

# The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

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

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Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

October 2009

## MARQUE TIME

I just visited the TMGC website and enjoyed the photos of the September meeting. It looks like I missed a good one, thanks to a nagging summer cold. Judging from the great snapshots, it would appear that Bill Olcheski did a superb job as acting Prez – thanks Bill!

I also need to thank Tad Carter for his efforts as Nominating Committee Chair. Not only did he get Jim Villers and Michele Peters to volunteer to keep their respective duties as Treasurer and Secretary, but he also convinced Russ Ripp to stand for Vice President and to get Bill Olcheski to be our Presidential nominee. This is a great slate of nominees, and we'll get a chance to vote at the October meeting at the Hasslers'. (As an added bonus, we'll get another shot at Becky's legendary apple pie.)

It seems like the last two years have flown by, and as your outgoing President I need to acknowledge some folks who have made significant contributions to our club. TMGC depends on volunteers like our committee chairs and officers. Bill Olcheski, Michele Peters, and Jim Villers have excelled at their elected duties. Ron Struewing and Peggy Craig have kept our newsletter humming. Bill Yoshida is doing a fantastic job growing our membership. Becky Hassler continues to keep us in the black with her regalia sales and auctions. Susan Bond keeps our history straight with her exhaustive photo records and scrapbooks. Mike Ash maintains our connections with other clubs. Mark Childers never fails to find the answer to life's tricky MG questions. And, Tad Carter is doing a fantastic job as our Activities Chair. Thanks to each and every one of you!

The glue that holds us all together is our newsletter. During the last year we've been fortunate to have entertaining articles from a wide variety of members. Whether addressing a technical subject, reporting on a car show, or passing on the results of a drive-out opportunity, we all benefit from the knowledge (and fun) that these

stories provide. Please keep up the good work in the coming year – *The Dipstick* is a great place to share what you know!

Thanks for the opportunity to serve during the last two years. I treasure the many friendships that I've made through TMGC and look forward to our next administration!

Cheers,  
Mark Davidoski



## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

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

- Sep. 26 TRAACA Wings and Wheels Car Show at Virginia Beach Airport, [www.aaca.org/tidewater](http://www.aaca.org/tidewater)
- Sep. 26 MGs on the Rocks, Bel Air, MD, [www.mgsofbaltimore.com](http://www.mgsofbaltimore.com)
- Oct. 2-4 SVBCC Car Show, Waynesboro, VA – Register by 9/22 and Save \$5 [www.svbcc.net](http://www.svbcc.net)
- Oct. 6 Tuesday meeting at Chuck & Becky Hassler's**
- Oct. 10 Brits by the Bay, Pasadena, MD, [www.tracltd.org](http://www.tracltd.org)
- Oct. 11 Hunt Country Classic, Middleburg, VA, [http://www.mgcarclubdc.com/hcc/hcc\\_main.html](http://www.mgcarclubdc.com/hcc/hcc_main.html)
- Oct. 12 Dipstick deadline**
- Oct. 17** TMGC Event -Saturday evening Drive-Out to Colonial Downs in New Kent County for an evening of Harness Racing. See “Activities” on page 7.

## Upcoming Activities (continued)

- Oct. 17 Euro Auto Festival at BMW plant, Spartanburg NC,  
[www.euroautofestival.com](http://www.euroautofestival.com)
- Oct. 31 Brits and Battleship, Wilmington NC,  
[www.bmccf.org](http://www.bmccf.org)
- Oct. 23-25 Virginia Fall Classic, Newport News,  
[www.vafallclassic.org](http://www.vafallclassic.org)
- Oct 31 – Nov 1 Hilton Head Concours d'Elegance
- Nov. 4 **Wednesday meeting at Paul & Carmen Thiergardt's**
- Nov. **TBA Tech session at Susan and Terry Bond's**
- Nov 27 TMGC Event – Northern Neck Artist Studio Tour –  
See “Activities” on page 7.
- Dec. **TBA Holiday party**
- Dec. 29 TMGC Event – Holiday Lights Drive through  
Norfolk Botanical Gardens



## SEPTEMBER MINUTES

Michele Peters

Before I begin my usual witty repartee, I would like to let everyone know that as of this writing, Vince is still in the hospital, but Pam reports that he is doing better. Along with sending Vince and his family all of our prayers and good wishes, all present at the meeting signed a “Get Well” card for him. We are hopeful that he will soon be up and about and able to join us in the near future. We all miss you, Vince.

We began our September meeting precisely at 8:00 PM on September 3<sup>rd</sup> at Frankie's Place for Ribs in Virginia Beach. It has now become our “second home” of sorts, when member homes are unavailable. But that seems quite alright with the membership, as we always have a full crowd when we meet, greet, and eat (I mean eat) at Frankie's. So, thanks, Frankie's for those great ribs and other assorted carnivorous delicacies. In fact, we were so focused on eating that this meeting rivaled some of the shortest in our history (at least, since I have been Secretary, and any other history is, of course, unimportant). Many folks had already finished eating by our start time. We began and finished our club business in exactly 30 minutes flat. El Presidente was under-the-weather and absent (get well, soon Mark), so the meeting was led by El Vice-Presidente, and you know how he loves to move on

with things, and not spend inordinate amounts of time on things like...*important* matters. After all, “brevity is the soul of wit” (Bill believes that Hamlet had it right, after all!)

But really, I think most of us wanted to spend our time relaxing and savoring the ribs, beer, and friendly conversation, without spending too much time on club matters (Dare I say this? Does it sound disloyal? I may be opening myself up to being drawn and quartered at the Apple Pie meeting...on the other hand, however, I have already offered my highly sought-after services to the club to continue on as Secretary, so I think everyone knows better than to be too cheeky with their remarks – except maybe the renegade who lives in Yorktown with Becky H. and owns a 1968 C and a 1980 B MG, and who tells the *worst jokes* of all time... but who shall remain unnamed!)

**New Members and Guests:** One guest: Anita's father, Dan Edwards. No new members, at least none that admitted it.

**Vice-President:** Bill was practicing for his expected ennoblement to the crown, I mean to the El Presidente position in November, and acquiesced to the obvious undercurrent of belly (and potbelly) rumbling sounds, offering his own report as “I have nothing to report,” (which turned out to be the recurring articulation of many of the club officers that evening).

**Treasurer:** Jim V. was absent, again (yes, we miss you, Jim and Betty) but reported by email that we are still quite “in the pink” (and that is *not* meant to mean close to “in the red”) and doing well financially. Our income for the month was good, mostly due to the bulk of the membership finally getting around to paying their annual dues, and to the raffle and regalia sales.

**Activities:** Please see Tad's Activities section for a complete run-down. He does such an excellent job, I couldn't hope to compete with it in these few, poor lines.

**Membership:** Bill reports that we now have 99 paid-up members. And he will be getting around to making up the new Directory eventually – just about as fast as many of our membership forwarded their annual dues, I guess.

**Newsletter:** Before he started his report, Ron apologized to yours truly, and to the membership in general, for accidentally deleting the tail end of my August report. So, in my magnanimity and generosity of spirit, I forgive thee, Ron. On behalf of Peggy and himself, Ron continues to ask for writers for our events and for *Dipstick* submissions to him no later than the 12<sup>th</sup> of every month.

**Clubs:** Mike had nothing to report.

**History:** Susan had nothing.

**Technical:** Mark was PRESENT and had nothing!!

**Old Business:** none

**New Business:** Tad is the head of the Nominating Committee for new club officers (although I have no idea who else is on the Committee, and to my knowledge, no one else knows, either. So, this may actually be a “committee” of one. This may or may not be allowed by the terms of the bylaws - but who would ever know, since Andy still hasn’t made his promised report on those bylaws. As an aside, he did look a bit wild-eyed when, upon entering the meeting very late, someone shouted “We just elected YOU president!” but he soon realized it was just a verbal manifestation of membership frustration with his empty promises...) Pres and Vice-Pres are up for grabs (well, in actual point of fact, probably not, unless someone wants to challenge El Vice-Presidente for the El Presidente spot, and would rather not see Russ Ripp in the El-Vice Presidente position, although this reporter cannot even imagine that there could be any objection to the man who created the famous (or infamous) Russ Ripp Run). The slate of nominees will be voted on at the upcoming Apple Pie meeting in October. Tad reports that all former club officers that, according to the Bylaws, may continue on in their present positions for life, including the officers filling the slots of Secretary, Treasurer, Activities, Membership, Clubs, Technical, Newsletter, Historian, and Regalia, have offered to continue to serve their sentences peacefully - I mean, remain in those positions, if there are no other nominees who step up to the slog, I mean plate...

**Marque Time:** none

**Raffle and Regalia:** Becky came through with a license plate holder (awwwright!); as well as blank business cards with the MG logo; TMGC magnet; a CD of 35 years of *The Dipstick*; the June MGOC magazine, slightly used; and the piece de resistance, the TMGC clock.

We made quick work, not only of the club business, but also of our meals, and a motion to adjourn was made at precisely 8:30 PM. I will exit with lines from the Bard, himself, and remember what your long-suffering secretary believes: “I am not bound to please thee with my answers!” and “I will be free, even to the uttermost, as I please, in words.” If you think otherwise, go ahead...sue me!



## Membership and New Members

Bill Yoshida

As of 11 September, the 2010 membership count stands at 100 memberships, with a “promise of renewal” by three additional 2009 members, and a potential for one more new member.

Since the September *Dipstick* was published, we have received two new memberships and one member who is re-joining the club. The new members are:

Jim & Diane Grigsby  
Virginia Beach  
1978 MGB

Phil & Barbara Sawyer  
Virginia Beach  
1974 MGB-GT

Re-joining the club (thanks to Mike Ash):

Richard & Joan Leal  
Cape Charles, VA  
1951 TD

Welcome to the club! We hope to see you at many future meetings and events.

I was able to meet with our Treasurer, Jim Villers, to turn over the dues collected during July and through mid-August. If your dues check was dated in July or prior to 15 August, you should see it clear on your current month’s bank statement. I am in possession of checks and cash from new members and other renewals received after 15 August and plan to turn over these dues to Jim in the near future.

I sent final e-mail reminders in September to all 2009 members that had not yet sent in their renewal forms and dues for 2010. I also made phone calls to the last few 2009 members, in hopes that they would renew their 2010 memberships. I started to assemble the 2010 Directory on 1 September and hope to have it to the printer by the end of September for mailing in early October.

Safety Fast,



## Officers and Committees

President	Mark Davidoski	499-4647
Vice President	Bill Olcheski	467-4046
Secretary	Michele Peters	482-1012
Treasurer	Jim Villers	481-6398
Editors	Peggy Craig	226-7755
	Ron Struewing	479-0084
Membership	Bill Yoshida	554-0402
Activities	Tad Carter	496-9847
Historian	Susan Bond	482-5222
Technical	Mark Childers	432-9155
Regalia	Becky Hassler	874-1477
Clubs	Mike Ash	495-0307
Webmaster	Mike Haag	<a href="mailto:mikehmg@cox.net">mikehmg@cox.net</a>

## August Drive-Out to Hanover, VA

or

### The Art of Flexibility

by Tad Carter

The rains stopped and the skies cleared for our Sunday drive to the Barksdale Theater in Hanover. A sunny day was before us, with temperatures in the 80s – ideal driving weather. As Karen and I arrived at Lake Wright for our 11:00 departure, we remarked about the patriotic display we were about to join. Bernie's Red "B", our White "B" and Donald's Blue Midget, all shining in the sunlight. As tradition dictates, one of the cars already had its hood up ; the Midget was experiencing hot flashes. After a speedy removal of the thermostat, we were ready to roll – only 5 minutes delayed – and on to Kiln Creek to meet up with Becky.

Option A – HRBT: Traffic Check, backed up 3 miles and moving slowly.

Option B – Downtown Tunnel and 664 to MMBT. Nope – Berkley Bridge opening in progress.

Option C – I-64 through Greenbrier, High-Rise Bridge and 664 to MMBT.

Onward we drove, now delayed 20 minutes. The traffic was fairly light, but coming out of the MMBT, I noticed how bumpy the road seemed to be. Looking for a better surface, I tried the right lane – still bad. That's when the left, rear tire blew \*(please see below), sending rubber over the top of the Midget. If the timing of a blowout can be termed "good," this was it. Out of the tunnel, out of traffic, a wide shoulder, and a Midget as a traveling companion, in need of additional fluids. We were a well-oiled pit crew, with Bernie manning the jack while the wheel was loosened. The spare tire was out of the boot and on, while the Midget took on fluids and tightened down connections. Back on the road in 10 minutes, and now only 30 minutes delayed.

We met up with Becky in Yorktown, where we made the prescient decision to park the Midget for the rest of the out-bound trip. Donald joined Becky in the air-conditioned comfort of the Jag (we had to keep it British), and we headed toward Hanover, with time to spare – or so we thought. Just west of any possible exit, traffic came to a stop. A couple of unfortunate vacationers had decided to play bumper cars, delaying the rest of us while their little mess was cleaned up. It was a slow crawl west, with traffic finally breaking free around Fort Eustis, and our 45-minute cushion was now a race to make the opening curtain. An on-course rerouting bought us a few minutes, and we arrived as the house lights were dimmed. Who wanted to wait around in the lobby anyway?

We were treated to a very entertaining performance of Becky Mode's *Fully Committed*. In a solo

performance, Scott Wichmann portrayed all 15 characters in the fast-paced comedy. It is Scott's farewell role with Barksdale prior to his going to Great Lakes, IL for Navy Reserve training.

Following the theater, we enjoyed a nice dinner in "Michelle's Restaurant" in the Hanover Tavern and headed for home. With the sun lower in the sky and the back roads between Hanover and Tidewater cool and with no traffic, we had an uneventful drive back home. "Uneventful" makes for lousy *Dipstick* copy, but there is a point where it is the preferable outcome. We made a brief stop in Yorktown to reclaim the Midget, and departed for an assortment of destinations around Tidewater. To my knowledge, everyone made our original goal of getting off the road before dark.

Thanks to all who attended, and thanks for the capable roadside assistance.

\* *MGB Driver - Vol. 19, No. January/February, 2009 - has an article titled "The Good Samaritan Award" discussing a similar blowout on one couple's drive home from MG 2008 in Valley Forge, PA. The follow-up article, titled "Tire Safety" warns of tires degrading after a period of time, and not just from excess mileage. Their warning is that six-year old tires, regardless of mileage, are a threat to peel apart, and have a higher risk of blowout than newer tires. The recommendation is to check the date coding on your tires to determine their age. "The code is numbered and is enclosed in an oblong box similar to these two examples: 198 indicates that the tire was manufactured the 19<sup>th</sup> week of 1998. 2303 indicates a tire that was manufactured in the 23<sup>rd</sup> week of 2003."*

*In my case, the tires were so old that date-coding had not begun, so probably 12+ years. Although they only had about 25K miles on them, and had recently been inspected, their age may have contributed to the blowout I experienced on August 16<sup>th</sup>. Please be aware of this potential hazard and check the age and condition of your tires. If your tires are in the danger zone, consider replacing them. If nothing else, it may prevent Bernie from having to jack up another car on the side of the highway.*

*Safety Fast!*



# MG Adventures on Our Way to Khedive Shrine

by Laurel Swenson

Al and I trailered our 1974 MG Midget up north. We drove it all over our hometowns of Glen Cove and Locust Valley on the north shore of Long Island attracting many visitors, even a fun Englishman who got to reminisce. From Long Island, we headed to Vermont. Hemmings sponsors a "Cruise In" so we traveled to Bennington and joined the event. We had a chilly ride back home on up the very dark Tinnmouth Mountain, thankful that no moose checked us out. A few weeks later we entered the MG in the Vermont Stratton Mountain CRUISE-IN SPECTACULAR again, sponsored by Hemmings. This was an "All-Makes" car show that was open to all pre-1985 cars, trucks and motorcycles. It included: muscle cars, street rods, sports, exotics, and classics. We had a great time and my 81-year-old dad got to ride in the MG!



Al at my parents' place at Tinnmouth Pond in VT.



Al by the woods at my parents' place



The Hemmings Motor News Cruise-In in Bennington, VT

# Summer Tech Session

by Steve LaPaugh  
photographs by Susan Bond

The year's summer tech session was again hosted by the Freehs at their home in Chesapeake. Although the temperature was in the 90s, there was ample shade in the front yard with cold frosty beverages to be had including a club favorite, Old Speckled Hen. In all there were roughly 17 MGs in attendance as well as a few other LBCs, including a snazzy TVR 2500 piloted by Bob Ross and a Bugeye Sprite owned by Robert Perrone.



Attendees included our hosts Jim and Linda Freeh, Mark Davidoski, David Kinsey, Craig Puryear, Craig Cummings, James Bettis, Mark Childers, Donald Ladd, Jim Villers, Doug Wilson, Roy Wiley, Roosevelt Moseley, Bernie Imdahl and Nancy, Frank Linse, Ron Struewing, Anita Edwards-Struewing, Stephen Daniel, Russ Ripp, Pete Olsen, Robin Watson, Robert Perrone, Susan and Terry Bond, and me.

I arrived around 10 AM to find many members, relaxing under the shade and deciding what problems to tackle. Among the many maintenance issues were two



valve adjusting jobs - one on Terry Bond's GT and the other on Craig Puryear's '71 roadster. Pete Olsen had help from Frank Linse diagnosing an intermittent running-light problem. The parking lights wouldn't work at all or only a few of the lights would work. Ahhh, the wonders of Lucas. Fortunately, the diagnosis was only a connector that had fallen off the dash switch. Demon Lucas was dispelled fairly quickly.

During the course of the day, a magic screwdriver emerged. This single screwdriver fixed three cars. I'm sure this screwdriver will be in attendance at future tech sessions. Never doubt the power of hand tools!



David Kinsey was able to diagnose a cracked motor mount. The distributor was ID'd with the help of a Moss catalog. The distributor on his '80 roadster had been updated with the earlier 45D distributor. My '77 is similarly modified with the earlier 25D4. In the absence of factory manuals, the Moss catalog proved a decent source of identification.



Although my '77 roadster is not yet running, I did manage to bring the brake calipers for rebuilding. With help from Terry Bond, I was able to get the seals seated in the caliper housing and installed the pistons. In addition, the seal was installed between the caliper halves. This is an easy part to forget to replace if you separate your calipers. Make sure you keep track of it and replace it if you choose to completely tear down your brake system.

At lunch time North Carolina BBQ was provided along with side dishes, pizza bread, and a host of other tasty dishes. When the summer tech session wrapped



up around 3 PM. I emerged from Jim's garage after my caliper rebuild to find most of the club members gone; however, the projects tackled will allow MGs to roam the streets dependably once again. Many thanks to the Freehs for opening up their home to TMGC members once again.



## The Tech Session continues

by Terry Bond

Ah -- and you figured the Tech Session at Jim Freeh's house was over when the beer ran out, right?

Well, it isn't always the case (no pun intended). Do you remember Robert talking about the intermittent malady with his Bug-Eye? We were not sure if it was Lucas or SU and since the problem apparently cured itself, he started for home, expecting a peaceful evening run to Virginia Beach. And we expected a glass of wine on the veranda -- until the phone rang.

"Hey, this is Robert. Got a spare coil?"

We grabbed our spare, including the special lead with screw-in plug, and headed to Robert's parking place just off Mt. Pleasant Road.

First problem -- the Sprite is too small to work on comfortably. It's too close to the ground. That lift-up front end with sharp edges is also a problem. A little blood was lost, but some new words were learned.

Robert is a pretty good mechanic, I'm a pretty good guesser, and Susan is a wonderful mediator. That means every time we thought we had it figured out, we ended up having to try something different.

Coil? Wires? Condenser? Distributor? Ground? Lucas Smoke? We tried it all as darkness set in and the Lucas Gods began to smile, enjoying their complete control of the situation.

When it became obvious that we would no longer

be able to find the stuff we were dropping into the dirt under the car, we threw in the shop rag and Robert called for a tow. Susan and I went home to prepare the operating room and warm up some dinner (or was it chill down some more beer?)

The Bug-Eye eventually showed up, looking quite embarrassed to be hooked to chains on the back of a big truck. Yup, if you look at a bug-eye sprite front-on, it makes a face back at you! Robert decided to tackle the problem later, so we covered the car and enjoyed some dinner and liquid refreshment.

Tuesday, after pulling and rebuilding the dizzy (distributor) at home on the kitchen table, the car fired right up. New condenser, cleaned, adjusted and a couple of new wires later, it purred! After a quick Forest Road test-drive he pronounced it a joy to drive once again.

I swear that car was smiling!

2009 August Tech Session – one fine afternoon... and a couple of evenings.



## Activities Update

by Tad Carter

By the time you read this, many of the well-known shows will have passed, but there are still opportunities to get out and share our cars. Events within a few hours' drive include Waynesboro (10/3) and Middleburg (10/11) in Virginia and Pasadena (10/10) in Maryland. Weather permitting, these are all nice drives and good shows.

Upcoming TMGC events include the **October 17<sup>th</sup>** afternoon drive to Colonial Downs in New Kent County. We will leave the Southside about 2:00 for a 2½ hour drive, followed by an evening of Harness Racing. The gates will open at 4:00 PM, with a 5:00 first post-time. For those so inclined, there will also be a FREE Texas Hold-em Poker Tournament starting at 6:30 at Colonial Downs. The Southside route will take Route 10 out to the Jordan Point Bridge crossing. We'll pick up I-64 at mile 211, and head east one exit to Colonial Downs. An alternate route has been selected for Peninsula drivers, or they can meet up with the Southside group near the James River Bridge. An e-mail follow-up will be sent on 10/1 asking you to sign up for this drive. This will let us know who to expect so that we can settle on a final route plan.

For those who choose to not face the "Black Friday" crowds, we've added one more drive for the morning after Thanksgiving (**Friday, November 27<sup>th</sup>**). We will leave early to head up toward Mathews, VA on

the Middle Neck. We'll have a chance to see three artists' studios before lunch at the White Dog Inn. The building that now houses the Inn was built around 1795, and has been a private residence, a school, and is now a B&B and restaurant. Following lunch, we'll head south to New Point for three more studios, including a weaver who raises her own sheep for the wool used in her work. Others may want to visit the historic New Point Comfort lighthouse before we turn for home. This will be an all-day event. Because of space limitations at the studios and the restaurant, we will have to cap attendance at 20 people. If there is enough interest, the studios will be open 11/28 and 11/29 also, so a second run could be arranged.

As we look forward to drive-out destinations for 2010, I think back on the numerous great drives we have had. In recent years, we've held ice cream socials, events at local restaurants, wandering drives through the countryside, and trips to the theater and the horse races. We've also enjoyed Beckey and Alan's many wine tours. Events being considered include a drive-out picnic, a scavenger hunt, and we're still trying to get a tour of Norfolk Naval Shipyard. We've also had a suggestion for a complement to the Wine Tours, with a Brewery Tour. We are working out the details and sampling enjoying analyzing possible stops along the way. I welcome your input on these events or suggestions for other destinations you think would be of interest.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, hosted by Becky and Chuck Hassler.

Safety Fast,



## September Meeting at Frankie's Place for Ribs

photographs by Susan Bond



David Kinsey, Chuck & Becky Hassler, Robert Perrone

# Tech Tip

## Reading a Wiring Diagram

by Lance Brazil

(editor's note: Reprinted from *Triumph Club of North America* newsletter (APR 2009) with permission.

A word of caution: there are multiple sets of wiring diagrams for every car. An example would be cars with right or left hand drive or cars that were made for the California market which has always had more stringent pollution control laws than the rest of the nation. Make sure you have the correct diagram for your car and year before you start to work on the wiring.

A few generalities from David Gerrard at the English Garage on wire colors on our British Cars:

**Brown:** Carries voltage (hot) all the time and is unfused.

**Purple:** Hot all the time, fused.

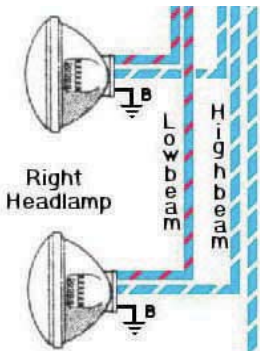
**White:** Hot with the ignition on, unfused.

**Green:** Hot with ignition on, fused

**Blue:** Headlights

**Red:** Side marker lights

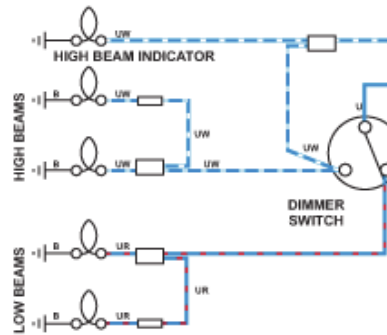
Let's start with some basics: battery and ground. Most of our cars are 12 volts, negative ground (Negative earth in Britspeak). A few of the earlier models were positive ground. What this means is one side of the battery (negative or -) is grounded or attached to the engine or body of the vehicle in some manner. The positive (+) of the battery is generally attached to the solenoid. When you turn your key to the "On" position it switches 12 volts to the coil and other electrical components. When you turn the key to "Start", it supplies 12 volts to the starter motor by way of the solenoid and cranks the engine. Everything electrical on the car works on the principle of battery on one side and ground on the other. If you have a marker light, taillight, backup (reversing lamp) on the car, one side is grounded to the body of the car. You may have only one lead going to the light since the socket it is in



contact with the grounded body. When the light needs to be on, 12 volts is supplied to the other side and the light comes on. This is a little easier to visualize if you look at the wiring diagram to the left. In the excellent example shown, ground is shown as B along with the universal symbol for ground. This drawing shows the wire colors

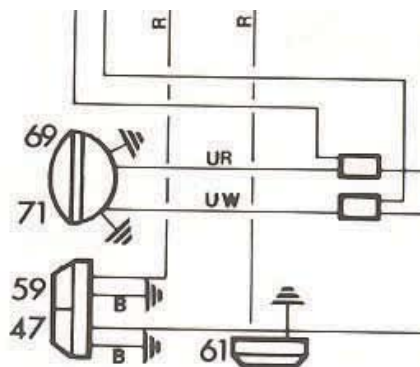
as they will appear at the light and if you follow the wiring back to the source (the dip or dimmer switch,

you will find the same colors attached there). Each of the headlamps has two filaments, one for high beam and one for low beam. Both filaments are grounded on one side. According to the lead with battery supplied on it that lamp will light; battery on the blue/white wire, high beam, battery on the blue/red wire, low beam.



In this drawing from another company we see a slightly different set of symbols, these are more universal. This diagram is still a good one because it shows wiring in the colors found on that model. Notice

that the high beam indicator lamp is shown. It shows a wire connected in the middle of another... This is almost never done in practice. What you would see is two leads coming from the same terminal or connector. Both of the drawings here show labels for each major component. Bentley Workshop Manuals and Haynes Workshop Manuals have everything numbered with a numbered list identifying what each number represents. Also in these manuals, everything is in black and white, so wires are labeled with somewhat esoteric letters: N = Brown, U = Blue, B = Black, etc. There will always be a legend defining the coloring codes used in their particular diagram. The color codes are very important. In the diagram below notice the color codes of UR and UW. This diagram is an example of what you might



find in Bentley's or Haynes manuals. Although functional, it is troublesome to locate an item, get its number, refer to the key to the wiring diagram, check the color code of the

wires, look them up in the legend, and then try to remember what you were doing in the first place. Sometimes this is all you have to work with and you struggle through, it just takes a little more concentration.

In next month's issue, I will give detailed instructions on how to use a volt/ohm meter and where to buy one for general use.

Let's go through a trouble-shooting scenario. One of your backup lamps does not work. It cannot be a fuse, since both left and right lamps work from the same fuse. The first thing you do is replace the bulb.



The new lamp still does not light. Set the parking brake, remove the bulb, turn the ignition key to the "ON" position (do not start the engine) and put the gearshift in reverse. Ground the common lead of a voltmeter to the body, set the voltmeter scale to DC volts and anything greater than 15 volts. Take the other lead of the volt meter and touch the center button at the bottom of the bulb socket. If you don't have 12 volts, check the lead coming from the other backup lamp. The wiring usually goes from the transmission switch to one lamp and then through a short (jumper) wire over to the other lamp. If you don't have voltage, check the wire from the other lamp. If you do have voltage, it probably means the bulb is not making good contact. Clean the button in the bottom of the bulb socket, replace the bulb, and test again.

A few times you may have to follow a wire from the electrical device back to the source. This is where having a color code for a wire is essential. An example of my own is when my horns failed to work after I had new carpeting installed (that doesn't seem logical does it?) I first checked the horn relay, by pressing the horn button several times and I could hear it clicking. I used a long piece of wire temporarily from the positive terminal of my battery and touched the + side of the air compressor. After banging my head on the bonnet because it startled me, I knew the compressor and the horns worked. I began following the wire back to the firewall. Once it went through the firewall I was able to tease it out of the wire loom and followed it to the horn relay. I unplugged the lead from the relay, applied battery, and the horn sounded. Upon careful inspection, I found that the WHITE lead to the relay was missing. I found the lead, reconnected it and everything worked fine.

Haynes Manual: US 1500 from Comm. Number 1 to FM40000 (Haynes does not indicate wire colors)



This diagram is for the overdrive circuit in a Spitfire. There are two switches in this circuit: the first is the overdrive switch located on the gearshift connecting the green wire to the Yellow/green wire. These colors may or may not be correct. The second switch is located on the transmission and it keeps the overdrive from being activated in first, second, and reverse gears. The main thing to see here is the symbols used for a switch and that both switches have to be operated in order to activate the overdrive solenoid.

Wiring diagrams for TR2, TR3, TR3A, TR3B, TR4, TR4A, TR6, and almost all MGs can be downloaded free from <http://www.advanceautowire.com/>. Scroll to the bottom of the page to find the links. Each download is in the form of a PDF file with multiple pages. Be sure you

are using the correct diagram for your car. Excellent wiring diagrams for Spitfires and GT6s can be downloaded from <http://www.triumphspitfire.com/wiring.html>. These diagrams are more accurate than Haynes according to the website and this is the one I use when I need to work on the wiring. The first example of diagrams at the beginning of this article is from this site. I had my wiring diagram laminated (\$2.36 at Office Max) and took it along on a recent road trip. Although my car has never given me trouble, it did on this trip and the wiring diagram enabled me to make temporary repairs in order to drive home. I drove 1148 miles in three days.



## September Meeting Continued



Betty Davis,  
Charlie Rice



Vice President, Bill Olcheski



Bill Olcheski giving the  
Treasure's Report for Jim Villers



Bruce Easley



Casey, Kristi, Craig &  
Kelsey Puryear

# “Buckypaper”

by Geoff Wheatley  
October 2008

I recall that a few years ago we were told that, through the development of new techniques, we would be wearing paper clothes, sit on paper furniture and sleep in paper beds in the not-too-distant future. Well the paper clothes came and went, as I recall mostly confined to woman’s dress attire. Although there was one male international tennis player who turned up at a major event in a series of outfits all made from paper that certainly caught the attention of the crowd when the material started to disintegrate under the strain of competitive tennis! Now we have another prediction: future cars and even airplanes could be produced utilizing paper or rather “Buckypaper.”

Researchers at Florida State University have been studying the development of Buckypaper, which is ten times lighter than standard material, yet has 500 times the strength. Despite the fact that it is a composite material comprised of ultra-thin sheets of carbon-treated paper, it will conduct electricity while dispersing heat like steel or any other such material. West Adams, a scientist at Rice University FL, said, “This is a sort of Holy Grail in the field of nanotechnology.”

Buckypaper is made from carbon molecules that are 50,000 times smaller than a strand of human hair. The technical name of these items is “Carbon Nanotubes” and they have been known for quite a number of years, but it took researchers at Florida University to develop manufacturing techniques that can produce a product that will be competitive with existing materials. The principal benefits are strength and weight, only 10% per sq. ft. of the weight of steel while being 500 times stronger. The scientific breakthrough that led to the creation of “Buckypaper” was, as is often the case, a result of another experiment back in 1985 when a British scientist joined researchers at Rice University for an experiment to find out how stars, the source of all carbon in our universe, make this element that is the principle building block of life. Everything went as planned except that one extra element emerged, a molecule with 60 carbon atoms. This turned out to be the third form of pure carbon to be discovered after graphite and diamonds. As a matter of special interest, Harry Kroto, the British scientist, and his colleagues, Robert Curl and Richard Smalley, were awarded the Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1996. As a result of this achievement, it was Kroto who named the new molecules “Buckyballs.”

Separately, a Japanese physicist, Sumio Iijima, at Arizona State University developed a tube-shaped variation of the molecule that led to the discovery that these tubes would stick together when disbursed in liquid and

filtered through fine mesh, which in turn produces a thin film that is “Buckypaper.” This is then pressed into sheets that can be used in place of steel or alloy. Obviously, at this stage in the game all development has been within the research laboratory and there is still a long way to go before we can walk into the local car showroom and select a “Buckypaper” vehicle or fly in a “Buckypaper” airplane. However, like so many new wonders of the twenty-first century, it can happen. One thought that came to mind as I wrote this was, “Can the body guys still repair the front fender of my ‘Buckypaper’ car when a brick wall, or whatever, jumps out at me or should I sell my Bondo shares?”



## September Meeting Continued



Terry Bond,  
Allen Hazlett,  
Stephen  
Daniel, Blair  
Peters Daniel

Steve & Mitzi  
LaPaugh



Russ Ripp,  
Harry Wat-  
son, Robert  
Perrone,  
Jim Freeh



Linda Freeh, Dan Edwards, Anita Edwards-Struewing & Ron Struewing



Marie & Tom Early



Donald Ladd, Mike & Denise Haag



Mark & Debbie Childers



Frank Linse, Renee & Bill Olcheski



Michele Peters, Bob Ross, Tad Carter



Josh Robertson, Jess Zarkowski



Kay, Kate & Carl Fisher



Mike Ash, Richard Leal, Jennifer Ash



Ken Johnson, Bill Yoshida, Laurel & Al Swenson



Nancy, Bernie Imdahl, Debbie Linse

# The Dipstick



## The Tidewater MG Classics

Ronald Struewing (editor)  
5483 Doon St.  
Virginia Beach, VA 23464-7732

Affiliated with



## FIRST CLASS

**Monthly Meeting**  
**Tuesday, Oct 6th**  
**Chuck & Becky Hassler**  
125 Aberfeldy Way  
Yorktown, VA  
757-874-1477

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

Time for Becky's Apple Pie

**Driving Directions**  
I-64 W to Victory Blvd  
Left on Kiln Creek Pkwy  
(2nd Kiln Creek left)  
Right on Aberfeldy Way

**To Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel Norfolk & Va Beach**