

# The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

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

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Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

November 2002

## MARQUE TIME

Thanks to Alan and Beckey for hosting the September meeting in their restored farmhouse in “rural” Virginia Beach. I forgot how early it gets dark this time of year, and just how dark rural roads can be. Running on “Lucas” high power beams, I could barely see the curves in the road ahead. Maybe the city could put up a few of those curve-ahead signs to benefit those of us driving cars of the electrically challenged variety. Glad to see all made it ok, as the “parking lot” was full when I arrived.

As usual during October, we hold elections for the Club Officers for the upcoming year. Since no one offered any nominees, the current slate of officers was offered up and voted in to continue for another year. In other words, you’re stuck with my monthly ramblings for one more year.

As was predicted in last month’s column, we indeed did have very nice weather for both the Richmond and Topping shows. It was good seeing so many club members in Richmond. As usual, Topping was a nice, relaxing trip and a chance to see something different besides the normal British cars we see at most shows.

I’m writing this column after returning from the annual trek to Waynesboro for the British Car Festival. All I can say is, I can’t wait for next year! What a great weekend this turned out to be. The combination of beautiful, warm weather, driving the back roads in our MGs, and relaxing with friends is unbeatable for “getting away from it all” and unwinding for a couple of days. Sue, Barry, and myself left Cosmo’s Diner and headed west. This year we decided to take a different route. After stopping to visit Scotchtown, home of Patrick Henry near Ashland, we continued up Rt.33. Without giving away too many details, I don’t think we’ll be taking that route again. We went to dinner Friday night in Staunton, where we met up with Frank and Debbie. The show on Saturday was nice, if not a little smaller than usual. We met Doug and Eiko Wilson, along with new members Craig and Joyce Cummings. All of the TMGC members there were able to sit together for the banquet, capping an enjoyable day. We saw Ivan Joslin and other TTR members that weekend as well. Before we knew it, it was Sunday morning and time to pack the cars for the return trip. Along the way back, we stopped at 3 vineyards, and *responsibly* sampled their wines. Capping off the weekend, we once again stopped at the VA Diner for dinner, before the last leg home. Please read the write-up of this weekend trip elsewhere in this issue for a much better description.

Not only were we blessed with great weather, the cars performed well also. Barry had a small leak in his radiator, giving him some concern and

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

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

- Nov. 3 SCCA Autocross, Fort Monroe  
[www.odr-scca.org/](http://www.odr-scca.org/)
- Nov. 5 Guy Fawkes Day
- Nov. 3 Tech Session at  
Mark & Debbie Childer’s  
(see page 3)
- Nov. 6 Meeting at  
Frank & Anna Worrell’s  
(see map on back page)
- Nov. 17 TSSC Autocross, Little Creek  
[members.aol.com/odrscca/index.htm](http://members.aol.com/odrscca/index.htm)
- Dec. 7 Christmas Party at  
Andy and Cynthia’s  
(see page 3)

## Congratulations Mike!

Congratulations to Mike Ash who was awarded the 2002 Mac Spears Founders Award at the NAMGAR GT-27 Convention held in July in Charlottesville. The late Mac Spears was one of the founding members of NAMGAR, and its first chairman. The award is given annually by the NAMGAR Board of Directors to an individual who has furthered the cause of NAMGAR, either locally or nationally, and/or who has enhanced the preservation of the MGA in North America. For over 15 years Mike has been the Technical Editor for NAMGAR and its MGA Magazine. Well done Mike!

# OCTOBER MINUTES

Barry Tyson (for Doug Kennedy)

generating a couple of impromptu repairs, but as usual, his car got him there and back again. Sue's black GT ran flawlessly. That car just keeps soldiering on, what a trooper it is! My car had a couple of minor annoyances, but nothing that caused me worry or kept me from enjoying the drive.

My car has had intermittent problems with the speedometer for the past couple years. On the trip to MG 2001 last year, the speedometer quit working about 30 miles into the trip, while passing through Windsor. Before leaving again the following morning, I pulled the inner cable out and squeezed the cable with pliers, to elongate the end where it fits into the drive assembly to help seat it in what I suspect is a slightly rounded receptacle. That fixed it, and it worked fine for over a year. However, just recently the problem reappeared, occurring on the Richmond trip while passing through Windsor, again. I tried another speedometer, to no avail. It acted intermittently the following weekend while driving to Topping. I then installed a new cable, thinking the problem was solved. My car had other ideas. Once again, while passing through Windsor, the silly thing dropped dead. What is it with that town and my speedometer? All day Friday, it would work occasionally, for about 10-20 miles, then go dead until I stopped for several minutes or more, then repeat the process. Then on Saturday and Sunday, it worked perfectly, and never skipped a beat. Just another one of those quirky problems that leaves us scratching our heads and wondering what is going on.

I also have noticed lately a scaly residue around the water outlet elbow nuts, indicating a slow leak. Last year, I had to replace the gasket in a McDonalds parking lot after leaving Minneapolis. Like my impromptu speedometer repair on that trip, it also lasted about a year. When I got back home Sunday night, I noticed a little more coolant leak around the housing and the upper front of the engine. However, when I removed the filler plug to check the level, yes, you guessed it, it was full. The expansion reservoir was normal. Another leak that consumes no fluid, just like the rear end and transmission reported last month. This car is really weird sometimes! It's definitely time to replace the gasket again. I don't like the cheap flimsy ones you get from the normal distributors; they don't seem to seal well, even when using gasket sealer. If anyone has found a better gasket for the water outlet elbow on a 'B, please let all of us know.

Lastly, in the continuing saga of "you never know when or where you'll see an MG" I decided to take the 'B out one recent Sunday afternoon to enjoy the weather and run a couple of errands. I backed out of the driveway, onto the street, and as I was taking off I spotted a black LE coming in the opposite direction. We smiled and waved at each other, but he kept on going. I didn't recognize him, but the car had vanity plates which read something like KLSSC MG, or something similar, at least that's what I think it read. I was looking into the rear view mirror, so, who knows, maybe I got it part of it backwards. I'm positive though that it didn't read GM! If you're a member, let me know the next time you're in the neighborhood.

In the suburbs of downtown Pungo, where there are more bullfrogs and snapping turtles than people, a large crowd of MG enthusiasts gathered for the October meeting at Alan and Beckey Watson's country home. Mike opened the meeting at 8:06 PM mean MG time with the rapping of the gavel. Mike thanked Alan and Beckey for hosting the meeting. Mike welcomed all in attendance.

Membership: Robin Watson reported that 12 old members have dropped out this year and that there were 13 new members this year as of October 1, 2002. The club now has 99 members listed, 1 is honorary, 6 complimentary and 92 subscribing members. Down 2 from last year. Dues are now past due. O. D. Dawson a Charter Member, was one of the latest renewals, is also very ill. Robin is shopping for a printing service to print this year's roster. The by-laws and illustrations will be included in this year's roster. Last years printing service wants \$1.50 each and Electronic Systems Inc. (which Alan Watson works for) will do it for \$1.00 each.

Treasurer's Report: Jim Villers reported: Balance brought forward from September 2002: \$2,716.13. Receipts: Total \$285.45: Dues \$220.00 and raffle \$0.00. Disbursements: Total \$711.21: Frank Lindse (Regalia) #1547 \$572.14, Sue Bond (Newsletter) #1548 \$62.07, Robin Watson (postage) #1549, \$37.00 Alan Watson (host) #1550 \$40.00. Balanced carried forward: \$2,299.37. Note: \$200.00 in checks not yet deposited.

Minutes: September Minutes approved.

Newsletter: Susan Bond reported: She and Peggy Craig thanked everyone for their articles and contributions the October Dipstick. Contributions are needed to keep the Dipstick successful. Early submission deadline required for November Dipstick, due to Susan going out of town. Susan also said she needed articles to be written for the many events in September and October: (Richmond Show, Topping Show, Waynesboro Show, Pig Picking, etc.).

Regalia: Frank Linse reported: He has purchased new regalia: grill badges, MG glassware, shirts and caps (coming soon) which he had at the meeting.

Activities: Dan Kirby absent. Others reported: Waynesboro British Car Show, Oct. 4-6<sup>th</sup>. Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>- Lucas Night Rally. Oct. 13<sup>th</sup> - Pig-Picking at Mark and Debbie Childers. Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> Tech Session at a Mark and Debbie Childers. Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> November Meeting at Frank and Anna Worrell's.

Archives: Susan Bond reported: Looking for photos, MG / club related memorabilia for 1999 and pre 1999 year books.

Clubs: Mike Ash had nothing to report.

(continued on page 4)

# November Tech Session



Sun, Nov 3rd, starting at 8am  
Mark & Debbie Childers  
3909 Pine Grove Landing, Chesapeake  
432-9155, Cell phones: 650-7742, 650-7743  
ifixmgs@aol.com



Mark has tig and buzz box welders, jacks, engine hoist, rollaway tool boxes, commercial buffing machines and a sand blaster plus a ton of spares and hardware.

See Pignic flyer in October newsletter for map and directions

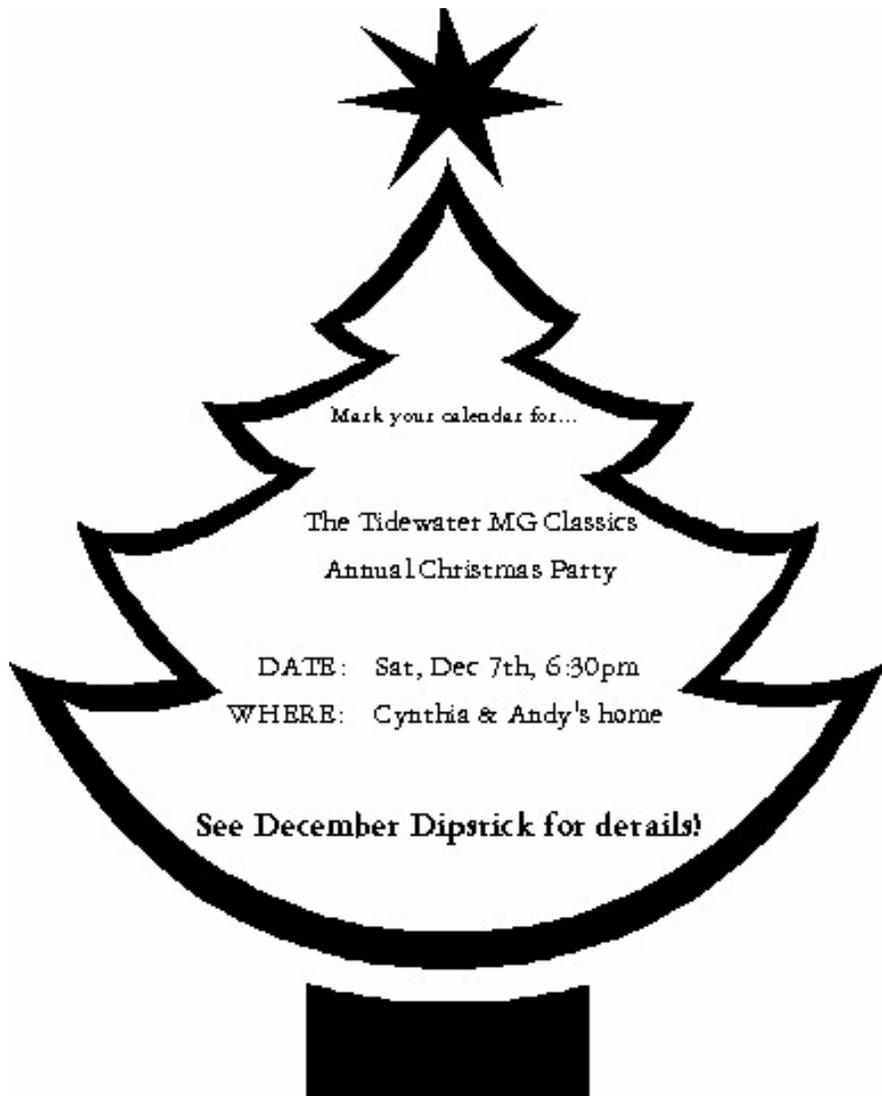


## Link of the Month

Tired of slow "fast food"? Not sure what else is available? Check out

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

before your next road trip. Pick from their extensive menu of specialty restaurants, something for almost every taste. The only one missing was "home cooking" – I found Mrs. Rowe's listed under "meat-and-three".



Old Business: Barry Tyson reported: There remain some issues (art work, register affiliations and price) to resolve before investigating the purchase of large fabric banner for TMGC membership tent at car shows. The meeting was turned over to the Chairman of the Nomination and Election Committee, Vince Groover, to conduct the annual election of club officers. There were no nominations from the floor or received after publishing those nominated in the October Dipstick. The club members proceeded to elect: President; Mike Haag, Vice- President; Barry Tyson, Secretary; Doug Kennedy and Treasurer; Jim Villers.

The Club's 30th Anniversary Committee reported: Peggy Craig reported they were starting to plan the event for May 2003 and looking at locations, invitations, dash plaques etc. were going to present the club with options to have the club make decisions on.

New Business: Jim Villers motioned that the free raffle ticket for wearing your name tag, be done away with to encourage the sale of raffle tickets to supplement the Treasury. After discussion the motion was modified and approved to give a free ticket with the purchase of the first raffle ticket if you are wearing your nametag. Mark Childers suggested a charity for the Christmas Party, " the Dwelling Place", a non-denominational shelter for families who need a temporary place to stay until they can get on their feet. He will investigate and report back at November meeting.

Technical: Mark Childers brought some "cheap" homemade tools. A differential plug removal tool, a ground down to 7/16", 1/2 " square drive and a wire wheel spoke end piece removal tool.

Marque Time: Jim Villers: Frank and Vince came over and helped him replace the windshield in his 1973 MGB.

Harry Watson: There are 2 MGB GT's at a junkyard at Oceana, 1970 and 1972. He also has upholstery kit and misc. parts for sale.

Mike Ash: Has a lead on a MG for sale on the Eastern Shore.

Bob Miller: Announced that he will be selling his 1977 MGB with 77,000 original miles.

It was mentioned that Joseph Friedman has his 1979 MGB for sale.

Bill Seib: Saw a rider-less motorcycle with a person in the sidecar, which turned out to be a motorcycle being driven from a wheelchair attached to the motorcycle or something.

Several people saw a Shelby Cobra for sale (kit car?) and were lusting after it.

Raffle: Pam Groover won the raffle, a selection from the new regalia Frank had at the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM mean MG time. May be a new record for shortest meeting. We proceeded to the Watson's country kitchen for a harvest collection of apple cobbler, pumpkin pie, cookies, banana nut bread and ice cream before the journey home through the darkness that only can be found in Pungo after the sun goes down.

## Officers and Committees

President	Mike Haag	496-7348
Vice 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
Clubs	Mike Ash	495-0307

## Notes from the Editors

Peggy Craig

I was looking over some early copies of "The Dipstick" (I save everything) and found it didn't even have a name back then. The June 1977 issue actually was partially handwritten due to the "non-availability of a suitable typewriter". It wasn't until August '79 it received the name "The Dip Stick", submitted by Dave Barrows, our founder. One of the most interesting articles was in the Nov '82 issue when Jennifer Ash was co-editing with Mary Thompson. The minutes reported "Jennifer stated that she had received a message, about third-hand, that perhaps Peggy Bradford would be glad to take over as newsletter editor." (Remember, Mary & Jennifer only undertook editorship because no one would volunteer for the job, and it is up for grabs at any time.). Well guys, it's taken me 20 years to remember I volunteered. Tomorrow I'll try to find out how many years ago Susan volunteered before she stepped up to the plate.

Susan here. I'm not sure, but I do have a tendency to talk myself into jobs. If I had kept my mouth shut someone else would be editing. And archiving!



## PARTS FOR SALE

I have a tonneau cover with headrest pockets in excellent condition and a seat upholstery kit (J.C. Whitney) including installation hardware in NAVY (not including headrest kit).

Harry Watson  
harkenw@charter.net  
757-538-1409

# TECH STUFF: Starter Swaps and a Cheap Upgrade

Mark Childers

Until '75, when the electronic ignition system was fitted to all MGBs, pre-engaged starter solenoids had one standard male spade terminal (not to be confused with the 7/16" heavy gage brown wire spade terminal). In '75, a second, smaller-than-standard, male spade terminal 1 was added to make 12vdc available when the solenoid engages. The upgrade was made because the OEM Lucas electronic ignition system was a current hog and won't produce a strong spark when source voltage falls below 9v. Battery voltage is supplied directly to the coil + terminal during the start sequence to eliminate voltage loss due to circuit resistance. The later coil also required a built-in resistive wire in the main engine harness to supply a reduced voltage to the system in the run mode.

While all pre-engaged starters will physically interchange, '75-80 cars with original ignition (or the original coil and a replacement system) need all the volts they can get when cold. It's not uncommon to order a late starter thru BAP GEON or any number of suppliers and get an early single terminal unit (or vice versa for an early car). Some folks have unwittingly bought early spare starters for their 75-80 electronic ign cars only to find that they are missing that mysterious extra terminal.

Connecting the white/lt-green and white/brown wires together onto the same terminal is NOT an option. The starter will engage when the ignition is switched to the on position, and the engine will start, but the starter will not disengage until the ign switch is turned off. Take heart, there is a cheap fix!

## The starting circuit

A starter control relay has been in place since early 1970, extending ignition switch life. It's located just aft of the fuse block. Early cars have a square can relay and later cars were fitted with the round plastic version. Relays are designed to control high current applications using a low current electromagnetic switching device. The relay is "on" only when the key is in the start position.

### Starter solenoid wiring:

- White/brown wire with the larger spade terminal controls starter solenoid.
- The white/lt green (smaller spade connector) '75-80 provides battery-sourced voltage directly to the original electronic ignition system whenever the starter solenoid is engaged. If your 75-80 MGB has been retrofitted with points, the extra wire it will certainly be a benefit. In '77, an ignition relay was also added to cut down on some of the voltage loss to the ignition circuit during start, the extra starter solenoid contact was retained as well.

### Starter relay wiring :

- White/Red W1 from the ign switch to starter relay coil power side
- White/Brown C1 from output relay to starter solenoid engage
- Black (W2) provides a ground for the coil winding
- Brown W2 from Battery provides 12vdc to White/

brown when relay engages

### Improvising for improvement or necessity

If you still have the original electronic ignition system and don't have a later 2-terminal starter available, you can, very simply and inexpensively, add another can-style relay to take the place of the missing contact on the starter. The addition of this relay will also improve cold-starts in ALL MGBs from '64 on by supplying full battery voltage to the coil during the start sequence--especially helpful for high compression engines and fast road cam grinds.

Purchase a standard 35amp off road lighting relay from Advance/Autozone (\$4) and some GOOD quality female spade connectors.

Purchase a couple of 2 into 1 spade terminal adapters (one female, 2 male terminals). Old VW's had them everywhere, and most good electric and electronic supply houses also have them for about a buck each. Also, gather up short lengths of scrap wire in brown, white, and black. Disconnect battery.

Install the new relay close to the existing starter relay on the fenderwell aft of the fuses using a self tapping philips head screw.

Wire as follows:

Ground either coil winding terminal (C1 or C2) directly to the relay mounting screw or at the ganged black-wire ground terminal.

Jumper the other coil winding terminal to the white/red wire terminal on the starter relay using a 2 into 1 adapter and a length of white wire. *If you have an early non-preengaged starter, connect it to the white/red wire terminal at the firewall mounted starter control solenoid.*

Jumper the new relay's common switch contact to the brown wire input at the starter relay/control solenoid using a 2 into 1 spade adapter and a length of brown wire. Early cars with non-preengaged starter, connect to the starter control solenoid brown wire terminal.

Jumper the normally open contact of the new relay directly to the ignition coil + lead (the side of the coil NOT going to the distributor) using a length of white wire. You can use a laundry marker to add a green stripe to the white coil wire, and a red stripe to the relay to relay jumper. If you have the correct wire colors, all the better.

### Earlier cars fitted with the 2 terminal starter solenoid:

Easy as pie: Add a jumper between the smaller starter solenoid terminal and the coil + terminal. Cold/wet weather starting will improve--as will hot weather starts when engine temps soar after shutdown.

### OPERATION:

With the new relay in place, the battery reconnected, and the key in the start position, the white/red wire from ign switch to starter relay wire fires the starter relay. The starter relay switch closes and sends power to the starter solenoid via white/brown. At the same time, the white/red also triggers the new ignition relay, and 12 v from the brown wire now goes to the + terminal on the coil via the white wire connected to the switched contact in the new relay. Voilla! Improved spark on start. When the ignition switch goes from start to run, both relays are interrupted, and there is no feedback to the starter solenoid.

*Safety Faster!*

# A “Capital” Car Show

Mike Haag

A small gathering of TMGC members met at Cosmo’s Diner, our usual departure for all points westward, for the annual September trek up to Richmond for the British Car Show put on by the Central VA British Car Club. Come to think of it, just about anywhere is west of Va Beach! So much for today’s geography lesson. Those members traveling together included Alan & Robin Watson, Mike & Ryan Pentecost, Frank Worrell & his buddy John Irwin, Barry, and myself. Frank drove his truck, which we quickly dubbed our chase vehicle. We pushed off about 9:00, and headed up Rts 58 and 460 towards Petersburg, our normal, preferred route for relaxed driving. We made a quick pit stop at the Hardee’s in Waverly, and continued on, arriving at the show on Brown’s Island at 11:30.



What a beautiful day for a car show--bright blue skies and not too hot. Brown’s Island is a beautiful location for a car show, nestled between the James River and the old Richmond canal and ironworks, with a great view of the Richmond skyline. The club had a good turnout of members for this show. Besides those mentioned above, others displaying their cars were Frank Linse & Debbie Eisenbath, Doug Wilson, and Frank Hurley. Vince was there selling “gently used” MG parts, Bob and Pam McClaren were there, and Gregg Coogan arrived in his Midget near the end. Frank Hurley took 4<sup>th</sup> place in the late MGB category, and Doug Wilson took 1<sup>st</sup> place in the MG ‘T’ series category.

What I like about this show is that besides the usual MGs and Triumphs, there are usually some other interesting British makes to view. This year was no exception. On display was a Lotus Exige Motorsport (Elise coupe) racer, imported for racing use only. It was for sale, but I didn’t bother asking--you know the old saying: “If you have to ask,...”. Also on hand was a beautiful Aston Martin DB4, a tiny Cooper racecar, and an AC ACE Bristol.

The show ended about 3:30, and in the confusion of leaving, we lost Frank. Barry, Mike & Ryan, Gregg, and myself left together, heading towards I-95 and back down Rt. 460. I forgot how steep the hills are in downtown Richmond be-

tween the James River and Broad Street. Thankfully we all kept some distance between our cars at stop lights to allow a little rollback upon starting up again. We made a short detour while getting crossed up trying to get on I-95 South, or was it I-64 East? The signs are confusing if you’re not used to driving there. We stopped at our usual spot for dinner on 460. Yep, you guessed it, the VA Diner in Wakefield. Like Barry said, we should get frequent diner cards there! Frank had beaten us there so when we arrived he greeted us at the door and led us back to our table. No waiting. What a class act!



As we were leaving, we noticed that the sky looked pretty dark towards the east. Ryan suggested that his dad put the top up, but none of us hardy MGER’s would hear of that. We decided to keep on driving with the tops down, enjoying one of the few remaining warm evenings of the driving season. When we hit Ivor, we knew we made a BIG mistake, as the rain started coming down in buckets. Mike & Ryan pulled over in town, and Barry and I lucked out and found a gas station with an overhang to get under, while we erected our tops in record time. Gregg pulled over; he already had his top up. It was pouring down, and Barry & I lost sight of the others. We pushed on, and the rain came down pretty hard for a few miles, but after Zuni it had pretty much stopped. Mike Pentecost caught up with us in Windsor, but we never did see Gregg again that night. After one last quick stop before getting on the bypass, we made the final push towards home.



# Wings & Wheels 2000

Mike Haag

The Saturday following the Richmond show was the annual Wings & Wheels Show at Hummel Airport in Topping (where?) VA. Located near Deltaville, on the middle peninsula, it's always a nice show of antique and experimental aircraft and various special interest cars. Sue and granddaughter Taylor, Barry, and myself met at our usual meeting place, Cosmo's Diner in Western Branch, for some "wake



me up" liquid refreshments, and pushed off around 9:00 a.m. Heading up I-664 and I-64 through all the eternal road construction, we exited onto Rt. 105,

stopping at the McDonalds on the corner of 105 and Rt. 17 for a pit stop and more coffee, at least for me. We continued on Rt.17, where there are entirely too many stoplights north of the Coleman Bridge! We exited near Gloucester and took Rt. 3, a nice 2-lane road, over to Topping, arriving at the airfield around 11:00am.



Upon entering the field and proceeding to the tent to pick up our packets, we passed a yellow MGB GT sitting on a trailer, for sale. In another one of my "senior moments", I forgot to go back and check it out. Barry said it even had a Webasto sunroof. Oh well, the last thing I need now is another project car.

There were fewer aircraft there than in past years. This year they had a selection of antique fire trucks on display, and even had



an old Cadillac ambulance. It was the biggest Cadillac I've ever seen, sort of like the "Ghost Busters" car but without all the "anti-spook" paraphernalia. There was a large display of cars and trucks from Model Ts to the latest Hummer H2, including hot rods, an assortment of MGs and Triumphs, several Alfas, Corvettes, Porsches, and many antique American cars.

There were two cars that stood out among all the others, and drew much attention. One was a 1955 gull-wing Mercedes Benz 300SL, a true "barn



find" with only 18K miles on it. This was no trailer queen, as we saw the owner drive it away. A nice shade of silver,



with only a slight amount of light surface rust on the front bumper. This car was all original. Jim Villers should see this car! The other interesting vehicle on display was a 1928 Hispano-Suiza roadster. An aero engine manufacturer during WWI, this Spanish car company

built some of the most stylish and exotic cars of the day.

The only other TMGC member there was Ed Meadors who was showing his newly restored Midget, which won 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the British Car category, I believe. We also met some of the TTR members who drove up and showed their Triumphs (and MGs). The show ended around 3:30, and we hung around for awhile relaxing, taking in the warm sunshine, and



watching the cars drive by as others were leaving. We ventured into Deltaville, stopping at a marina to look at some of the boats, or yachts, that we'll never be able to afford, then had a seafood dinner at Taylor's Restaurant. After leaving the restaurant, with the sun setting and noticing a dip in the temperature, Barry and I wimped out and decided to put our tops up and forgo shivering for a relaxing 2 hour drive back to our homes.

# Fall British Car Festival, Waynesboro

Frank Linse

Thanks to the Shenandoah Valley British Car Club for providing us with such an enjoyable weekend. We're talking about Waynesboro! Those of us from the Tidewater area who took advantage of this weekend getaway will definitely agree. The weather was perfect as always, the drive both ways pleasant and uneventful with the exception of Sue Bond's brief run-in with the law. The car show, although slightly smaller than in years past, had some very interesting automobiles.



After a leisurely drive from Norfolk and a brief check-in at the Holiday Inn, Debbie and I met Sue, Mike, and Barry at the Pullman restaurant in downtown Staunton. This rustic old place, converted from an old train station, provided an excellent meal and wonderful atmosphere.



Saturday morning after a late breakfast we all converged on the show field, and set up camp. An interesting selection of vendors and a nice layout of British autos occupied our time for the next several hours. In addition to Frank, Debbie, Mike, Barry, and Sue, our club was represented by Doug and Eiko Wilson, Craig and Joyce Cummings, J.D. Hawthorn, and Henry Christoff. Ivan, Bernie and Marty from the Tidewater triumph register were also present.



The awards banquet was held on Saturday night with both Craig and Doug receiving First place awards. Bernie Imdahl from the Triumph club was also a winner.

Anyone looking for a great weekend getaway in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley would do well to consider this show next year. It's always the first weekend in October, and in twentyone years the weather has never been bad. See you there next year!

## On the Road Again (to Waynesboro)

Susan Bond

Frank can't believe we can spend all day making a 3 ½ hour trip, but we like to enjoy the scenery and make lots of stops (coffee breaks). This year Barry Tyson, Mike Haag and I had breakfast at Cosmo's before heading out on 460 and Barry checked his radiator. After the obligatory stop at the Waverly Hardees we tried something different this year and got on 295, headed for Scotchtown, Patrick Henry's home from 1771 to 1778. The house and tour were excellent! Our guide had played in the abandoned house as a girl and told us about the goat man who lived in the basement before it was rescued and restored. Barry patched his radiator. The other guide used to own an MG and enjoyed our mini-show.



Route 33 was interesting, ask Mike and Barry about the junk yards they spotted. Don't ask me about Hanover County's finest. It took 2 of them to pull me over after a stop sign. I had been careful to come to a full stop so pulled to the side of the road expecting the blue lights to go right past me. Nope, it was me they were after. Once I got the B safely into a driveway – where were the guys? – the cop with eagle eyes pointed to my license plates and said they were expired. Knowing I had paid for new stickers, I explained that they must be at home in the pile of paper work that wasn't bills and therefore hadn't been opened when I got back in town. He wasn't buying it and asked for my license so he could run the plates through DMV. He asked if we were traveling together, he had spotted the other 2 LBC's (where were those guys?), and I told him about Waynesboro. I think he was surprised when DMV told him I was paid till 2004 and he had to tell me to "Have a nice day!" So I got back on the road only to find that ANOTHER cop had pulled up behind Barry to find out if he needed any help. Barry didn't tell him about the radiator. I found out that the guys had been keeping an eye and ear on things, just didn't want to make matters worse by calling on the radio at an inopportune time.

Route 33 is a nice road but there sure is a lot of traffic on it nowadays. Slow traffic. Ever see a tow truck pull a broken-down garbage truck up a mountain? We hadn't either till we hit the 3-lane part and finally passed it. MG's do not like to go up hills in first gear. Especially ones with radiator problems. We hit Gordonsville as school was getting out, and Harrisonburg during rush hour. I don't think we will go that way next year. We got in to the motel at 6 and had dinner reservations for 6:30 so we did a Superman change and were only a few minutes late at the Pullman.

For some reason I was very visible this weekend. Saturday morning I was checking the oil and brake and clutch fluid when the guy next to me proposed. Yes, he wanted to marry me even tho he was already married. He was so surprised to see a woman under the bonnet ("they are capable, you just don't see them doing it") that he wanted to take me home. His friend assured me he would keep an eye on him. I kept looking over my shoulder just in case. Barry patched his radiator again. At the car show the DJ played a whole hour of James Bond music at noon. He gets a kick out of the name. Another guy gave me a hand up when I got thru putting a new clutch return spring on the B. Wriggling out from under the steering wheel is becoming a young person's job.



The trip home started with the traditional breakfast at Mrs. Rowe's. Poring over maps and guidebooks, we decided to do a winery crawl. There were winery

dots all over the map between Waynesboro and Charlottesville and we managed to visit 3 of them, Afton Mountain, White Hall and Oakencroft. Mike replenished his wine cellar and we wondered how many samples equaled one drink per hour. We equaled our record of 2 years ago when we had lunch in Charlottesville - 4 hours to travel 40 miles! The rest of the trip was uneventful - gas and a radiator check at Oilville, dinner at the Virginia Diner, listening to Thistle and Shamrock which was just ending as I pulled into the garage. 568 miles. What a weekend!! Can't wait till next year!



## Oink, Oink

George Craig

In spite of the calls of "Tally Ho" and "Away We Go", the annual Pig Roast and Rally didn't "Go". Seems that there was a mix-up in the starting point as understood between the participants and Rally Master, Mark Childers. Nevertheless, waiting at the starting gate were perennial "Rallyers" Vince and Pam Groover, Bill Seib and his son Bryan, Robin Watson sans a Navigator, and the team of Sue Bond and George Craig. Since Terry and Peggy were both out of town (not together we trust), George volunteered to help guide Sue's BGT rather than chance scratching Peggy's B. All turned out OK with the "starters" running their own Mini-Rally on their way to the North Carolina border -- site of the Pig Roast.



Ah yes, the Pig Roast -- what a feast! Hosts Debbie and Mark Childers and daughter Sabrina out did themselves again at their home and mini horse ranch with this, the "Umpteenth Annual Pig Roast". We tried to reconstruct the number of years this soiree has been held, but the best that could be done was to all agree that they started in the "seventies". Old timers Vince Groover and Frank Linse recalled that they started with the traditional piglet-on-spit recipe rather than the now more civilized bar-b-que -- but insisted that "Pig Roast" seems to be a much more romantic name than Bar-B-Que.



More than two dozen participants gorged themselves while relating their MG war stories on a beautiful fall afternoon. Paul and Carmen Thiergardt brought their guests from Texas, Gary and Ramona Garnett, who confessed to being MG lovers and past owners. Mike Haag and Barry Tyson expressed their gratitude that this great event brought out some members not seen for a long time such as Ed and Linda Solomon, and Jim and Vivian Overcash.

It was indeed a beautiful sight to see the more than ten MG's lined up along the street for the traditional "tire kicking". Mark Childers did his best to sell his beautifully restored BGT (by he, and earlier by Frank Linse), but he was preaching to the choir.



So as the sun sank slowly in the West we bid farewell to this



land of enchantment musing about the wonderful time we had. Several folks were overheard asking for lipstick so that they could write "stop me before I eat again" on the rear view mirror.

## Rotary Club Talk

Terry Bond

What could possibly be more fitting that talking cars at the Rotary (wheels go round right?). At the invitation of Phillip Ford, I made an appearance last month at the Suffolk Rotary club for an early Friday morning breakfast talk about our favorite subject – MGs.

The crowd of about 30 seemed to enjoy the brief history of the marque, enhanced by a neat powerpoint presentation that Phillip had put together. We had a lot of fun a couple of evenings prior, trying to figure out Susan's scanner and selecting an assortment of suitable MG pictures from calendars, magazines, books, and the internet. The toughest part of it all was trying to pare it down to the allotted 20 minutes. I was told they actually ring the bell if one runs over-time!

Without rehearsal, it all went like clockwork powered by Lucas batteries. Thanks to Phillip, the laptop worked like a champ, the projector was faultless, the audience was spell-bound, and the speaker – well, lets put it this way – I didn't get any egg on my tie. Phillip rounded out the session by showing a few slides of his restoration in progress, just to let people know that it is indeed worth saving an Octagon!

We kept the CD, and I've still got my script, so perhaps some cold winter evening, we can take 20 minutes of Marque Time to entertain the troops and impress you with our newfound knowledge of the history of MG. It was all quite enjoyable – and a good breakfast too!

## My MG Racing Adventure

Concluded

Stephen H. Kelley

Part IV

My major goal for 1962 was to obtain a National Competition License and to compete in a National Race. I set as my objective the Watkins Glen National which was held there in the Finger Lakes region of New York every October. To move up from Divisional Races it was necessary to complete three of them with no mishaps, no adverse comments on one's record, and to finish in the top half of one's class in three races. This was a tougher standard than the promotion from Regional to Divisional races in that one had not only to be safe but also at least reasonably fast. And of course that was a good idea as the club did not want cars in national races which would be hazardous to others by being too slow.

While my racing was going on, I was completing my degree during the 1962 summer semester at New York University with graduation in early fall. During all this time I held a student deferment from the draft which kept me safely in civilian life. As I was nearing age 25 by this time I felt confident that I would be safe from the draft even after graduation and used as my logic the theory that surely the Army would not want a 25 year old Private. And, I convinced my employer, the American Oil Company, with the same logic, or if you prefer, rationalization.

My racing went well that summer and I was able to meet the National Competition License standards by late in the summer. The car performed beautifully and there were no racing accidents. I had begun to think seriously about my future as a driver. My results were consistent even though only once did I win a race outright; the TD was all it could be then and I saw no real way to get significantly faster with that car. Of course I dreamed of moving into a higher class but simply could not afford to do so. I'd been advised to be patient and that in time someone would sponsor me in a higher class with a better car. This did happen of course but with at least dozens of pretty good drivers in the northeast all hoping for the same thing, the chances of my being picked were not real good! And, to be sure, it did not happen.

But my dream for 1962 was coming true. I sent off all my paperwork for a National License and also my entry for the Watkins Glen National; the SCCA told me that since time was short my license would be waiting for me at registration when I got to the Glen. A local friend who worked at the British Car dealer in White Plains agreed to meet me there and act as my pit crew. Off I went with the TD in tow behind the MGA. I stayed Friday night at some cabins at Watkins Glen and registered the same evening and, happily, my National License was in fact there waiting for me.

Most races covered two days, Saturday and Sunday - and this was the case here. Technical inspection was the first order of business on Saturday morning and then practice laps with cars in similar classes - probably G and H production. In the

afternoon races were held for the slower classes with the faster classes racing on Sunday. I had never even seen Watkins Glen before so when I went out to practice my first few laps were fairly cautious but of course I got faster. It is a beautiful course with a mixture of tight turns at the end of the main straight and then higher speed sweeping right handers approaching and following the back straight. I discovered in practice that if I did everything *exactly* right I was able to take the sweeping right hander at the end of the back straight absolutely as fast as the car would go; I also noticed that most of my competitors were slowing a bit.

The race was probably 20 laps long on the 2.5 mile course (as best as I can remember it) and amounted to a 50 mile race. This was certainly the longest race I had been in in the TD so I was truly excited. Also, H Production ran alone so we were not also dealing with G Production cars. I got off to a good start from my usual spot well to the rear on the grid and passed several of the 22 or so cars in the drag race to the first turn and one or two more by the time I got to the back straight. Much on my mind at this point was that sweeping right hander I had been taking at something like 100mph! Here I must digress and recall a basic principle that one should be a little extra cautious on the first lap of any race as conditions often change on the course from what they were in practice. The temperature may be higher or lower, dirt, gravel, or oil may have found its way unnoticed onto the pavement and so on. But as I approached that turn, I saw several sets of brake lights coming on in front of me and I told myself that here was my chance! Bad mistake! I began to lose the car and rather than spin and go off the course backwards or sideways at that speed I straightened up and drove off straight into the pasture braking as much as I dared. Regaining control with no damage, I got back on course but was then in last place by at least a quarter of a mile. But I knew there was time to salvage something and did well from then on catching the back of the pack fairly quickly and then working my way well forward. I finished in tenth place and considering my off course excursion, was quite pleased with that. How would I have done without the mishap? I will never know of course but certainly better than tenth. But as I've suggested earlier, there was no way I was going to beat the principle national contenders in my class. All in all, I was delighted with the adventure and was sure I would be doing more in 1963.

But a huge surprise awaited me when I got home. In the mail, over that same weekend, had come my draft notice and I was to report to Fort Dix within a few weeks. I was stunned and my employer was too. They had just given me another promotion and had a lot of ideas about what I would be doing for them in the next year or so.

At the time however, my plan was to do my two year commitment to the Army and then return to the American Oil Company. I wanted my job back and they were required by law to re-hire me in an equivalent position when I returned. And, I certainly planned to resume racing when I did come back.

But I really did not ever come back. I started as a Private at Fort Dix, but already having a degree, I was a shoo in for Officer Candidate School and was commissioned within a year. I found I really liked what I was doing, felt I was serving a higher purpose than I had been in the business world, enjoyed the responsibility and stayed until retirement 27 years later.

So ended *My MG Racing Adventure*.

The car could not stay at home while I was in the Army so I asked and received permission from my Uncle to store it at his place for the two years I would be gone. Seven years later, he sold his property and as I was unable to retrieve it he had it towed off with my concurrence. I have lost track of its whereabouts and often think of it. Somewhere, probably still in the northeast is or was a solid TD in full racing trim that probably did not have 300 miles on a really strong engine. I hope someone has given it a good home.

The draft notice totally changed my life and I often wonder where would I be today and what would I have done with my life if it had not been there. Certainly I would have raced at least a few more seasons, perhaps have found a way to move to higher levels of competition, and perhaps not. I know that several drivers who were on the scene when I did race moved up with great success but also that some of them lost their lives in the process. The tragic losses of Walt Hansgen and Mark Donahue come particularly to mind. So, I have no regrets, look back on the "adventure" with great fondness and remind myself frequently that had I not been in the military most of my life I would not ever have met my wonderful wife Cathi or have the family I now have.



## Found on the Internet

Found on MG-ABC@yahoogroups.com

Submitted by Chuck Hudson

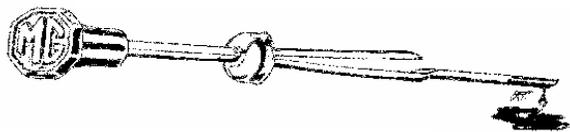
Dear Group,

Have any of you learned folks had any experience fitting air bags to our cars?

Answer

Having experienced (endured?) approximately 2 years and 40 billion e-mails filled with the most absurd, petty and repetitive discussions often indicating true obsessive/compulsive behavior involving every conceivable minute and obscure detail such as the "correct" location of tonneau studs – to a sixteenth of an inch! It is this Badger's opinion that many of "our" cars are currently already fitted with air bags!!

# The Dipstick



## The Tidewater MG Classics

Susan Bond  
541 Forest Road  
Chesapeake, VA 23322

## FIRST CLASS

**Monthly Meeting**  
Wed, Nov 6th  
Frank & Anna Worrell's  
429 Downing Dr  
Chesapeake  
482-6423

7:30-8:00pm - Kick Tyres  
8:00 - Meeting

168 - Great Bridge By-Pass, Nags Head  
Bartlefield Blvd  
Greenbrier Pkwy  
Kempsville Rd  
Centerville Tmpk  
Indian River Rd  
1691  
Canal  
Mt. Pleasant Rd  
Downing Dr  
Back Rd

Pins ranch house on right after turning on to Downing Dr