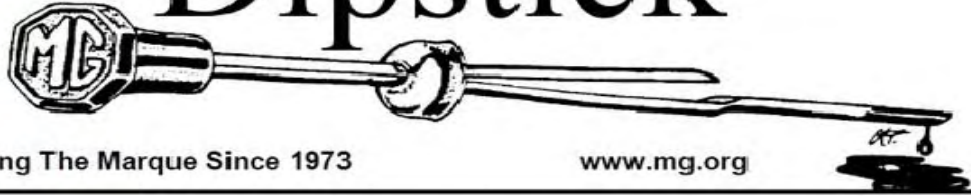




The Dipstick



Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

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March Activities Report

Hopefully, everybody survived the winter blast we had recently! We were lucky to get a decent day in February to get our cars out and have a great ride in Suffolk. And to think we almost postponed for weather! We started the day with a fantastic, guided tour of the Riddick's Folly House Museum on Main Street. About 24 of us were met in the parking lot by our host, Lee, who was as knowledgeable about Suffolk history as he was fun! From the main floor, up to the fourth floor Revolutionary War exhibit and back to the basement kitchen, the tour was immensely enjoyable. Everyone left with new "fun facts", even Sue Bond, who was teased by Lee as being our groups 'smarty pants', as she seemed to know as much about antique items as he did!

From Riddick's Folly, we headed out to the backroads of Suffolk and enjoyed the country views and winding roads that these LBCs were made to drive on! Although no one went topless, we still had a great 35-mile drive! We finished not far from where we started on Main Street and enjoyed some beverages and great food at Barons Pub. Apparently, the French Dip was as good as PJ had hoped for and the burgers seemed to be a hit. Barons was gracious enough to seat us in our own room, allowing everyone to sit as a group to discuss the day's drive, future trip ideas and reminiscing past excursions.

The next outing in March will be the Great Bridge Battlefield and Waterways Museum in Chesapeake. Details will be emailed out soon. Hopefully, we get as good a turnout as we did for the Suffolk Riddick House!

Safety fast. Shayne McKean & Pam Morris

TMGC Coming Events

Mar 4 - Meeting at Cindy Hall's on Willoughby Spit

Mar TBD - Great Bridge Battlefield Museum Tour

Apr 2 - Meeting at Kampe's





Marque Time!

President's Message from Scott Parker

Well, my goodness, what a turnout we had for the breakfast meeting Michelle and I hosted earlier this month. I think we were all a little worried that the overnight rain might keep things wet and limit participation, but thankfully the rain moved out quickly and we had a dry and seasonably cool morning for the monthly festivities. In all, over 30 members ventured out and navigated the twists and turns of Great Bridge to enjoy a morning of food, fun and fellowship. It was also great to see a couple new members, Paul Voss and Doug Stuhlmann, attend their first official monthly meeting – welcome to the crew Paul and Doug! Our house was busting at the seams and I was completely blown away by the amazing turnout and I think everyone had a fantastic time!

A huge thank you to Shayne and Pam for coordinating the Riddick's Folly Museum Drive. We had a solid turnout with 25 members enjoying a Saturday exploring and enjoying Suffolk. This event started with an amazing tour of one of the oldest and largest homes in Suffolk, Riddick's Folly, a Greek Revival home built in 1837 by the prominent Mills Riddick of Suffolk. Following the fantastic tour, members experienced a serene drive through the windy back roads of Suffolk and then had a great lunch and beverage stop at the historic Baron's Pub. The rowdy group had a great time and this was the first event (probably in a very longtime) that showcased the City of Suffolk, the largest city (by area) in Virginia.

Cindy Lee Hall and Eric Fee are up next and will host our next club meeting on Tue, Mar 4th; 6:00pm kick the tyres, with the meeting to follow. Hop in your MG and travel to the wonderful Ocean View area of Norfolk and enjoy another great meeting with the TMGC family. Well folks, that's all from the cheap seats here at the Parker residence. See you next month!

Safety fast. Scott

TMGC Membership

As of February 20th, we still have 101 paid memberships. There are still a few hard copies of the club roster which will be available at upcoming meetings, until we run out. Any questions about your membership, please contact me at membership@mg.org.

Safety fast. Mike Haag

TMGC Offices and Committees

President	Scott Parker	TMGCPres@mg.org
Vice President	Rob MacPerson	TMGCVP@mg.org
Secretary	Michelle Parker	
Treasurer	Mark Davidoski	Treasurer@mg.org
Dipstick Editor	Jim Villers	Editor@mg.org
Activities	Shayne McKean & Pam Morris	Activi- ties@mg.org
Webmaster	Mike Haag	Webmaster@mg.org
Historian	Sue Bond	
Regalia	Rose Ladd	

Meeting Minutes - February 1, 2025

By Michelle Parker

This month I got to have all y'all over to my house for our monthly meeting! What fun it is to host the winter breakfast meeting. I hope everyone enjoys it as much as we do. I sadly did not get a headcount that day and found out after most everyone had gone that Scott hadn't either. But we did have a good turnout.



A large turnout for the breakfast meeting at the Parker's.

And a huge thank you to the Bond's for the use of their coffee maker. It was a bit strong, I'll try and make it a little lighter next year.

President Scott Parker called the meeting to order. He recognized the two new faces at this meeting: Paul Voss, he owns a 1960 MGA coupe (in pieces) and Doug Stuhlmann with a 1974 MGB. So good to have them both out and as a part of the club. The minutes from January were then approved.

The Vice President's Report by Rob MacPherson came with a hearty shrug and some info on the upcoming meetings. See the calendar of events for all the details. July is still open for anyone open to hosting it. See Rob if you'd like to fill that spot.

Shayne gave the Activities Report. He unfortunately had been sick making him unable to attend the last HRCCC meeting. So, he will attend the next one, at which point we will get our club voted in as members with them. He gave out info on some upcoming events. See the calendar of events for all the details. (I'm typing this after the Riddick's Folly outing, and man did I really enjoy that!) We discussed having a table at the TRAACA annual swap meet on March 8. It was decided that we would have a membership table there that day with who will man it to be determined.



Scott Parker calls the meeting to order.

Treasurer Mark Davidoski brought the Treasurer's Report: our only expense between meetings was for a couple name tags, our bal-

ance was \$2004.60.

The Dipstick Editor Jim Villers said to remember the 20th, you write it, he publishes it!

The Membership Report was brought by Mike Haag. We are still at 101 members. Hard copies of the directory are available at club meetings if you would like one.



Terry Bond said as far as a Technical Report goes there's nothing right now to report, but once we start driving things will come up. Maybe make sure your car is ready as good driving weather is right around the corner. *The gathering in the kitchen observers the meeting.*

There was no Old Business to discuss.

For New Business: Rob asked Bob Stein to put the Norfolk Cars & Coffee in the Oil Spot, he said he'd take care of it. Shayne had a bunch of things to say... no clue... engine, cranks, rotations, pistons, ...see the video if you'd like to hear more of that because I have no clue.

Marque Time: Bob Stein said he brought Rodney and said he was out front, I'm figuring that is a car and not a child, as it had been awhile and it was pretty chilly. Well that, and kids don't have throttles that stick open. If they do then it's probably a stomach bug, maybe some crackers and ginger ale. He also had an alternator issue and got a good one from Amazon, in case you need one. Prime 2-day delivery! Also, He has a mostly complete, mostly black, straight 4 speed, no overdrive, 1980 LE for \$400 if you're interested. (And consensus is that 10-year-old tires are not good.)

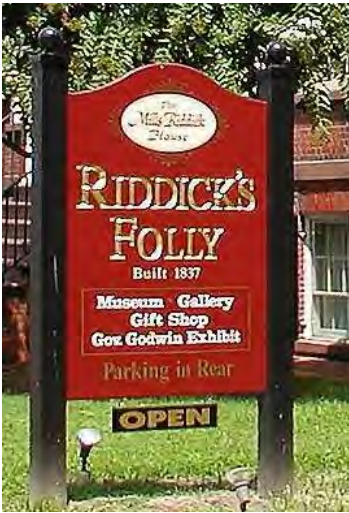
Jim brought his B with its new fuel injection kit. He's very happy with it and happy to share the info with anyone who would like it and he'll even let you take it for a spin.

Mark found that Tiger Paw roofing material is great for putting under your car so it won't leave oil spots. He's got a lot, let him know if you'd like a strip of it.

Regalia With Rose! There are always stickers and magnets and badges available if you'd like to buy them. Susan won the MGB matchbox; Shayne won a Union Jack foam airplane; Rob won the MG coffee mug, completing his set; Mike won an Moosehead beer mug; Paul won a club magnet; and Mark won the \$31 50/50, which he gave to the club.

This meeting of Tidewater MG Classics was adjourned. If you'd like to see what you missed, check out the YouTube video of the meeting at <https://www.youtube.com/@TidewaterMGClassics>

Riddick's Folly Run By Rodney (1978 MGB-GT) as told to Bob Stein



Eight of us MGBs gathered with 24 human members of the Tidewater MG Classics car club at Riddick's Folly in Suffolk on February 15th. Built in 1837, this is a house that has been mostly restored to how it looked when it was built – I guess you would call it a mild resto-mod. In any case, the humans all gath-



Gathering in the parking lot before the tour

ered before 10 AM in the parking lot, which meant my owner and I had a nice run from Norfolk. He had given thought to taking my great-aunt Mina, but reconsidered and decided my closed cockpit and functional heater was a wiser choice. I did note many of the humans brought 'modern iron,' and besides two other GTs, my convertible brothers and sisters all had the tops up.

We had a nice chat with the house once our humans had gone inside. Since it is far older than any of us, we listened respectfully as it told us of its history. Riddick's Folly is only museum in the Tidewater area devoted to the early 19th century. Most of its 21 rooms have been restored with original or period furniture, with many Riddick family belongings back in place. Built by Mills Riddick using the insurance money from three other buildings, Riddick's Folly got its name because the Greek Revival style was unlike anything else in the area – though it rather smugly noted that those that laughed are all long gone.

Union soldiers took over the place during the War between the States. Less than a hundred years after the Colonials had rather foolishly torn themselves from the United Kingdom and



Our guide, Edward King, has been the director of Riddick House for over 30 years.



After touring the house, there was a relaxing drive around Suffolk.

they were already fighting among themselves. Although the Union soldiers were initially decent, they got to be downright mean as the war dragged on. Much of the house's objects were stolen, even doorknobs! In return, many of the soldiers left their signatures on the plaster walls of an upstairs room.

The house stayed in the Riddick family until 1967, when the Nansemond County school

board bought the building and used it as offices. Would you believe those humans actually scrubbed off 60% of the Union Soldier signatures upstairs? Luckily, more historically-minded humans bought the building in the late 1980s, and have continued restoring and maintaining it ever since as a historic house museum.

Our humans finally emerged nearly two hours later, many complaining about the many stairs they'd had to maneuver. However, that's when the fun started for us MGBs. Shayne McKean, the tour coordinator, led the way in his rubber-bumper MGB convertible (FIT BRIT) as we toured the countryside on a 34-mile trek. Nice twisty roads with little traffic and only a few traffic lights made us feel like we were back in England for a while. Especially when it started to sprinkle – a perfect cloudy UK afternoon. Those humans driving proper MGBs took the lead with a variety of Yank and Japanese vehicles hauling their owners behind us.

As expected, the humans ended their drive at Baron's Pub in downtown Suffolk so they could refuel with a variety of food and beverages. And all they did was sit in us while we did all the work! I suppose the stairs at Riddick House will be blamed, but I think our owners can be lazy at times. Anyway, the group apparently enjoyed lunch – something I can attest to as my springs sagged a bit more when my driver got in to go home. The day was fun and didn't have a single breakdown – not that we MGBs would ever leave our owners stranded. Many thanks to FIT BRIT and its human for a fun day!



Lunch at the Baron's Pub concluded the event.

TECH STUFF – The Vacuum Gauge, an important tool - By Terry Bond

Is it time for your spring tune-up yet? If you are ready to begin tinkering there's one important tool that is often overlooked – the common Vacuum Gauge.

We often preoccupy ourselves messing with fuel mixture, timing, and all things electrical while overlooking some of the simple mechanical functions that make it all work. A simple Vacuum gauge can be a handy tool to help troubleshoot things. They have been around a long time but usually gather dust in the back of the tool cabinet in favor of other electrical diagnostic equipment.

Remember, your engine (affectionately referred to often as “the lump”) is nothing more than simply a large air-pump. Here's how it is supposed to function –

It draws in air by creating a low-pressure area in the intake manifold and cylinders, compresses the air, mixes in a little gasoline, lights a fire, generates heat and pressure and finally pumps out the exhaust.

The starting point to evaluate engine vacuum is the intake manifold. To test the engine, start it and let it reach full operating temperature. Then simply connect your vacuum gauge to an empty vacuum port on the intake manifold (anywhere PAST the throttle body).

When you connect a gauge to a tap on the intake, you're measuring manifold vacuum.

Vacuum is measured in terms of “inches of mercury” Don't worry though, you don't need to know any more than that about measurements except to just focus on the numbers. Handling mercury isn't necessarily

The MGB has a couple of handy taps available to connect the gauge to. There should be a rubber tube connected between the intake manifold and the anti-run-on valve. Use that rubber tube to connect the gauge to the manifold. You might need a length of new standard automotive vacuum hose to do that and ensures there are no air leaks from small cracks in your existing hose. Any auto parts store should carry that hose. Hint-it's always a good idea to have a length of that hose in your spare parts kit anyway.

What Tests Can Reveal – Here is a fairly simple look at what readings you might see and what they could indicate –remember, for the MGB normal vacuum at idle is about 18 to 22 in.-Hg.

Note – the Vacuum gauge can be useful in helping to narrow things down, but sometimes additional tests might be necessary to positively identify a specific problem. When you are doing your spring tune-up though it can be an easy to use piece of test equipment. Air leaks can be a problem – not just for your tires (tyres).

If all this sounds terribly complicated, Moss Motors had developed an excellent You Tube video that provides an basic explanation of how engine vacuum is measured.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=utUSI-JYhVU>

Safety fast. Terry

GRAY NEEDLES ARE FLUCTUATING | BLACK NEEDLES ARE STEADY



Normal Motor
Needle steady between 17 & 21



Normal Motor
Open and close throttle rapidly
rings and valves okay.



Poor Rings or Oil
Needle steady but lower
than normal



Poor Rings or Oil
Open and close throttle rapidly
needle pulls down to zero.



Sticky Valve
Needle drops occasionally
about 4 divisions



Burnt Valve
Needle drops regularly
several divisions



Leaky Valve
Needle drops 2 or more divisions
when valve should close



Loose Valve Guide
Fast Vibration of needle
between 14 and 19



Weak Valve Guides
Motor racing, needle registers 10
to 22, variations increase with RPM



Late Valve Timing
Needle reads between 8 to 15
and remains steady



Late Ignition Timing
Needle reads between 14 to 17
and remains steady



**Plug Gap Too Close or
Points not Synchronized**
Needle floats slowly between 14-17



Leaky Intake or Carb Gasket
Needle reads below 5



**Leaky Head Gasket
Between Cylinders**
Needle floats between 5 & 19



Choked Muffler
High reading at first, Breaks to 0
and builds back to 16



Carb Out of Adjustment
Needle floats slowly
between 13 and 17

My Engine Rebuild

by Shayne McKean

For many months, I have spoken about the MGB engine build that I have been preparing for. My excitement has been “toned down” for last few months, while the block was cleaned and prepped at the machine shop, but I finally got it home and the fun (?) has begun!

I had purchased a Black Label OD transmission from Greg Chait, at Stannis MG, in Tybee Island, GA and I was discussing with Glenn Towery what I would need for a rebuild of the existing engine in my MGB, and he asked why I just didn’t build a new engine? I thought about it and decided it was a good idea. Or was it? Getting a bare block meant I would have to get all of the parts needed to assemble a complete engine. I could have taken the block and transferred the core parts from the engine in my car to another block, but that didn’t make complete sense. I could have just refreshed the engine in the car currently, but would probably have to replace key parts like pistons, oil pump, cam, etc. The block from Glenn was extremely affordable (free), so I decided to build the new engine to pair with the transmission.



The bare block starting point.

Once I picked up the block in Maryland, it was delivered to Abacus Racing to be tested and cleaned. After which I started the research to get all of the parts I needed. I got the crank, cam and a 12H-2709 (European 12H-2387) “big valve” head from Greg Chait. The pistons came from Basil Adams in Sears Point, CA. I already had two sets of carburetors (HIF-4 and HS-4) that I had rebuilt with Joe Curto rebuild kits earlier last year. The rest of the parts were “accumulated” after hours of scouring Moss, British Parts Northwest and Rimmer Brothers, using their exploded diagrams to compile a list of everything I needed.



New pistons, rods, cam and crank shaft.

Short story long, I finally picked up my freshly cleaned head, crank and cam shafts from the shop! I had the block decked .010”, the cylinders were bored and honed .030 over and the cam bearings were pressed in. They also cleaned the oil galleries and fitted a brass rear freeze plug. The crank needed to be ground .010, so I had to source some King Tri-

metal main and rod bearings. I went with Maxspeeding rods, so I also had to get the “old style” pistons with free floating wrist pins and circlips.

Once I got the block home, it was time to work. I got it mounted on the engine stand and started to fit the crank and bearings. No problem, right? Once I cleaned the coating off the bearings and installed the upper set, the crank sat nicely in them. The problem was, if I pushed the crank “back” towards the transmission, there was a ‘tap tap tap’ sound as I rotated the crank. If I pushed the crank “forward” it all but went away, so I installed the thrust washers, hoping that the “tapping” would be gone.

Nope, it was lighter, but not gone. With the thrust washers installed, the crank rotation did become tight though, with 1-2 thou free play, so I decided to sand the washers a bit. Once I got 3 thou, I thought I’d be good, but the tapping continued. After several days of watching, listening, rotating and cursing, I finally realized what was happening. On the bottom side of the bearing support, there were two protruding lobes that were left where the cutting wheels stopped during block preparation, after manufacturing. Apparently, they cut



An image of the little excess metal that caused the clicking.

enough away for the original crank, but I was not using the original crank. I asked my machine shop, and they confirmed I could file away the offending lobes. I did so and found free and clear rotation of the crank shaft! The excitement was short lived though, as when I checked free end float again, I went from .003” to .008”! Apparently, the lobes limited the crank travel enough to give me incorrect readings initially. A week later and a new set of thrust washers, measured and confirmed to be .091” thick, my crank now has .0035 - .004” clearance. With new thrust washers and clearance set, all five bearing caps were fitted, tightened, thrust free play re-verified and caps torqued. Final free play, with main bearing caps torqued, is .003”. A job that should have taken an hour (at most), took a week. Lessons learned – don’t modify anything until you have verified that the modification is needed. If something doesn’t feel right, don’t keep pushing forward until everything feels right. It will only compound the problem later if you don’t! Next jobs – install the pistons, cam shaft, crank and cam gears and set the timing. I may be asking for some help with timing. :)



The assembled long block.

Tuesday March 4th
Hosted by
Cindy Lee Hall
722 W Ocean View Ave
Norfolk
876-5148



**From 64 take exit 273
onto 4th View St
turn Left at W. Ocean View**

