

The Dipstick

The Tidewater MG Classics



February 1995

Volume XXXI Issue 1

Marque Time

Thanks to Peggy Bradford for hosting the first meeting of 1995. Although it was January, a month notorious for poor meeting turnouts and very CHILLY, we had a terrific turnout. There were a large number of members and prospective members who drove their MGs that night, but the forecast of 22 degrees kept all of the hoods up on the open cars. Yours truly drove a coupe, the TC sat this one out at home, but I was tempted. I was also very impressed with the number of cars that were driven to the meeting. It goes along with my continuing emphasis on driving our little British beauties.

Lets have as nice a turnout for the February meeting at Shelly Pellegrino's. For those of you who do not yet know Shelly, she is a new member who volunteered to host the February meeting at her place. That is the MG spirit! We still have some open dates on our meeting calendar and we need hosts/hostesses. See Peggy Bradford and sign-up for a turn. Think how nice your neighborhood will look with twenty or thirty Abingdon Classics lining your street.

We had our annual holiday party in December, this one hosted by Chuck and Judy Hudson. Approximately 40 members had a fantastic time and partied until nearly mid-night! Each holiday party seems to get better than the last and this was no exception. The food was terrific and the gifts from one MG-to-Another went over real well. The man in the RED SUIT visited us and was obviously in the spirit of the occasion because his suit looked very much like an MG racer's suit. Speaking of suits, Philip Ash took the best outfit award at the party. Philip in his tuxedo and his friend in a formal evening dress defiantly had the most outrageous holiday duds.

Hank Giffin, one of our founding members, also put in a surprise appearance. Hank, known elsewhere as Rear Admiral Henry C. Giffin III, is recently back from NATO duties in Italy and will be residing at the Naval Base. See what owning

MGs and a little hard work can do for you? Welcome back, Hank!

I want to once again mention the 1995 Norfolk Azalea Festival. The Featured NATO country this year is Great Britain and who could celebrate Great Britain without some great British cars. A parade through downtown Norfolk is planned for Friday evening, April 28, 1995. There is also going to be a static display of Classic British Cars at the Norfolk Botanical Gardens on Saturday, April 29. This is a terrific opportunity for the club to show off our little English beauties and get some great publicity right here

The Dipstick is the official newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics.

President	Bob McClaren
Vice-President	Frank Linse
Secretary	Doug Kennedy
Treasurer	Bob Miller
Dipstick Editor	Doug Squires

in Tidewater. If you haven't already volunteered to participate, or have questions about the Norfolk Azalea Festival 1995, call me for more information.

I hope to see each one of you at the February meeting and at the Chili Cook-off. The Central Virginia MG Classics (known as the Richmond Rascals) are planning to come to Tidewater and "Kick out Tail Lights" again. Can we stand to have our chili cook-off prizes go to Richmond another time? I think not! So start working on your best recipe now. See the attached map and flyers for times and locations.

Keep a log of the miles driven in your MG with a separate log for each car please. If you own a Triumph ... too bad!

Safety First!
Bob



The Tidewater MG Classics is a club dedicated to the preservation, appreciation and maintenance of the MG Automobile, and the fellowship of the club members.



Meeting Minutes (January Meeting)

CORRECTION: The Secretary must "clarify" an entry from last month's minutes. It was stated that the Ashes were observed "arguing" some matters connected to their trip to England. Apparently, this was a misconception. They were in fact having a "heated debate that characterizes their loving relationship". The Secretary appreciates this clarification and will try not to make the same mistake again.



Bob McLaren opened the meeting promptly at 8:00ish. He welcomed Elsie Tarr (welcome back and we hope you rejoin us in the future) and Ray Clout, the owner of several midgets, as well as Shawn Forsyth, the owner of a Red MGA. Shelly Pellegrino and Chuck Simonetti were also welcomed as new members. Peggy Bradford's neighbor who owns a midget was also lured over to join us.

Treasurer's Report: Old balance: \$1699.72 New balance: \$1572.88 Don't get too excited, we must still deduct the Christmas party from the new balance.

Activities: Shelly Pellegrino volunteered to host the February Meeting. The chili cookoff will be at Peggy Bradford's house February 11th and will feature a model car show/contest. Peggy mentioned that we need people to host meetings, tech sessions, and activities. CALL HER ASAP to volunteer.



Membership: Mark Childers was off gallivanting around Baltimore and could not report. However, all agreed he was doing a superb job and this lapse would be excused.

Newsletter: Doug mentioned that he wanted to include some history of the club in future newsletters. He especially is looking for more Tech articles or shop tips. Get any shop "secrets" to him. Lastly, Doug wants to feature a "car of the month". Get him a picture of your gem and a profile of what you've done to get it/keep it on the road. Submit some info and Doug promises to edit it so that it will be Pulitzer Prize quality.

Regalia: Can coolers are on the way. Shirts are being made, and badges are in. Call Greg Coogan ASAP to pick up your badge.

Spares: Robert showed a Colortune tool that allows for tuning a car based upon the color of the flame as the fuel is ignited. Call Mike Ash for instructions on how to make it work!

Car Shows: Vince Groover mentioned that a huge MG car show will be held in Indianapolis during June 1996. There are also national MG B and T shows scheduled for 1995.

Old Business: Everyone agreed that the Christmas Party was a huge success. Twenty-two different dishes and 20 pounds of ham were consumed. There was much speculation that Vince Groover accounted for 18 of the 20 pounds of ham consumed.

New Business: SIGN-UP FOR ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS, TECH SESSIONS. CALL PEGGY.

We have also been asked to participate in the Azalea festival parade and car show. The parade is scheduled for April 28th, and the show on the 29th at the Botanical Garden. Call Commander Broadbent, Royal Navy at SACLANT Headquarters 445-3416 for more information.

Bob McLaren wants people to log the miles they drive their MGs. He will award plaques to the people who drive theirs the most.



Membership Notes

From what I've heard about the food and fun, we're really sorry we missed the Christmas Party... Many thanks to Mary Scully for her fine Autoweekly article which was responsible for generating at least eight new membership applications, and inquiries by another half dozen MG drivers and admirers... The membership roster now stands at 141 paid memberships, 3 in arrears, two reciprocal club subscriptions, and 5 prospective members who have made inquiries within the past three weeks. With the large number of recent additions, limited space precludes much of an introduction... Hopefully they'll all be at the next meeting.

Shelly Pellegrino has a nice white '78 with a hot cam and a weber. She has graciously agreed to host the February meeting.. John Severin has a '73 roadster.. Lee & Suzanne Kimble have a '77 roaster... Bob and Beulah Mitchell purchased their '65 Sprite in November 1964 for \$2,002.54 and did the right thing: they upgraded into a Midget in '72... Ray and Joy Clouch have a pair of Midgets - a '71 and '72... Taylor Wells owns a pair of BGT's, and works with Richard Jolly at the Tidewater MG Center... His daughter, Winne, another new member, is a student at William and Mary. I think she has commandeered one of dad's rides, but may have her own. Dee Fitch, from way up in Belle Haven on the Eastern Shore, has a '71 BGT and an '80 roadster... Tom Hall has returned to the fold after a short leave of absence. His '53 TD is currently undergoing restoration... John Martin, a prospective member has a '54 TF... Collier Ries, Karen Murphy, Scott Alvey and Shaun Taylor are prospective members of unknown year, make or model... but, even if they don't own an MG, they're more than welcome (long as they'd rather push an MG to a meeting than drive a Triumph...)

For a nostalgic Trip down memory lane, send \$12.95 (including P&H) to:

World of Collector Cars
Box 8808
Chico, CA 95927

Ask for Video # 908 (and a catalog) Wonderful B&W and some color period footage of TD's and other sports cars in racing form; great commentary, and some very interesting trivia.

Mark Childers & Debbie Goodwin
5013 Carnation Av
Virginia Beach, VA 23462
473-1757 or Dig Pgr 626-9686

MGA Techno-Trivia

Since most of this was gleaned from Clarke Spares and Restorations super MGA catalog, some free advertising is in order: Todd Clarke manufactures more than 400 MGA repro-parts in addition to supplying hundreds of original specification hardware and sundry items. A New Original 1600 owners manual, yellow with brown print is \$17.50. He also offers bargains on used parts, including T/ZA/ZB and a few He@%\$y parts. Mail CSR * 90 Swamp Rd * Doylestown, PA 18901 Phone 215-348-0595

- An original steering wheel lock was offered during the later production years.
- Wire wheeled cars sold in Germany were fitted with hex style wheel nuts.
- A rubber 'crash pad' surrounded the rear view mirror of French market MGA's.
- All MGA's were delivered with jute-backed, all wool piled carpeting; grey for coupes and black for roadsters. (Sorry, no substitution on the carpet menu)
- A foam rubber sound-deadner fitted to the underside of the heater box was standard on twin cam cars and coupes, and was optional on roadsters.
- A headlamp flasher was optional. Installation required a 1/4" hole in the dash.
- An optional radiator blind was available to aid in extreme cold climate driving.
- Very early MGA upper and lower suspension swivel links were bronze, painted over in black. (This was a carry over from TF production).



"Don't let lack of a membership application keep you from signing up a new member. I'll accept applications on scraps of paper, or even written on a \$10.00 bill."



A car for sale - in an unusual way

Excerpts from a letter from the St. Mark's United Methodist Church

When I was visiting in the Tidewater area, I read about your club in the newspaper. Also, I spoke with [a club member] who suggested I send information for your newsletter. ...Last spring my church held a sacrificial Capital Fund Campaign and we were given a 1972 MG Midget. It is the responsibility of our Board of Trustees to sell it.....



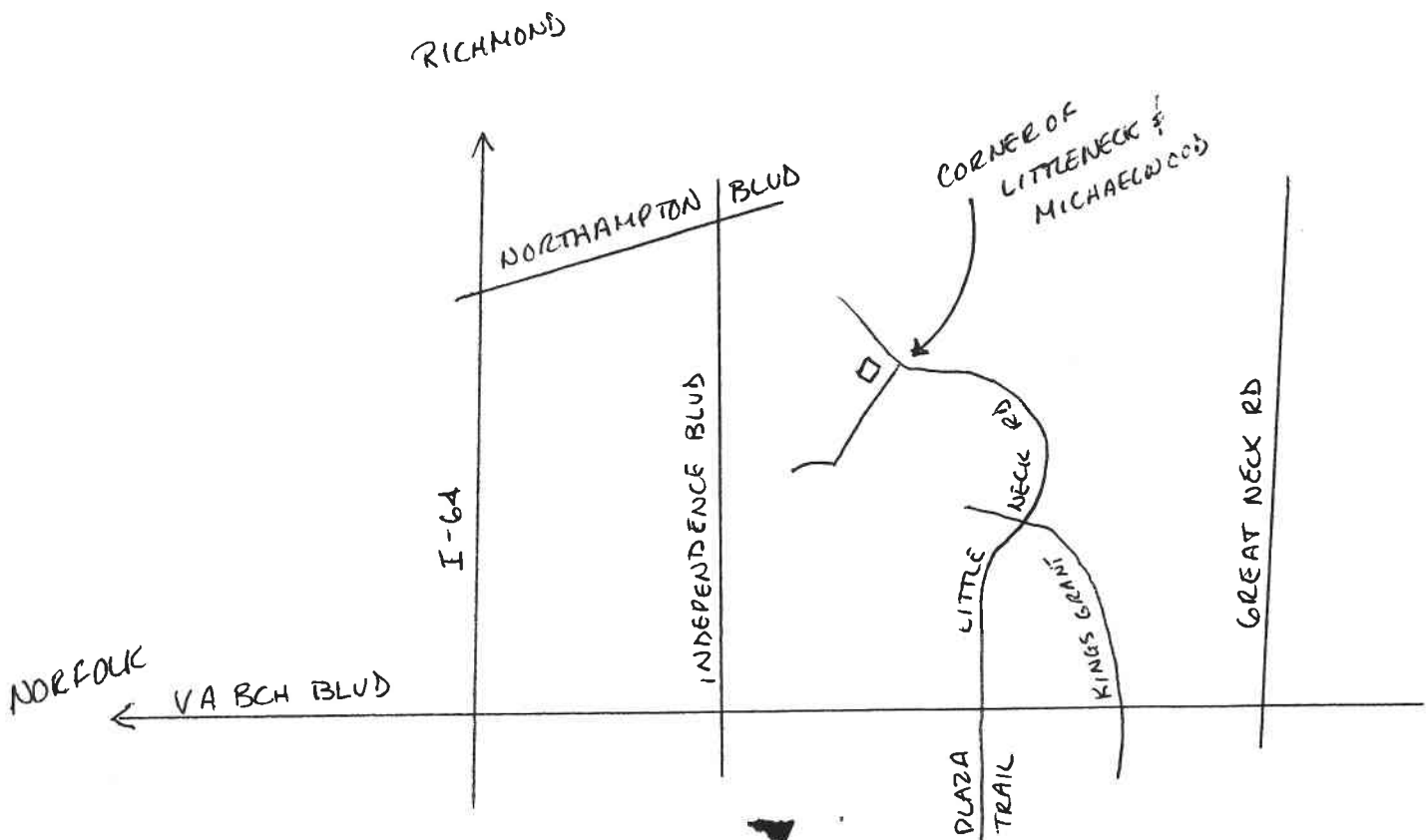
- 1972 MG Midget Convertible
- 4 Cylinder - 4 Speed
- Engine/Transmission in excellent Condition
- New battery - tune-up
- Excellent Running Condition
- Needs new paint and some body work

May be seen at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 11551 Lucks Lane, Midlothian, VA (Chesterfield County) Call Monday -Friday 9 am to 4 PM (804) 379-1655

The value placed on this car in our campaign was \$2500.00. We are willing to consider the best price offered. Any help you are able to give us in disposing of the MG will be greatly appreciated.

Next Meeting

Tues February 7, 1995 Kick Tyres: 7:30 PM. Buisness Meeting: 8:00 PM.
Hosted by: Shelly Pellagrino 1201 Little Neck Rd, Virginia Beach 463-2119

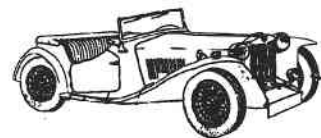


Activities

Activities Chairman:
Peggy Bradford 464-0543

Your Club needs you to sponsor an activity. This can be fun to share with another person or another couple. Club members are always willing to assist, but we need some person (s) to coordinate and plan the event. The following are only suggestions. If you have other ideas, please let us know. - Peggy

Mar	TBD	BOWLING/PIZZA PARTY	Sponsor: Shelly Pellegrino
Apr	Late	SCAVENGER HUNT/RALLY/GoLF TOURNMENT	Sponsor: The Kennedys & Groovers
May	Late	DRIVEOUT	Sponsor: _____
Jul	Late	PICNIC	Sponsor: Chris & Phil Eller
Sep	Late	PIG ROAST/CAR SHOW	Sponsor: _____
Oct	Late	DRIVEOUT	Sponsor: _____
Dec		CHRISTMAS PARTY	Sponsor: _____



If you are interested in Sponsoring or Co-Sponsoring a Club activity, contact Besty Kennedy or Peggy Bradford.

DO YA KNOW.....

What year the 250,000th MGB was produced?

What year the one millionth MGB was produced?

Meetings & Tech Sessions - If there's a blank next to it, we need a sponsor. Can you help?

Meetings

Wed Mar	1	_____
Tue Apr	4	Cynthia & Andy
Wed May	3	John & Janet Wessel
Tue Jun	6	Mike Murphy
Wed Jul	5	_____
Tue Aug	1	Bill & Libby Keeler
Wed Sep	6	Doug & Betsy Kennedy
Tue Oct	3	_____
Wed Nov	1	_____

Tech Sessions

Tech Sessions are held on Sunday from 10:00 until..... Host chooses a date.

26 Feb	Frank Linse
?? May	Bob McClaren
?? Jul/Aug	_____
?? Nov	12 ?

1971 and 1976 respectively

NOTE: New rosters will be available at the next meeting. See Mark Childers for your copy.

English 101

How's Your English?

The following was stolen from the October Edition of "MG Classics of Jacksonville".

American Name	British Name
---------------	--------------

Hood	Bonnet
Trunk	Boot
Shock	Damper
Generator	Dynamo
Dash	Fascia
Transmission	Gearbox
Soft Top	Hood
Gasoline	Petrol
Sedan	Saloon
Muffler	Silencer
Wrench	Spanner
Oil Pan	Sump
Windshield	Windscreen
Fender	Wing



On the Merge of Greatness (or) A Tale of a Whale of a Sale....

By Mark Childers.

(All dates and merger information extracted from the British Motor Heritage Museum archives)

The earliest **MG** descendants, **Starley and Hutton**, opened shop in 1877. They later merged with **Rover** in 1904. When **Rover** spawned **Land Rover** in 1948, **Daktari** was just a kid with dreams of roping a rhino on the veldt... Returning to the past:

Wolseley and **Leyland** were both founded in 1896; **Riley** opened for business in 1898. **Morris** began operations in 1910, branched into **Morris Garages** during 1922 and 1923. The **MG Car Company** was registered in 1928. The **Nuffield Group** was formed by **Riley, Morris, MG, and Wolseley**, in 1938. *Backing up a bit, again:*

Austin, in business since 1905, merged in 1946 with **VandenPlas**, founded in 1913. Together, they provided both assembly line and custom coachworks, including the elegant Princess limo. In 1952, **Donald Healey** struck a deal with **Austin** to build a line of sports cars. In the same year, **The Nuffield Group, Austin-VandenPlas**, plus the newly formed **Austin-Healey** branch company, emerged as **BRITISH MOTOR CORP (BMC)**.... *Once again, returning to the past:*

Way back in 1896, **Daimler** and **Lanchester** opened their respective factories. They merged in 1931 as **Daimler**, and **Lanchester** eventually folded in 1955. **Jaguar** was formed in 1931. In 1960, **Jaguar** merged with **Daimler**. In 1966, **BMC** merged with **Jag-Daimler** forming **British Motor Heritage (BMH)**.

Standard, builder of the **Swallow**, formed in 1903, and **Triumph** opened for business in 1923. In 1944, **Triumph** and **Standard** merged. In 1961, **Leyland Co.** merged with **Triumph-Standard**; in 1963, **Standard** closed its doors forever.

In 1967, **Rover/Land Rover**, and **Triumph** merged with **Leyland Co.**, and in 1968, the parent **LEYLAND CORPORATION** merged with **BRITISH MOTOR HERITAGE**, owner of **Morris, Wolseley, Riley, Austin-Healey-VandenPlas, Jaguar-Daimler** and **MG**. From these roots (not to be confused with Rootes...) **British Leyland Corporation (BLC)** was born.

BLC didn't need glue to affix its tacky "We'll Save the Kingdom at Any Cost" corporate logo (a dead ringer for the Yugo Heavy Equipment Company's *Progress Going in Circles* grille badge, I might add..) to the sides of eviscerated **MGB**'s. While some badges simply fell off in transit; rumor has it they were often pried off by financially-embarrassed test drivers who used them as phone tokens.

Riley died in its sleep in 1969, and **Austin-Healey** halted production in 1971. **Wolseley** went out of business in 1975. **VandenPlas** locked its doors as a premiere coachmaker in 1980. **Triumph** shut down in 1984. **Jaguar** sold out in 1984, and is now under **Ford** management, and without a program, the hired help can't figure out who is playing whom... The **Leyland Company** was divested from **BLC** and **Austin** ceased production in 1987. **Heritage** is building classic body shells and spares for classic British sports cars, and **Elvis** can be reached on the **Psychic Mechanics**' Hotline.

What's left of the 21 manufacturers and mergers over the past hundred and twenty years since **Starley and Hutton**? **ROVER GROUP**, comprised of **Rover, Land Rover**, and, God Save The Queen, **MG**, which held onto its US line until 1980, when smog and safety laws killed the **MGB**. **Road & Track** recently reported that the **MR.-2** inspired **MGD** may make it to our shores if federal standards and tariff issues can be satisfied.

Next month: From A to Z... and all the letters in between, a brief history of **MG** models, from the 1924 **MG Super Sports** and the 1925 "Old Number One" racer, to the last **MGB**....

Ignition Coil Polarity

Borrowed from "The Sports Car Chronicle"

In order for your car to have maximum engine performance, a good spark is required at the plugs. Many a poor running engine has been attributed to poor spark. There are many causes for this, such as bad plugs, maladjusted or burned points, shorted condenser, etc. We won't cover the usual faults, however, an often overlooked problem is incorrect ignition coil primary circuit polarity.

Lucas ignition coils, and for that matter any "conventional" coil have three terminals on top. One screw or spade type terminal is the primary circuit feed connection. This generally will be connected to a source of battery voltage, namely the ignition switch. Next is the central tower terminal. This is the high voltage secondary coil output terminal. This terminal has a "Push-in" or "Screw-in" connector for the coil wire connection to the distributor cap. The third connector is a low voltage primary screw or spade lug. This connects the other end of the coil primary circuit to the points inside the distributor.

Both ignition coil primary terminal connectors are marked, and it is very important to connect them correctly. To put it another way, the coil primary circuit polarity must be correct! Having reverse polarity will result in a lower voltage to the spark plugs. In fact, with incorrect polarity the resultant spark plug voltage will be 30% lower than it should be. This results in misfiring and poor performance. Check your coil. If you look at the two primary circuit connections at the top of the coil, they will be marked in either of two ways. On some coils they are marked "+" and "-", others are marked "SW" and "CB". On a positive ground MG, the "+" should be connected to the distributor, and the "-" to the ignition. On a negative ground car (MG's with alternators) the reverse is true. The "+" connection should have a short single wire that runs to the side of the distributor. For the coils that are marked "SW" and "CB", "SW" is short for ignition switch, and "CB" is short for contact breaker (points). If the coil was made for a positive ground car, then connect as marked. If not, reverse the polarity. You may find your car runs better.

Rosters for the 1995 season
will be available at the next meeting.

Rosters will only be mailed upon request.

Send your request to: Mark Childers

(Specify the MG Marque or you may get another British Marque)

Upcoming Events

- Tues 7 Feb Monthly Meeting at
Shelly Pellegrino's
- Sun 26 Feb Tech Session at
Linse's
- Weds 1 Mar Monthly Meeting
WE ARE IN DIRE NEED OF
A HOST - CALL PEGGY IF
YOU CAN HELP!!!!
- Mar ??? Another Great Bowling Party -
Watch next Dipstick for details

Activities Chairperson:

Peggy Bradford 464-0543

Computer Users

If you are a windows user, you might be interested in a Screen Saver I recently found. It is all MG's. Rotates among pictures of TC's, TD's, TF's, A's, B's, C's, GT's and Midgets. Also has a MG Trivia section. Send \$24.45 to:

Lifestyle Screens
PO Box 6339
Charlottesville, VA 22906



Safety first!

Have you gotten a great deal from a local shop that has worked on your MG? I want to hear about it. Drop me a line.





**Deadline for the
next edition of
The Dipstick
is
15 February 1995**



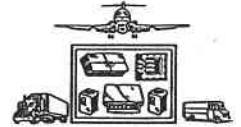
The Tidewater MG Classics
wish to express their appreciation
to

Cathie & Chuck Nowak

- ☒ UPS
- ☒ US POSTAL SERVICE
- ➔ FAX SERVICE
- ☒ MAILBOX RENTALS 
- ☒ RESUMES
- ☒ GIFT WRAPPING
- ➔ AIRLINE TICKETS

owners and operators
of
C & C Transport Station
Towne Point Square
Portsmouth

686-8800



**POSTAGE STAMPS
MONEY ORDERS
NOTARY PUBLIC
PHOTOCOPIES
AIRBORNE EXPRESS
APO/FPO SHIPPING
PACKAGING
SUPPLIES
KEYS** 

For their work in printing and distribution of the
Dipstick in 1994

ARE YOU TOO HOT?

Borrowed from the "MGB Driver" Jan/Feb 1995 Edition

One of the aggravating problems that haunt the owner of an MG is overheating. Some common causes of overheating are as follows:

1. Clogged radiator or water jackets in the block and head. Possible solution: Try using a heavy duty chemical cleaner. Flush your water system regularly and use a good quality anti-freeze with inhibitor.
2. Unsuitable or faulty thermostat. Solution: Repair or replace thermostat. The normal temperature is 80-96 degrees C or 176-194 degrees F.
3. Restricted air flow through the front grille. Solution: Remove all those car club badges.
4. Loose fan belt. Solution: Tighten or replace the belt if worn.
5. Retarded Spark. Solution: Check the timing with a strobe light, or by attaching a light to the lead from the distributor to determine when the points are breaking. Adjust the timing accordingly. Running retarded spark almost always leads to overheating.
6. Faulty distributor. Check the distributor and repair or replace.
7. Lean mixture. Solution: Adjust the carburetors to correct settings.
8. Worn rings or cylinder allowing blow-by of combustion gases heating the cylinder walls. Check also leaking valve guides, head gasket and exhaust gasket.

Essentially anything that restricts air or water flow, or causes friction will increase temperatures. There are also internal engine causes, such as improper camshaft or torque when reassembling the engine following rebuild. For the most part however, the overheating problems can be traced to one of the common maladies outlined above.

Supplied by the Vintage MG Car Club, CA



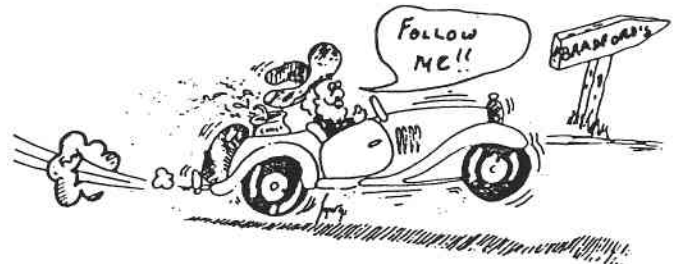
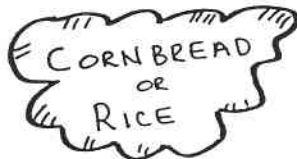
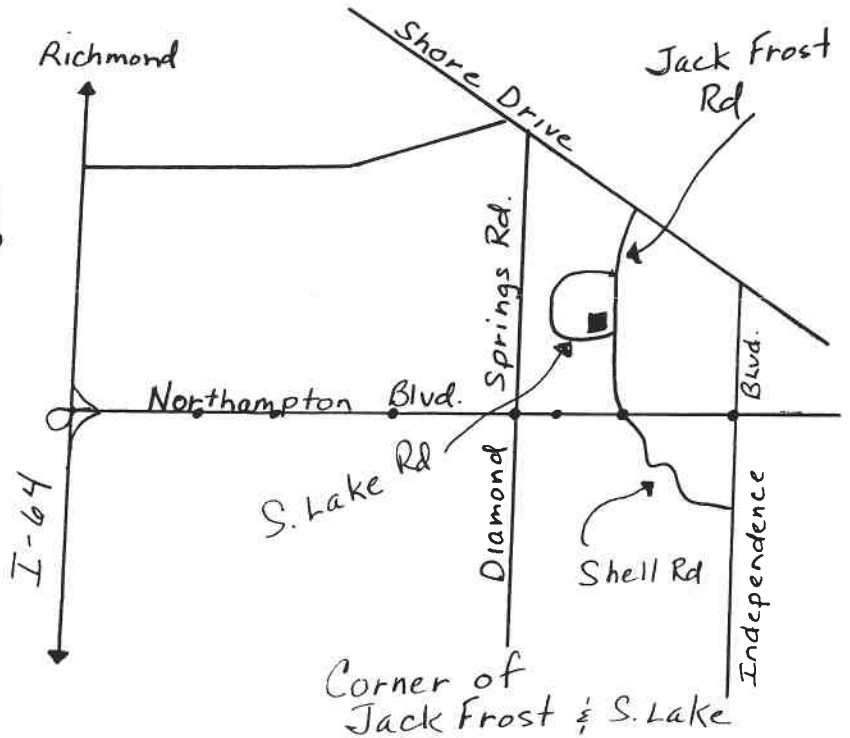
TIDEWATER MG CLASSICS FOURTH ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF & MINI BRITISH CAR CONTEST



OK Richmond, we'll give you one more chance NOT to win...

Where: 5104 S. Lake Rd, Va Beach
When: Sat, Feb 11th - 7:00pm
RSVP: Peggy at 464-0543 by Thu, Feb 9th

Let us know what you will bring--
combread, rice, salad, munchies, etc....?



MINI BRITISH CAR CONTEST:

Dig into your model collections or run out and buy a new one to assemble and bring it to the Mini British Car contest. Included will be constructed from scratch models, kit models, ready-built models, etc.... *Enter any British car. Popular Vote!*

A Final Thought

As I begin my second year as Editor of *The Dipstick* I must say it is a unique experience. It isn't all fun - there are deadlines, and decisions. Is this real important? Can that wait until next newsletter? Where am I gonna get something to fill in the blank spaces? (*Lots of these thoughts!*)

In an ideal world, I would be nothing more than the guy that puts all the stuff together to get the newsletter printed. In reality, it takes a lot more than that. It takes a lot of time and energy, many phone calls each month, and at times, work into the wee hours of darkness to make it to the printers so everyone will at least have a map of where the next meeting is.

The Dipstick is your newsletter. It can be as much, or as little as you want it to be. Each member should feel an obligation to contribute something, at some time, to the newsletter.

You don't need to be an English Major to send me something, Heaven knows that I'm not! Perhaps a description on how you found an easier way to do maintenance, or a strange problem you found with your car that might just save someone

else hours of troubleshooting.

I would like to see this newsletter be more than just a medium for passing the minutes and directions to the next meeting. I'd like to see it full of short, little stories that will benefit the old members as well as the new members. Something for everyone.

One of my goals for 1995 is to have a technical article in each edition of the Dipstick. I'd especially like to start a "History" column in here. Many of you older members have so much to teach us - so much to share with us. Do you remember an amusing story or little known fact? Jot it down and send it to me. I'll make sure it gets printed. So sit down tonight, and look through your "MG Stuff". Send me a paragraph, a page or a chapter that you think everyone or someone may want to see.

I will put them into a big (*I hope*) pile that I can draw from each month to add some interest to **your newsletter**.

Is your newsletter worth 5 minutes of your time? I hope so.

DGS



The Dipstick

The Tidewater MG Classics



Doug Squires
4909 Orleans Dr
Portsmouth, VA 23703



FIRST CLASS MAIL