



THE DIP STICK

AUGUST 1979

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 TREAS: Helen Barrows (428-3250)
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Hi T-Lovers:

First, this is the final formal reminder that dues must be paid by Sept 1 to guarantee continuation of membership in the club and an uninterrupted flow of the newsletter. So pay your \$10.

Secondly, since it seems to have gone undetected during the months I've been doing the newsletter, the DEADLINE for the upcoming newsletter is always included as the last item between the asterisks in the current newsletter. So if you have contributions for the newsletter, please get them to me by the deadline date. It would make this job a lot easier. Thanks.

FROM OLD NUMBER 2400, 4270, 6900, VM199--July has been a low-keyed and extremely pleasant one MG-wise. The meeting at the Fishers' was slightly lightly attended but provided for a most informal environment. The meeting was held out on the screen porch where the most pressing issue was the name of the newsletter. As you have surely detected by this point, its name is "The Dip Stick." This title was contributed by none other than Dave Barrows.

The Barrows's seaside picnic was well attended with parking readily available under the bag covered no parking signs. Thanks, Dave. As can always be expected when the preparations are accomplished by our wives and sweethearts, the food was superb and the company was magnificent. I personally had a marvelous time and it appeared that everyone enjoyed the beach, the fare, and the MG fellowship.

Looking ahead, on the 29th the tech session will be conducted at the Banwards' commencing at 10 a.m. Bring your problems or your expertise. I will try and mix and match the problems with the expertise.

The "Mouth of the South," the Florida newsletter, had an interesting article which might bear duplicating locally. It is entitled "Restoration report." It listed by name those who had restorations underway and what the state of the car's progress was. This performs a dual purpose in my mind. It is informative and inspirational to those involved in restoration and to those who are contemplating a restoration. Is there anyone out there who would like to prepare an article of this nature for the Tidewater group?

See you at the August meeting.

Jim

 DON'T FORGET TO PAY YOUR DUES!!!

THE JULY MEETING--There is something for everyone at a meeting at Carl and Kay Fishers'--antiques, clever and beautiful arts and crafts (products of Kay's talent), flowers and potted plants, cats, horses, goats, the player piano, the VA, and this time one new attraction--Dave and Helen Barrows's beautifully restored award winning Austin Healey Silverstone. After our 25 or so gatherees finished trooping through the house and kicking tyres in the yard, we congregated on the porch for our usual quiet, dignified, orderly business meeting.

Tom Lund announced that we had a June meeting and Helen Barrows reported our balance at \$807.13 which included the 27 membership renewals recorded in her books. Robert Davis reminded us that we can order parts from Moss Motors

at a discount through Phase I. Besides being gainfully employed, Robert is in the process of dismantling the attic of his parents' house in search of marine plywood for his cars. Robert is now the proud owner of two Nash Metropolitan.

Old Business included the naming of the newsletter. Several nominations were proffered from the floor including The Half Shaft (from Roosevelt Moseley--could be amended to Getting the Shaft from Moss Motors), 'T' for Two, Tidewater 'T' Times, the Tidewater 'T's Herald Tribune, and Robert Davis's choice, the very original The January through December Monthly Newsletter. After considerable confusion, and via the democratic process, we settled on "The Dip Stick," submitted by Dave Barrows. Since no one has mentioned a suitable prize, I guess Dave will have to settle for going down in history as the man who named the Tidewater Chapter newsletter.

Under New Business, Dave Barrows mentioned a welding establishment that we might patronize--Fitzgerald Welding and Repair, Inc., 4906 Bainbridge Blvd., Chesapeake (543-7312). Remember, this is not an endorsement of the place, merely an announcement of its existence. Robert Davis complained about the difficulty of getting machine work done in this area. Both Atlantic Machine Shop and Hunts are slow and unreliable, though neither Jim Banvard nor Dan Boswell can express any dissatisfaction with the work done by Hunts, however slow they are. Robert suggests that we try Chesapeake Farm Equipment Co., 866 Cedar Rd., Chesapeake.

Welcome to our newest members, Roy and Pat Hendrix, who attended their first meeting in their TF, one of the few who were not deterred by the threat of rain.

After the meeting, the group moved en masse to the kitchen to sample the fresh fruit and vegetable trays provided by Kay. Thanks for those low-cal treats for us professional dieters. The AUGUST MEETING site has been changed since our original host must be out of town at that time. Tom and Jeanne Lund will host the meeting in their six-car garage on WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1, beginning at 8 p.m. (or thereabouts). This is Tom's new house so don't go to his old apartment which is on the same street. This is closer to Hampton and Newport News than to most of southside Hampton Roads so we hope to see a lot of north of the bridge-tunnel members.

NO DUES, NO NEWS!!

UPCOMING EVENTS--

JULY 29 (SUN)--TECH SESSION at the Banwards, 3633 Van Buren Dr., to begin at 10 a.m. See last month's map for directions. To enlighten the new members, Tech Sessions are for working on your car. The host garage usually has all the supplies you need, but a donation of 50¢ or \$1 is generally welcome to help absorb the cost of distribution and consumption. This time Bess Mann is expected to complete the brake job begun during the last tech session.

AUGUST 17 (FRI)--Pool Party on Bay Island, beginning at 7:30 p.m. (Map on page 3.) Cost is \$5.00 per couple to cover the rental fee. Last year each family brought one snack and their own beverages. Details concerning food and drink for this year will be decided at the meeting so if you don't make the meeting, call Jennifer Ash (424-1660) to find out what to bring.

AUGUST 23-26 (THURS--SUN)--GOF WEST '79, San Diego, California. Any Easterner crazy enough to want to trek across country in mid-August also has the opportunity of participating in the first (annual?) MG Sea-to-Shining-Sea Trophy Dash from the parking lot of the Holiday Inn on Staten Island to GOF West, leaving Sunday, August 19 at 5:00 p.m. If interested, contact me and I will put you in touch with the people responsible.

SEPTEMBER 16 (SUN)--TECH SESSION in preparation for the event the following weekend.

SEPTEMBER 22-23 (FRI?-SUN)--ROAD RALLYE, details next month.

OCT 12-12 (THURS-SUN)--GOF MK XXIX, Cooperstown, N.Y. See latest issue of THE SACRED OCTAGON for registration forms.

OCT 13 (SAT)--Trip to BUSCH BREWERY and drive-out.

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PAST OCCURRENCES--The Beach Party:

Jim already mentioned this in his message so I won't go into detail but we did have over 50 people, ample food, a few drops of rain, and a warm but angry ocean to dip in, which was great for the body surfers in the group. Welcome to our guests, Jeanne Lund's parents and sister and Jim Rudd's friend Dondra and her children. Also welcome to Ron and Rosemary Eaton who dropped in later in the evening between trips to northern Virginia where they are settling in. Ron told a horror story of one of his MGAs in tow breaking loose and darting across the highway in the path of oncoming traffic.

Fortunately, no other cars were involved though the A was just about totalled. Ron is preparing to head north in the TC for his next trip.

Also Mike and Jennifer Ash, our world travellers, have returned after visiting families, doing the tourist bit, and eating their way through England. Mike reported that during 2500 miles of driving through flawless English weather (i.e., three weeks with no rain, a drought by English standards), they saw only a few Ts.

As usual, Dave and Helen were the most gracious of hosts and deserve everyone's appreciation and applause.

 IT'S TIME TO PAY YOUR DUES!!!

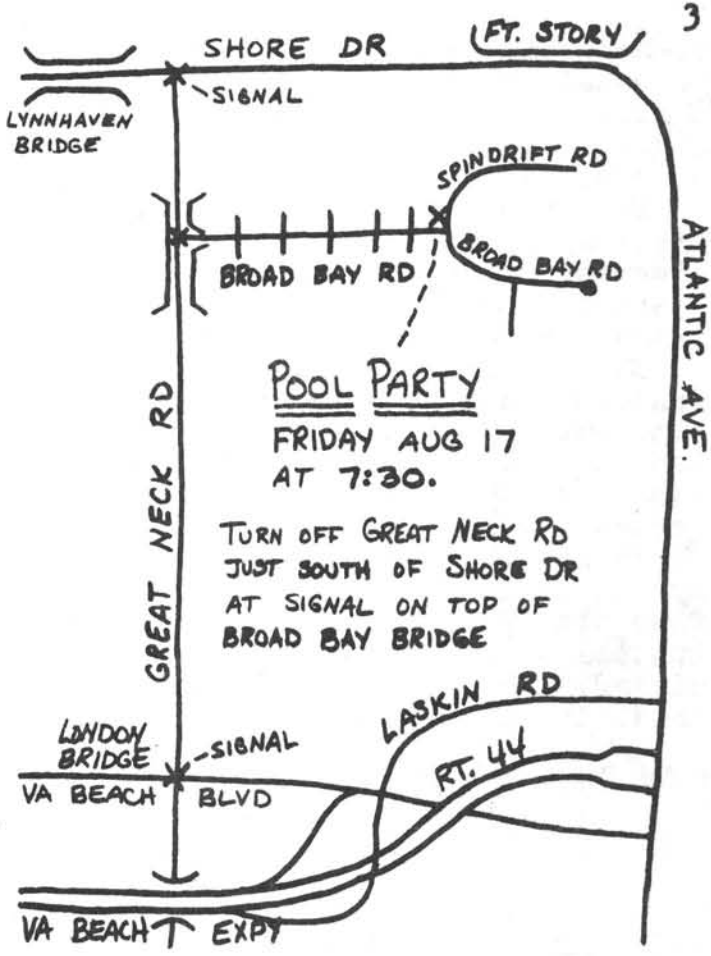
TECHNICAL SECTION--The following comes from THE WIND MACHINE, newsletter of the Sorry Safari Touring Society, Ltd., in California.

ASK A FUELISH QUESTION by Jarl deBoer

It is unfortunate, but the SU low pressure fuel pump as mounted on TC, TD, and very early TFs is more often a very unhappy part of the car. We've all heard about people who've had pumps that lasted for ten years or more, but usually 12-18 months is all you get, especially out of some of the rebuilt units. Also, the current crop has gone through a design change, and doesn't even look right!

For a car that is used regularly, an American fuel pump can be a good answer. By putting the pump along the right frame rail it is put both out of sight and in the place where it works best. An electric fuel pump is more efficient as a pusher than as a puller, and the whole setup is much less prone to a partial vapor lock which helps to keep the pump from beating itself to death.

The two varieties generally used are Bendix (best but more expensive) and Autopulse (also sold as Hasbro or Dupree). The latter looks like a hand



grenade and is nice and compact. AC makes a similar one. When you get one, you must specify a low pressure pump, as the regular pumps with their 4.5 to 6 lbs. pressure will blow it right through the SU carburetor and cause flooding and overflow. If you have to get a regular one (high pressure) you must also put in a fuel regulator and set it for 1½ pounds.

Most pumps come with mounting brackets and fittings and will require drilling holes on the inside of the right frame just ahead of the rear shock absorber but about 10" out of the copper fuel line; and two short neoprene hoses to hook it in. The wire can be run from the old pump, along the right frame back to the pump.

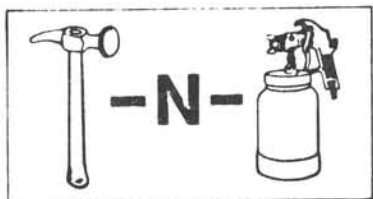
5-10 The new pump will push right through the old SU on the firewall, although you can remove the valves from it to increase the flow. You must disable the old pump by blocking the points, or removing one, or the pressure will go up too much if it should decide to work again. Now you've got a nice reliable year pump and everything still looks stock. Cost? About \$25-\$40 for all the parts.

While doing the pump, it might be nice to put a fuel shut-off and filter by the tank and really solve your gas woes, except the price per gallon. The four fittings in the diagram can be bought for about \$4.00 and allow you to install a small in-line fuel filter and your new fuel pump without a petrol slaver. The shut-off makes a dandy anti-theft device too, if you can crawl under the back without being seen.

* * * * *

This is the last of the series of articles on body work and painting--

FINAL FINISHING AND DETAIL WORK



The value of your hard work will seldom show itself if the final finishing of your new paint job isn't well done. For that reason special attention should be paid to this last, but most important, article in our HAMMER-N-PAINT series.

Before beginning any finish work you must be aware of the drying qualities of the particular type of paint (enamel, acrylic, lacquer, etc.) used. Most touchy of these are the enamel paints, which never completely dry unless baked. Although these paints will feel dry

to the touch, even after a couple of months the paint underneath the hard surface will remain soft. Actually the hard surface isn't hard at all, it's plastic and as such is very susceptible to damage. If you doubt this, try leaving something lying on a newly painted fender. Most likely you'll end up with a pattern or outline of this object, in your paint.

In all cases with enamel, the vehicle should remain in the paint booth for as long as possible before removing tape, paper, etc. If possible, wait at least a couple of days before starting the detail work. Examine the surface for any signs of sags (runs) that you may have ended up with. Don't feel bad if you find some, this happens to even the best of painters, at times, when working with enamel. No big problem though - just allow the paint to set for two weeks, water-sand the run ridges, then lightly fog the area with new paint.

Unlike lacquer or acrylic, enamel paint doesn't require color sanding. In fact, since enamel never really dries underneath, sanding it will often cut away the vital sheen layer and you'll never get a shiny result. If for some reason you want to rub out an enamel paint job, do so only after the paint is at least three months old. You can use a machine polisher, if you know what you're doing, but if you're not sure of yourself do it the hard way, by hand.

When rubbing out enamel, use an enamel compound. We've already pointed out that enamel never really dries, so the rule is USE A VERY LIGHT TOUCH. You may find that some tiny particles of dust have become imbedded in the thin outer layer of the paint. Most of these could probably be removed by repeated washing but for maximum smoothness, they'll have to be rubbed out. A word of caution: Enamel should not be rubbed out too often. A good guide is after three months, then once a year thereafter.

Before applying wax, you'll need to give the vehicle a good wash job; but remember, enamel that is only a couple of months old is very susceptible to water spotting. When washing new enamel, use only clear, cool water and the softest of rags. Then carefully dry the entire surface with a very soft chamois. Don't leave even a small speck of water on the surface, it will spot the paint.

When it comes to waxing, you're on your own. It's always recommended that you use a good quality carnuba wax, but generally the better the wax, the harder it's going to be to apply. Consider how much work you've put into the job so far, then let your conscience be your guide.

Although most amateurs begin with enamel paints, they soon try their hand at lacquer and/or acrylics. Reasons for this are obvious: fast drying time; ease of handling and cleanup; an extensive range of colors for base coats and detailing. But as with all good things there are drawbacks, most notable is the time and effort required for the final finish.

Lacquers and acrylics normally require a color sanding for maximum effect. This sanding may come either during the actual painting process, or after, or both. Don't get the idea that the more coats of paint you spray the better the paint job; in most cases the opposite is true. Too many coats on the surface will lead to an early paint failure.

Your first color coat will show why color sanding is necessary during the painting process. No matter how carefully the body work has been done, not all of the tiny ripples or dings can be found during the primer-surfacer phase. With a light coat of color, however, they'll readily show up and can then be eliminated with a thin coat of putty. Color sanding follows after three or four coats of color have been applied; color block sanding further smooths out the overall surface of any imperfections.

Color sanding is made possible by the paint being thoroughly dry from its outer to inner surface. Such sanding is always done with #600-grit wet-or-dry paper, chased with generous amounts of water. Make sure that the paper's surface is clean at all times, as a grain of dirt will cause deep scratches in the surface.

When the surface has dried after color sanding, it will appear dull, but very smooth. Now comes the time for polishing, and like everything else connected with painting, requires a light touch. Hand rubbing a vehicle may sound exotic, but it's a perfect waste of time. You'll eventually end up with a hand-rubbed finish anyway, so start with a machine polisher.

Use of the proper polishing compound is a must. Hand rubbing compound, used with a machine polisher, will cut through the paint to bare metal in short order. If only hand rubbing paste is available, cut it with water until you have a thin, watery paste. Remember, it's better to have the compound too thin than too thick.

Work one panel at a time until the paint becomes shiny, then use a hand rubbing compound to get around all those little places-door handles, grille molding, fender corners, etc. - that can't be reached with the machine polisher. This will take almost as much time as you've spent with the polisher, and you'll soon know why hand-rubbing is so futile. Finish up by wiping the vehicle with clean, soft rags and hand rub any areas that aren't sparkling. If you've followed all the steps to this point, the vehicle should glisten like a jewel.

If you really want a super job, repeat the rubbing process with progressively finer grades of compound. Some fanatics even go so far as to put the finishing touch on by using kitchen corn starch, which is a very fine, powdery abrasive.

Following the rubbing, wash the paint with clear, cool water to remove all remaining traces of abrasive. As with enamel, never leave water standing on lacquer or acrylic finishes. This becomes especially critical if the car is washed in the hot sun. Drops of water act as tiny magnifying glasses and can literally burn holes in the paint. If possible, do all your finish work in the shade.

Recommendation for waxing is the same as that for enamel, a good quality carnuba. Keep this in mind though, acrylic and lacquer finishes are delicate and must be waxed as soon as possible, and frequently thereafter.

No matter how careful you are, that new paint job is bound to receive little chips and nicks during normal service. The solution is not to throw a tantrum, but to repair the areas immediately. Touch up chips and nicks with a matching color or a color tone close to it. Use a small brush or frayed paper match stem, and dab on the paint in successive layers until it has built up close to the original thickness. Then, very carefully color sand and/or rub the area, blending the edges smooth. You can also use this buildup method to repair scratches in chrome. Just get a bottle of clear fingernail and have at it.

Whatever paint you choose, the quality of your finished work and maintenance will make the difference between an "also ran" and a thing of beauty. Take your time and do a good job for when those compliments start coming in, you'll want to swell with pride and say "I did it myself".



READ YOUR "MG WORKSHOP MANUAL"

The following article comes from CAR COLLECTOR magazine, May, 1979. I could not reproduce the accompanying photographs since Peter Kwick does only black and white glossies so use your imagination and picture a VA tourer similar to Carl and Kay Fishers's. The VA in the article is owned by Don and Lorrie Rowley, friends of the Fishers's and out-of-town members of the Tidewater

The Car Collector's Scrapbook

1937 MG 1.5-Litre Tourer, Model VA

by Donald R. Peterson

Just over two-score years ago, when this attractive little 1937 MG-VA tourer* was brand-new, the name "MG" was all but unknown on this side of the Atlantic. To be sure, a few far-sighted souls on the East Coast, such as Ralph Stein, the Collier Brothers, and a handful of others, were buying, driving and racing the MG and other funny little sports cars before the war, but the *hoi polloi* were totally ignorant of their existence. The MG car in America is very much a *postwar* phenomenon. In fact, as late as 1953 my friend Jim Grady, when queried for the 10,000th time about the make of his TC, blandly replied, "It's a Greyhound, ma'am. Made by the Greyhound Bus people." Today, there are very few people left who would have to ask. The place of the MG in the hearts and minds of the American public is secure.

Most of the pre-war MGs in this country were imported *after* the war, and this car is no exception. In the summer of 1974 its owner, Donald C. Rowley of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, bought the car from its second owner (who lived on the Isle of Man), and imported it that same year. The car was in excellent condition when purchased, and Rowley had merely to detail it to make it competitive. We first saw the car on the field of the AACA National Meet at Ft. Lauderdale last year.

The Motor printed a road-test on the MG-VA in their July 6, 1937, issue and reported a top speed, with wind-screen down, of 81.82mph and 77.58mph with it raised, very impressive for a 1548cc four-cylinder-engined, 2688 lb. (as tested) car. Although not considered a true sports car by MG buffs of that era, the VA was the

winner of the London-to-Edinburgh race in 1938, and the London-to-Exeter race the following year. A total of 2,407 VAs were produced in the three year production run, 1936-1939, of which less than a thousand were four-seat tourers as shown here. The rest were Tickford coupes and saloons (some of which were manufactured to police specifications and were widely used by law enforcement agencies throughout Britain).

Although the price of this car new, £285 (\$1,408), seems cheap nowadays, it should be pointed out that that same amount of money would have bought a new LaSalle convertible coupe or a pair of Ford roadsters, any of which would have had V-8 engines and considerably more performance and space, but, on the other hand, would not have been nearly as much fun to drive!

PAY THOSE DUES--PAY THOSE DUES!

ODDS 'N ENDS--NEW MEMBERS--Welcome to Georgin and Terry Kelly, proud owners of a '58 MGA 1500. They live at 4454 Ashwood Lane, Va Beach, VA 23456. Home phone 486-7260, work 444-1444.

MORE NEW ADDRESSES--

Ron and Rosemary Eaton
2925 Beau Lane
Fairfax, VA 22031

Jim Hatcher
404 Maycox Ave.
Norfolk, VA 23505

Ted Hughes
532 Boissevain Ave. Apt. 4
Norfolk, VA 23507

Bill and Bonnie Litchfield
809 Prince Phillip Dr.
Va Beach, VA 23452

This is the response to the original "Armwagglers Guide" published in the May newsletter. Both have been gratefully borrowed from 'T' Times, the newsletter of the Michigan Chapter.

A REBUTTAL TO THE "ARM WAGGLERS GUIDE"

by Fritz Elliott

It seems a shame to shatter the illusions of one who so obviously made careful research of a particular custom, but actually the author of your recent article on the handwave, missed one pertinent factor.

That is, the driver of an MG TC seldom ever waves first to any other make car, regardless of the other car's displacement, price, or "concours" qualities. To another TC, yes; to a Bugatti, certainly; and always to a horse and buggy. My own personal code includes Mercer Raceabouts, Stutz Blackhaws, and the H.C.S. (if their tops are down).

And that, of course, brings up another division of TC Drivers—the circle within the circle—the heirarchy, who wave to another TC only if the top is down. And, if the top is completely removed and hanging from the rafters of the garage at home, real enthusiasm is displayed in the highball. It takes psychic powers to determine whether an oncoming TC is sans top, but one learns in time. After all, it requires a touch of the supernatural to really master the wheeling of a TC, so with a little practice and effort one can become practically a mystic. Care must be taken about this though, because it can lead to table tipping, levitation, and the milder forms of cybernetics.

To show how closely the devotees of this inner cult will adhere to the Custom, let me cite my own case. I drive a moderately clean TC with no excessive embellishment. In my own club I can smirk and polish my finger nails against my lapel with that smug air that creates such lovely hatreds, while shrugging off the praise heaped upon my little bucket, decrying all with the phrase, "Oh, yes, but there's so much more I have to do to her yet."

In all but the foulest weather my

top is stowed, and the side curtains have long since departed this scene. Yet there is a man in my office, one, yclept* Dickenson, who, afoot, is a gentle, courteous, and humble soul, friendly to all and seemingly without the petty conceits of ordinary man. But awheel;—ah, then the scene changes. He becomes a veritable demigod, lordly of mien, stern of visage, scarcely deigning to note the passage of other vehicles. Occasionally—just occasionally—he will



raise a haughty finger in answer to my eager salute. (Once it was two fingers, and once he wagged, but I now have reason to believe that he was under the influence in both instances.) At any rate, he seldom indulges in a greeting to anyone or anything awheel, afloat, or awing. But I must be fair about this, damn him. For his is the ne-plus-ultra of Teeceedom.

"Top?" he queries. "Top? My word, do they make tops for them? But what matter. I couldn't use one anyway. Nothing to tie it to, old boy. Positively nothing. No windshield, y' know." And then he looks down and flicks an imaginary dust mote from a gleaming red

*archaic

fender. (I happen to know his wife, Dottie, is chef-d'-spittin' polish in their menage, so he can't score me there.)

Sure enough, no windshield. Only a pair of lovely Brooklands windcreens, gleaming and rakish with just the right amount of sweep back. That, added to no top, breaks it. After all, why should he wave to anybody? Anybody can fold the windshield and hook those dual purpose sidewings to the dash. But how many, I meant count 'em on your fingers, how many hardy purists can you name who are splitting the breeze with their beezers unprotected by anything more substantial than a Brooklands wind screen? And not just on drives to Grandma's for Sunday dinner, but everyday, rain or shine, fog or smog, hell or high water. That makes the guy at the haut monde, the paragon of perfection. So perhaps the couple-three recognition signals I got should be stored away with my memories of roaring miles at the wheel of my first Mercer Raceabout.

In the meantime, I take it out on the drivers of lesser plugs. I answer the hesitant shy waves with a lordly flip of the fingers. The brash bids for recognition, I ignore completely. After all, those people must be kept in their places. Anyone can own a Jaguar these days. But a TC is only for the elect, the true aficionado, the aesthetic with grease in his ears. I must admit that the temptation to answer the hearty greetings of the few Austin-Healeys I've seen has been a strong one. But I conquered the feeling with the realization that it was just a form of braggadocio on their part now that Austin-Healeys are so rare. Wait 'til they become as common as the TD. Then watch their bubble burst!

By the way, does anybody know where I can get a pair of Brooklands wind screens?

ROAD and TRACK, Inc. 1971

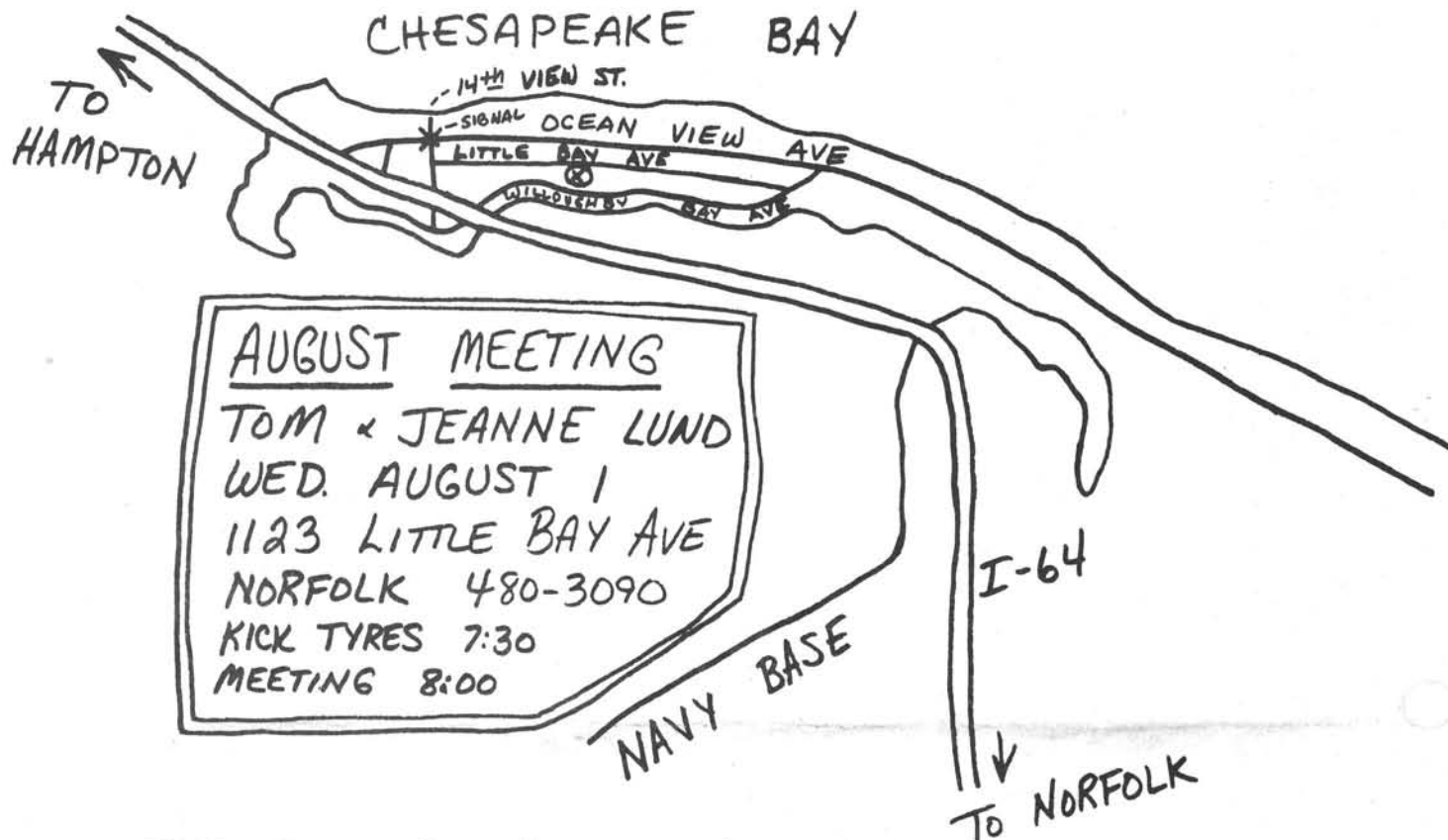
WILL THIS BE ON SEPT. 23?!



FROM KREK "THE MOUTH OF THE SOUTH"

AND FINALLY--Many thanks to Jim Krekovich, whose cartoons I frequently publish. Without his mad genius, I would often be faced with that one thing an editor fears the most, empty space. Thanks, Krek.

THE DEADLINE FOR THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER IS 26 AUGUST 1979!!



AUGUST MEETING
 TOM & JEANNE LUND
 WED. AUGUST 1
 1123 LITTLE BAY AVE
 NORFOLK 480-3090
 KICK TYRES 7:30
 MEETING 8:00

TAKE OCEAN VIEW AVE EXIT (LAST EXIT BEFORE BRIDGE-TUNNEL)

TIDEWATER M. G. "T" CLASSICS
638 ROYAL PALM DR.
VIRGINIA BEACH, VA. 23452



MISS & ANN HAINES
 633 PINE TREE DR
 VA BEACH VA 23452