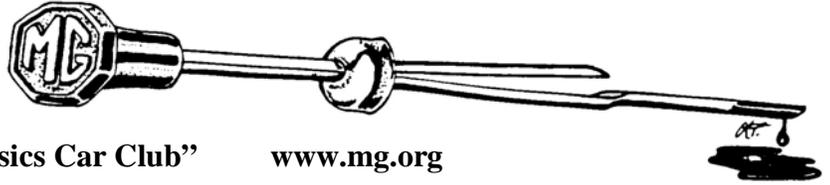


The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

www.mg.org

Volume XXXI, Issue 12

Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

December 2003

MARQUE TIME

Even though chosen/elected as President without competition, I feel that it is an honor to lead our Club. I have been a member for almost 30 years and previously (many, many years ago) served as Secretary. (Doug Kennedy - See what you can look forward to in your late 50s). I have thoroughly enjoyed my association with the Club and look forward to another 30 years.

Let me start my term by thanking our previous President, Mike Haag, and Vice-President, Barry Tyson. They have done a great job over the past four years. If I and Vice-President, Alan Watson, can come even close to them in performing our duties, we will have a great next year. Also, thanks to the Childers for hosting the Pig-pickin', to Pete and Barbie Douglas for hosting the November meeting, and the Bonds for hosting the Tech Session. It was great seeing and talking to Bruce Woodson who drove down from Richmond in his TC for the Pig-pickin'.

We need your help both in hosting meetings and in chairing committees. Peggy and George Craig volunteered, when no one else stepped forward, to host the Holiday Party. As of now, few members have signed up to host meetings in 2004. While we can meet at restaurants when no one volunteers their home, I personally feel it is much more enjoyable to meet at someone's home. If for no reason than to see that there are others besides me that have dust covered cars that haven't been worked on in years. You do not need a lot of space nor culinary capabilities...beer, soda, chips, and a floor to sit on are fine. This is not a Mercedes club (no offense Jim and Betty Villers). So, please look over your calendar, pick out a date and sign up for a meeting. We still need an Activities Committee chair. You do not need to be able to lay out a rally; all you need to be able to do is organize and coordinate.

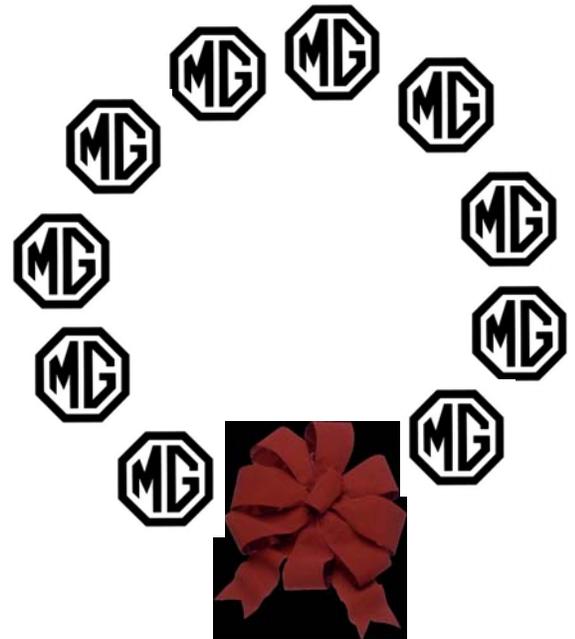
I hope to be able to personally wish you happy holidays and a happy New Year at our Holiday Party. For those who cannot make it, may your holidays be enjoyable, and your new year be your best year. If there is anything I can do to help club-wise or personally, just let me know.

Andy

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Check www.mg.org for the latest info!

- Dec. 12** Christmas Party at Peggy and George Craig's (see flyer on page 3 and map on back page)
- Dec. 19** Dipstick Deadline
- Jan. 7** Wednesday meeting at ??



*Happy
Holidays!*

NOVEMBER MINUTES

Doug Kennedy

The meeting started promptly at 8:07 Lucas Standard Time. All was well with the world as first-term President Andy reigned supreme and the Secretary's unsplinted no-longer-broken right thumb typed furiously trying to keep up with his proclamations. With Hail to the Chief playing in the background, the first to be recognized were Pete and Barbie Douglas for their wonderful hospitality, including the pre-meeting refreshments.

Although turnout was a bit slim we sat by in rapt attention while President no-nonsense cautioned us against too many outbursts from the back rows!

Chuck and Becky Hassler were first-time visitors. As long-time British car owners they have finally come to their senses and have gotten rid of the crummy Triumphs and Healeys in favor of 79 and 80LE Bs.

Membership: Robin reported 99 members. He's hoping for stragglers to cough up their dues pretty soon. He investigated a color directory for next year and decided against it when the price quote looked like the gross national product of Paraguay.

Treasurer's Report: In: \$340 Out: \$207.34 Remaining: \$2372.72

Minutes: They were approved. Nice job Sue and Mike!

Newsletter: Peggy and Sue produced another great effort and everyone praised the work and looks forward to each issue.

Regalia: Frank has plenty of holiday gifts just ready for purchase. The TMGC club logoed mink coats and cashmere jackets went fast so don't wait to get your regalia. Discussion of new regalia continued as usual. Apparently the "Save an Octagon" license plate frames are very popular among math teachers.

Activities: Andy mentioned that we desperately need an activities chair. Discussion then focused on how many activities we need, what's most important, and who's willing to step up. But enough about that, tech session coming up at the Bond's museum of automobilia. Free chow, plenty of MG tech advice (some of which may be correct) and lots of fellowship! Then...as the meeting grew VERY quiet the issue of the holiday party came up. With no one stepping forward we decided to wait until the next meeting to

panic.

Clubs: Mike had some NAMGAR magazines to pass around from the register in the hope that we'd join.

Technical: We missed Mark so we wait for his next step of tips.

Old Business: He just sat there quietly as the Glee Club harassed him.

New Business: We returned to the issue of the holiday party and perhaps holding it at a local restaurant. Vince is looking into a couple ideas.

Marque time: Robin reported that Alan suffered a crunched front end at the hands of a Cadillac. At least the Cadillac lost a bumper so his B inflicted some retribution.

Doug discussed how Robert Davis has come to the aid of a Virginia Wesleyan student who needed some work done on his Rover.

Kate showed pictures from a mini-GOF in Williamsburg. The event included all sorts of Brit cars.

Robert had a friend visiting from Nova Scotia. They rebuilt a front end on a Mercedes and rebuilt a short body Land Rover in one weekend!

Frank has an MGA in his driveway, 1958 1500 with disc wheels that the owner is looking to sell. The price is at least \$7500.

Pete was driving about one day and took off for a drive only to find the roads flooded and the alternator deciding to drop off into the engine. As he pulled off narrowly avoiding a school bus he was lucky to find some guys doing the shade tree mechanic routine who helped him get the car back on the road.

Kate and Carl went for a drive and happened by a car-washing Robin!

Robert also reported that he happened upon an old TMGC member with a few B-GTs, one of which he bought from Vince Groover (who couldn't recall it at all!).

Vince is restoring a 79B.

The meeting was adjourned, the secretary kept his losing streak alive thanks to Vince who dove in front of him to buy his winning raffle ticket, and we headed off to the chow faster than election losers rushing



Tidewater MG Classics' Annual

Holiday Dinner Party

Friday, December 12th

6:30 Social Hour

7:00 Dinner

at

George & Peggy Craig's

1417 Shenandoah Pkwy

Chesapeake

Ham and drinks are provided. Please bring a dish to share

(Appetizers, Vegetable/sides, breads, desserts)

Please RSVP by
Tue, Dec 9th
382-7547
balloon@exis.net

This year the charity we're supporting is Hope Haven. They have 17 foster children, 1-16 years old, living with house parents in 3 cottages on their site on Lands town Rd. They would love to be able to give the children something to do during the Holidays and suggest we provide gift certificates. Some suggestions are: Pinboys Bowling near Chesapeake Gen. Hosp., the ice skating rink at Strawbridge or other places like Pizza Hut, McDonald's, Golden Corral or Blockbusters, etc.... So the certificates are equitable, it's suggested they be \$10 or increments thereof, but the final gift is left up to each individual member. If you choose to contribute to Hope Haven, please bring your donation in an envelope to our Holiday Dinner Party.



Membership & New Members

Robin Watson

Total membership 99

After going to print in the November Dipstick I had a late renewal, making our total members to date 99. I now have the 2004 Membership Directories and will be bringing them to the holiday party and the January meeting for pickup. I will be mailing the copies out to those members that do not make it to either of those gatherings. A word on new membership for 2003, we had a total of 9. One thing I find hard is to come along to a new member at a meeting or get-together and not remember their name. What I hope to do is get a picture when I do meet up with the new members that we can put in the Dipstick and help every one identify them when they meet up.

Back in February Bruce & Carol Woodson from Richmond became members, although I did not get a picture of Carol I did manage to get Bruce with one of his TCs at the Pig Picking. Hope you had a good and dry run back to Richmond, Bruce.



In May Chuck & Becky Hassler, who were living in Florida at the time, joined. They were close to retiring and had started to move things to a new home in Yorktown. Well, we met up with them at the November Tech Session and although they were not in their 79 or 80 B they did have a couple fuel pumps

for a B to check out. Sorry I did not get a picture of the pumps, but I did get Chuck & Becky.

In June we had four new members: Kevin & Laurie Montgomery, Virginia Beach, 71 B; Andy & K.C. Chambers, Virginia Beach, 76 B; Matthew Gre-

salfi, Virginia Beach, 80 B Ltd.--3rd to last produced and last in the USA; Mark & Wendy Hiby, Chesapeake, 73 B. I do have a picture of Mark & Wendy at the line-up for the Pig Picking.



We had two new members in July: Doris & Roosevelt Moseley, Virginia Beach, 53 TD and Joe & Levona Lupton from Hampton, 79B.

In October we had Colin Watson at Randolph Macon, Ashland, 69 B (needs a little work on this).

I have not been able to find pictures of some of the new members, but if you think the idea is good and acceptable let me know and I will try to get some.



Officers and Committees

President	Andy Wallach	622-8315
Vice President	Alan Watson	426-2600
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		
Historian	Susan Bond	482-5222
Technical	Mark Childers	432-9155
Regalia	Frank Linse	461-7783
Clubs	Mike Ash	495-0307

Note from the Editors

Susan Bond

It's hard to believe we have come to the end of another year — and what a year it has been. Not counting meetings, I have 25 events for the archives, and over half of them were our own activities! All of our events and most of the others have been written about in these pages. Hopefully you have been inspired to drive your MG a bit more in the coming year — a New Year's Resolution perhaps? — to enjoy the open road and the fellowship with others as nutty as you are about these fun little cars.

Tech Stuff

Mark Childers

There are dozens of Hollywood hacks turning out forgettable scripts and stories about cars: witness; *Knight Rider*, *Faster and Stupider*, etc, but rare is the truly great writer who really knows something about connecting the reader to the road. Take a moment to ride shotgun through what is arguably the best hundred and fifty words ever written about the cosmic connection between man (generically speaking of course...) and automobile.

"Al, bent over the wheel, kept shifting eyes from the road to the instrument panel, watching the ammeter needle which jerked suspiciously, watching the oil gauge and the heat indicator. And his mind was cataloguing weak points about the car. He listened to the whine, which might be the rear end, dry; and he listened to tappets lifting and falling. He kept his hand on the gear lever, feeling the turning gears through it."

"Listen to the motor. Listen to the wheels. Listen with your ears and with your hands on the steering wheel; listen with the palm of your hand on the gear-shift lever; listen with your feet on the floorboards. Listen to the pounding old jalopy with all your senses; for a change of tone, what a variation of rhythm might mean. That rattle - that's tappets. Don't hurt a bit. Tappets can rattle till Jesus comes again without no harm. But that thudding as the car moves along - can't hear that - just kind of feel it. Maybe oil isn't gettin' someplace. Maybe a bearing's startin' to go..."

John Steinbeck crafted this marvelous passage for *The Grapes of Wrath* in 1939 or '38, in a time before the term stick-shift had been coined, back when back seats were as nice as the sitting room sofa. It conjures up camelhair, the squeal from the speaker as the tuning knob sought a far off station, the vague smell of brake fluid wafting in from under the floorboards, and a hundred more fleeting *déjà vu* moments from my distant past. And it provides a short and sweet lesson, a reminder to really pay attention, if only once in a while, to what your car is saying. Stretching the analogy, those words could be the key to unlocking untapped powers of human observation of the very meaning of life itself... but we ain't going there tonight, especially with an MGB in the garage screaming for help... The first time I drove this particular B was to the November Tech Session. It's a basic daily transporter with no radio, leaving the driver to pay attention and connect with the car. A couple tires are out of balance, and there was an annoying clunk in the right rear wheel that Terry diagnosed as being brake shoe related. It went away on its own by the time I got home, so I guessed he was right, but since then it has moved to the left side.

The valves were in dire need of adjustment, and I'm fairly certain that left unfettered, the rockers would have pounded eight valve stems into oblivion long before the second coming--loose enough to cause a significant loss of power from reduced valve opening. The valves got adjusted, and now the engine is not only eerily quiet, but it also has more than enough power to be fun to drive. The down-side? Its driver will inevitably focus on the previously masked "tunka-tunka-tunka" coming from the left front wheel at speed, or the nearly imperceptible rumble of the right rear axle bearing, or the squeal from the alternator belt whenever the headlights are turned on, in spite of a new belt and a perfectly good charging system. They don't need to be fixed until they're on the verge of breaking, which could be years from now. Or months, even I'll remind him that those noises are supposed to be there, to keep the mind from wandering too far down, or off the road, and no matter how well maintained, there is always an element of adventure in driving a twenty five or fifty or even a one hundred year old car more than a few miles from home (without an AAA card or cell phone....). That's what makes it *so* much fun. And when it comes to listening, feeling, smelling and sensing what's going on, always keep in mind that the key word is *attention*, not *obsession*....

Keep your eyes and ears open, and as always
Safety Fast!



Field of MGs

I had a call from Tom Lund. He found a field of MGBs and Midgets in southern Chesapeake and wanted to let us know they are available. Bob Stein had bought a couple cars from there a few years ago and says most of what's left is only good for parts, they have been there a bit too long. He also says the guy is rather hard to get hold of, but his name is Van Manson and his phone number is 421-2611, just in case you are in need of a parts car.



Pig Pickin'

Pam Groover



The annual Pig Pickin' was held on Sunday, October 28th at Mark and Debbie Childers'. Tidewater MG Club members met at Greenbrier Mall in the early afternoon before setting out on a driveout organized by Robin Watson. Mark and Wendy Hiby, Linda and Jim Freeh, Alan and Beckey Watson, and Terry and Susan



Bond drove their MGBs. Bruce Woodson drove his MG TC from Richmond!! Barb Taychert and Mike Knepler and Vince and Pam Groover were also part of this group. Robin and Olive Watson led the caravan on a leisurely trip through the Virginia Beach and Chesapeake countryside to the Childers' home.



The gang gathered on the deck and was joined by Andy and Cynthia Wallach, Mike Haag, Harry Watson, Bob and Brenda Ruegsegger, and Paul and Carmen



Thiergardt. Also attending were Michael and Terri Mayne, neighbors of the Childers and owners of an MGB. Does anyone know if the Maynes joined the club that day?? After some liquid refreshment (including some "honey" beer), swapping stories and being entertained by Debbie's four horses, the bunch got down to the business at hand--eating barbecue and sampling the scrumptious dishes made by Debbie and other attendees. A great big thank-you to Debbie and Mark for hosting this much anticipated annual get-together.



November Tech Session

Robin Watson

Great day at Terry & Susan Bond's house! The weather and enthusiasm was good all day. Yours truly was first there and parked at the front of the house



close, but not too close, to the 1914 Model T, and made my way up to the garage

where I knew the coffee would be. Not only the coffee but a great assortment of doughnuts was there.

Frank Linse arrived and was soon rubbing his hands together ready to start. Jim Villers came along and left his 1971 B out at the front of the house (must be



running good even with the 5 GEARS). It did not take long for Jim and Frank to get started on Susan's B-GT—the one she drives, which had a couple of electrical problems. One was the reversing light

6 that turned out to be a loose rivet in the spade connec-

tor on the unit. The fitting of a new unit put that right. The other problem was checked but did not get fixed. Susan is having trouble with the alternator light coming on when she turns the lights on. The new front grill was checked out for fitting correctly on her other GT.

Vince Grover and his grandson, Jared Church, arrived in the TD and bled the brakes. I helped with the pedal pushing and I must admit, although I did not tell him, I thought he must have very long legs. I could hardly reach the bottom of the stroke, however, when I got out and I saw where he checked the oil level I realized he must have pushed the seat back before he started the job.



Frank Hurley came with his 71 B and Vince checked the king pins & bushes for him—he needs a few parts here. While working on the car it was pointed out how he had not covered the top of the dash

just behind the windscreen and it was painted yellow, the color of the car. Looked good Frank! Mark Childers came along with a B that had scraped along a Jer-



sey wall. The door was still on although it was held closed with a metal bracket. He took the window out getting ready for the serious work.

Mark Hiby came along with his 73 B in the hope to put a new top on but, although he put it out in the sun that day, it did not get warm enough to do that kind of work. Chuck & Becky Hassler came from Yorktown with a couple of fuel pumps that he could not get to work, one of them brand new, never been on a car. Vince helped them check both pumps and

proved to Chuck that he was not going crazy. They didn't work and Chuck was going to send the new one back.



Bob, Linda & David Pellerin stopped in to say "Hi". Barry Tyson & Mike Haag came along in their Bs and Barry took his into the garage where Vince and Frank Linse had a look at the splines on the hubs and spoke wheels, also to check how true the wheel rims ran. It was found that two of the wheels were running out of true and that the splines were not worn too badly.

A lot of interest was given to the attic and I



think Jared was impressed with this old collection. I did not go up

with the main tour but a bit later on I was told that Terry had made some changes so I went up with Mike & Barry. Terry showed us what he had been up to on the wood floor and it looks great. I thought, what a job he must have had moving all the articles, and then he told us he had already moved them to get ready for the storm. He showed us a couple of items that he had added to the collection. One was a lamp and he already had the box that it comes in in his collection. The other was a Jones Speedometer. Many early cars were not fitted with speedometers and this Jones Speedometer was an after market add-on and recognized as one of the best on the market. The very interesting thing about this speedometer was that it came with a plaque that reads "POLICE NOTICE This car is equipped with a JONES SPEEDOMETER. The Driver KNOWS his speed! Don't arrest on guesswork". I think in my 53 years of driving that I could have found a use for a plaque like that a number of times.

Driver Days

Susan Bond

The crossroads of Driver, in Suffolk, becomes a giant block party during Driver Days, this year held 25th and 26th of October. The car show is always on Saturday and has become very popular, at least with



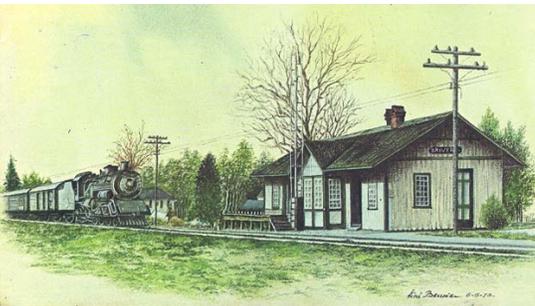
the participants. There wasn't enough room for everyone this year, some ended up in an overflow field. Fortunately Barry Tyson,

Frank Linse and I were able to park right in front of the Berea church -- sometimes driving small cars is a great advantage!



Terry and I wandered around visiting all the shops and craft stalls, looking at the stationary engines, military vehicles, and Wild

West encampment. We went into the Feed and Seed store after seeing a picture of it as the local railroad station in one of the shops. The owner let us look



around and pointed out the old baggage room. He even gave us a postcard showing

the station and a steam locomotive -- Barry says he can remember when the trains used to stop there. Of course we looked at all the cars, too, everything from a Model T to hot rods. And, as advertised in the paper, Cooter from the "Dukes of Hazard" was there with the General Lee.

The weather wasn't as nice as it could have been this year, but this is always a great event for relaxing and enjoying the friendly, "small town" of Driver. Having a great parking place is a big plus, and almost everyone wins a raffle prize (I got a box of tools this year). I am already planning on being there for next year's show.

MG Models in the UK

Part 3

Robin Watson

Last month I mentioned the MG-TF, and I have been asked by members why it was changed from what we had understood was a MG-F, also what the cost was in England. I hope to have some answer by the next Dipstick. I did get some prices on some of the models but missed getting the TF while I was there. This past week I started a project at home and also do not have the MG brochures at home that I get the notes from to write the article, so the next MG model will have to wait till next

month. However, I do have a picture of a Rover MG van that I will place here. Bear in mind that an English van is a small business delivery type of vehicle and not a multi-seating USA type van.



While staying in Southam with my sister I was taking a walk through the town one morning and noticed a thatched roof cottage that I just had to take a picture of. Well, some might think that is not an unusual thing to



see in England, right, but this one seen in the picture is special. If you want to know a little about

thatching a cottage, ask Beckey Watson about this one. Back in 1981 while walking through the town this one was being thatched and Beckey asked a couple of questions of the gentleman doing the job. He asked Beckey if she was scared of ladders and within a couple of minutes she was up the ladder and on the roof being given a lesson on thatching.

10 Best Tools of All Time

Found on the Web

The origin of the following is unknown, but its author is a wise and experienced auto repairer.

These are the only ten items you will *ever* need to repair *any* car at *any* time under *any* conditions:

1. Duct Tape – Not just a tool, a veritable Swiss Army knife in stickum and plastic. It is safety wire, body material, radiator hose, upholstery, insulation, tow rope, and more in an easy to carry package. Sure, there's prejudice surrounding duct tape in concourse competitions, but in the real world, everything from LeMans winning Porsches to Atlas rockets use it by the yard. The only thing that can get you out of more scrapes is a quarter and a phone booth. (Ed. Note: Should be updated to a cell phone.)
2. Vice Grips – Equally adept as a wrench, hammer, pliers, baling wire twister, breaker-off of frozen bolts and wiggle-it-till-it-falls-off tool. The heavy artillery of your tool box, vice grips are the only tool designed expressly to fix things screwed up beyond repair.
3. Spray Lubricants – A considerably cheaper alternative to new doors, alternator, and other squeaky items. Slicker than pig phlegm, repeated soakings will allow the main hull bolts of the Andrea Doria to be removed by hand. Strangely enough, an integral part of these sprays is the infamous little red tube that flies out of the nozzle if you look at it cross eyed (one of the 10 worst tools of all time).
4. Margarine Tubs with Clear Lids – If you spend all your time under the hood looking for a frendle pin that caromed off the petal valve when you knocked both off the air cleaner, it's because you eat butter. Real mechanics consume pounds of tasteless vegetable oil replicas just so they can use the empty tubs for parts containers afterward. (Some, of course, chuck the butter-colored goo altogether or use it to repack wheel bearings.) Unlike air cleaners and radiator lips, margarine tubs aren't connected by a time-space wormhole to the Parallel Universe of Lost Frendle Pins.
5. Big Rock at the Side of the Road – Block up a tire. Smack corroded battery terminals. Pound out a dent. Bop noisy know-it-all types on the noodle. Scientists have yet to develop a hammer that packs the raw banging power of granite or limestone. This is the only tool with which a "made in India"

emblem is not synonymous with the user's maiming.

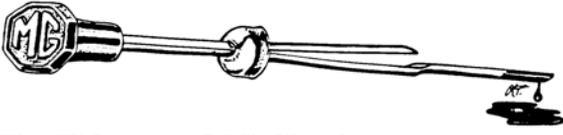
6. Plastic Zip Ties – After 20 years of lashing down stray hose and wiring with old bread ties, some genius brought a slightly slicked-up version to the auto parts market. Fifteen zip ties can transform a hulking mass of amateur-quality wiring from a working model of the Brazilian Rain Forest into something remotely resembling a wiring harness. Of course it works both ways. When buying a used car, subtract \$100 for each zip tie under the hood.
7. Ridiculously Large Craftsman Screwdriver – Let's admit it. There's nothing better for prying, chiseling, lifting, breaking, splitting or mutilating than a huge flat-bladed screwdriver, particularly when wielded with gusto and a big hammer. This is also the tool of choice for all filters so insanelly located that they can only be removed by driving a stake in one side and out the other. If you break the screwdriver – and you will just like Dad and your shop teacher said – who cares, it has a lifetime guarantee.
8. Baling Wire – Commonly known as MG muffler brackets, baling wire holds anything that's too hot for tape or ties. Like duct tape, it's not recommended for concourse contenders, since it works so well you'll never need to replace it with the right thing again. Baling wire is a sentimental favorite in some circles, particularly with the MG, Triumph, and flathead Ford set.
9. Bonking Stick – This monstrous tuning fork with devilish pointy ends is technically known as a tie-rod separator, but how often do you separate tie-rod ends? Once every decade if you're lucky. Other than medieval combat, its real use is the all-purpose application of undue force, not unlike that of the huge flat-bladed screwdriver. Nature doesn't know the bent metal panel or frozen exhaust pipe that can stand up to a good bonking stick. (Can also be used to separate tie-rod ends in a pinch, of course, but does a lousy job of it.)
10. A Quarter and a Phone Booth – See #1 above.

Links of the Month

Now that you know which tools you need, check out these sites for more info:

www.ducktapeclub.com
www.ovlr.org/Rooth/MR.MoleWrench
www.wd40.com

The Dipstick



The Tidewater MG Classics

Susan Bond
541 Forest Road
Chesapeake, VA 23322

Affiliated with



North American MGB Register

FIRST CLASS

Map to the
Tidewater MG Classics' Holiday

Dinner Party
Friday, Dec 12th
6:30 - Social Hour
7:00 - Dinner

(for information, see inside newsletter)

