to receive their Dipstick on line.

# A Great Day at the Swap Meet

Stephen Daniel



Saturday, March 10th turned out to be a great day for the TRAACA 2007 Annual Swap Meet. The day was just right with the good temperature and plenty of sunshine, so me and my '79 took off for the meet with the top down. Upon arrival, the personnel working the traffic ushered me into the lot where I could display my B. The traffic control in and out of the lot was handled in a very professional manner.



After arriving, I quickly checked out the 50 registered vendors, to see if there was anything there I was looking for, but no such luck. Upon entering

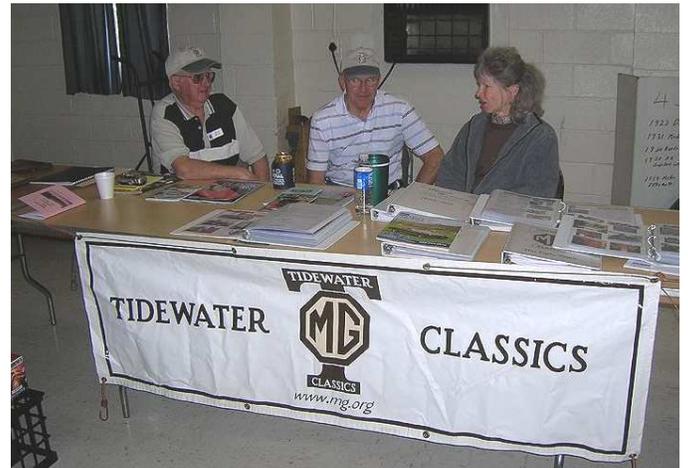
the building I located our group's table where Robin Watson and Susan Bond were. I joined them there and we all began to talk about the one thing in common--our MGs. One individual stopped by and was telling Robin and I about the '53 TD he was starting to restore. Robin gave him a brief tech session on how to decipher the information on British Whitworth wrenches. Susan and I found this very interesting.



During the course of the day Susan would go outside to take pictures of the new MGs that had arrived, but Robin and I also would make the trip outside. This was to get warm, as it was somewhat cool inside the building. We were also glad to see other members like Mark Childers, Jack Pavlidis, Frank and Morris Worrell, Kent Lacey, Sam Kern, Matthew Gresalfi, Vince Groover, and Harry Watson. There were approximately 50 cars at any given time on display and about a half dozen MGs were present through out the day, too.



Overall, the entire event was very good with a great day of sunshine and warmer temperatures that brought out the folks. Hopefully, some of the people we talked with will be interested in joining. In my opinion, the only thing that would have made it better would be the invasion of the MGs. But the bottom line is a good time was had by all, we saw several friends there and, hopefully, got some new people interested in becoming members.



Robin Watson, Harry Watson, Susan Bond. Photo by Bob Stein



## Saving Bobbet, Part Three; The Rescue

Jon Suponski

I had to work fast, there was no telling when someone might change their mind and take her away from me. A trailer...I needed a trailer. There was a U-Haul right up the street. I headed for the U-Haul....they had no car trailers, (of course she's a car, what did you think I was talking about?). No one locally had any car trailers. Everyone in Southeastern Virginia must have needed a car trailer that day. How

about a 12-foot utility trailer they asked. That will have to do I said. Now I need ramps and tie downs and a hand winch. "Have it ready for me", I said to the trailer lady and hurried off to Lowes.

Five straight days of perfect Spring weather. And today? Rain. A genuine Baptist downpour. Off to Lowes to get the stuff I need to rescue my little red lady, back to U-Haul to hook up the trailer, find out that I do not have the hitch receiver on the truck. It is back home in Suffolk some forty miles away.

The following events would have indicated to a normal person that this adventure was simply not meant to be. However, I am bred from good stubborn Polish stock and was not about to be deterred, so off to Suffolk I went.

Suffolk, Virginia...the largest "city" in the state, not quite city and not quite country but the last god-forsaken outpost of civilization on the western edge of south eastern Virginia. Cow country so barren that even the cows have packed up their show and moved on to greener pastures. Rt. 58 is about the only way to get there.....Enter Virginia's Finest.....in a silver and blue Camaro no less. Roughly 70 in a 55.....in the rain.....in traffic. Never, never try to explain an LBC rescue to a cold, wet State Trooper, it will do you no good. Only 15 over the limit though...failure to obey posted speed. He was pretty nice about it.

Continue on at a slightly reduced speed to my road, Manning Rd, 9.8 miles of winding twistys....posted speed; 55 Mph...enter Combine, you all know what that is....big green thing.... about twenty feet wide....eats corn.....what it is doing out of hibernation in March is anyone's guess. Did I mention that Suffolk roads have drainage ditches.....deep ones? Only a couple of miles from home now...just grab the hitch receiver and head back to U-Haul.....enter Bambi.....remember those drainage ditches...close... very close. Zip in the driveway, stop at the garage for the receiver, turn the truck around in the barnyard and.....45 minutes later I finally manage to get the truck out of the mud in the barnyard. This is a common circumstance that we here in the country have gotten used to;...when it rains the fields and barnyards turn to a glop with adhesive qualities akin to Super Glue.

Truck un-stuck, mud washed off (must maintain appearances here) and heading back to U-Haul to get the trailer. Wary of combines, deer, drainage ditches and the Federales, I travel at a more subdued pace.....hitting every single bloody traffic light between Suffolk and Chesapeake.....the trip takes almost an hour. After picking up the trailer I arrive back at the garage to find a small knot of people gathered around the red lady.

"Howeryalldooin", I ask as I approach, ...

"Essfinehowboutyerself", one says...

"We hear yer gonna take it away", another

grins..."what ya gonna do with it?"

"Yes, I am rescuing her," I say, "and I'm going to restore her back to life!"

Laughter erupts....."why it ain't even got no floorboards! What ya gonna do...make it a pedal car??"

I ignore their comments as they walk away snickering, ..... "She will live again...you'll see!" I declare as I turn back to her to set to the task of putting her on the trailer ... alone.

She went willingly, almost eagerly, up the ramps into the bed to be tied down securely for the trip to her new home. No one will ever tie down your spirit I thought as I watched her in the mirror. I could tell she was happy, her raggedy top was blowing in the wind with reckless abandon!

Arriving home, she was dubbed "the cutest little car I ever saw" by my wife Bobbi and was immediately christened "Bobbet". She was so tiny that there was room for her in the garage and she rolled off the trailer and scooted into her spot like she owned the place, secure in the knowledge that she had a future.

I threw and old quilt over her to keep off the birds and closed the garage door. As I did I could swear that I heard her sigh.

A future she did indeed have....and it would be glorious.....

The saga continues in;  
"Bobbet and the Racing Midge"  
coming soon!



## Link of the Month

Submitted by Terry Bond

Looks like everyone is having problems with oil. Here is what the hotrodders have to say. This also talks about the parts themselves and the suppliers.

[www.hotrod.com/techarticles/engine/flat\\_tappet\\_cam\\_tech](http://www.hotrod.com/techarticles/engine/flat_tappet_cam_tech)

## Modern MG News

Frank Worrell sent in this article and says, "Just got a bit more info on the type of cars that're going to be offered and when.....still no photos, I want to see photos!"

Printed here are excerpts from the article

### Nanjing plans 4 MG models

Automotive News (China)

SHANGHAI -- Nanjing Automobile Group Corp. plans to introduce three MG vehicles this year: a roadster, sedan and hatchback.

This spring, the MG TF roadster goes into production in Great Britain. If sales in Britain are high, the car will be launched in Europe.

Nanjing Auto plans to assemble three other cars in China: Production of the MG7 sedan, a version of the discontinued Rover 75, starts this month. Production of the MG3 hatchback begins in the fourth quarter.

A fourth vehicle, the MG5 sedan, will be produced in 2008, says Lv Qiang, press officer for NAC MG, the subsidiary in charge of the MG project.

Supplier sources say Nanjing will be able to produce 65,000 MG3s and 30,000 MG7s.

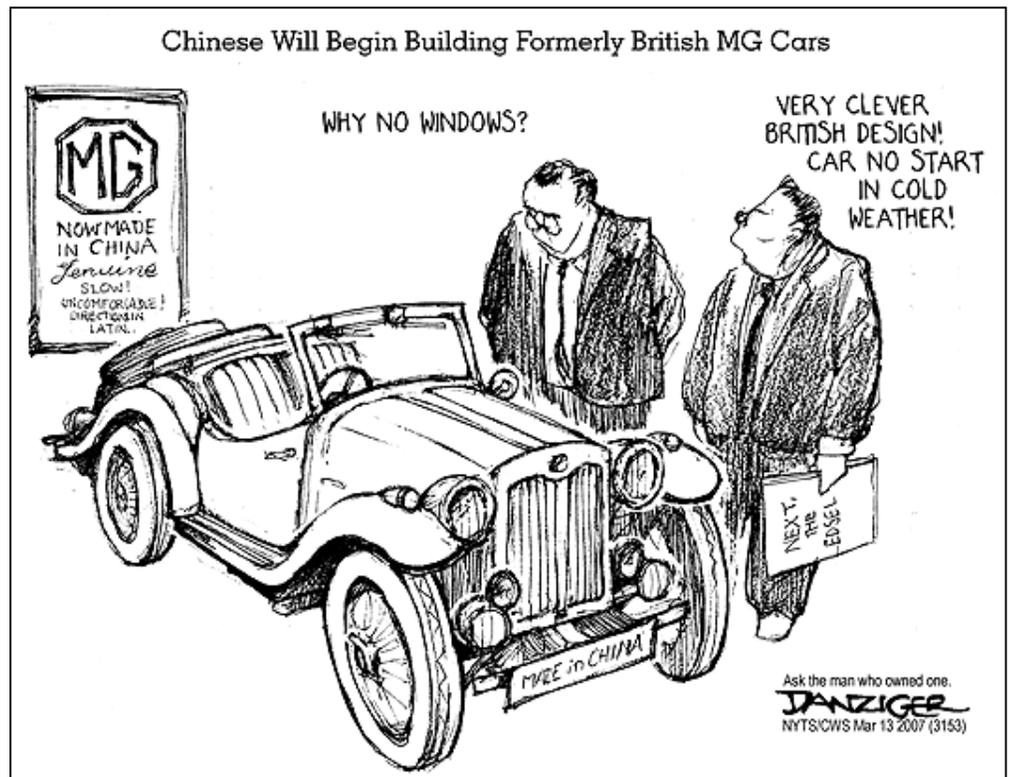
Anticipated volume for the MG7 in 2007 is 13,000, including 8,000 equipped with manual transmissions and 5,000 with automatic transmissions. Anticipated volume for the MG3 is 7,000 units, with 500 manuals and 6,500 automatics.

"We want to create a good English car," says Zhang Xin, NAC MG general manager. "Every component and part of the MG car will be of international quality satisfying both the Chinese and European market requirements."

Meanwhile, Stadco Ltd., part of Acertec PLC, has signed a contract with Nanjing Automobile Corp. (UK) to transfer equipment to construct the body of the MG TF from its plant in Coventry, England, to Nanjing Automobile's plant in Longbridge, England.

The powertrain for the MG TF will be assembled in China and shipped to Longbridge.

According to Automotive Resources Asia, a unit of J.D. Power and Associates, Nanjing Fiat sold 30,668 vehicles in 2006.



Jim Villers sent this in. It appeared in the *New York Times* on March 14, 2007

## MG in China

Geoff Wheatley

In a recent press statement the Nanjing Automobile Corp (NAC) stated that they expected to have a MG vehicle in the UK market by the close of 2007, with plans for a launch into the US market about eighteen months after that. No news on what this first car might look like and there is general speculation that it will simply be a revamped MGF the car that BMW designed some ten years ago. One of the problems with this car was its ability to blow head gaskets. One can only suspect/hope that the Chinese have solved this problem!

Some of you may recall that the Term "Modern Gentleman" was rumored to be the new name of the Chinese MG. It would seem that this evolved from the translation of MG into the Chinese language but there was/is no suggestion that this will be the future image for the car. In short, the marque MG will remain.

It has also been revealed that Nanjing Automobile paid in excess of \$100 million for the rights to MG, which is a lot more than the \$12 paid to BMW by the previous British owners of the marque. Now that the Rover rights have been purchased by Ford, MG has to stand on its own in the future. Its only long term hope must be in the development of a new sports model within the next three to five years. To my mind the future is still suspect for MG. But I have been known to be wrong in the past...Ask my wife!

## And Still More...

Craig Cummings sent in this link. Seems there is a group of guys in the UK who explore abandoned factories, mills and anything else interesting. This guy went into the plant at Longbridge and came out with a bunch of pictures which he posted on this forum.

[www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9749](http://www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9749)

I thought everything had been auctioned after the bankruptcy, but there are pictures of almost completed cars.

Then scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on page 2. He found an "old" Mini in a tunnel, a bit the worse for wear. The rest of the pages are just discussion, mainly about security at the plant.

Then I had a bright idea and went thru back posts on the forum. Here are the links for more pictures, some of other plants. There are probably more if anyone is really interested in wading thru 35 pages of threads. Too bad no one did this at Abingdon before it was demolished.

[www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9760](http://www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9760)

[www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9321](http://www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9321)

[www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9256](http://www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9256)

[www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9254](http://www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9254)

[www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9257](http://www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=9257)



### MG and Morris

Geoff Wheatley

This was written for a non-MG audience, but I think it is worthy of print to any MG Owner. Very little is ever published about Morris who was responsible for the existence and survival of the Marque during its formative years. Geoff

The MG Car Company was the product of a man who left school at fourteen and went on to become one of the world's most wealthy individuals and who gave away over eighty million dollars to charity during his life time. William Morris at the age of twenty was building cycles and motorbikes in his first factory. By

the time he reached thirty five he was the largest producer of motor vehicles in Britain, and when he died in 1963 his company wealth was in excess of 60 billion dollars. All this was created by one man operating out of his Morris Garages complex in Oxford, England.

The first MG was hand-built as a competition car for a national event in 1926 and featured the logo of Morris Garage (MG). Over the next few years demand for these "Sports Cars" increased, and by 1929 this demand had created a situation where an independent factory was required. For reasons best know to Morris, the whole enterprise was separate from his giant Morris Motors Empire that had become the largest manufacturer of vehicles in the British Empire. Various successful MG models were produced between 1929 and 1936, all hand-made and usually built to individual requirements. In consequence the MG Company was usually in the red by the close of each production year. But Morris viewed this enterprise as his private creation, much to the distress of his fellow Directors of Morris Motors Ltd.

However, in 1936, when the British Government introduced a new tax structure for the rich to pay for unemployed relief, Morris transferred the MG operation to the Morris Motors Company and relinquished control. The result was a complete revision of MG Production. No more special hand-built vehicles with leather seats and high-power engines, all future production had to use standard Morris Motors parts. Strange to say, this utility policy created one of the most attractive vehicles to ever carry the MG logo, the now famous T Series with the long sloping fenders. These fenders were obtained from a small commercial van that Morris Motors produced. The engine was a standard power unit from one of the Morris family sedans, and was completely under-powered for sports car performance.

By 1938 sales of the then new MG A had hit rock bottom and the company was destined to close. However Morris came back into the picture and as Chairman of the Board decided that the MG company would be given one more chance. A new MG sports car was designed with a performance equal to any previous MG Sports car built before the takeover. Regretfully this car, the MGTB never proved its worth in the market as, within a few months of its launch, the second World War broke out in September 1939 and all private production stopped as the factories were turned over to meet war requirements. Only 379 were produced and they are now a collectors item if you can find one!

With the end of the war in August 1945, MG were determined to be the first manufacturer to offer a post-war vehicle. The MGTB was the basis for the post war MGTC. In reality they were virtually the same car except for an extra four inches in width to try and provide some degree of comfort to the owner! The first new MGTC rolled out of the factory in September 1945

just five weeks after the end of the war. About 10,000 of these cars were produced between 1945 and 1949 with a few ending up in the USA despite the fact that the steering wheel was on the right hand side.

It became obvious that there was a growing market for the British sports car in the USA and with this in mind MG designed the MGTD which featured independent suspension, a new power unit and, if desired, a heater – for a few extra bucks of course! Between 1949 and 1954 over 30,000 of these cars rolled out of the Abingdon factory with a large majority ending up in the USA with the steering wheel on the left hand side!

By now MG was certainly in the black and with a strong financial base decided to design a truly modern sports car based on the MG that had been entered in the 1949 European LeMans. However the design process took longer than expected so a facelift was given to the MGTD and the MGTF was launched in 1954. Today this car is viewed as one of the most attractive cars produced by MG but in 1954 it was viewed as a makeshift vehicle and was panned by the media as unattractive and under powered. Production lasted for two years and around 9,000 were sold.

In 1957 the sleek MGA hit the showrooms and was in instant success. Hailed as the modern sports car of the decade, they sold like hot cakes. During its production period over 100,000 were produced. To my mind it is one of the most attractive vehicles to ever carry the MG logo, with a performance to match.

In the 1960 a change was taking place within the British Motor Industry. The Government of the day, who had invested large sums of taxpayers money to keep the industry going, decided that motor producers should combine their resources. Government had substantial holdings in most of the companies including Morris Motors and, of course, MG. The British Motor Corporation, a semi-government organization had its powers extended resulting in the control of policy and direction in the British Motor industry. MG was requested to produce a new sports vehicle that would have a long term appeal to the declining export market. (Declining because of poor quality, bad service and continuous labor strikes.)

The MGB was introduced in 1963 and was a popular success. Until the early 1970s its popularity grew as an inexpensive fun vehicle with sales increasing every year. After 1973 the model underwent various modifications to meet US environmental requirements. These modifications reduced the performance of the car, not an asset in any sports vehicle. The attitude at MG was to find inexpensive ways to meet these requirements rather than invest in a new model that met the required environmental standards.. The MGB lasted seventeen years but by 1977 its appeal had vanished. In 1980 the British government decided the MG factory should close and all future financial support should be directed to the then new Triumph TR7 sports car.

In a matter of seven years the Triumph factory also closed and the once successful British Motor Industry was coming to a close. MG still existed on paper, owned by British Leyland who also had Jaguar and Rover. The Government, who still had its hand on the tiller, was beginning to let go after DeLorean took the government for a cool forty million UK pounds, then fled the country leaving behind a new factory and 600 out-of-work employees.

In 1995, BMW purchased the rights to the famous Mini, MG and Rover. A few years earlier Ford had acquired Jaguar and Range Rover. BMW, in its professional manner, redesigned the Mini into a popular vehicle that is still a success, and produced the first new MG since 1963, the mid-engine MGF.

The future look promising for MG, but by 2000 it was obvious that sales of the MGF were not going to justify further investment. For the sum of \$12 (that's right, twelve US dollars), BMW sold the rights of MG to a private company in the UK, the Phoenix Group, who struggled to get the marque back into the black. As the MGF was not a success with BMW behind it, what chance did Phoenix have in today's competitive market? Without government support Phoenix went under in 2005. But in 2006 a Chinese company acquired the rights to the MG marque and plan to start building the car in 2008. In a recent PR interview, a spokesman for the new owners indicated that they expected to have an MG in the US market by 2009.

Only time will tell if this rebirth is for real. In the mean time these are many classic MGs to be seen and admired at most of the auto events around the country.



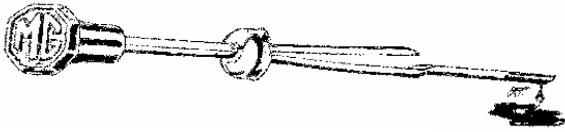
## Notes from the Editors . . .

Susan Bond

My apologies to those who showed up at Frankies for the meeting on Wednesday, the 7th. Somehow both Peggy and I got the date wrong, however we had the Tuesday part right. Beckey sent out an e-mail blast with the correct date, and Mike had it right on the web site. Please read the e-mails you get from Beckey — they are important! The alternative is having someone call every member. Do YOU have the time to make 100 phone calls? If so, you don't have enough to do. Want to edit a newsletter?

It's time to send in your car show registrations. The Williamsburg Winery show will NOT have any registration on the day of the show, you MUST pre-register. Send it in now! And while you are at it, send in the others, too. You don't want to miss out on the fun.

# The Dipstick



## The Tidewater MG Classics

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Affiliated with



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## FIRST CLASS

