

# The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

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

Volume XXXIII, Issue 2

Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

February 2005

## MARQUE TIME

I currently try to operate under two sayings: “Less is More” and “Less Thought, More Action.”

Less is More, except when it comes to money...and possibly cars. I'm an accumulator. You replace a part on your car with a new one...and you just do not dispose of the old one. It is a perfectly good bottom wishbone bracket except that the hole for the lower link bolt is enlarged. Someday, if need be, you could weld-up and re-drill the hole to the correct size. Well, after storing and moving this junk for years, I'm trying to dispose. But it is hard, mainly because I'm inherently frugal and do not want to throw away anything I might eventually need and, then, have to buy. As I said “Less is More except when it comes to money”. I dealt more with this internal conflict lately as I cleaned up the second floor of my garage so that I could then fill it up with all that I could move from the first floor in preparation for a “Make Over” of the first floor. I dream of a “Bill Keeler Garage”; everything neat and clean.

Two weeks shy of 22 years and I have parted ways with my 1983 Porsche 944. With four MGs, a Toyota, and an Acura...and “Less is More” thundering in my head, it just had to go. Anyway, the Acura accelerates faster than the Porsche and both the Acura's and the Toyota's air conditioning works.

Now to my other 2005 saying: “Less Thought, More Action”. There are “thinkers” and there are “doers”. I'm a “thinker” and my wife Cynthia is a “doer”. While I research and contemplate all the ramifications, she just does it. And guess what, the difference in the eventual outcomes is not very different. You can take weeks to search out the best price for an item...and maybe save a few dollars or just go to a store with good prices and buy the item. For the “thinker”, the mind is cluttered with all the different items that one is contemplating...which then just slows down the whole process.

Thanks to all who signed up to host a meeting or event this year and to Activities Chair Beckey Watson who adeptly signed them up. We have never entered a new year with nearly all the dates hosted.

Andy Wallach

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

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

**Feb. 2** Wednesday meeting at Bill Seib and Leslie Paul's (see back page)

**Feb. 13** Valentine Rallye (see page 3)

**Feb. 15** Dipstick Deadline

**March 1** Tuesday meeting at Wendy & Mark Hiby's

March 5 SCCA Rally School and TSD Tour  
[www.odr-scca.org](http://www.odr-scca.org)

March 12 TRAACA Swap Meet  
[www.aaca.org/tidewater](http://www.aaca.org/tidewater)

**March 15** Dipstick Deadline

March 26-27 SCCA Evolution Driving School  
[www.odr-scca.org](http://www.odr-scca.org)

## Membership & New Members

Robin Watson

*Total membership 103*

Since the January report we have received two new members. For those of you that want to keep their 2005 Directory up-to-date and may wish to enter the new members in it, here are the details of the new members:

Dennis Gaskin  
1112 Cottage Pl.  
Norfolk, VA 23503.

Dennis has a 1979 B (well, he hopes he does). At the moment I have it at home, do-

ing a couple of things for him. Last time I saw him we were so busy talking MGs I did not get him to fill in a form so I cannot yet put any phone numbers into print.

Our other new member found us out and made a visit with us at the January meeting at Frankies Ribs.

Thomas & Amy Day  
71 Clydes Ln.  
Windsor, VA 23487  
Phone: 757-242-9392,  
E-mail: twday@aol.com

They have a 1974 B-GT. We did not get to meet Amy yet but because of the distance, I think Thomas wanted to check the club over before committing. Glad you made the trip in Thomas and we are looking forward to meeting Amy and seeing the GT on the road.



## JANUARY MINUTES

Doug Kennedy

With a hearty "Happy New Year" el Presidente Andy called the meeting to order promptly at 8:03 Lucas Standard Time. Frankie was thanked for hosting us at his place for ribs. *SECRETARY'S NOTE: This meeting site is well recognized for its fine food offerings as well as challenging acoustics. With that in mind the following minutes are offered with little guarantee of accuracy or their realistically reflecting the goings-on.*

A welcome to Richard Leal, a long-ago neighbor of Mike Ash's. He actually wanted to buy a Triumph until Mike helped him come to his senses. Along with acquiring a TD he has also recently acquired a wife, Joan. Tom Day was also welcomed. He's here from Windsor and owns a 74 B. Hopefully, they were all not scared off and will return next month.

**Minutes:** Motion to approve by Oswald, then passed.

**Vice-President:** His eminence, Alan, thanked Andy and Cynthia for hosting the holiday party. This great idea was greeted with a ton of applause.

**Treasurer's Report:** In: \$189.00, Out: \$536.67, Left: \$1989.28. There was some mention of Jim leaving for the football bowl game but this heretic behavior could never have happened by such a fine man.

**Newsletter:** Peggy has certificates for contributors so

get your submissions in. A certificate was also mailed to Geoff Wheatley who writes nationally. He welcomed the thought and submitted two more items!

**Membership:** Robin reported that we had 102 members at year's end. This equals the last year's (2003) total.

**Activities:** Becky has almost all of 2005 planned out with meetings already! She thanked the members who visited the lights on the beach for a top-down event. When asked that evening why he had his top down that night Vince apparently reported "It's a convertible, it came like that." Wine tour and lots of other events coming as well.

**History:** Kate's early years album was present and Sue's working on last year's album. Keep those pictures coming.

**Spares:** Mark bowed out due to stage fright. He also has distributor points plate for an early B. Mike Ash and Andy have wire wheels available. Completely unrelated, Andy finally sold a book for \$150 on-line. This part of the meeting took 20 minutes so please accept the summary since I lost interest pretty quickly. Oh, Cynthia is flogging the rest of Andy's books/door stops at greatly reduced prices.

**Regalia:** Frank has mugs and glasses all ready to sell. See him now and beat next year's holiday rush.

**Clubs:** Nada.

**Old Business and New Business:** Hmmmm....none. When suggestions for business were brought up there was a rousing chorus of boos. It was widely accepted that there being no business was a sign of the President's excellent management skills. The President then passed his promised \$5 to the Secretary.

**Marque Time:** Vince reported that Bill Seib's car was resurrected by he and Frank when they found that the battery was dead, leading to no power. So, a B for sale was avoided at the last minute.

Andy is working on his A's welding. Cynthia is optimistic. Everyone else is not.

**Raffle:** Mass hysteria was produced when the winning raffle ticket was missing for awhile. Then, Sue came forward to grab her booty (stop your unpure thoughts, that's the raffle prize I'm talking about). With that commotion settled we adjourned and sat back to digest and reflect wistfully on the year that passed like a Hokie fan the day after the Sugar Bowl.



**Take your sweetie out for a treat-y!**

**And drive those MGs we love so much!**

**Sunday, February 13, 2005 (Valentine Eve)**

**Meet at Virginia Wesleyan College (turn right after guard shack, you'll find us) at 3:00 p.m.**

**This is a gimmick rallye -- there will be questions to answer, street names that are scrambled, clues to look for**

**A navigator is strongly recommended!**



**The short rallye (about 30 min) will end at Pembroke Pizza & Pasta, 633 Independence Blvd., in Virginia Beach (between Haygood and Virginia Beach Blvd.) 497-9014**

**If you don't want to run the rallye meet us there around 4:00 p.m.!**

**There will be fabulous prizes!**

**Love will abound!**

## **Tech Stuff**

Mark Childers

Based on the rate of progress I'm making on the '70, the only possible color to replace the original *Flame* has to be *Glacial White*...It now runs, and can actually move under its own power, stopping only well enough for a short 25 mph test drive. Blame the brakes on me. Or, more accurately, on the feral tomcat that got in by pushing the unfastened battery box cover out of his way. Three bottles of Febreze later, I found an assistant willing to sit (with the top off and a shop fan blasting away) just long enough to get a decent bleed on the front brakes. As I checked the front suspension and steering, I noticed that the front wheel bearings were making a little noise. A lot of noise, actually. And they were a bit wobbly as well. So, after the test drive, it went back into the garage to look after the wheel bearings, and any other can-o-worm colonies that might be festering in the greasy shadows. With the car on jacks and the wheels removed, I determined that instead of finding the specified couple thousandths of

in and out freeplay, the taper bearings had been preloaded in the fashion of, say, the '61 DeSoto Sportsman fitted with ball-type wheel bearings. I concede that an argument could be made that a few pounds of preload on an MG's spindle might be fine for autocrossing. With the bearings, shims and spacer pressed together, the spindle is not subjected to the slidehammer effect of multiple directional changes. But for the long haul, temps build up, metal expands, and who knows how it might affect the life of a wheel bearing or axle stub. From the *tunka-tunka* sounds when the wheels were rotated, I assumed that at least 1 bearing had gone bad on each side, so I found a couple of spare hubs with good bearings, and got started.

Special tool/equipment/skills required? A 1-1/8" socket (available at AutoZone for about \$5), torque wrench, a can of high temp bearing grease (a bearing greaser and grease gun are a bonus), and a "Perceptometer". Otherwise known as the poor-man's dial indicator (or SWAG-ometer in less than scientific circles) your soon-to-be-acquired ability to convert the mere perception of motion into its three-decimal-point equivalent will keep you entertained for hours while

waiting in supermarket check out lines. Providing you are easily distracted.) A container of kerosene or parts cleaner will preclude the need to use the family dishwasher as a parts cleaner. I also recommend wearing latex or vinyl gloves, as bearing grease contains some rather nasty chemicals that interfere with the healing process. Shim-wise, as I recall, the most that should ever be needed is 2 or 3 of each size (.003, .005 and .010" are available from the usual suspects; these and other sizes can also be gotten from most local machine shops if you bring a sample). Oil seals can be purchased at any NAPA store using the part number from the old seal.

I prefer to do the job in two stages; clean-up and dry-fitment then final assembly with grease. Remove wheel and two 5/8" caliper retaining bolts. Hang caliper from a wire then disassemble axle and clean all the grease off of everything. Inspect the bearings for any sign of growling. When removing the old grease seal, take care not to bend it. Assemble without grease in the following order, using the old oil seal (to save the new seal from getting dinged up):

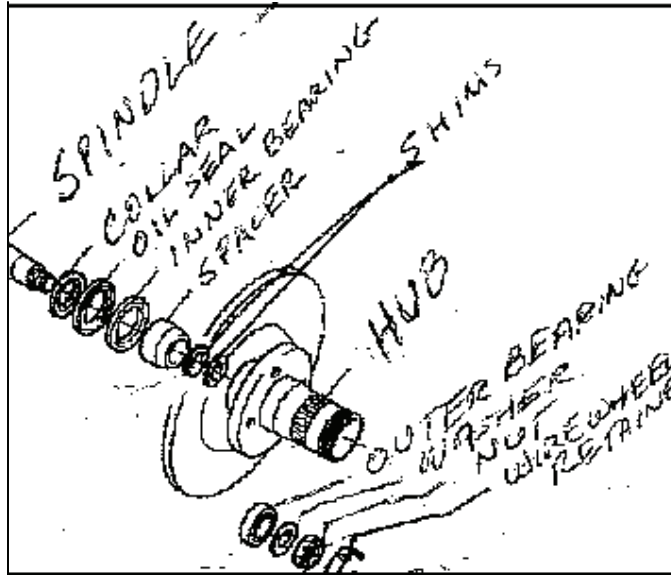
**NUT - WASHER - OUTER BEARING - (no shims here yet) - SPACER - INNER BEARING - OIL SEAL - COLLAR**

Tighten the nut until the hub just binds. This ensures that the bearing races are seated. Next, remove the nut, washer and outer bearing. I start by adding shims to get enough float as to be able to both see and hear it when the hub is moved in and out, then swap shims (sometimes 2 differing sizes at the same time) until the end float is just perceptible. Generally, if you can feel the wheel move in and out, but can't hear more than just a perceptible tick when the hub is shoved in and out with some authority, the clearance is between .001 and .002". If you can feel the motion, and hear more than just a muffled tick, and possibly even see a tiny bit of movement, then you are likely at .002 to .004" and still within spec. Even with as much as .005" movement, far less long-term damage to bearings will occur than is likely if the bearings are preloaded, or there is excessive (.008" or greater) end play. Disassemble and remove bearings and discard old oil seal.

Packing a bearing is an art unto itself. Always pack grease from the same side of the bearing to keep air bubbles from forming. And, always use gloves when packing bearings as grease can actually be "hydraulicked" right through the skin with painful consequences (heed the voice of experience...) I put a lump of grease in my palm, and force it into the slot between the rollers and the outer race, then work inward. Pack some grease in the new oil seal cavity and some additional grease between the seal and the inner bearing face. Don't pack the hub cavity. It only adds to unsprung weight. Wash the rotor off with brake sol-

vent or alcohol.

Reassemble and torque the nut to at least 40 ft pounds, then turn until the next set of cotter pin holes line up. Don't torque more than about 50 ft pounds (although 70 ft pounds is supposed to be the max) to get the hole to line up. Before driving, pump brake pedal gently to restore hard pedal. Entire job takes about 30 minutes per wheel.



**On the First Day of Christmas My True MG-Lover Sent to Me...**

Beckey Watson

A bunch of presents to put under the needy families' trees! I should not be surprised at the outpouring of gifts brought by fellow club members (Andy and Cynthia's holiday party) to be given to The Dwelling Place, this year's charity. I had given the ages and wish list of twenty-one children -- and received over seventy toys AND \$150.00 in gift certificates!! We had play tea sets, wrapping paper, three basket balls, dolls, a neat talking car that Alan added to his Christmas list, and SEVEN personal CD players -- one for each of the teenagers!

When we delivered the gifts to The Dwelling Place, the coordinator didn't know what to say! She saw us carry in the first two bags full, and was very happy and grateful, and told us where to put them by her desk. Then she followed us back to the car, where the trunk was packed with two more bags and a large box full of toys. Then I gave her the large envelope full of gift certificates. She said a thousand Thank You's, and a few God Bless's -- and I told her He already had. It's a pleasure to represent TMGC at Christmas time! Thank you to everyone for your generosity!



# BEACH FRONT LIGHT TOUR

Robin Watson

What a way for Becky to finish off the year's activities. Even though we knew the weather may not help,



Olive Watson, Jim Villers, Lew & Largo Faxon, Terry Bond

it was planned as a top-down run. However, the run was scheduled for Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> and on the morning of Dec.



Becky Watson, Leslie Paul, Bill Seib, Alan Watson, Barb Taychert

27 the thermometer on my front pouch in Pungo showed a low of 17.6 in its memory. At this point I was not too sure about the top-down on the run. Becky, along with Alan's help, had planned a meeting at the Beach Pub on Laskin road to leave at 7.30.



Some of us planned to eat there. Orders were placed Pam Groover, Mike Knepler, Becky Watson

and then, with the temperature in the mid 50's, we started to miss some of the members from their tables as



Betty & Jim Villers, Lew Faxon

they went to the car park to put the tops down. There were four members, Vince & Pam Groover, Susan Bond, Olive & Robin Watson, Jim & Betty



Villers, who drove from home with their tops down. We had a total of 18 members, 9 cars, 7 MGs: Susan & Terry Bond, Lew & Largo Faxon, Mark & Kathy Davidoski, Bill Seib & Leslie Paul, Barbara Taychert & Mike Knepler, Alan & Becky Watson, Robin & Olive Watson.



We tried to leave and stay together as a group but a couple of cars got held up in the transition onto Laskin road. But the MGs did finish as a group along Atlantic Avenue and on to the light tour. About 1 mile from the start of the lights, traffic moved

along at a stop-and-go crawl, our top down MGs sure brought on a few



com - ments and picture taking from the pedestrians. Vince was asked by someone why we had the tops down which drew a casual comment from him that the cars came that way. The lights were very good and well worth the trip down



Lights reflected in an MG bonnet. See the web site for the color version.



the Boardwalk. At the end of the lights we tucked in behind Alan & Beckey who had arranged with an Ocean Front Hotel (Courtyard Marriott) for Hot Chocolate. This little extra had taken quite a bit of arranging due to the holiday season being over and finding someone to serve at that time of night was not easy.



Vince Groover, Robin Watson



Vince & Pam Groover, Jim Villers, Robin Watson, Betty Villers, Lew & Largo Faxon, Olive, Alan & Beckey Watson, Terry Bond

As we parked, some of the MG drivers put the tops up ready for the drive home. Those of us that ran the light tour sat down to a warm drink and a very pleasant chatter to finish of the year's activities. Thank you Beckey for an active 2004!

**DENNIS THE MENACE** by Hank Ketcham



"Y'KNOW, JOEY... HOT CHOCOLATE IS KINDA LIKE ANTI-FREEZE FOR PEOPLE."

From the *Virginian Pilot*, Jan. 30, 2004

# January Meeting

January 4, 2005

At Frankie's Place for Ribs

Don't adjust your bifocals, some of the pictures are a bit fuzzy.



Andy Wallach looking very presidential!



Cynthia Faschini, prospective member Joan Leal, Jennifer Ash



Mike Ash, prospective member Richard Leal



Alan & Beckey Watson

Marilyn & Roy Wiley



Paul & Carmen Thiergardt





Mike Knepler,  
Pam Groover,  
Barb Taychert

Robin Watson,  
Paul Thiergardt



Katherine &  
Kate Fisher



Pam & Vince  
Groover



Anne & Carl  
Godwin

Editors  
Peggy Craig  
& Susan Bond



Harry Watson



New member Tom Day (he  
signed up at the meeting and  
has a GT)



Carl Fisher

Frank Linse &  
Debbie Eisenbath



Terry Bond, Mark Davidoski, Mark Childers

SuperScribe  
Doug Kennedy



## 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	Beckey Watson	426-2600
Historian	Susan Bond	482-5222
Technical	Mark Childers	432-9155
Regalia	Frank Linse	461-7783
Clubs	Mike Ash	495-0307

## Notes from the Editors.....

Susan Bond

Bad planning, I have three quarters of a column left over. So here are some rambles.

I have had a bunch of senior moments lately. I know that someone in the club offered me some column fillers, but between overwork, the holidays and a nasty cold I have forgotten who. If you could please refresh my memory it would really be appreciated.

Have you seen an MG in unusual circumstances lately? How 'bout snapping a picture and sending it in? Our new column, MG Sightings, is the place for it.

My 74 BGT is finally ready to paint! It has only been 10 years since it banged into a 69 Dodge and took up permanent residence in the barn. Now if the painter will just call me back and tell me when to deliver it....

While going thru all the piles of parts that were taken off the B, I realized that I couldn't put all that rusty stuff back into a pristine body. When am I going to find time to strip and paint all that stuff? Fortunately the radiator and heater core went to the radiator shop so I don't have to worry about them. Now to get all the stuff that goes around them cleaned up....

Did you drive your MG during all that glorious summer weather we had in January? If not you missed out on a real treat. It isn't often we can **enjoy** top-down or windows-open driving in the middle of winter. I drove the GT to the office and saw lots of old cars on the road, from Vettes to an El Camino, and a few MGs. Now that winter weather has returned, the memories will have to keep us going. Spring is only a few months away!

## MG Sightings

This is a new column for all the MGs of note you see in various places.

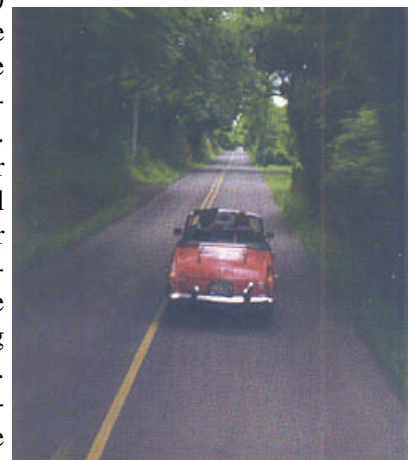
Sent in by Mike Haag:



Heard about this MGA a few months ago from my brother-in-law, and finally looked at it on the way home. It's located about 20 mi from my Mom's house. Unfortunately, it's too far gone. Mostly rust, not many parts even worth saving. A pair of vise grips for a steering wheel! It does have an engine. I'm afraid the thing would fall apart if you tried to move it. It's too bad people let cars like this go to waste. Even I'm not tempted on this one, so you know it's bad!

Magazine sighting:

All you AAA members (and if you drive your MG you probably should be) turn to page 2 in the local AAA magazine **Going Places**, January/February 2005. There is a sidebar titled "What is fuel costing you per mile?" The illustration is a red chrome bumper B going down the road. Though it's not a local car (looks like Pennsylvania plates) it is nice to see it as an illustration for fuel economy. What sort of mileage do you get with your MG?



Another magazine sighting:

In the October 2004 issue of **Antique Automobile**, published by the Antique Automobile Club of America, was an article by Geoff Wheatley titled "MG Origins." It starts out, "Most MG owners today believe they have



a product from one of the most successful car manufacturers of its time, a company that exported cars all over the world and obviously made lots of money in the process. In reality nothing could be further from the truth!" He outlines the history of MG, the various models, racing and the lack of good management. It jives with the info printed last year in **Enjoying MG**, published by the MG Owners Club.



From *Classic Motorsports*, January 2005, issue 112, page 36

## "The Fabulous 50"

Nobody ever said classic cars were a rational obsession, and classics have all kinds of virtues that don't translate well to cold, hard statistics.

So what?

Our hobby isn't about logical decisions and pragmatic choices. It's about the indefinable things in life and how our cars best embody and deliver those things – like pleasure, relaxation and, yes, love. It's about how much of ourselves we invest in these objects, and how much they tell us about ourselves in return.

In other words, it's a deeply personal thing. Which is why we turned to you, the *Classic Motorsports* audience, to determine our list of the 50 favorite classics. Unlike some other magazines, we're not telling you what's cool; you're telling us.

Because rational or not, you know what you like. They may not necessarily be the fastest or best-looking cars ever. They're certainly not the most reliable, or even the most comfortable. But to you, they're the best.

Tons of readers voted for their favorite classic via our online poll at [www.classicmotorsports.net](http://www.classicmotorsports.net). Once the final results were tallied, your choices proved to be interesting, provocative, and often surprising. So, without any further ado, here they are.

### 1. MGB

MG sold more than a half-million Bs during an 18-year model run that stretched from 1962 through 1980. This makes it far and away the top-selling classic, and as MGB owners remain a dedicated, faithful and energetic group, it's no real surprise it topped the list of reader favorites.

So what makes the B so popular? In a word: balance. There's a subtle balance to the external design, for which MG borrowed liberally from everything from 1950's Renaults to Ferraris, but the overall look is unmistakably MGB. There's rewarding dynamic balance to the B, too, as a bolt-action gearbox under your hand

and perfect 50-50 weight distribution make the most of the MG's modest power. Simply put, the B gives you a nearly unbeatable blend of vintage charm and modern usability, simplicity and robustness, comfort and performance.

Bolstering the B's numbers were fans of the MGB GT, who were no doubt swayed by the GT's Pininfarina-penned roof line, which makes the coupe quieter, stiffer, better handling, and more practical than the B roadster, albeit without the wind in the hair.

Even the later, much-maligned rubber bumper models picked up a few votes thanks to their superior comfort, ergonomics and the peace of mind those giant plastic-covered girders bring in modern bump-and-go traffic. The fact that there's just more of them out there undoubtedly helped the voting as well.

Equally at ease as a Sunday cruiser or as home to a fire-breathing V8 engine transplant, the B is good-looking, good-handling, fun, affordable, and easy to find parts for.

Why wouldn't it be a favorite?

### 19. MGA

The A was long overdue, and would have hit the streets several years earlier if it weren't for internal squabbling among BMC executives. The first modern MG did away with the classic "square-rigged" look and offered levels of comfort and performance never previously found in mass-produced MGs.

Combine the typically predictable and fun MG handling with beautiful, flowing lines, and you've got a winner. When it finally saw light for 1955, the A quickly became the best-selling sports car in MG history up to that point.

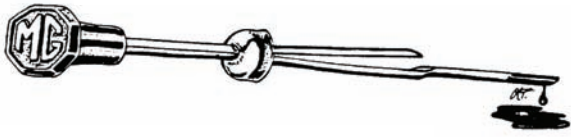
### 28. MG T-series

Without the MG TC, this whole sports car thing may never have taken off in the U.S. Sure, to modern eyes it's ridiculously old-fashioned and slow, but immediately after World War II nothing else was even close. Servicemen brought them home, wowed the men, wooed the women, and taught America about sports cars. The TD and TF just cemented the love affair.

### 46. MGC

The MGC was supposed to be MG's big-engined car and a successor to the Big Healeys. It failed; reviewers of the time hated its slow-revving (and slower turning) nature. But modern owners have discovered that the C – sold only from 1967 until 1969 – is a comfortable, long-legged tourer, and both the suspension and engine are relatively easy to rouse.

# The Dipstick



## The Tidewater MG Classics

Susan Bond  
541 Forest Road  
Chesapeake, VA 23322

Affiliated with



North American MGB Register

## FIRST CLASS



7:30 - Kick Tyres  
8:00 - Meeting

Monthly Meeting  
Wed, Feb 2nd  
Bill & Leslie's  
617 Reasor Drive  
Va Beach  
420-9523

