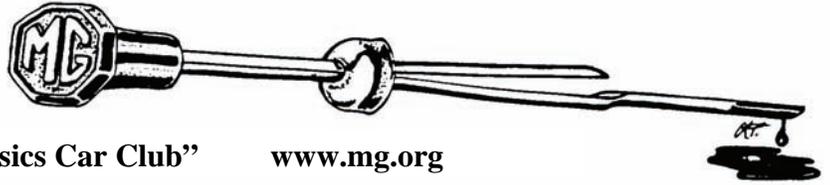


The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

www.mg.org

Volume XXXIII, Issue 2

Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

February 2006

MARQUE TIME

Was that January? Normally I spend January huddled under a blanket in front of the fireplace, listening to the rhythmic drone of the oil pump on my furnace as it pumps dollar bills, (this year fives) into the burner. What I (and probably only I) find interesting is that considering how mild the first month of this year has been, it is lagging behind the previous years for a high temperature. One of the many quirks I have is that I track each month's overall high and low temperature as measured on my front porch. This started January 2001 when I received a digital thermometer for Christmas. Since then I have maintained a spreadsheet charting overall highs and lows for every month. I have wonderful line graphs, too!

Changing gears, the General Assembly is once again reviewing antique license plate legislation with House Bill # 288. It appears two changes are involved this year, one prohibits use of the vehicle for daily travel to and from the owner's work place, which probably would help our hobby by reducing antique plate abuse. The second change does concern me because it would limit the “occasional pleasure drive” from 250 miles to 50 miles from the owner's home. Fifty miles from my home doesn't get me very far from Pungo! I would like to see this part of the legislation removed. I know I will be contacting my representative. (Ed. Note: see page 4)

The “off-season” is a time that Beckey and I start planning and mapping some of the events that she will be coordinating this year. We have one route mapped for the tentative wine-tour for this year, and we are working on another gimmick rallye, this time for St. Patrick's Day. It's also a good time to start thinking about the ice-cream runs -- she is always looking for volunteers to plan one of those. They are generally shorter drives, usually 30 minutes or so, and as the name implies end up at a location that serves ice-cream. If you have any ideas or suggestions for activities, now is the time to get them to us.

Safety Fast,
Alan

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Check www.mg.org for the latest info!

Feb. 1 **Wednesday meeting at Frankie's Place for Ribs** (see back page)

Feb. 15 Dipstick Deadline

Feb. 18 Central Virginia British Car Club Snowball Run to Tides Inn, kevin@sellingrichmond.com

Feb. 18 SCCA Rally School and TSD Tour, Richmond, www.odr-scca.org

March 7 **Tuesday meeting at Mark & Wendy Hiby's**

March 11 TRAACA Swap Meet, www.aaca.org/tidewater

March 12 **St. Patrick's Gimmick Rallye** (tentative date)

March 15 Dipstick Deadline

Officers and Committees

President	Alan Watson	
	426-2600	
Vice President	J.D. Hawthorne	723-0630
Secretary	Doug Kennedy	460-5037
Treasurer	Jim Villers	
	481-6398	
Editors	Peggy Craig	
	226-7755	
	Susan Bond	
	482-5222	
1 Membership	Robin Watson	721-

JANUARY MINUTES

Doug Kennedy

Secretary's Note:

The meeting was held at Frankie's Place for Ribs. While noted for its delectable skeletal, the acoustics of this particular meeting site are slightly better than your average chain saw repair shop. Mixed in with the fact that the Secretary spent too much time in college as a roady with a particularly loud punk rock band, and efficient minutes generation is a challenge. So, no accuracy of the following is assumed, implied, or guaranteed. Omissions are unanticipated and not done on purpose. Do not fold, spindle, or mutilate.

The meeting opened on time at precisely 8:00:21 Lucas Standard Time. El Presidente Alan commanded everyone's attention with a mighty rap of his gavel bringing us to order. No guests summoned the courage to attend.

Minutes: Approved from November.

Treasurer's Report: In: \$428.00 Out: \$533.74
Left: \$2280.87

Activities: Becky had 125 cars in attendance at the car show over Peninsula way! Andy and Cynthia were thanked for hosting the holiday party. All meetings for 2006 were signed-up for with the exception of February. Things are quiet otherwise with a rally in the planning stages.

A cell phone went off.

Clubs: MG 2006 will be in Gatlinburg in June. Make your reservations now says Mike.

Membership: Since November we have three new members. We're at 108 now.

Someone ordered Merlot but there was some confusion over who's it was.

Newsletter: Peggy passed out Certificates of Appreciation to newsletter contributors. Authors are needed. PLEASE write about your experiences and projects and get the info in. Alan and Becky spent New Year's in St. Louis where they started planning a wine tour in Virginia. This seems to make sense to them.

Another bottle of Sam Adams was needed over on table 4.

Regalie: Raffle was for a stadium blanket and a pic-

ture Frame. "SWEET TEA? ANYONE FOR SWEET TEA?" Another order going in for regalia items so see Becky.

Spares: Andy had leftover holiday party items looking for their rightful owner.

Old Business: Nada

New Business: Zip

Marque Time: Craig Cummings and Chuck Hassler put a windshield back in a C in an hour and 45 minutes. Much conjecture ensued.

Jim's car wasn't starting so he fiddled and it works now. There was a spring involved and the choke was also at fault but the details elude me.

Vince spoke with Mike Donovan. Mike's doing okay and halfway through his chemo. We all wish him well.

Anyone know of a good painter? Please call Vince. I assume it's to paint a car. I also assume good means "good and cheap."

The Sam Adams and Becks appeared.

The raffle was held for the blanket, DVD, and picture frame/license plate holder and the Secretary kept his 58 meeting loss streak alive (this time missing by ONE number). The meeting was adjourned and we all tried to avoid paying our bills like congressmen avoiding calls from reporters seeking comment regarding a "Mr. Abramhoff."

Membership and New Members

Robin Watson

Total membership 108

Membership for this month is still at 108, lets hope for some warmer days so that we can start the ICE CREAM RUNS and other get-together activities and draw some more interest in our wonderful LBC club.

Claim your dishes!

Andy Wallach

The following are the leftover MG Holiday Party dishes/utensils:

- 1 Mikasa Italian Countryside Salad Plate
- 1 Ekco Baker's Secret 9" metal pie plate
- 1 Small clear glass bowl (KIG-Indonesia marking)
- 1 Oneida serving spoon.

MGs at the Beach

Jim Freeh

Photos by Jim Villers, Robin Watson, Susan Bond

It was a dark and stormy night. Well...that's what I would have expected for a wintry December 27th, but it was clear and merely brisk, with temperatures in the low 50's and falling as we arrived at the Beach Pub a bit before 6 pm. A total of 7 MGs were present and at least one intrepid couple arrived with the top down, an option that was available to all the B's that arrived, save one well known black B GT, which would have required a sawzall for alfresco motoring. Having decided discretion was the better form of valor, Linda and I opted for the top up during the mostly freeway trip to the Pub.

Once safely inside the Beach Pub and out of the elements, we settled in for some serious foraging and consuming. Barb and Bob Ross, Roy and Marilyn Wiley



Barbara Ross, Jim & Linda Freeh, Olive Watson

(accompanied by two prospective junior members), Jim and Betty Villers, and Sue and Terry Bond sat at one end of the long table; Robin, Olive, Alan and Beckey Watson, along with Linda and Jim Freeh, held up the far end of the tables, accompanied by late arrivals George and Peggy Craig, their son Scott and his wife Nita, and Peggy's sister, Debbie, and Mom, Evelyn, from the warm state of Texas.

The food was delightful, as was the fellowship. Tales of Christmas' past and present were told over fish and chips, burgers, oysters, and chowders. Following the meal, we broke camp and headed for the parking lot where the remaining 5 MGB roadsters bravely folded their tops in anticipation for the Christmas Lights spectacle. The group drove east on Laskin Road and then made a right hand turn onto Atlantic Ave. The convoy generated some attention as we paraded down the street. I'll assume it was generated by the MGs, and not addressed to the occupants who had their tops down. Close together, we managed to stay in a



group as we crawled south on Atlantic. There was a rather long line, and I am pleased to report there were



no mechanical failures enroute. Despite the prolonged idling period, the prince of darkness never did rear his head. Once on the boardwalk, we proceeded along at the perfect speed, 1st

gear, clutch out, and idling. The lights were beautiful, the night air was quite crisp, and electric dolphins were leaping over our cars. I was surprised by the number of people out and about on the boardwalk, and even



Linda & Jim Freeh



Beckey & Alan Watson

more surprised to see a horse drawn carriage overtake our cars... Aside from a ten minute or so stop at the pier due to unknown circumstances, the trip up the boardwalk went quite smoothly. Terry and Sue Bond, along with Jim Villers, took advantage

of the stop to document the event with photos of the cars on the boardwalk. Toward the end of the light show, the Twelve days of



Nita & Scott Bradford

Christmas were depicted as we idled along. We got up to 11 Pipers piping, but could not see the 12 Drummers drumming. I later found out that the drummers were



Betty Villers



home, but the lights were out. Must have been a cost saving measure. Following

Barbara & Bob Ross



Olive & Robin Watson

the drive on the boardwalk, we adjourned to the Marriott Hotel on Atlantic Avenue for some hot chocolate, which was welcomed by most as an enjoyable warm-up after the drive. We posed for some group pictures and departed around 9:45 pm. Most,

if not all, tops were erected before leaving the hotel grounds as well.



You and legislation – and how to deal with HB288

For the 2006 legislative session in Virginia, HB288 has been drafted to first make some corrections to the years of license tags that can be used on properly registered “antique vehicles.” Secondly, the bill responds to requests from DMV and Law Enforcement officials to “tighten up” two areas –first, there is now a specific prohibition being proposed that will preclude someone from using their properly registered antique vehicle as transportation to and from work or a work site. Secondly, it attempts to reduce the “distance from home” where you can operate a properly registered antique vehicle for occasional pleasure use (i.e. not associated with legitimate hobby activity). Under current law, you are permitted to use your vehicle for occasional pleasure use within a range of up to 250 miles from home. The new Bill attempts to reduce that authorization to 50 miles from home.

There are some misunderstandings about the bill – first, it is seen as an attempt to restrict usage. Nothing in the bill restricts proper use of your vehicle. There is no maximum amount of mileage you can put on your vehicle, and absolutely no restriction on how much you use it for proper authorized reasons.

The usage of antique vehicle tags has always involved restrictions, but in return, there are benefits: 1-time token fee, perpetual renewal for as long as you own the vehicle, exemption from inspection and emissions testing, no personal property tax, etc. These benefits have brought about severe abuse of the privilege of registering our vehicles as “antique”. We’ve all seen cars bearing little resemblance to their parentage with antique tags and wondered “how is that allowed?” We’ve also seen old broken down work trucks wearing antique tags being driven on the streets every day. We’ve seen them in business parking lots obviously used for daily trans-

portation. Such misuse endangers our continued right to properly register our antique vehicles and because of such abuse, our privileges are under constant threat of revocation. It is indeed a matter of proper enforcement but as it currently exists, there are difficulties.

Having Antique tags on your vehicle is an advantage. If you carry special “antique” or “hobby” type vehicle insurance on your vehicle, the reduced rates are predicated on an assumption that there is reduced risk involved-because you are using your vehicle primarily for hobby related activities. Having your vehicle properly registered and licensed (and accepting the necessary restrictions) is often key to your ability to obtain such insurance coverage. In the event of a claim (by you, or against you) the registration status of your vehicle, and the circumstances of its use are often critical elements in adjudication. Should a civil matter arise, these factors would be extremely important to your case.

Nobody can argue that the restriction on “work use” of properly registered antique vehicles needs to be implemented. It is done at the request of law enforcement. DMV in this case, unwittingly contributes to the problem. DMV clerks have no ability to inspect a vehicle and there is no requirement to verify club membership or intended usage. A vehicle registration request meeting the proper criteria is granted the appropriate registration. All that matters is whether it is the right year of vehicle to qualify. This leaves it strictly up to law enforcement to police proper registrations and usage. The existing law makes enforcement difficult.

Let me digress a moment and tell you how I interpret the word “enforcement.” I view it as a positive thing because it helps protect my rights as an antique vehicle owner/user and will help to secure the privileges that I enjoy by having my antique vehicles properly registered and utilized. I don’t want to see these privileges eliminated or my favorable insurance rates increase because the system is being abused!

Another element that was difficult to enforce was the “distance from home” restriction. This was introduced into the law originally by only a narrow margin. It was an arbitrary number, and the benefit was provided in a good faith to us in hopes that there would be no problems. However, that proved not the case. It has encouraged unrestricted pleasure use of antique vehicles, and since the given 250 miles often crosses over jurisdictions it has proven difficult to enforce. Again, law enforcement has requested the ability to provide more enforcement of the proper use of properly registered and licensed antique vehicles.

In an effort to draft appropriate changes to the existing code, DMV, at the request of law enforcement (Virginia State Police) turned to the Car Club Council of Northern Virginia, a group with whom they have developed a sound and respectful relationship. The legislation was drafted not because Mr. Marshall is “anti-antique vehicle” but because he worked with DMV, State Police, and the Car Club Councils to draft an acceptable piece of legislation. While the 50 miles from home restriction on occasional pleasure use is the most sensitive piece of the legislation (because it takes something from us) its impact should be minimal. It in no way restricts your

proper use of your vehicle. If you intend to drive from here to the Blue Ridge Parkway for a weekend of touring you should find a way to make it a club or hobby related activity. If you are going to use it to go visit Aunt Martha in Lynchburg for a week and its your only form of transportation, then you probably need to consider having the vehicle registered in the normal manner instead of as an "antique vehicle." In that case, you are no longer upholding your end of the bargain – you have accepted the privileges, but are taking none of the responsibility for its' proper use under the terms of your agreement with the State.

As the bill floats through committee, it is anticipated that the 50-mile restriction may be increased. There is much bargaining yet to be done, and the principal groups involved are working carefully to reach a mutually acceptable solution to this one controversial area. The Legislature, the DMV, the State Police and car enthusiasts all want a clean piece of legislation that everyone can support. It is not all out war as some would portray. And, at this point in deliberations, it is essential that all entities maintain a proper, mutually respectful relationship. The Legislature, DMV and State Police are well aware of the power and potential impact of the combined effort of car clubs, the councils, and individuals in our state. We have rallied behind causes of interest to us before, and our strength as a group is the reason we enjoy the privileges we have today, including especially, the relief from personal property tax. For this reason, car enthusiasts have been actively involved in this process since well before the Bill was even drafted. This Bill is not, as some would have us think, a shot in the dark at car enthusiasts.

In my opinion, there is no need to issue a "call to arms" at this time. There is certainly no need to attack the sponsors of this legislation as they have been diligently working with all parties concerned. It is my intention to keep a watch on this Bill as it progresses through committee. I am in touch with several individuals who have been key players in this matter and intend to follow their lead in responding in an appropriate way. I do not see any need for hobby groups or individual enthusiasts to "unload their clips" at this time. My recommendation is to stand by and see what develops. Meantime, if you wish to contact your delegates and engage them in a respectful dialogue, I recommend you do so, and encourage their support of retaining the 250-mile pleasure use restriction.

You can read and track HB 288 by using the following web site: <http://legis.state.va.us/>
Select "Legislative Information System" from the menu across the top of the page, and then type HB288 into the "search" function at the top left of the page. There is also information on who you can contact regarding any legislation, who sits on which committees, when they meet, and also some important hints and tips available on how to be effective in corresponding with your representatives.

Terry Bond
National Director, Antique Automobile Club of America,
Past Vice President of Legislative Affairs
Legislative Representative, Tidewater Region, Antique Automobile Club of America

Latest on State Legislation

I thought I would send you an update on our antique registration bill HB 288. After discussion with some contacts at VA DMV late on Thursday evening, I left for the General Assembly in Richmond for meetings with DMV, State Police, and individual meetings with legislators yesterday.

After discussions with each of these groups, the State Police tentatively agreed to accept removal of the sections of HB288 limiting our use to 50 miles. Subsequent phone calls by DMV officials also received the same acceptance of the removal of the 50-mile reduction from the State Police Chiefs Association.

At this time I went for an impromptu meeting (accompanied by DMV) with Delegate Marshall, chief patron of the bill. After in depth discussions with his aide and Delegate Marshall, he pledged to amend the language of HB288 to "restore" the 250-mile pleasure allowance at the next meeting of the House Transportation Committee. I do not doubt his sincerity. While the face-to-face meeting with state agencies present certainly helped our position, it was also most helpful to know that the Delegate had received roughly 40 e-mails from hobbyists. It was great to know we were all on the ball, and helping to plead our case. However, I must unfortunately report that some of those communications were, to say the least, inflammatory. Inflammatory E-mails, calls, etc., do not show the best side of our hobby, and are of no help to our cause.

As a result of these meetings Friday, DMV has also pledged to work on their side of the DMV counters to reduce the number of antique registrations given to unqualified applicants.

It is my opinion that HB288 will be amended to restore our 250-mile pleasure use provision. Once that has been accomplished, I urge everyone to start supporting the amended bill, as it will retain a tightening of the restrictions against work-related use of vehicles with our tags. We do have a problem with parasitic use of our tags by beat-up work vehicles etc.. It needs to be stopped or we will be coming back over this issue next year.

PLEASE remember that this is "not" a victory until the bill has been formally amended. It is wise for us to continue to politely ask our legislators to restore our 250-mile pleasure use provision to HB288. Truthfully, it won't be a victory until it has made it through the entire process, since further amendments, while unlikely, can occur until it is passed by both houses.

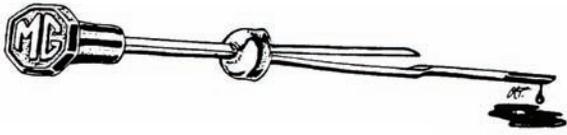
The Delegate may elect to substitute another bill containing the amended language restoring our 250-mile pleasure use provision. If that occurs the Bill number will change.

I will continue to keep you updated on changes as they happen. Thanks for all of your support in this matter, and all of the help from Fred Fann, Hal Hartel and others.

Tom Cox
Eastern Chairman Legislative Affairs AACA
Member Roanoke Valley Region & Tidewater Region AACA



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The Tidewater MG Classics

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