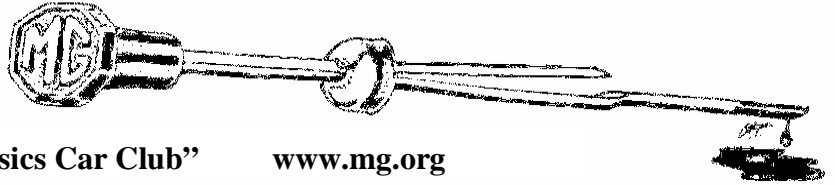


The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

www.mg.org

Volume XXXI, Issue 7

Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

July 2002

MARQUE TIME

What a great turnout we had for the June meeting! I haven't seen such a large turnout for a meeting in quite awhile. I'm sure the perfect for top-down driving weather helped. Thanks to Charlie and Ellen Smith for hosting the meeting. It gave all who attended a chance to see their “pull handle” Bs, the earliest of the MGBs and a not too common sight. A quick perusal of the club roster shows the next oldest MGB to be a '65 model, so Charlie and Ellen have the distinction of owning the oldest MGB in our club!

Congratulations to the Tidewater Triumph Register for holding another successful and enjoyable “Brits on the Bay” British car show on the 1st of June. The beautiful weather and great location saw a large number of Triumphs and MGBs, with many of our own members showing their cars. Thanks to Sue Bond for providing her canopy, which was set up near our MGBs and provided much needed shade for our members to relax in. One of the most interesting cars in the show was a 1980 MGB LE, the last MGB exported to the US. This car was originally given to the Henry Ford Museum, then migrated to a small museum in PA, then went through a couple of private owners before ending up in Virginia Beach with its present owner. This car is pristine, with only 1275 miles on it. They don't come any more original than that!

Seeing the last MGB in the US and one of the earliest models, the '63 pull-handle project car of Charlie and Ellen's, in the span of just a few days caused me to pause and reflect on just how long these cars were in production, with very little changes done over the years. Other than the change from wire to steel wheels, the change from chrome to rubber bumpers, several dashboard layout changes, and minor engine and suspension tweaks, the final model was a close approximation of the original (performance and ride height notwithstanding). How many other models of cars can claim this same feat? The Volkswagen Beetle comes to mind, and like the MGB, its last model closely resembled its early years. The Corvette and Porsche 911 have been around for a longer time, but the latest iterations of these cars bear very little resemblance to their beginnings. If British Leyland had the resources, i.e., capital and vision, maybe the MGB would have evolved over the years like these last two cars, and maybe it would still be around. Who knows? The MG RV8 in the mid-90s demonstrated what the MGB might have evolved into. This limited production run of 2000 cars during

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Check www.mg.org for the latest info!

- July 2-5 NEMGT GOF Mk 73, Wolfville, Nova Scotia
- July 3-6 NAMGBR, Grapevine, TX
www.mg2002.com/
- July 7 SCCA Autocross, Pungo Airfield
www.odr-scca.org/
- July 10 Wednesday Meeting at Ragazzi's** in Kempsville (This is a week later than usual), see map on back cover
- July 13 Car show at VA Hospital in Hampton, 10:00-2:00. For details call Carol Finlay, 484-8554
We will meet at Cosmos at 9:30
- July 17-21 NAMGAR GT 27
www.namgar.com or
www.britishcarclub.com
- July 24 Ice Cream Social Run**
7:00 at Redwing Park (see page 3)
- July 27 Brits by the Bay, Anne Arundel, MD <http://www.tracltd.org/>
- Aug. 4 SCCA Autocross, Pungo Airfield
www.odr-scca.org/
- Aug. 6 Meeting at Paul & Carmen Thiergardt's**

(continued on page 3)

JUNE MINUTES

1993-1995 by Rover featured a somewhat updated body shell, a 3.9liter V8 engine, and a more luxurious interior. Unfortunately, all were RHD and most ended up going to Japan.

After the demise of the MGB, at least Rover kept the name brand alive during the 80s, even if it meant nothing more than a badge on the little Metro "econo-box". A brief but successful stint with the MG 6R4 WRC car helped keep the name recognition alive until the MG RV8 debuted, followed closely by the MGF. And the rest, as they say, is history. Or in the case of the MG, hopefully it won't be relegated to the history books quite yet. The reinvigorated MG Rover company has recently come out with the next generation of the MGF, and is also doing quite well with its lineup of Rover derived other new cars, from hot hatchbacks to sports sedans. They're even slated to turn a profit this year, as mentioned in an article in the May issue of *Road & Track* magazine. Increased profitability will help ensure that the MG brand may once again be offered for sale in the US. Who knows, if their coffers grow and they return to our shores, maybe they'll do another limited production run of the MG RV8, my "dream" MGB, only this time with LHD and for sale in the US. I can only hope. Until then, I'll continue to drive and enjoy my MGB, even if it is only a rubber bumper B with Karl Malden's nose!

Lastly, thanks to Alan and Beckey Watson for organizing the June Ice Cream Social and Drive-Out. Alan did a great job with the route through Pungo. It surely will become one of my favorite Sunday afternoon drives "out in the country" in the 'B. The only downfall was that, without a navigator, I couldn't answer his rally questions, as I was too busy deciphering road names and watching for road signs. I guess I really do need to find another "navigator". Paraphrasing an old joke told to me recently by one of our esteemed members (unnamed to protect the guilty), maybe I should submit one of those personal ads that reads something like "SWM seeks SWF with MG. Please send picture of MG".

Safety Fast! Mike

Officers and Committees

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

Mike opened the meeting at 8:10 PM with the rapping of the gavel. Mike thanked Charlie and Ellen Smith for hosting the June meeting in their home. Many MG's were in attendance as were their drivers. Guests, Scott Kalis with a red rubber bumper MG with Hawaiian print seat covers and Alf Aubrey with two 1980 MGB's (some assembly required) were welcomed.

Membership: Robin Watson reported there were two new members: Debra Eisenbath and Harry Watson. The club now has 104 members and 148 MGs. He emphasized how important it was to update your membership renewal form when paying your dues, due on July 1st. It is important to list what registers, clubs and organizations you belong to, for affiliation purposes. Membership tent at "Brits on the Bay" went well.

Treasurer's Report: Jim Villers reported: Balanced brought forward: \$2,283.39. Receipts: Dues and other: \$99.00. Disbursements: Total: \$255.44, Robin Watson (postage) #1531, \$40.47, Sue Bond (Newsletter) #1532, \$51.73, R. Watson (Mail & Print) #1533 \$163.24. Balanced carried forward: \$2,126.95.

Minutes: Approved.

Newsletter: Susan Bond reported: The June Dipstick was the first issue that she and Peggy produced after taking over from Ed Kehrig. Contributions are needed to make the Dipstick successful.

Regalia: Frank Linse reported: Investigating purchase of more regalia, grill badges, MG glassware, clothes, and cup/can "huggies". Questions were asked about badge lanyards and the elusive software copy of the club emblem. Frank Worrell is to investigate purchase of large fabric banner for TMGC membership tent at car shows (probably should be under new business and would be old business next meeting).

Activities: Dan Kirby and others reported: June 16th - British Car Days (formerly known as Bowie), June 22nd - Dragon Lairs Rally, TDR Rally, June 19th - Ice Cream Social run, meet at Kellam High School at 7:00 PM, July 10th - July meeting at Ragazzi's, 7:00 PM

Archives: Susan Bond reported: Looking for memorabilia and for old or new photo's MG /club related for yearbooks.

Clubs: Mike Ash reported: NAMGBR convention July 3-6, Grapeville Texas, July 22nd New England MG T Register GOF, July 2-5, NAMGAR GT 27, July 17-21.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None. (Club banner, see regalia)
(continued on page 3)

Minutes (continued)

Marque Time: Mark Childers has a 1980 LE MGB for sale \$1600, good condition, needs paint and seat covers. Mike Haag talked about some cold air induction mods he saw on MGBs owned by Ed Meadors and Frank Hurley at "Brits by the Bay" car show.

Raffle: Winners were: Mike Haag, Paul Thiergardt and Mike Marcialis.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:12 PM to feast on many delights. Of particular note were the tasty cream filled pastries and cinnamon twists.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

(Continued)

Aug. 10 Tech Session at Susan & Terry Bond's

Aug. 9-11 Roadster Factory Summer Party
www.The-Roadster-Factory.com

Aug. 14 Ice Cream Social Run

Aug. 17 Khedive Auto and Craft Show, Chesapeake

Aug. 17 Sufferin' Suffolk Dash, TSD Tour
Old Dominion SCCA
www.odr-scca.org/

Mark your calendar now for the

July Ice Cream Social/Drive-Out...



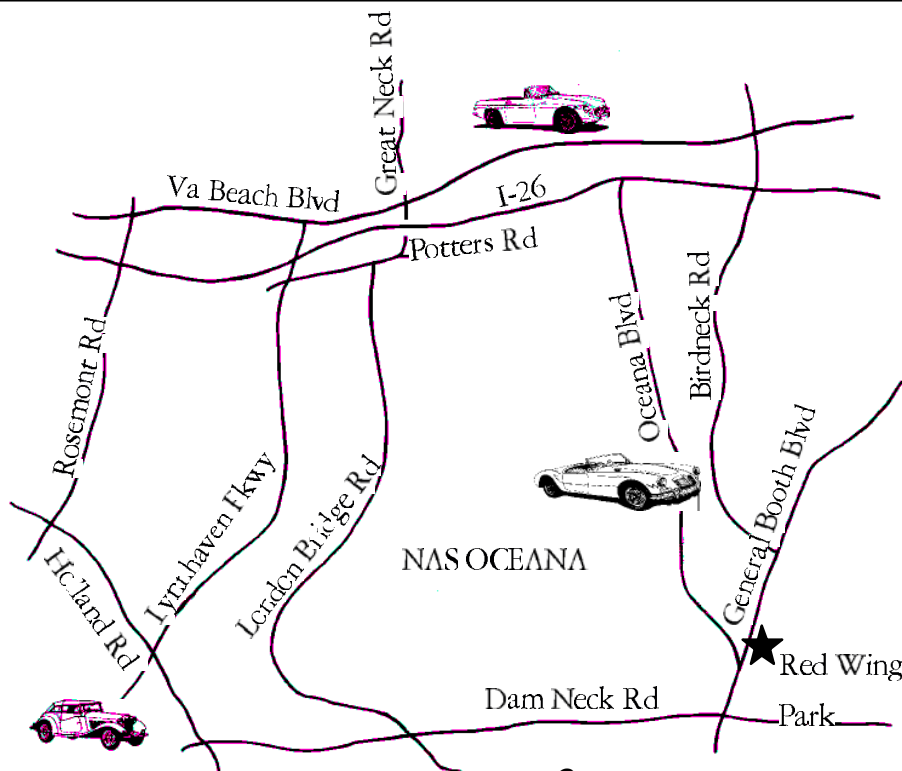
WHEN: Wed, Jul 24th at 7:00pm

WHERE: Meet at Redwing Park on General Booth Blvd

WHO: Dan Kirby is in charge of the evening - 430-9591

As in the past, Dan promises his "Fab-U-Lus" prizes so join us and take one home.

We'll have a short drive-out ending with an ice cream social at the new Sonic drive-in in front of the new WalMart. It's east of General Booth Blvd on the Farrel Parkway extension.



Early arrivals at
Kellulm High
School



June Ice Cream Rallye

Becky Watson

Clear skies...check...a dozen MG enthusiasts...check...tops down...check...cue the deer....aaanndd action! Thus the stage was set for this summer's first Ice-Cream Road Rallye, directed by Alan Watson, on Wednesday, June 19th.



Drivers meeting—reading the rules, including “The rallyemaster is always right”!

The twenty-two mile long Rallye took the drivers through the heart of Pungo, with plenty of twisty back roads, acres of green crops, tractors and barns. The scenic route ran through a little-traveled rural section of Virginia Beach, ending at the Dairy Queen on Holland Road. Rob & Olive Watson's MGB got a belly ache, causing a temporary delay while they went home for a replacement vehicle. Paul Thiergardt was misled by the Watson's departure from the course, and after attempting to correct his mistake, headed for Sandbridge for a different point of view.

Nicole and Mark Guay were the first ones to the ice-cream haven, but it was Sue and Terry Bond who took first prize by answering the most questions correctly. They were awarded the one-of-a-kind Ice-Cream Road Rallye First Place trophy,

which will remain in their possession until the next winner is named. Paul made his way to Dairy Queen, as did Rob and Olive. There was a tie for last place between Peggy and George Craig and the senior Watson's. The Craig's were awarded a one-of-a-kind Ice-cream Road Rallye tow truck trophy. Rob was awarded a jar of Goop hand cleaner, which



Rallyemaster Alan has our attention.

might just come in handy when he replaces the throttle cable on his B.

Check out the web site for some photos of those who participated. It was a perfect night for good friends, fair roads, and sweet treats. Hope you'll join us on the next Ice-Cream Road Rallye in July, as the Bond's defend their title, and the Craig's hope to surrender theirs!





Vince Groover, Mike Haag, Terry & Susan Bond, Ed Meadors, Bob Miller, Barry Tyson and Frank Linse at Boulders

For more pictures of both events, see the web site, www.mg.org

Brits on the Bay

Frank Linse

June 1st, a day greatly anticipated, had finally arrived. The owners of British cars from all over were heading to Virginia Beach. The second annual Brits on the Bay car show was being held on this warm late spring day. The Tidewater Triumph register had done a superb job of coordinating everything including the weather. The grounds of Bayside Baptist Church were hosting a multitude of finely restored automobiles from Rolls Royce to MG midgets.

Tidewater MG Classics had a very good showing at this event. A large number of club members were present: Bob McClaren in a very vintage MGTC, Vince Groover in his nicely restored MGTD, and Paul Thiergardt in his 55 MGTF. Among the chrome bumper MGs were noted the following fine automobiles: Charlie and Ellen Smith 64MGB, Robin Watson 74MGB, and Bob Stein with a ready for restoration but running 73MGB. The rubber bumper MGs were well represented by Mike Haag 79MGB, Frank Hurley 76MGB, Bob Miller 79MGB. The GT class had several excellent restorations including: Ed Meadors 67BGT in Aran beige, Ed Adams in his nicely done 74 1/2 BGT, and Sue Bond with her old faithful 72. Frank Linse arrived in his tired old Jaguar, and was seen keeping company with the beautiful Debbie in the shady Jag row.

Several of our members were show winners including: Bob Pellerin 52MGTD First place, Greg Coogan MG Midget First place, and Ed Meadors 67 GT Second place. There were a large number of beautifully restored Triumphs of various vintage. There were also several interesting Rolls Royces and Bentleys.

British Classic Car Meet Boulders, Richmond, VA

Bob Miller

A few showed-up and the awards were many. Mike, Barry, and Susan and Terry were late as they met at Cosmos and had to wait for the power – someone ran into a light pole. Those that attended included Frank Linse and Vince Groover selling parts, Barry Tyson, Sue Bond, Ed Meadors, Mike Haag, Bob Miller and Gregg Coogan. Second in Class Participants Choice were awarded to Barry Tyson, Sue Bond, and Ed Meadors. Third in Class was awarded to Bob Miller. As to success, Barry quoted Woody Allen, “80% of success is showing up”!



Early B's at Brits on the Bay

The show provided us all with a most enjoyable day, good cars, and great friends. By about 3:00 pm most of us were heading home to cool down. This is a wonderful local show and we hope to see more cars next year.

Ellen & Charlie Smith, Linda Pellerin, Kerry Hurley, Paul Thiergardt, Frank Hurley, Bob Howell, Ed Meadors, Mike Haag, Robin Watson at Brits on the Bay



Notes from the Editors.....

George and I just returned from a whirlwind tour of Europe ending on a 6-day barge trip cruising Holland canals. The barge experience far surpassed any cruise ship. With only 21 passengers and our own chef aboard, we lived, ate, and drank French wine in luxury. We met up with Beth and Derek Straw and their son, Dominique, one night in Brussels. We spent a great evening talking MGs, quilts, and their futile attempts at returning to the States. Beth is on temporary assignment for two years in Brussels while Derek, although retired from the RAF, is doing much what he did before but as a civilian and flying quite a bit. Derek came over from their home in Cotswold to move Beth into an apartment that weekend. Their MGF had a little mishap in a "car park" and some minor mechanical problems but still their favorite little car. They both have fond memories of their stay here and send greetings to all their friends in the club.

We shopped for car models everywhere. The quality is so much better than in the States. I found 3 MGs, a Ferrari for Scott, and a Smart for my grandson and lots of others. The Smart is a unique car that's all the rage in Europe. It's an extremely small two-seater and comes in two-tone colors. Body panels are switched out to change color combinations. It's made by Mercedes-Benz and is ordered powered by gas, electric, or propane. I bought the model in a fascinating Mercedes-Benz store in Milano—an adult toy store if I ever saw one. If you had lots of bucks you could buy anything from a designer key fob to a car, all inside a store in the ancient glass covered city mall.

Our latest ice cream social which Alan and Becky superbly organized was a great evening drive ending at DQ and I finally got to participate in an MG. I forgot how it feels to drive one—surrounded by huge vehicles trying to run me down—like standing on a street corner in New York City and looking up. It was a fun evening and hope more of you attend the one in August.

We had a great first issue last month and due mostly to all the articles submitted by members—and EARLY, too! Hope the trend continues. A big thanks to all for the contributions and support.

Peggy

Check this out!

Susan Bond

The May 2002 issue of *Smithsonian* magazine has an article about the Mille Miglia in Italy. This was a full fledged road race starting in the '30's, but was discontinued in 1957 after a tragic crash. It has been revived as a vintage car tour over the same 1000 mile route, but at a sane speed instead of at 200mph. Check it out at:

http://www.smithsonianmag.si.edu/smithsonian/issues02/may02/mille_miglia.html

There was an article in the September 2001 *Enjoying MG* about an MGA that had been in the 1956 Mille Miglia and went back last year to participate again. I can't find it online, but can let you read mine.

The 70th Running of the 24 Hours of Le Mans

MGs, Flames and Smoke

By Barry Tyson

The history and tradition over the years makes the running of the 24 hours Le Mans to sports car and road racing, what St. Andrews is to golf. The racing over actual public roads through the French countryside day and night evokes images of silk scarves and string back driving gloves and swashbuckling drivers. Even the names of the parts of the race course, the Mulsanne straights, Esses, Terre Rouge and Arnage, are almost poetic and sort of roll off the tongue in the way only the French language, the language of love and art can express. This is auto racing in the Continental style. A loaf of bread some cheese and a nice Bordeaux and the scene is set to watch an automobile race of "by invitation only participants". It is a spectacle that combines a French country fair with girls from the Moulin Rouge doing the Cancan out on the racetrack.

MG have been part of this spectacle off and on since the early thirties. This year MG was back, with high expectations, at the classic event after returning to Le Mans in 2001. Entered this year were two factory sponsored MG



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Lolas, No.'s 26 and 27. They were in their distinctive black and bright green color scheme with the Green MG inside Octagon emblems on the body. New this year was the distinctive bright yellow and orange flames on the side of the body, courtesy of one of their new sponsors, Mattel's Hot Wheels. You can probably expect to see a Hot Wheels model of the MG Lola.

The third MG Lola entered was from a privateer team, KnightHawk racing, No. 30, from the USA. It was black with a much more extensive flame design on its body. The MG Lola was in the LMP675 class, which is just below the LMP900. The LMP900 class is the highest powered and technically sophisticated of the two prototype classes. There are other classes with production cars in various states of modification and other limitations.

The race began with the cars lined up on the grid in accordance with their qualifying times. No longer is the famous Le Mans start used where the cars are parked on one side of the track and the drivers dash across the track, leap in their cars, start them and take off. Safety has priority over

tradition. The two factory MGs qualified sixth and twelfth overall on the grid, first and second in the LMP675 class. The NightHawk was further down the grid.

The early part of the race pretty much settled into the Factory No. 26 MG toggling back and forth between third and fourth over all and first in its class. The Factory No. 27 MG was running 13th over all and second in its class after some minor fuel supply problems requiring a stop in the pits for repair. The NightHawk was running 30th overall most of the time and well down in the class because of several repairs and adjustments in the pits and an incident in which it spun out in the Forest Esses. That was until about 11:45 PM, in the Mulsanne straights, when KnightHawk's No. 30 MG Lola caught fire while driving around in 30th place. The irony is that this sleek black LMP-675 was decorated with flames. Fortunately, Mel Hawkins, the driver, was able to get out of the cockpit. The KnightHawk No. 30 MG was retired.

The next disappointment came after midnight on lap 129 when the car #26 (driven by Anthony Reid, Warren Hughes and Jonny Kane) retired with transmission failure, when running strongly in 4th overall. MG car No. 27 (driven by Mark Blundell, Julian Bailey and Kevin McGarrrity) continued on relentlessly through the night gaining positions and by early morning having completed two thirds of the race period suffered an engine problem on lap 219 - with no warning. "At 7.37am local time a sudden plume of smoke from the rear of the car as Kevin took it through the second chicane on the Mulsanne signaled that the car had a



problem, and the car slowed and pulled off on the right hand side of the track." Despite all the efforts of the driver and the team the dream was over. The car was 11th overall at the

time, and leading the LMP675 category.

Commenting on MG's return Rob Oldaker, managing director, MG Sport & Racing, said: "Our ultimate aim when coming to Le Mans this year was to complete the race. We clearly made improvements over last year and have shown that the MG Lola EX257 is capable of performing with the fastest cars in the race. "We are bitterly disappointed that we've not made enough progress in durability and reliability sufficient to complete 24 hours of hard racing. The drivers have done tremendously well to keep the cars in such good shape during the race and to keep the pressure on. A true team spirit with MG, CMS, Lola and AER pulling together was incredible and with the enthusiasm from fans and our sponsors was phenomenal."

Mark Blundell, MG motorsport ambassador and driver team leader said: "It's a huge disappointment. We lost car 26 last night when it had been showing tremendous potential - mixing it with the big boys. The squad with car 27 felt very optimistic that they could reach the end of this very special race and win the LMP675 class. It wasn't to be de-

spite the huge efforts made by the MG team and all its partners."

There were many favorable comments made by the commentators from Speed Channel about the MGs. They were impressed with how fast and how well the cars handled. The Factory No. 26 MG on several occasions during the race set the fastest lap time and was very capable of challenging the front running Audis. They commented on how well prepared and well designed they were. One comment David Hobbs made when the rear cowling was off was that "the mechanicals looked like a fine Swiss watch".

At Le Mans, as is the history of endurance racing, to finish is everything. Originally this type of racing was to prove to the public the reliability of your product. Today it is a competition that showcases engineering, technology and driver skill. The Le Mans race is a grueling test of machines, where cars like the MG-Lola, are running at speeds in the 200-mph range for 24 hours. Only two cars that were in the class that MG raced in, finished and one of the cars limped across the finish line after a suspension failure on the next to last lap. As they say in racing, "Maybe next year."



Parts for Sale

MGB

1980 no motor or trans, or will sell parts separately	\$150.00
1973 rear end	\$50.00
1973 front end	\$50.00
1973 doors	\$40.00 each
new wheel chrome rings and caps	\$50.00 all
1973 motor block 1800	\$75.00
1973 transmission	\$200.00
exhaust w/ converter adpt.(used)	\$50.00
1978 zenith carb	\$75.00
1978 zenith manifold	\$75.00
hood	\$75.00
trunk	\$35.00

Midget

1973 motor 1275, approx. 65,000 miles	\$300.00
trans. and parts	\$75.00
Lots of 73, 78-80 parts	

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 Chesapeake, VA 23322
 Work, 7-5 548-8000
 Home 482-6423
 AFM@yahoo.com
 Fworrell@qe-usa.com

TECH STUFF

Mark Childers

Saturday morning, and you're strolling thru the aisles in Tooldtown...

"Buy me!" shouts the ratcheting box wrench set for seventy nine bucks.

"NO! Buy ME!!!" yells the jump start box , "On sale, only fifty seven ninety nine."

A dozen more gotta have's are all screaming at you, all wanting to be adopted.

Hey, look over here, on the shelf with the timing lights...yeah the lowly vacuum gage. If you don't have one, get one. Satisfy your craving for cool tools.

It's one tool that not only earns its keep, but can also put money back in your pocket . Splurge on a better quality combination vacuum and fuel pressure gage, a steal at less than twenty bucks.

Easy to use? You bet. Just plug it into a handy vacuum port on the intake. If you haven't got any vacuum ports, well, you can always drill and tap and install a small hose barb even with the intake bolted on using a little engine-uity to keep the drill shavings from contaminating your engine. Haven't got a drill or taps, here's your justification... You can even snake a rubber hose into the cockpit, hook the gage up and keep it in an easy to see location to monitor your driving habits and engine performance. You can also use the combo gage to check fuel pressure by adapting it to the fuel inlet hose. Don't lose the little booklet that comes with the gage, and keep all the little hose adapters in a baggie. They do come in handy.

Analyzing Engine Performance and Condition with the Vacuum gage:

With the engine at normal operating temp and smooth idle, most engines in good mechanical condition generate between 17 and 22 inches of mercury (Hg)

Engine vacuum fluctuates wildly when the throttle is blipped, and can drop to near atmospheric pressure at redline. Once the engine is warmed up, with timing, valves and carbs set, connect the gage to a vacuum port and see what you've got.

Steady Needle, 17-22" Hg = Sound engine condition with stock cam. A mild street cam can be as low as 15" Hg. Advanced timing can also lower vacuum while keeping a steady needle.

Intermittent Fluctuation at Idle indicates an ignition miss or sticking valves.

Low Steady Reading = Late timing, low combustion pressures across the board, sticking throttle plate, or a

vacuum leak . A big cam such as the Piper fast road cam, with a tight centerline and high overlap will be naturally low.

Drifting Needle (high to low and back again) = Improper carb mix or balance, or a minor vacuum leak which also affects the mixture.

Needle fluctuates as RPM Increases = Ignition miss, blown head gasket, leaking valve or weak or broken valve spring

Needle holds steady, but dips with a regular pulse = burnt valve or incorrect valve setting Vacuum will fall when the bad valve is seated and returns to normal while the valve is off seat.

Gradual persistent drop at Idle with accompanying lack of off-idle power = clogged muffler, kinked exhaust or clogged Catcon causing excessive back-pressure. Engine may die after idling for a minute or two; it will usually start up after sitting for a few minutes, then repeat the fall off until it dies again.

Without going into too much detail, you can increase gas mileage by keeping the vacuum as high as possible while cruising. You may find that there is an inch or more difference over a couple of mph, which will translate to better economy in the long haul. Timing can also be optimized by obtaining the highest vacuum at idle without changing the basic timing by more than a half degree, and carb mixtures can be tweaked as well without radically changing the mixture - simply add or subtract a quarter flat either way and see if the vacuum jumps up and stays there.



Kicking tyres at the June meeting

“MG Quotables”

Mike Haag

In the April 2002 20th Anniversary issue of *Classic & Sports Car* magazine, an article listed the 20 most underrated classics. Although most were European vehicles not available in the states, the list did include the early Mustangs, Camaros, Jaguar XJS, Porsche 914, and Sunbeam Tiger, so that we weren't totally left out on this side of the pond. What I thought was more interesting was a sidebar, where these same classic car writers panned 20 of the “sacred cows” of some classic car icons. Some of the comments included:

On the Austin-Healey, “The farmer wants a sports car”.

On the Citroen DS and Lotus Elan, “Comes apart”.

On Ferraris, “Overpriced, cramped, bad visibility, too visible”.

On the NSU RO80, “Bankrupted two motor giants and many an owner”.

On the Triumph Stag, “Its defenders don't believe what they're saying either”.

On TRs –all after TR2, “Progress, what progress?”

On the MGB, “A perfectly nice little car”.

That's the worse they could come up? I was pleasantly surprised. Another article in this issue described four popular sports cars from the periods covering the early 50's through the early 80's. One of the four cars was the MGB, and again the writers had some favorable comments, including “There are fewer prettier production cars of the 60s”, and “The B really was – and in many ways still is – the sports car ideal”. Finally, comments about the B end with “And the B was perhaps the last truly popular mainstream British sports car, prior to the MGF's arrival”.

Before all of us get too smug, keep in mind that these comments, and other favorable comments written about the MGB in other articles, always refer to the early years of the chrome bumper. Almost every critic is universal in panning the rubber bumper MGBs, as an example points out, “By the mid-70s, by when it should logically have been replaced, the car received its rubber bumper snout and tail to accommodate US safety regulations and looked all the worse for it. Think Julie Christie with Karl Malden's nose”. Ouch!

The May 2002 issue of *Enjoying MG* states that MG Rover has entered into a deal with a Chinese automotive company called China Brill-

iance Industrial Holdings. This gives MG Rover a foothold into the Far Eastern markets, a sharing of technology, and long-term investment to help ensure its future and help spur growth. We can only hope that this will help to hasten the return of MG to the US, but will the cars be labeled “Made in China”?



“HOARDING HUSBANDS” - A wife's lament

Reprinted with permission

From “The Breed” MG Car Club Cape Town Centre

By way of *The Octagon Bulletin*, April 2002

Submitted by Chuck Hudson

There is a breed of women who deserve a rich reward –
They are the wives of husbands whose habit is to hoard.
These guys belong to old car clubs of every size and kind
Into their homes they stash just anything they find.

You drive along the freeway on a happy, sunny day.
He yells: “Stop – I see something lying in the way!”
Glinting in the sun it lies, a piece of silver wire –
He pounces on this treasure – his need is truly dire!

An evening stroll around the block is like a treasure hunt –
Your neighbour's put upon his verge some things he doesn't want –
A piece of board, a plastic bucket, piles of ice-cream tubs,
Your hubby's eyes light up, his hands in glee he rubs!

He rushes home to fetch the car – you quietly creep inside,
He's back quite soon with car boot full, his smile is very wide.
“I'm going back,” he says with glee “old Jones has had a clear-out;
I see a rusty scuttle there” – “No, no!” you try to shout!

And so the garage corners fill with woods of every shape and hue
The shelves are groaning heavy with all kinds of nut and screw.
His favorite phrase; “You never know when useful it may be!”
You heave a patient sigh and mutter; “That I'd like to see.”

“I'm going to the shop,” he says, “to buy some wood and nails.”
“What about those piles and piles of stuff you've saved?” She wails.
“No, no, the wood's the wrong shape, colour, size and kind,
And I've searched for two inch nails but nothing can I find.”

You wives out there, don't rest on hopes that he will ever alter.
You hear the phrase “When I retire” – your doubts may even falter.
But rest assured, a hoarder born, a hoarder he will stay –
The only consolation is the wife stays put – HOORAY!

Automobile Electrical Theory

or
A Treatise on the Importance of Smoke
by
Joseph Lucas

Positive ground depends on proper circuit functioning, which is the transmission of negative ions by retention of the visible spectral manifestation known as "smoke". Smoke is the thing that makes electrical circuits work. We know this to be true because every time one lets the smoke out of an electrical circuit, it stops working. This can be verified repeatedly through empirical testing. For example, if one places a copper bar across the terminals of a battery, prodigious quantities of smoke are liberated and the battery shortly ceases to function. In addition, if one observes smoke escaping from an electrical component such as a Lucas voltage regulator, it will also be observed that the component no longer functions. The logic is elementary and inescapable!

The function of the wiring harness is to conduct the smoke from one device to another. When the wiring springs a leak and lets all the smoke out of the system, nothing works afterward.

Starter motors were considered unsuitable for British motorcycles for some time largely because they consumed large quantities of smoke, requiring very unsightly large wires.

It has been reported that Lucas electrical components are possibly more prone to electrical leakage than their Bosch, Japanese or American counterparts. Experts point out that this is because Lucas is British, and all things British leak. British engines leak oil, British shock absorbers, hydraulic forks and disk brake systems leak fluid, British tires leak air and British Intelligence leaks national defense secrets. Therefore, it follows that British electrical systems must leak smoke. Once again, the logic is clear and inescapable.

In conclusion, the basic concept of transmission of electrical energy in the form of smoke provides a logical explanation of the mysteries of electrical components - especially British units manufactured by Joseph Lucas, Ltd.

"A gentleman does not motor about after dark."

Joseph Lucas (1842 - 1903)

Contributed by Jim Villers



The Other Side of Lucas

Susan Bond

The AACA (Antique Automobile Club of America) started a Driver Participation class at its National meets last year. Since my GT survived our April Fools' Tour I figured it would qualify as a driver and entered it in the National meet at Richmond, held June 16th. The GT was duly qualified and got a little plaque to prove it. On the way home on Sunday I spotted the 1930 Lincoln of a friend pulled over on the side of the road at the traffic light at the new Food Lion in Windsor. If they were going to the grocery store, wouldn't they have pulled into the parking lot? So I stopped to see what was going on. The car had died and wouldn't start. (Does this sound familiar?) Would a jump start help? Might as well try. So I emptied the "back seat" and we attached my little GT's battery to one end of the jumper cables, which ran thru the driver's window, to the battery behind the front wheel of the huge Lincoln. I revved it and ol' Lucas responded, the Lincoln turned over, coughed and ran! How many times has an MG had the privilege of jump starting a classic Lincoln?



Inspecting the Smith's early B at the June meeting

Link of the Month

If you haven't already, check out this link for lots of LBC humor

<http://www.team.net/sol/humour/>

Sandusky Valley Vintage Rally

May 18, 2002
Dan Kirby

My dear friends Phil and Pam (AKA Dallas) Smith hosted the featured event of the Spring 2002 Gathering of the Faithful of the Ohio Chapter NEMGTR, a Time-Speed-Distance (TSD) rally. I enjoy this sort of competition, and it isn't often that there is an "all MG" event of this type, so I called Brian Cameron, an old MG friend from Ohio, overly busy with work and family, and convinced him he needed a rest from all that. So I packed the GT and headed for the midwest.



The Sandusky Valley Vintage Rally (SVVR) proved popular among those braving cold and potentially wet conditions in Tiffin, Ohio, over the weekend of May 17-18. Conducted with the assistance of the River Cities Region SCCA, the SVVR was a 90 mile time-speed-distance rally restricted to vintage sports cars using vintage timing and distance-measuring equipment. Most of the competitors hailed from Ohio and the host club, the Ohio Chapter, and consequently MG was by far the best-represented marque in the event. Roughly a third of the competitors brought their T-series or pre-War MG, with the remainder of the field comprising MGBs, an MGA, an Alfa Romeo GTV, an Austin-Healey 3000, and a new BMW-MINI.

The New MINI looks a lot more like a MAXI next to any MG, even an MG-BGT. It is indeed small compared to other new cars, but wow- it's BIG compared to our cars!

The rally took competitors over the roads in the scenic Sandusky River area of Seneca and Wyandot Counties. Given clear route instructions, the rallyists were asked to maintain specific average speeds over various sections of the route, and were required to arrive at surprise checkpoints at the time reflecting the specified average speeds. Early or late arrival at the checkpoints resulted in penalty points.

I have been concentrating on my navigating skills in recent events, so Brian drove, and I got to handle the paperwork. Brian hadn't competed in one of these events before, and his style of entering the checkpoints was memorable, to say the least. In order to effectively communicate in the cockpit, it's a good idea to define the following words: Stop, Go, No, Wait, Left, Right, Correct, and the phrase "just drive the car like a sane person". Prior to the event, we overlooked the necessity to have a discussion and agreement with regards to

exactly just what the aforementioned words and phrase mean... and realized our oversight upon entering the first checkpoint. Seldom have I seen, heard, felt, and smelled such sensory inputs from the cockpit of the MG... I can't remember the last time I laughed so hard... Every word I uttered within sight of that first checkpoint was met with some sort of car control demonstration... Brian just kept smiling and laughing...exercising the pedals and steering wheel... my gosh I didn't know you could get an MG to do some of those things... Fortunately we had enough momentum to carry us past the checkpoint and to the pull-off area. We collectively decided to have a quick meeting of the minds just past that first checkpoint pull-off area. I brought along some tissues, so we were able to dry our eyes from the tears of "overlaughter".

The balance of the event went off without a hitch. The roads and layout of the event took us through some beautiful areas, well away from traffic, and enabled us to have a great time. It's great to see the T-series and earlier MGs out there motor-ing along with a mission!

Nearly all of the competitors were novice at this type of rallying, and this resulted in typically double digit penalties at each checkpoint. Overall winners, and experienced TSD rallyists, Eric Jones and Bill Potvin in Eric's rally MGB, completed the event with a total penalty of 37, thus averaging just under four penalty points at each of the ten checkpoints. I don't think Bill and Eric had as much fun as we did at that first checkpoint, though. We finished second overall with a total of 64. Dave and Elaine Winkle were fourth overall, and the best T-series performance with 364, and also distinguished themselves by being awarded the J.R. Brehm Distance award, as they had traveled from their home in the Pittsburgh area in their 1955 MG TF to participate in this event; not only that, they were forced to make the entire trip in the open, as their car currently is not fitted with a top!

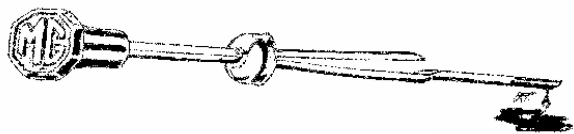
All of the competitors completed the rally, and enjoyed an excellent awards banquet meal. Following the awards dinner, most of the rallyists attended a concert by the Glenn Miller Orchestra, in the historic and restored Ritz Theatre in downtown Tiffin. A suitable conclusion to a long but very enjoyable day for all involved.

The Ohio Chapter of the New England MG T Register is the primary Ohio club catering to enthusiasts of the T-Series MG sports car. These cars were produced by the MG Car Company of Abingdon, England, prior to 1956, and are the classic sports car often associated with the early history of sports cars in America.

Many thanks to Phil and Dallas for putting on a great event! It was a real treat!



The Dipstick



The Tidewater MG Classics

Susan Bond
541 Forest Road
Chesapeake, VA 23322

FIRST CLASS

Monthly Meeting

Wed, July 10th at

Ragazzi's Italian Restaurant

424 Witchduck Rd (Kempsville)

557-0517

