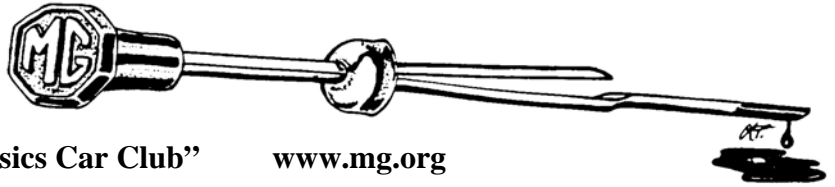


The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

www.mg.org

Volume XXXII, Issue 3

Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

March 2004

MARQUE TIME

Thanks to Mark and Wendy Hiby for hosting the February meeting. Wendy, besides providing us with wonderful food, also took the minutes. Hope to see you at Frankie's on Wednesday, March 3. You do not have to buy dinner; while dinner starts at 7, the meeting will start about 8pm.

New Dominion Pictures is looking for MGBs and Midgets and other British cars of the 1970s - 80s to put in their television show "Interpol". If interested, contact Michael Pollock at 923-1300 ext. 3528 or mp@newdominion.com.

I know of some cars for sale. Member Tom Lund has one 75 B and two 78 Bs for sale; Matt Mills (e-mailed me from Goldsboro, NC) is selling his 1968 MGC GT; and member Richard Hall has information on a basket-case TD. Also by e-mail, Colleen has a '74 Midget for sale in Richmond.

Speaking of basket-case TDs, while I haven't done much over the past month on mine, the garage is beckoning as the temperature is rising into the 60's today ... but must finish this column or I'll be letting down our great editors Susan Bond and Peggy Craig. Hope you read last month articles by Mark Childers and Robin Watson. They are both doing a super job in providing not only interesting information about our cars and technical tips, but also autobiographic data. Remember, Mike Ash's statement "Cars bring us together; People bring us back." Let's hear from more of you about you automotive experiences.

The Club still needs an Activities Coordinator for this year...

Safety Fast! Andy

Minute taker Wendy Hiby and President Andy Wallach



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Check www.mg.org for the latest info!

March 3 Wednesday meeting at Frankie's Place for Ribs (map on back page)

March 6 TRAACA Swap Meet
www.aaca.org/tidewater

March 19 Dipstick Deadline

March 27-28 SCCA Evolution Driving School
Pungo Airfield, www.odr-scca.org

April 3-4 SCCA Solo II, Pungo Airfield
www.odr-scca.org

April 3 Tartan Day Scottish Festival
www.tidewaterscots.com/SST/index

April 6 Tuesday meeting at ??

April 18 Tech Session at Frank Linse's

April 19 Dipstick Deadline

April 24 CVBCC Show, Williamsburg
<http://www.Williamsburg-bcc.com>

April 24 Honky Tonk & Hot Rods, Driver
538-3512

April 25 Best of Boots, Bonnets and Baskets at Alan & Beckey Watson's

April 25 Britain on the Green
CapitalTriumphRegister.com



FEBRUARY MINUTES

Wendy Hiby

The meeting started a little after 8:00pm. Mark and Wendy Hiby were thanked for hosting the meeting.

Lee Kimbel was introduced as a new member to the club. Lee, who lives in Virginia Beach, owns a 1977 B, which is currently not running. He found out about the club on the Internet.

Minutes were approved from the January meeting.

Robin's report on membership: 1 new member, the above-mentioned Lee, for a total of 100 members. 12 members did not renew. Letters have been sent, but no responses.

Jim gave the treasurer report: Balance brought forward from Jan 2004 was \$1,794.83. The club made \$45.00 in raffle and dues and spent \$183.12 for the Christmas Party and printing. Final balance is \$1,656.71

Sue reported on the newsletter: Everyone enjoyed the Feb. edition. Sue is teaching and March may be small.

The club is still in need of an activities director. Anyone who is interested, please step forward.

The March meeting will be Wednesday March 3. Location to be determined.

Mike Ash reported on other club's events. They are all getting ready for Nationals. The "B" national is in NJ in June. The "A" national is at Watkins Glen in September and so is the "T" national. This is to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the MG racing at Watkins Glen. If you are interested in going book your rooms now.

Mark Childers gave advice on fixing distributor points plates getting wobbly. I admit I got confused with the real technical talk and could not take good notes of this discussion. For more information on a very easy fix contact Mark.

Old Business: Vince was not here so none was discussed.

New Business: New Dominion Pictures in Suffolk is looking for early 70 Bs or early British cars for set dressing for a new TV series.

Doug Kennedy has 1971 license plates. If you want one contact Doug.

Tom Lund is selling 2- 1978 Bs and 1 - 1975 B not sure if they are running or not.

Marque Time: Cheers!! There will be an article in the Dipstick about new legislation SB204 that is sponsored by Sen. Fred Quayle.

Saturday March 6 is the Tidewater Antique Automobile Club swap meet. No admission charge. From 8:00am - 3:00pm at the Khedive Temple, 645 Woodlake Dr., Chesapeake. The club voted to have a booth inside.

Betty Villers brought a crate of bulbs for everyone to take home.

MG is claiming to have the fastest station wagon on the market.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Hiby
(minute taker of the meeting, not by choice)

Membership & New Members

Robin Watson

Total membership 102

Membership is up by three this month, and for those of you that would like to keep your 2004 Directory up to date we have 3 new entries, and a change to Doug and Eiko Wilson's email address, which is now dew311@cox.net.

Last month my report went to print just 2 days before Lee & Suzanne Kimble joined, and we got to meet Lee at the Feb. meeting.

D. Lee & Suzanne Kimble
1613 Milldale Ct.
Va. Beach VA. 23456
Phone:(757) 467-4941
Email: dlkimble@erols.com
1977 MGB.

Then I received a renewal from Bob Stein who had backed off renewing this year because of his heavy commitment to his other great cars. Bob however has just saved another Octagon and now has his latest addition, a 1973 MGB-GT, running and on the road.

Bob Stein
7500 Pennington Road
Norfolk VA. 23505
Phone: (757) 588-6200
Email: posti@aol.com.

Bob now has 1966 MGB, 1973 MGB-GT and 1978 MGB amongst other cars that do not get a listing in the MG list.

We also have Peter & Diane Limoges, who I found on our web-site looking for someone that knows a little about MGAs. He likes to get out in his A and is looking forward to getting to a meeting even though he lives out in Suffolk.

Peter & Diane Limoges
5105 West Creek Court
Suffolk, VA. 23435
Phone: (757) 638-1698,
Email: limchina@aol.com
1959 MGA (1500)



SB 204

Terry Bond

Have you heard about SB 204? Well it's pretty important to you if you enjoy working on old cars!

To fully understand the bill and what it does, you need to get a look into the problem. I quote here from a letter written by Bill Laurent, President of the Car Club Council of Hampton Roads.

"SB-204 is not something new in the state of Virginia. The bill defines acceptable screening of inoperable vehicles. In Eastern VA, the following cities already allow inoperable vehicles to be stored outside provided they are shielded or screened from view:

Chesapeake, Falls Church, Franklin, Gloucester, Hampton, Hopewell, Portsmouth, Richmond, Suffolk, Smithfield, West Point, and Virginia Beach.

The following cities do not allow inoperable vehicles outside a fully enclosed structure:

Norfolk, Petersburg, Newport News, and Williamsburg.

Of the cities that allow inoperable vehicles to be shielded or screened from view, some limit the number of inoperable vehicles to prevent the formation of junkyards, and some do not define acceptable screening from view. Our problem as automotive hobbyists is that racecars and cars undergoing restoration are by definition, inoperable. Even a restored antique vehicle can be a problem for hobbyists because it may take a long time to locate repair parts to make a damaged or broken down vehicle operable. In cities that do not allow inoperable vehicles outside a fully enclosed structure, hob-

byists violate the code every time the vehicle is taken outside a garage. This fact and problems with local interpretation of 'screening from view' is why hobbyists statewide are calling for your help to provide a minimum, clear definition."

If you want to feel the scope of the problem, I quote again from Bill's letter:

"Captain Todd Burke, USAF owned a 1976 Camaro that he raced and periodically showed at car shows. He kept the car in his carport with a car cover on it. It was inoperable because it did not have a legal exhaust nor license plates (Todd towed it to races and shows). The City made him remove the car from the carport because it was inoperable. Todd periodically brought the car back to his home from storage for cleaning and maintenance before races or car shows. The city codes compliance inspector saw the car during one of the short visits and categorized Todd as a repeat offender, subject to heavy fines."

There are countless other stories of private property being taken or owners of collector vehicles being forced to dispose of them because of overzealous enforcement of inconsistent and overly repressive zoning ordinances. Until the state levels the playing field by clearly defining what "screened from view" means, then local zoning officials will be able to continue their quest to remove "inoperable vehicles" from private property.

SB 204 was drafted by concerned hobbyists and was sponsored by Sen. Fred Quayle of Chesapeake. Unfortunately, the bill was subjected to harsh criticism by some paid lobbyists who labeled car collectors as junk collectors. The bill was amended and in its present form only marginally aids our cause. Most of us expect to see it defeated eventually.

Where we stand – we have a group of supporters in the legislature who are actively working to clarify and standardize zoning as it affects our hobby. There are problems – particularly in some of Northern Virginia's most blighted areas – and we understand their concern. But, protection for our rights as property owners is vital, and the ability to continue to enjoy our hobby is important.

What you can do – visit the website legis.state.va.us where you can look at the text of this bill and its amendments. This website will enable you to not only see where this legislation currently stands, but you can also contact your representatives to tell them how you feel. It need be no more complicated than that. If you can't think of anything to say, just tell them:

"Clarification of the regulation concerning storage of inoperable vehicles is critical to consistent and equitable enforcement of zoning laws. Such clarification will help to protect my rights as a property owner and as an automobile enthusiast."

TRAACA Annual Swap Meet

TMGC will have a space at this local antique-car-only flea market where we picked up several new members last year. We displayed our banner, archives, newsletters and national MG club publications. If you would like to sell a few surplus MG parts, bring them along, we get a table and a couple chairs with the space. Stop by and visit us, the food is good and you might find something you just can't live without. Check it out at www.aaca.org/tidewater.

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 |

TECH STUFF

Mark Childers

Judging from hundreds of conversations at our meetings, I'd guess that more than half of the membership has taken on the task of restoring an MG. Some are actively contemplating the idea, some are actually gathering the bits and pieces aforehand, while the rest (at least until reading this) are perfectly content with their particular Abingdonian pride and joy.

From the handful of frame-off, near-concours show cars, to some fabulous re-spray and seat cover jobs, to mechanical perfection hiding under aging exteriors, it's apparent that TMGC's corporate knowledge and craftsmanship is nothing short of amazing. There are some superb MGs in this club, and many of our cars have garnered awards at local, regional and national events. Unlike the show stoppers at Pebble Beach, our cars are often treated just as Mr. Thornley and his merry band had intended: driven hard, in good weather, and bad. And that's the best part of having one of these gems.

For those whose automotive restoration experience is limited to Simonize and tire-shine, but have toyed with the idea of starting up a diamond in the rough, first

take heart, then take a good hard look at the raw material that's propped up by four tires. Look past the tattered interior and faded paint, and envision the possibilities, bearing in mind *wants and needs* ("want desert, need veggies ..."). The vision of flawless candy-apple red can blissfully blind us to the painfully obvious rot bubbling from the doglegs. Not much sense in putting an ultra-thick paint job on a car with bad brakes, slipping clutch or knocking engine, either, and there's no point in rebuilding weak brakes and shaky suspension just to pass inspection, only to find out that the car is rusted to the point of being unsafe to drive, and too expensive to repair. Sure, most parts can be reused, but at a cost of lost hours that could have been spent making forward progress locating a restorable shell. There are several members of the club more than happy to help determine the condition of a restoration candidate, but you have to make the call to get the wheels in motion. Borrow or purchase Lindsay Porter's "Guide to MGB Purchase and Restoration"; it will become your own personal technical advisor.

Once you have listed what you want to accomplish, break everything down into subsections, ie: INTERIOR: instruments/gages/dashtop, seats/cushions/frames/covers; ENGINE COMPARTMENT: mechanicals/plumbing/cosmetics; SUSPENSION: bushings/springs/a-arms/shocks and upgrades for each of the 4 corners; BODYWORK: Top/fenders/quarters/decklid/hood/windscreen/doors. List everything you see that is wrong, and also anything that you are happy with. There are numerous on-line inspection checklists available that break cars down almost to the individual component list.

Not everyone wants to be a journeyman tinsmith. It takes years for old-world panel beaters to become masters of their craft. But a serviceable and virtually invisible patch panel can be made by even a rank amateur with minimal handtools, given patience, practice and a good instructor, be it book, video or a community college class. And unlike Jay Leno, the average hobbyist doesn't require a full time staff, from artisan to gofer to do the vast majority of tasks that are needed to accomplish any level of MGB restoration. CPAs with MBAs, and doctors, and computer guys and lawyers and engineers and such keep those anachronistic old world panel beaters, and each other for that matter, gainfully employed. Even though you'll likely be doing most or all of the work, don't let a restoration consume your every waking moment. It's a challenge with a reward at the end, not a sentence leading to an eventual parole.

From the financial standpoint, I like to be very pragmatic. Every part, and every process adds to the

final expense. How much do you want to spend? Humor me, and take a mental trip to the off track parlor. You can't see the horses up close; its all guts and intuition, except for the tout sheets, and no two of them are alike in their picks. Now, place a bet on a horse. Any horse you choose. No, the odds aren't posted. And they change from something less than 1 to 1, up to long shot status – 2 or 3 to 1 if you pick the right bet on the right horse. Oh, by the way, the odds sometimes change *after* you place your bet. Bet too little, and the horse never gets beyond the first turn; in other words, the project becomes a basket case. Bet too much and the odds fall way below 1 to 1 when you cash in. Go ahead, bet as much as you can afford to lose – as long as it doesn't "take food off the table," in the broadest sense of the phrase.

If you are doing a restoration purely for the love of the car and its nostalgic value to you, and money is no object, then by all means bet the farm. However, if you don't plan on riding off into the sunset in this ruby (or blue or green or purple) steed, then do some serious research on what the market is bearing before blowing the bankroll on a car that you wouldn't be happy with if the market dried up and blew away. You might be better off with some mechanical upgrades to improve driveability, and a Maaco re-spray with a set of seat covers from Kmart – have fun driving for a couple years, turn it over, then move up to the car you really want to do up right using the money you saved up front.

Timewise, using weeks or months, calculate just how long your mental/social health can afford to go without a drive, and factor in unknowns such as lack of garage space, spousal separation anxiety, neighborhood irritation factors and the like. At any rate you can now begin to block in time for each job. Use the notes from your goal-setting to figure out just how deeply you want to delve into each section. Double the time that you have decided on then add some time (and money) for the surprises that often hide under body panels and carpets and brake drums, and you'll eventually have a business model that will help guide you along the way.

Even when blessed with a deep reserve of disposable income, and angelic patience, restoring any car is a daunting, yet challenging experience that can develop one's mechanical, artistic, and time management skills. Far greater than the mere reflection of your smile in freshly buffed paint are the heartfelt compliments from friends and complete strangers alike. These, along with new skills, and pride in craftsmanship are powerful returns on the investment of our cherished "spare time." These days, everyone needs a different sort of chal-

lenge to offset the daily grind of earning a living. And actually restoring an old MG is far more interesting and fulfilling than endless evenings in front of the tube watching reruns of Alain deCaternay barrelling around Goodwood in an ancient Alfa that probably costs more than the entire TMGC registry.

To see a *real* restoration challenge, drop in on this web site: www.oldsclub.org/MembersCars/1909_X3/1909_X3.htm

Safety Fast!

Notes from the Editors . . .

Susan Bond

Fortunately the reporting business gets a bit slow this time of year, I am having problems fitting things into my schedule. I was drafted to teach at TCC again, after telling them I just didn't have the time to do it. One instructor is out with back problems and they had to find substitute teachers for all 5 of his classes at the last minute. I really need to learn to say NO more forcefully. Only 2 more weeks of classes and I can get back to the usual rat race.

This slow news season has given me the opportunity to run a delightful article Geoff Wheatley sent me last year. When I asked for permission to reprint an article I had found in another newsletter he graciously agreed and sent me a few others as well. Enjoy!

February Meeting



Terry Bond, Robert Davis, Andy Wallach, Mike Ash

Many thanks to Mark Hiby for these pictures!



Susan Bond and Mike Ash



Susan Bond and Betty Villers

“Nellie”

Geoff Wheatley

I remember my first car as clearly as though it were parked in my garage today. I was in my first year of college in London, England. The car was M Type M.G. two years my senior, having first explored the leafy lanes, highways and busy cities of England in the year nineteen hundred and thirty. I purchased it for Ten Quid (\$16) off a fellow student who had passed his exams and decided that he now deserved a kinder and more gentle means of transport. The current student value was a few bucks less but as this model had the all-metal body rather than fabric I decided to go for broke. A familiar situation in those days!

Prior to this acquisition my general mode of transport was a W.W.2 “Norton” motor cycle that required its rider to have one leg longer and stronger than the other just to start the thing. It also had a tendency to kick back without warning which did little to impress the female passenger balancing precariously on a chair pillow tied to the back mudguard with several feet of string.

I considered myself to be something of an entrepreneur when I sold the motor bike for Eight Pounds and purchased my “ragtop sports” for just two more. Surely a sign that as and when I completed my higher education the world would certainly have another Rockefeller to contend with. Owning this car and enduring the love-hate relationship was akin to living with a leeching relative. As previously mentioned, as a college student I was constantly strapped by tight finances but this car taught me patience, discipline and the ability to operate under stress. I could afford those repairs that managed to keep the engine running. Every thing else, including the ability to stop at short notice, took a back seat. In consequence I did meet several fellow motorists from time to time by introducing myself and my car to the rear end of their vehicle.

In 1931 this car was considered a touring version of the

popular Morris Minor saloon. This really meant that they saved a few bucks by not fitting a real top, a sliding roof or proper side windows. Furthermore, the doors were only half size which must have contributed to saving a few more pennies. Not only were they half size, they also had no real door locks. At any moment whilst taking a corner at break neck speed (about twenty M.P.H. providing the road was not wet), the door on the near side would simply pop open leaving the passenger hanging on to any thing that would serve as an anchor. Sometimes, especially after a few beers in the local watering hole, the door would fly open and one of the three passengers residing in, on or under the single passenger seat would simply fade away into the night. Often no one even noticed until the next day when the individual turned up for class with his or her arm in a sling or on crutches.

Another little quirk was the sticking pedal that was, over a period of time, to become a chronic condition that eventually required serious attention in the form of a fourteen dollar repair, more than I ever spent on the engine throughout our entire three year relationship. Often, whilst waiting at a stop light I would lean under the dashboard to try and free the thing. This could lead to some interesting situations when the lights changed and I was still trying my karate chop on the offending unit. On one occasion I did manage to get the thing free with the heel of my shoe but in the process must have knocked the gear shift into reverse. As I took my other foot off the slipping clutch, (we never seemed to achieve a smooth take off no matter what I did), the car jumped back at least four feet and landed on the front bumper of a very new, shining automobile being driven by a now terrified senior citizen. Thank God his car had good brakes so that my reverse projection was halted before I did any serious damage . . . to my car! After I had accepted his profound apologies for hitting my rear end, it would seem that at the moment of impact he had just moved into first gear there by concluding that he had hit me. A brief exchange of names and addresses followed by two crisp five pound notes pressed into my hand resolved the matter. That was when I decided to make the capital expenditure on my sticking pedal before my guardian angel gave up on me and went off to protect a more worthy candidate.

During that period, when the car and I were still on friendly terms, I decided to improve the appearance with a paint job. After all, having spent 85% of my new found wealth on a pedal rehabilitation, I thought a further fifteen on cosmetics was not an extravagant proposition. In some magazine that I believe addressed the then new craze of D.I.Y. I noticed an article that suggested that the best way to get a durable yet brilliant paint finish was to utilize a large female powder puff, the sort of thing that twelve year old girls just love as a present on their thirteenth birthday. All I had to do was daub the P.P. into any chosen paint and then brush it onto the required surface. The end result was virtually guaranteed to give amazing results. (At least that part was right!)

My first problem was the instant destruction of several P.P.’s when dipped into the paint and applied to the car. After the fourth or perhaps fifth loss of a P.P. one could not help but notice that a percentage of the “Puff” remained on the car, giving the appearance of a mini shag carpet rather than a

gleaming automobile. The color I had chosen was a deep burgundy, purchased that very morning from the nearest Woolworth store. The tin was clearly marked "Ideal for outside use" so I knew that I had the right paint. It must be the cheap P.P.'s I was using, also purchased from Woolworth. Throwing caution to the wind I lashed out a further fifty cents and bought a "Super Delux Lambs Wool" P.P. convinced that this would solve the problem. Needless to say I was wrong, and for the remaining period of my ownership "Nellie", as she was affectionately known, had one fluffy fender. The rest of the car was painted with a conventional brush and turned out reasonably well. In fact, my two dollar fifty paint job had every appearance of costing at least twice that figure apart from the near side fender.

Considering the age of the car I got reasonable fuel mileage, about thirty something to the gallon, almost equal to the oil consumption. In fact, oil became a more serious expense than the gas as it seemed to cost more. I would stop and put in two gallons of fuel at around eighty cents, give or take a penny. The oil however cost close to a full dollar and that was the cheap stuff. Nellie always needed two/three large quarts to get her circulation back to that expensive line on the dip stick. In the end I resolved the problem by purchasing "recycled material". My local garage would sell me a full gallon of nearly new oil recently taken from a customers car during some expensive operation called an oil change. I never needed to waste money on such refinements, my car changed its own oil every hundred miles.

The battery was another source of trouble, it never seemed to take in enough electricity to start the engine. Thank goodness I had a starting handle and as the compression was at best modest, it was not difficult to swing the thing half a dozen times. Any one who has seen black and white movies of our gallant flyers in the First World War will be able to visualize the situation. Me, the gallant hero, sitting at the controls. She, my date for the evening, up front clasping the starting handle with both hands. "Contact", she swings the engine, nothing happens. "Again" one more swing and a slight rumble greets our ears. "Think it will fire this time", two more swings, a loud bang followed by an equally large cloud of gray smoke at the rear. "Here we go! Once more and we are on our way!" By this time my companion has discarded her purse and one or two items of superfluous clothing. One more swing and Bingo we are off. Sometimes this last attempt did result in a damaged nylon stocking, but who cares, we are off to travel the highways and byways of life, or something like that!

There was one serious problem that I could never totally resolve, I had extreme difficulty seeing where I was going at night. "Nellie" did have a wonderful pair of almost sensual headlights, large, cone shaped, and firm. However her six volt system was not the brightest star on the road and if I put on her main lights for more than a few minutes the battery ran down. In consequence most of my nocturnal driving was done via the two minuscule side lights that were reminiscent of gentle glow worms in a summer garden.

The final end of our relationship came almost unexpectedly as such things often do. I had decided to change one of the

tires, the one with the least amount of tread and slight shake at speeds over ten miles an hour. The process of changing the wheel required three bricks and a block of wood. I carried these items with me to supplement the mechanical jack that came with the car but would not hold any weight for more than thirty seconds. On reflection I recall that I could jack up the car, assemble the blocks and release the lift in fifteen to twenty seconds, providing it was not raining.

Any way, back to changing the wheel on that memorable day when "Nellie" and I bid a fond farewell to each other. I had just taken off the wheel and was busy trying to glue back one or two spokes that had parted company with the rim, when a voice from behind said, "Is this car yours?" Looking round I expected to see the usual Policeman standing on the pavement about to tell me that I could not do repairs on the Queen's Highway. Instead it was a rather well dressed man who seemed to be interested in my endeavors. "Yes, it's my baby" I replied. "Who painted the thing, and what's all that fluff stuff, on the front fender?" Indignation swelled up in me. "For your information, this is the original paint except for that nearside fender which I am about to strengthen with fiberglass." I know this may seem hard to believe but it must have sounded good as he nodded his head indicating that he understood the merits of that new wonder material called fiberglass. I had seen the term in a local news paper and concluded that it would look something like the "Fluffy Fender" on the nearside of "Nellie."

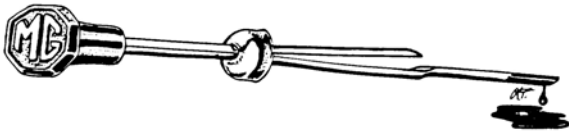
"Would you consider selling the car?" "Depends on how much I could get for this beauty, spent a lot of time restoring her to the condition she is in now." (That was no lie.) "Had one of these when they were all the rage some twenty years ago, don't see many around these days." (I could understand that.) "Would you consider fifty pounds?" "Think it's worth at least twice that amount," I heard myself say as my mind went into a state of shock at refusing such an offer. "Split the difference, lets say seventy five, in cash, now!" A few minutes later I pushed seventy five big ones into my back pocket, helped the new owner refit the wheel with the glued spokes, handed over the registration and watched "Nellie" disappear out of my life in a cloud of gray smoke.

Thank goodness we never met again and I never got that expected phone call from her new owner asking for his money back. I often wonder if she is now resting in someone's garage completely restored and the pride and joy of her owner, winning prizes at classic car shows and being admired by everyone who sees her. If I had kept her that's what she would have been today. But at twenty two with no prospects except a blind hope that you will get through exams, seventy five big ones is a Kings Ransom, especially in 1955.

If you are wondering what mode of transport followed "Nellie", I purchased another motor cycle, with a rear seat, for twenty pounds and eventually sold it for fifteen. It would seem that with the passing of "Nellie" my ability to turn a fast buck ended. I guess that's why I never became a reincarnation of Rockefeller.

Geoff Wheatley, 4327 Indianfield Road, Clinton, NY 13323

The Dipstick



The Tidewater MG Classics

Susan Bond
541 Forest Road
Chesapeake, VA 23322

Affiliated with



North American MGB Register

FIRST CLASS



March Meeting
Wed, Mar 3rd
Frankie's Place for Ribs
5200 Fairfield Shopping Center
495-7427

