



# The Dipstick



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November 2014

## Activities Report

Before I begin, please allow me this opportunity to correct an oversight. Elsewhere in this edition of The Dipstick, you will read stories from assorted writers about our Raid on Harpers Ferry. In my Day 4 notes, I offered my thanks to several people who helped out during the trip. I neglected to include Beckey and Alan who were of great assistance in coordinating our delayed arrival with both the restaurant and the Beaverdam Depot on Friday. In addition, they led us on a local route that saved us a few precious minutes as we tried to make back some time. B&A are veteran organizers of many drives and understand the impact of delays on our site hosts. I thank them for stepping up once again to help out.

Our November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting will be at Kathy and Mark's home in VB. I'm not sure we ever have a "normal" meeting any more between restaurants, picnics and Movie Night, but this will be about as normal as we get. Please note - this is not a Chili Cook-off. You can save those recipes for your family over Thanksgiving weekend or for a church or office event. Check out the latest upgrades and repairs (i.e. Kick Tyres) in the driveway at 7:30. The meeting will follow at 8:00. We'll have the 50/50 raffle, augmented by whatever donated goodies we score, and of course, the coveted 1<sup>st</sup>-in-Line. I look forward to seeing you there.

The "injury reports" continue to come in from our Fall Tour. Some of the vehicles are scheduled to depart on the Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup> drive to the Barksdale Theatre in Hanover to carry their passengers to see Neil Simon's *They're Playing Our Song*, so I wish them all a speedy recovery. For those in need of a final check-up, come on out to Susan and Terry's on Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. That is the date for our third and final Tech Session for 2014. If you have attended in the past, you know the drill. And for any of our many newcomers, the garage is open to address many of those nagging little problems that may make you feel less than road-worthy. We've had cars come in on trailers or under their own power. There is always a treasure trove of knowledge and willing hands to help with the solution. The doors open at 10:00am. BYO Parts.

Our last drive of the year is on Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> for Holiday Lights at the Botanical Gardens. For those interested in dinner in advance, we have a 6:00 reservation at Franco's Italian Restaurant. Afterwards, we head over to the Gardens to enjoy the lights. The Old Farmer's Almanac calls for temperatures slightly lower than average for December, with slightly higher precipitation. We'll know more as the date approaches, but top-down is proper vehicle attire whenever possible.

As for our Holiday Party, as I write this, plans are not finalized. I hope, by the time you read this, that you have received e-mail or other notification of the time and date. Please be prepared to step up and help our host and hostess with food, set-up and/or clean-up duties.

One thing that we are prepared to announce is our 2014 Holiday Charity. Even with the outrage over recent very public domestic abuse issues in the NFL, the problem remains a reality in our society. Samaritan House in Virginia Beach has been providing services to our community for 30 years. While it isn't an anniversary to celebrate, their support to our community has grown from the efforts of the interfaith community to where it is today. Services include a 24-hour support hot-line, 11 emergency shelters, 10 transitional housing units, 27 affordable housing units and supportive services that promote safety, self-sufficiency and healing to families in crisis. Financial gifts are used to support these efforts, and holiday gifts are shared with the many children who call Samaritan House home. (Did you know that the average age of a shelter resident is 11 years old?) If you are so inclined, the club will be collecting donations of gifts, cash, and gift cards that we will deliver to Samaritan House in December. **A copy of their wish list will be emailed separately.** Thank you for your support!

And finally, for those looking toward 2015, our opening meeting is on Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>. We start with dinner at Frankie's (seating begins at 6:00 in our usual room), followed by the meeting.

Our opening drive for 2015 will be the *Love Nickel Beer Tour* on Saturday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. Mark the date - I know you have nothing else planned. Details will begin to trickle out in the December Dipstick.

Until we meet again on the 5<sup>th</sup>, enjoy the ride!

*Tad Carter*

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**TMGC Officers**

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***Marque Time***

Thanks again to Bill & Renee for hosting the October meeting. I arrived to find many tops down despite the cooling temperature. Several members were discussing current and future projects while Jim Villers explained a modification for the B heater valve to me. It's good to plan ahead and get systems sorted before you need them. Several people asked about the status of my roadster, I've got the exhaust system on now it's a matter of sorting a few things out and getting serious about getting the car back on the road. There are several drive outs planned in the near future as well as a tech session. If your MG is in need of some exercise or maintenance make sure you mark your calendars!

***Safety Fast!***

*Steve LaPaugh*

**Dipstick Calendar – November 2014**

**Nov. 2 – Fall Tech Session - Sunday 10am - ???  
 Hosted by Susan and Terry**

**Nov. 5 – Wednesday - Club Meeting – Virginia Beach  
 Hosted by Mark & Kathy**

**Nov. 16 – Barksdale Theatre – Hanover, VA**

**Neil Simon's *They're Playing Our Song***

**Dec. TBD – Holiday Party – Looking for a Host Family!**

**Dec. 9 – Tuesday – Holiday Lights Drive**

**Dipstick Calendar – 2015**

**Jan. 7 – Wednesday – Club Meeting – Frankie's Place for Ribs, VB**

**Feb. 3 – Tuesday – Club Meeting – TBD – Newport News**

**Feb. 14 – Saturday – Love/Nickel Beer Tour**

**Mar. 3 – Tuesday – Club Meeting – TBD**

**Mar. 14 – Saturday – Ft. Monroe Tour & The Point at Phoebus**

**Apr. 1 – Wednesday – Club Meeting – TBD (Really)**

**Apr. 24-26 – The Mitty – Vintage car racing at Road Atlanta, Braselton, VA**

**Apr. TBD – Virginia Wine Tour – Lucky # 13  
 South-Central Virginia**

**May 6 – Wednesday – Club**

**07 October 2014 TMGCC Meeting Minutes**  
*as recorded by Robert Perrone, guest Secretary*

As has happened before, I have been called upon to provide my fellow TMGC members with the minutes of a monthly meeting. Oh, you poor people.

Normally, this job would be fulfilled by the very competent Bruce Easley. Unfortunately, you have to suffer through (should you choose to read this) the minutes taken by your less than competent Vice Pres., yours truly. Once again, my apologies.

There is no apology needed for the great job of hosting by our members, Renee and Bill Olcheski. As always, the wine and food were excellent. More importantly, there was enough beer to last the night. You are a truly great man, Bill.

Ah, yes, back to the actual meeting.....

We had a visitor (who ended up joining the club) Alan Jackson. Welcome, Alan. You don't know what you're in for, but don't worry, we're all pretty much harmless. Bill Yoshida told us about the current status of our membership. I would suggest that you check his entry into this Dipstick for an accurate accounting of what he said. Please, whatever you do, don't expect that from me.

I have notes here, but I lost track and they mainly say "blah, blah, blah..." so I would not take much stock in that. Ditto for what Tad Carter said regarding Activities. You do such a great job Tad. And I should not be held accountable to report your plans, so I direct the readers to your own entry to the Dipstick. Jim Villers did give me a detailed Treasurer's report regarding our finances. As always, Jim has our finances in complete control, and we have a healthy balance in our bank account.

We had no history report from Sue Bond, mainly because we had no Sue Bond. Go figure.

Mark Davidoski noted the early deadline for the Dipstick. If you are reading this in the November issue of the Dipstick, that must be because I got it in on time. Of course, if you're reading this, and you had to submit something to Mark, you are way too late. At the "Technical/Marque Time" segment of the meeting we heard from Jim Villers who told us of heater valves from Ford Broncos that would fit in an MG. Sounds good for anyone who needs a new heater valve. See Jim for details. Russ Ripp also noted places in the area that you could obtain fuel that did not contain ethanol. There is a website, but you should probably ask Russ directly if you want the info.

Other than that, we had the usual raffle, with a little twist. This month, we had a 50-50 raffle to try to see if we could raise a little bit more money for our club. We will have to see what David Kinsey has to report. Let's all hope that it is good because I have my annual trip to check out the MG dealer in Aruba coming up soon, and I need the funds for the bar tab... wait, I meant, the car fare. Yeah, that's it... car fare...

And so you have it. Now you all probably all appreciate Bruce more than ever, You're welcome, Bruce.

**Is Your Car in Need of a Tech Session?**

**Bring it to Susan & Terry's Garage**  
**Sunday, November 2nd starting at 10 a.m.**



**541 Forest Rd.**  
**Chesapeake, VA.**  
**482-5222**



forest road Susan & Terry's

## The Raid on Harpers Ferry

September 19-22, 2014 (Photography by Susan Bond and Don Ladd)

Friday, September 19

By Susan Bond

As glorious sunshine burned off the fog, we gathered at the Lake Wright Quality Inn parking lot for an 8:30 departure with Tour Director Tad Carter. Most of us did.. Jack and Hilary Pavlidis did not make it. The polished, tuned and packed, his GT decided it didn't want to join us and locked up a wheel bearing. Then Russ Ripp called. His B had stalled and wouldn't restart. So we all headed to Haygood to supply expertise, parts and barbs. Turned out the points were so badly burned they couldn't be gapped. Robert Perrone just happened to have a spare set (for why, see the July meeting write-up) and a new condensor for good measure, but I quit paying attention when Russ said his was not like that and he had to rig it to work. At last, after a pit stop at Lake Wright, we were on the road at 10:00. Plenty of opportunity to look for license plates for Tad's scavenger hunt (see your 2014 passport). All I need is SD.

The only way out of Hampton Roads is by interstate. CA, GA. Fortunately traffic wasn't bad, but we were glad to get off 64 and onto parallel Rochambeau Drive before the stop at Starbucks near Williamsburg, where we met the Peninsula contingent. Easleys and McKennas were glad to finally see us. It was a long wait for them. We managed to stay on Rochambeau for a couple more exits before time constraints put us back on 64-295-95 to Ashland. MO, OH.

There aren't many parking spaces in Ashland and at 12:30 on a weekday they were all full, so we circled until I saw Alan and parked in a company lot that was posted "no parking". Beckey said they knew the owner and it would be OK. No tow truck showed up. Neither did Russ and a few others. This time it was a fuel problem. Executing Plan B, Tad went into Homemades by Suzanne and picked up our pre-ordered lunches instead of us eating them there. Russ arrived and we took a great back road to Beaverdam where we enjoyed our lunches in the vintage train depot while listening to Frank Gayle tell the history of the building which was destroyed three times during the Civil War. We gassed up at the local BP and were back on the road at 2:15. Tad said we were back on schedule. IL, IN.

Along the way to Culpeper, Tad let a school bus turn in front of us. At its first stop, 2 tweenage girls got off and immediately started grinning and counting the MGs. Rose Ladd said they waved at all the cute little cars, tho I didn't see this as I was second in line since I didn't have a navigator. At the second and last stop, a boy got off and paid little attention to us, tho Rose said she did get a brief, half-hearted wave. Ironic, isn't it? NC.

For years, Belmont Farm Distillery was the only legal distillery in the state of Virginia, and it has the oldest operating copper pot still in the country, producing whiskey, vodka and Virginia Lightning from corn and grains grown on the farm. Owner Chuck Miller hadn't changed a bit from the first time we stopped there on a wine tour, and he led us on a tour of the aromatic still room, bottling line and barrel storage, telling stories all the way. Missy McKenna volunteered to sniff the mash, Jim Villers liked the stuff steeping with apple wood chips, and the weeping barrels prompted a discussion on aging – storing the barrels of whiskey in an unheated room



means the changes in temp push the liquor in and out of the wood, really picking up the taste of the oak and causing a few of them to leak. Some of us sampled and bought whiskey, I bought apple wood chips steeped in whiskey for our grill. They had told us to park right in front of the building so we got a great group shot of us with the cars before we tackled the gravel driveway to leave. WV, MD.

At some point we were flagged around a loader trying to remove a huge round straw bale from the roadside ditch. I am sure there is a story in that. Later on, I couldn't get the camera out in time to catch the deer that stood right next to the road and watched all the little cars go by.

After some confusing turns on VA29, we arrived at the Culpeper Comfort Inn and checked in – the misguided people had put all of us in one area on the second floor and we could hang out on the balcony. Betty Villers, the ultimate hostess, brought out snacks which were eagerly consumed. Later we drove into downtown Culpeper. In the parking lot, a shy little girl was admiring my GT. Always the sucker for an MG admirer, I let her sit in the drivers seat. Hopefully she will own an MG someday. KY, TN.

We ate dinner at It's About Thyme, a French restaurant in a storefront on a revived main street. We filled 2 tables in the mostly empty dining room, which was full by the time we left. There were murals on the walls and fresh roses on the tables. After an excellent – if slow – meal, we were told there would be no separate checks. Since Andy Wallet was not with us, Tad had to gently remind them that they had agreed to separate checks and we were finally able to leave. We wandered the streets, buying cheese, wine and souvenirs before heading to the Fiesta, a Hispanic street party in the train station parking lot. There were lots of kids games, face painting, food, a rather loud band with a bad vocalist, and a very festive atmosphere.

Back at the motel, Betty once again produced snacks and we socialized. One by one, tired people disappeared until only 4 of us were left. A little bit more wine and we were discussing what a great tour this already was, and the important subject of where to go next year. Stay tuned, Tad has some great ideas!

PS. I did not find SD on this trip. Did get it 2 weeks later 2 miles from home.

Saturday, September 20

By Robert Perrone

The day began with a beautiful sunrise. At least that's what people that were up that early told me. Me, I was in bed sleeping off a little vino. I blame the others who forced me to enjoy, um, I mean forced me to choke down some wine the night before.

But we did have some fun on the balcony that evening. Thanks to Bob and Missy (as well as Tad, Caroline and any others) for supplying the wine. It was much appreciated.

As many of you know, my brake lights were not working on Friday, and the culprit was a faulty pressure switch. Well, Jim Villers to the rescue! He had a spare in his car and let me have it to install. Thank you again, Jim. Even after all of these years I am amazed at the how helpful and generous other members of our club can be.

On to our first stop with all lights working. On the way my car decided that it would stumble and sputter. After we stopped I found that I had knocked off a spark plug wire. Jim probably noticed, but was too polite to point out my clumsy mechanical work.

I made it to the Graffiti House and reattached the wires. I have to say that I was very surprised and impressed with what we saw there.

Of course, some of us saw more than others, right Mike? Leave it to Mike Haag to find the "naughty bits" in the graffiti. If you don't know what I'm referring to, you may need to check some of the photos that he posted online. Oh, Mike... (yeah, but it was still funny...)

Well, after that we needed some food to keep us going. It was great, but one part took me by surprise. At lunch the server asked "Who here is not the sweet person?" Well, I will tell you that Denise is a sweet person no matter what that woman said. Of course, she was just referring to whether the tea was sweet, but still, we all think you're sweet anyhow, Denise.

As we all know, we went on from there to Oak Hill, the boyhood home of John Marshall. If you're a lawyer with great appreciation for our American legal system, you would probably stand in awe at the home of one of our country's greatest legal minds. I, on the other hand, was looking for the winery. Yeah, I know... We did go down the Barrel Oak and sample a few. It was well worth it.



On the next leg of our drive, I noticed something that was a wonder of nature. Because of that, it brought to mind the question "Why did the deer cross the road?" Answer: It didn't; it stood and watched as all the MGs passed. If you were paying attention you would know what I mean.

We also had a few, um, "experiences" on the road. For one thing, many of us, Alan included, got to check our brakes. Thankfully, they worked as expected. Of course, it also meant that they broke as expected. Oh well, that is the life of the owner of an LBC.

Onto the highlight of our drive, the arrival into Harper's Ferry. We had the most excellent of all tour guides, and learned more than any history major could ever want to know. Wait... did I have an undergrad degree in American History too? Um, no... wait...um, yeah? Oh well, college, you know....

At the park it was really interesting was when our tour guide noted that, while near the river, this was the only place to be able to truly appreciate the lyrics from the John Denver song. "Take Me Home, Country Roads" which most of you may remember from the early 70s.

Our tour guide, Jim, noted that we were, as he pointed up to the blue sky, near "...almost Heaven..." and (pointing to the ground) in "...West Virginia...", then directed our attention to the "...Blue Ridge Mountains...", and then over to the "...Shenandoah River". Oh yeah, that was cool.

We then had a very informative tour of the actual Harper's Ferry site. Very well done by our tour guide. Dinner following at Private Quinn's Pub, another great stop arranged by Tad. And not that I need to get anyone in trouble, but I did hear Jim say "I'll take the blonde".

Of course, Jim was just referring to his beer of preference, and I would never try to imply that he was thinking of any woman. But it did sound funny.

What I mostly recall after this was a short drive to our hotel and a much needed rest for the next day's activities. Once again, a great job, Tad.

Now on to Sunday...



Raid on Harper's Ferry  
Sunday, September 21  
By Bruce Easley

The weather holds! The day starts out with another gorgeous sunny morning. After a typically filling Holiday Inn breakfast, we were on the road about 0945, under the wing/fender of our fearless leader, Tad. Today we are heading up...to the higher elevations of the Skyline Drive. On the way up, we pass a real castle: Berkely Springs Castle. The architectural plans for this castle began with conceptual sketches on the back of a menu, and it blossomed into an amazing stone structure. The owner, Colonel Suit (of Suitland, MD), was smitten with the dazzling young Rosa Pelham, and he used the lure of the elegance of the castle to entice her to marry him. They had three children and when she was widowed at age 27, she got on with life (after a respectable period) and established the castle as Party Central for Berkeley Springs.

We had an excellent "all organic" brunch at Panorama at the Peak, a restaurant perched on the edge of a Shenandoah Valley overlook. The restaurant/ inn was built in 1929 with timber and stone from the area, and the sun display above the fireplace contains 17 varieties of native woods. This was one of those spots at which you just can't help taking pictures. The valley spread out before us, the MGs lined up, the tourists ogling MGs... really nice. Other tourists were taking pictures of the cars before pictures of the scenery.

However, there was a cloud on the horizon. Alan and Beckey Watson returned to their car to find a substantial pool of brake fluid under a wheel. After some consideration, Alan felt that he might have overstressed a brake seal with a sudden unexpected power stop, and created a leak. Based on that and some other travel considerations, they decided to head for home in a more leisurely fashion than following a bunch of other idiots in MGs, and to make frequent brake fluid stops.

Russ Ripp also developed a bit of inconvenience, apparently due to a loose capacitor. He worked on the distributor making necessary tweaks, and kept on going. Next stop – Dinosaur Land. This was an interesting stop with a park where large numbers of life-size dinosaur reproductions were available for kids to play on, as well as a gift shop with fossils and semi-historical geegaws. Robert Perrone survived a flat tire en route to this stop, but made a quick change and joined us for the dinos. Word from the others was that he is a candidate for a professional pit crew. After a rest stop and a wait for Mr. Perrone and for Mr. Ripp, who had gotten separated while waiting to try to help others find the site, we were back on the road. While we saw and visited many wineries, on this day we also saw "beeferies", or farms displaying signs that announce fresh beef for sale. It was tough keeping the MG on course going by these spots.







The Skyline Drive was, of course, beautiful. The gum trees and other early-color species were showing their red leaves, and we were literally driving in the clouds. Nothin' like winding, high altitude roads, with panoramic views to make a great ride. With the clouds, we were getting some slight raindrops, but our speed was such that they passed overhead, and we ignored them. BUT the raindrops kept growing, until they were the big, fat drops. Tad stopped at a pullout so we could put tops up – all except for the real toughies Robert Perrone with Caroline and Bob and Missy McKenna. Naturally the rain abated as we headed back down to the valley.

What a variety tour! Gas below \$3.00 to over \$3.48. Our travels over the tour took us through Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Wineries and Distilleries. Our last stop before overnighting in Luray, VA was the Wisteria Winery, the turnoff for which was just past Lucas Lane (dark, of course). Wisteria is such an inviting place! In addition to wines and a great 'tasting tour', there were dogs, chickens, and sheep to pet, as well as a fruit new to us: jujubes. These trees grow all over the world and can tolerate a wide variety of climates, but are not well known. The fruit is about the size of a crabapple, but sweet. Tad's wife, Karen, met us here to join us for the rest of the journey. Also, it was here that Denise Haag announced she had seen Russ Ripp go airborne over a hill, and she swore he got sideways!

Our respite for the night was the Mimslyn Inn in Luray, a wonderful old inn with lots of history and elegance. We all met for dinner in the basement restaurant, the Speakeasy. The food was great, the drinks were great, the live entertainment was great, and the prices were very reasonable. If you're ever in Luray, stay there. After dinner, a number of the group retired to the rooftop patio to share some of the wine purchases, snack food (Betty Villers and other kept us supplied each night), and stories of the trip. One brave soul, Russ Ripp, stayed at ground level and relaxed in the hot tub. It was interesting to watch him lounge from four stories above, but Russ bathed alone. Good night, all!

## Raid on Harpers Ferry – Monday, September 22

By Tad Carter

The final morning of summer brought broken clouds and the first hint of cool weather. Several Raiders enjoyed a quiet breakfast on the front porch of our hotel while others readied themselves for the day by loading their cars, wiping off the dew and checking fluids.

A quick photo-op at Mimslyn and it was off to Luray Caverns. We started with a brief visit to the Car and Carriage Museum, where we saw examples of automobiles dating back to 1892, Rudolph Valentino's 1925 Silver Ghost Town Car (painted to suggest an alligator skin covering), a Stanley Steamer and a Conestoga Wagon. They had quite a variety and we could have used more time to take it all in, but it was time for our cavern tour.

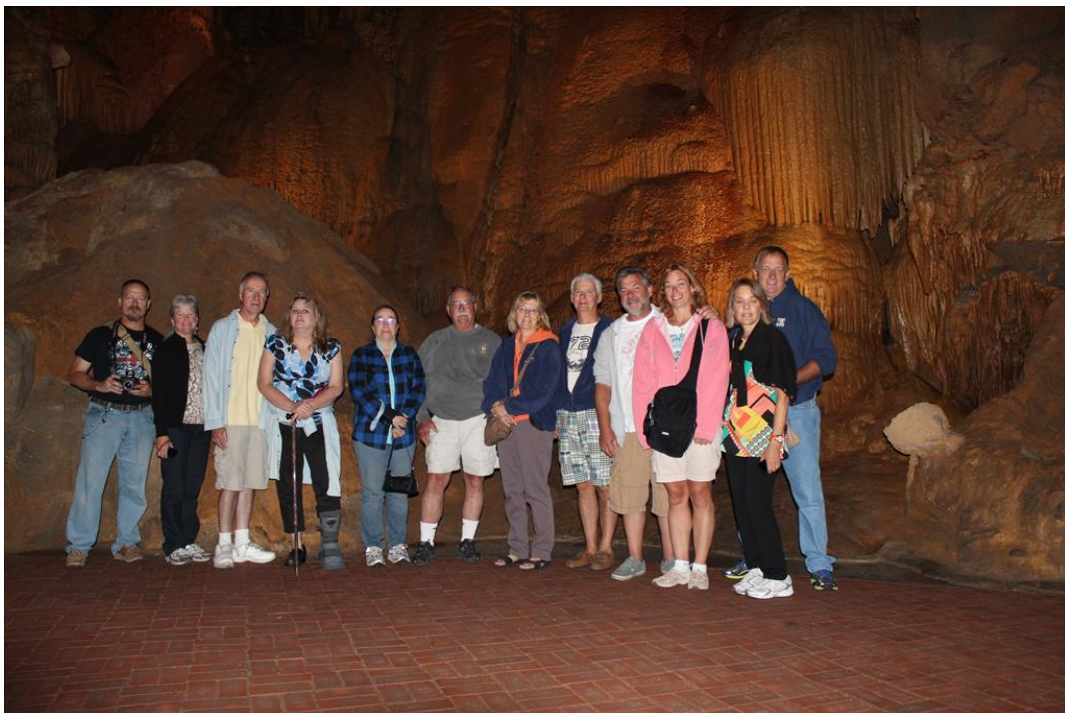
Discovered in 1878, Luray Caverns is the largest series of caverns in the eastern US. Our guide told tales of the discovery and pointed out beautiful formations of stalactites and stalagmites. We saw Pluto's Ghost, the reflecting pond at Dream Lake, and the interesting formations of Saracen's Tent which resemble draped fabric, rather than the rounded formations you may have experienced elsewhere. Also of interest was the Great Stalacpipe Organ, which generates its tones by gently tapping on a series of stalactites found throughout the caverns.

The mile and a quarter hike was worth the effort, but many were ready to sit for a while, which we did as we started the eastward path toward home. We climbed up out of the Shenandoah Valley, over the Blue Ridge at Thornton Gap, and down to the Piedmont and south toward Barboursville, through fields of corn and other crops sporting their fall colors. With sunny skies and cooler weather, it was a beautiful drive, missing most of the highways in favor of empty two-lane roads.

Lunch was waiting when we arrived at Stonefire Kitchen, the latest food venture of Charlottesville restaurateur Carl Tremaglios. He has been involved with many restaurants in the area including the Palladio at nearby Barboursville Winery. After a lunch, it was off to the winery and a taste of the house-favorite Octagon wine. All good things come to an end and as we left Barboursville, it was time for the final push back to the Beach. Travelling US-33, we encountered little traffic other than "rush hour" in Louisa. We said our good-byes at a fuel stop in Ashland and everyone headed for home.

So what were the numbers? Lake Wright to Lake Wright, we traveled 715 miles – 13,382 passenger miles. At 226 miles, Monday was our longest day, although it was an easy drive over mainly rolling hills coming east from the Blue Ridge Mountains.

I offer my thanks to Betty and Jim for packing a wide variety of car parts that came to good use, as well as snacks to share with the group. As veterans of many road trips, they have taken packing to a new level. In addition, my thanks to Denise and Mike for bringing up the back of the line. Their white car stands out and provided the lead car with a quick, clear indication whether the pack was together. Their assistance in the chase car made the weekend much easier. And finally, to the rest of the "raiding party", my thanks for joining me in this adventure. I hope you enjoyed the weekend as much as I did. Other than dates and destinations, the 2015 schedule is filling up nicely. I look forward to seeing you down the road.



## ***Watkins Glen – the Right Car for the Right Event.***

**September 5-7, 2014**

**By Terry Bond**

It was in 1948 that American road racing was revived at Watkins Glen, NY. On October 2, 1948, the first road race run since before World War II snaked through the quaint finger-lakes village streets. It started and ended in front of the Schuyler County Court House. To close the public roads for the event, it was necessary to have permits from six governmental entities; the state, county, village, Town of Reading, Town of Dix and the New York State Parks Commission.

It was also necessary to have a permit from the New York Central Railroad to stop the trains during the race, as the course crossed the tracks. The circuit was used for races from 1948 through 1952 when it was closed for safety reasons following a fatal accident.

Those first races in Watkins Glen were initiated by Cameron Argetsinger, who campaigned a 1948 MGTC. Long a fan of the great European Grand Prix races, he simply asked the question “why not.”

Later, a new track was constructed outside of the town, and today, “The Glen” is world famous. It is the site of formula 1 racing, NASCAR events, Indy car racing, and some of the greatest vintage racing in the world.

Such famous race drivers as Emerson Fittipaldi, Mario Andretti, Niki Lauda, Dale Earnhardt, and the King, Richard Petty have run the course.

It’s been on our “bucket list” for quite some time, and when we found out this year the featured car was the MG, we decided to take Eleanor, our 1948 MGTC, there to relive history.

Thanks to Richard Hall, who trusted us with his trailer, we cleaned, tuned, and loaded for the trip well in advance. It was a smooth journey and we arrived in Watkins Glen a day before the festivities began, just so Susan could get in some practice time on steep hills. We immediately found the small village overwhelmed with vintage cars. Finding a place for the trailer was a challenge, but we managed to locate a safe place on a side street near the hotel. The Harbor Hotel was quite luxurious, a treat to ourselves. Like Susan said, we might as well do it right!

Thursday night we met fellow Tidewater MG club member David Kinsey for dinner at the Seneca Lodge. This lodge features a pub that has as much history as the entire town. It’s where racing’s greats have quenched their thirst and celebrated victory. The walls are covered with memorabilia including pictures and even laurel wreaths from winning drivers over the years. We met the entire team from Abacus Racing, who were there for some serious competition. We let Bill Thummel know that if we had any problems with Eleanor, we’d meet him in the paddock. Bill had rebuilt the engine several years ago, so we felt we were in good company.

Friday morning was an early start. We quickly met up with over 150 other MGs of all types at Wings of Eagles, an airplane museum, as we prepared to go on to the newer track to run some laps. It was a fabulous experience and we were able to run the full course twice at good speed. Were those really our tires I heard squeal as we cornered tightly into the famous "boot"? It was amazing to see so many beautiful early MGs. We were chosen to join a group of 20 special cars to lead the pack, and later be displayed on the village streets following our reenactment on the original village course.

Once we had completed our turn at the new track, the parade of MGs wound their way through the countryside to the village. We followed the old course part way into town and as we began to descend into the village we were confronted with a fantastic view of Seneca Lake and the harbor at Watkins Glen. It was picture-postcard perfect! We dropped down a steep hill and rounded famous "Millikens Corner" making the S curve onto the main street through town. The sight of hundreds of cheering spectators lining the streets took our breath away! As we moved past the sea of spectators, cars were lined up two-by-two in front of the old start-finish line near city hall. Race master Bobby Allison dropped the green flag and we were off-reenacting that original 1948 Grand Prix race, and we were doing it in the RIGHT CAR!!!



Pre-war MGs roar through Watkins Glen

The first climb was a second gear hill, and the sound of the MG's engine revving (along with all the others) was so exciting it was just indescribable. Sufficient to say I do believe our collective heart-beat at that time was at least 4000 RPM!

We rounded a few turns, accelerated nicely into a straight-away, rounded a scenic corner (complete with strategically placed hay bales, just like back in 1948!), and then dropped down to the old Stone Bridge. Another tight "S" turn on some scenic winding roadways, and then on to Railroad straight. Beyond the trees lining the road here there is a sheer cliff dropping off to the bottom of the Glen. Cars achieved maximum speed on this stretch, often becoming airborne as they bumped across the railroad tracks.

Friar's curve begins the descent into the village with Seneca Lake coming into clear view at Big Bend. It's a truly breathtaking view, with the downhill into the village providing opportunity to gain maximum speed before braking at Milliken's corner. To the left is a tall, narrow brick building, and the tight S turn leads directly onto the main street through town, and that gauntlet of hundreds of spectators cheering and waving as we turn the corner.

Three times we got to experience that thrill, realizing that we were reliving history.

Track marshals quickly directed us to our designated place and, as we parked, the cars were descended upon by dozens of enthusiasts, eager to see the cars and drivers close up. Many times we saw people running towards the car exclaiming “that’s the lady driver!” We were proud to show off the car, but there was so much to see and do.

We had to see Smalley’s Garage close up. It’s an old 1930’s style gas station right along the main street where all the tech inspections were done years ago. It hasn’t changed in all those years

There was the walk of fame – stone blocks the length of town recognizing the accomplishments of those brave drivers who made the Glen so famous. There were shops, pubs, restaurants, and wherever you looked, great cars. There were actually quite a few groups taking their turn on the old course, and we saw newer muscle cars, Indy cars, NASCAR cars, and dozens of vintage racing cars including some rare early MGs with thoroughbred racing backgrounds. It was one of the most amazing car shows we’ve ever seen. So much history surrounded us!

That evening, the MG vintage racers also reenacted the first Watkins Glen race thru town. They staged on Franklin Street and fans got to wander among them, talking to drivers. The start-up was much louder than that of the stock cars, the close buildings made the sound deafening, and we could hear them coming down the hill long before we saw them coming back in. We found out the next day that the first hill was climbed in second gear by them, too.



Colleen, David and his MGB

Rare MG Airline Coupe





Susan's TC (aka Eleanor)  
taking a break at Smalley's  
Garage in Watkins Glen

Then there was a street party. Food, drink, music, cars, and everywhere you turned, there were motoring enthusiasts. We were pleased to meet AACA members from all over the country, and spend time with one Watkins Glen native who lived along the old course and once pumped gas at Smalley's garage on race day.

The night ended with fireworks while we ate a wonderful Italian meal along the main street, sitting next to a couple of race enthusiasts from New Jersey who wouldn't stop talking. Well, neither did we – such was the level of excitement the weekend brought!

Saturday we ventured back to the new track to watch qualifying runs and mingle with drivers and cars in the Paddock. There was a car show, wine-tasting and of course the chance to actually see all that great machinery up close. We were amazed at how the crews and drivers were so interested in talking with us and telling us all about the history of their cars.

There were MGs there that had raced on some of Europe's finest tracks, and were now being raced again after being restored. We saw one MGB that had been an original factory works race car, wrecked, hung in the rafters of a pub, then when the pub burned, the car was purchased, restored in original race trim and is now back on the track again in all its glory.

There was a special display of Triple M cars – those were the early pre-war MGs, known as Midgets, Magnas, or Magnettes. Some were supercharged competition cars with documented race histories, while others were simply beautifully restored examples of MG history. We were in MG HEAVEN! Then it started sprinkling liquid sunshine, so we decided to visit some wineries along Seneca Lake. We tasted at Lakeside and Glenora, buying a few bottles. The wine bottles with MGs on the labels were a bonus. Pizza and beer at the Crooked Rooster brewpub ended the day.

Sunday, we were back at the track for the featured events – the Collier Cup and the Kimber Cup race, named respectively in honor of Miles Collier, the event winner in 1949, and Cecil Kimber, father of MG. The races were exciting and the chance to once again get up close and personal with owners and drivers was a thrill.

By later PM, we were loaded with souvenirs, the cameras wouldn't hold any more pictures, and the long road home awaited. We loaded Eleanor and headed out of town, once more past that wonderful start-finish line, past Smalley's garage, and as we saw the sign in our rear-view mirror "Seneca Lodge, turn here" we realized we had indeed relived history. More than that, we had done it in the right car. Eleanor performed perfectly and looked great doing it. She was a crowd-pleaser and I believe she actually smiled at us as she too realized her tire prints were now alongside some very famous ones there at "The Glen."

## 2014 November Dipstick- Membership Update

**2015 Memberships:** As of 15 October we have 114 paid memberships with 4 more “Promises to Renew”. I made phone calls and either spoke with members that had not yet renewed, or left messages requesting a response.

### **New Memberships:**

Cathy Demartino  
Norfolk, VA 23503  
1975 MGB

Note: Thanks go to Bill Bair for his recruiting efforts with Cathy.

Al Jackson (Joined at the October meeting)  
Virginia Beach, VA 23464  
1979 MGB

**Cars:** Total cars – 184

**Cars & Types:** 177 of the following types of MGs:

MGA	A- Coupe	B	B-GT	C	C-GT	TC	TD	TF	Midget
26	2	85	17	1	3	7	20	4	12

Other/Various MGs – 7 (1-Cooper MG/ 2-VA/ 1-YB/ 1-ZB/ 2 ELVA Courier)

**Dues:** I turned over \$160 in dues checks and \$40 in cash dues to Jim Villers at the October meeting. I currently hold dues in the form of a \$20 check for turnover to Jim.

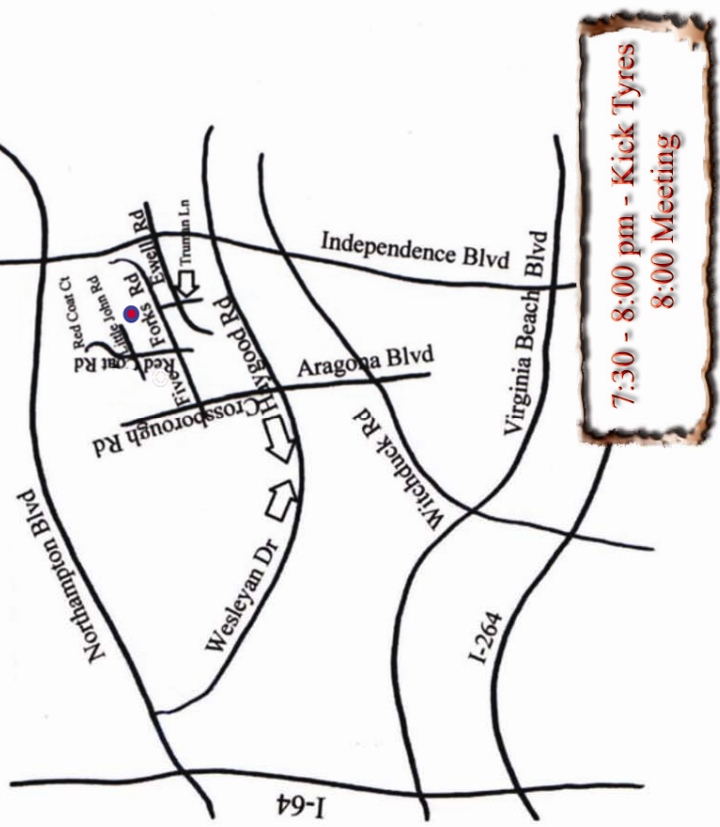
**2015 Directory:** The digital version of the 2015 TMGC Directory was e-mailed to all members with a valid e-mail address. Paper copies were mailed on 14 October to members that do not have e-mail addresses or have requested paper copies. If you need to be added to the “printed copy” list or no longer need to receive a printed copy, please let me know by e-mail (preferred) or phone (757) 554-0402.

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**The Dipstick** is the official publication of Tidewater MG Classics (TMGC), dedicated to preserving the Marque since 1973. For more information please contact the editors at (757) 831-4196 or [davidoskicrew@cox.net](mailto:davidoskicrew@cox.net)

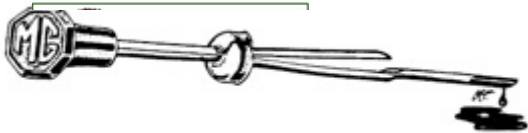


**Monthly Meeting**  
 Wednesday, Nov 5th  
 Mark & Kathy  
 Davidoski  
 4705 Little John Rd.  
 Virginia Beach  
 499-4647



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

# The Dipstick



Tidewater MG Classics  
 C/O Kathy & Mark Davidoski  
 4705 Little John Road  
 Virginia Beach, VA 23455

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