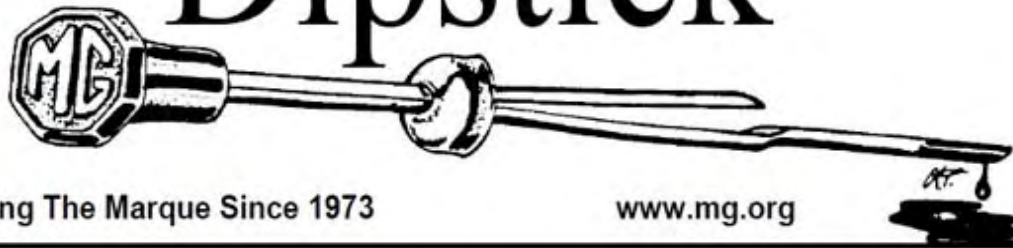




The Dipstick



Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

www.mg.org

Volume 53 Issue 4

April 2026

April Activities

Let's get driving! While the weather has been a bit unpredictable, we're seeing more warm days, making it a great time to plan some rides. We may do some "flash drives" just to get out on the roads and stop for coffee or a stronger beverage, with no specific goal or destination, except to enjoy the ride! We can discuss at the next meeting.

One activity on our list is a drive to Corolla, NC, where you can see wild horses on a beach truck tour. There are also 4x4 Jeep rentals and other sightseeing options available. We're considering either Saturday, April 25th or Saturday, May 23rd for this trip. Pam and I will organize the details and share them with you soon.

Additionally, we have a two- or three-day trip planned to Ocracoke for the British Cemetery Ceremony on Friday, May 8, 2026. This cemetery honors British and Canadian Royal Navy sailors from HMT Bedfordshire who lost their lives during the Battle of the Atlantic in World War II. We'll drive down on May 7th, stay overnight in Ocracoke, attend the ceremony at 11 AM on May 8th, enjoy lunch at one of the island's local restaurants, and then head home afterward. You're welcome to stay an extra night and return on Saturday the 9th, giving you more time to explore the island. The Anchorage Inn and Marina currently has rooms available, and there are other lodging options in Ocracoke, Frisco, and Hatteras Village. The Hatteras-Ocracoke ferry runs every 30 minutes in May, so transportation should be smooth even if you don't stay a second night. If you're interested, please book your accommodations soon. We'll coordinate travel as a club, but hotel reservations need to be handled individually.

Please also put in your calendars the MG International 2026 in Sandusky, Ohio, at the Kalahari Resort in Sandusky, from 23-27 August 2026. MG International hopes to get at least 1000 MGs to attend.

Upcoming events: Weekend dessert drive to Be Free Ice Cream – TBD. They don't just have ice cream, they have croissants of all kinds, Danish, pastries, cookies and donuts, as well as coffee to go with all. We will try to plan a nice weekend, but with indeterminate weather, it may be a relatively short notice based on weather forecasts.

25Apr 26 (tentative) Corolla day drive

8 May 2026 – Ocracoke British Cemetery Ceremony (7-9 May 26) (alternate date, 23 May 26).

Safety fast, Shayne

TMGC Coming Events

Apr 18 - Meeting: Steve Charles's in Suffolk; Sat 11:30 Kick tyres

Apr 26 - Tech Session at Huovinen's 11:00 with Pizza

Apr 28-30 - TMGC Spring Tour



Marque Time!

President's Message

from
Rob MacPherson

Greetings and Salutations!

It seems as though Spring has sprung! I hope everyone has been enjoying the fine weather, except for the (occasional) freezing overnight temps, snow, cold rain, and sleet!!!

But seriously, it seems that we're going to be blessed with a lovely Spring, so get your cars out of hibernation, and get them ready. Shayne and Pam are working on various plans, and there are other events like Cars & Coffee at JANAF

and in downtown Portsmouth that run year round. Mathieu Huovinen is hosting the Spring Tech Session, so come on out if you have work to do or need some help or advice.

Hope to see everyone soon...

Safety Fast.

Rob

TMGC Officers and Committees

President	Rob MacPherson	TMGCPres@mg.org
Vice President	Russ Murphy	TMGCV@mg.org
Secretary	Terry Walburn	Secretary@tmgc.org
Treasurer	Mark Davidoski	Treasurer@mg.org
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Webmaster	Mike Haag	Webmaster@mg.org
Historian	Sue Bond	
Regalia	Rose Ladd	
Technical	Terry Bond	
Membership	Mike Haag	Membership@mg.org

TMGC Membership

As of March 19th we have 99 paid memberships. As always, if you have any questions about your membership or have any changes in your information please contact me at membership@mg.org.

Safety fast. Mike Haag



Rob MacPherson, Shayne McKeen with his grandson Henry, Mike Haag, Mark Davidoski and Bob McClaren. Right, Terry Bond with part of his booth.



TRAACA Annual Swap Meet

The Antique Car Club Annual Swap Meet was held on Saturday March 7th at the Nansemond-Suffolk Academy on Rt 460 in Suffolk.

The MG club had a table at the swap meet for membership and as a gathering place for TMGC members. It was a fun, early spring gathering.



I just thought I would let you know that my Alfa Romeo Duetto is now fixed and back home and ready to grace the MG community once more.

Skip



TMGC February 2026 Meeting Minutes.

Meeting Location: Eastside Pizzeria - Portsmouth

Meeting Called to Orders: 6:48 P.M.

There were no new members present, but Rob's friend Corey was a guest in attendance.

The previous meetings minutes were unanimously approved.

Vice President Report

All months have meeting locations determined, but exact dates and time for some are TBD. There will be a Tech Session at Matthew's house in April in Ocean View.

Activities Report:

Information provided by Rob. Saturday March 7, 2026, there is a Swap Meet at Nansemond Suffolk Academy off Route 460.

Treasurers Report:

There was a \$60 deposit from the 50/50 drawing, and there were some name tag sales and a few new memberships bringing the balance to \$2057.37.

Dipstick Report:

Jim requested anything for the April edition to be submitted by the 20th of March.

Membership Report:

The current membership is 99 peeps.



President Rob MacPherson.

Technical Report:

It has been too cold for technical work. Robert did share his experience with piston rings.

Someone (The Bond's?? I did not write down who brought this up), were having problems with the starter on their TC. They sent the starter to Doug in Mason Arizona, who rebuilt the starter and sent it back in 10 days.



Old Business:

Jim and other members of the by-laws committee summarize their work on the by-laws. The by-law changes have been posted on the website. They proposed a change to the fiscal year, and a few other minor changes. The fiscal year change also changes when membership dues must be paid and the election of officers. A motion to approve the by-laws as written was seconded and approved.

The next item was what to do, if anything, about the 6-month gap for the change in dues due date. Things discussed were a possible \$10 assessment or less subsidy to the Christmas Party. Alas, no motion was made, and it was decided to wait to see the financial situation later in the year.

New Business:

Nothing was brought up, but a drive to North Carolina was mentioned.

Mark Time:

There was some talk about repairing toilets.

The website has been updated to have links for places to buy replacement parts and services. The website was also updated to have an index with hyperlinks to the Tech articles found in the 52 years' worth of Dipstick newsletters.

Regalia:

Rose mentioned some items that were for sale and then conducted the raffle. I wasn't able to catch the names, items won, or the amount of the 50/50.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 P.M.



John Singletary picking the winning raffle ticket.

Project Cheapskate gets it in gear. by Doug Kennedy

Having declared Project Cheapskate complete, it was of course time to continue working on it because, well, owning a vintage MG isn't a hobby, it's a career. It requires continuous attention and development, continuing education, trial and error, and the hope for reward when you achieve success. Having enjoyed two months of episode-free MGA ownership it was time to dig into the next step in what will be a career of ownership. I recently spent time with the A's brother, a 1969 MGB, at its home in Maine and was reminded of the wonder of an overdrive transmission. When the B's engine hits screaming range I just push the turn signal overdrive switch and the engine absolutely purrs its pleasure and settles into an RPM range that doesn't sound like a screaming blender. With the B I traded a hardtop for the overdrive tranny. Unfortunately, with nothing to trade, the similar solution in the A is a Miata or Ford T-5 gearbox kit. Without a spare \$6K lying around that swap was off the table.

An exceedingly deep dive down the MGA tranny rabbit hole did produce an attractive solution. When the words "poor man's overdrive" leapt off the page I thought "Now you're talking my language!" Keeping with Project Cheapskate's ethos; the plan was to swap in an early B's rear differential. This would change the drive ratio from 4.3:1 to 3.9:1. If you're like me and don't really understand the minutiae of final drive ratios and/or struggled with fractions and percentages in 7th grade, this basically means "Engine go slower, rear wheels go faster".

The swap seemed sneakily simple, and I could even move an entire B rear end into the A if I had to. Happily, the 62 MKII half shafts have the same number of splines as the early B so the task list to just swap the diff was short:

1. Jack up rear end and take off wheels
2. Withdraw half-shafts a foot-ish
3. Crawl under heavily jack-standing car, drain diff, undo four driveshaft bolts, and undo 10 bolts off the diff pumpkin
4. Yank out diff
5. Put new paper-thin seal on axle housing and reinstall in the reverse of above.

Of course, it wasn't this simple since I was working alone. It never is.

In undoing the wheels I somehow got it into my head that the welch plugs needed to be pulled out of



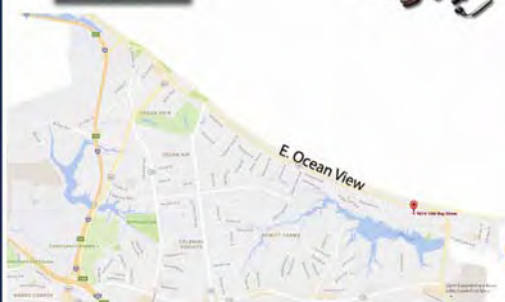
The early MGB 3.9:1 differential.

the center of the hubs. These are blank metal plugs the size of a quarter that are jammed into the hub with a million-pound press to seal off the center. Two holes drilled, various picks and screwdrivers employed, a couple hammers of differing weights and it was out.... annnnd, I realized I had absolutely no reason to do this. Perhaps it was the fog of MGA repair war, advancing old age, or just too many baseballs to the head as a youth but I just plain got it in my head the plugs needed to come out when in reality the whole hub and half-shaft is withdrawn, plug in situ.

Having tilted at that imaginary windmill I chose the appropriate profanity and soldiered on. Happily, the diff drain plug unscrewed easily with a ½" square socket drive with fluid following it. I struggle to find the right words for used 63 year-old gear oil. I'm thinking it smells like a bucket of cabbage left in a car with its windows closed on a sunny hot Virginia Beach day, after an enraged skunk was locked in with it, and then died and was found after a couple weeks of decomposition. With 99% of the gear oil into the waiting bucket the other 1% was quickly wiped off the floor before the EPA declared it a superfund sight from smell only. Next was removing the 10 bolts on the diff. As is always the case, half came right off and the other half were hidden between decades of oil and road grunge. Mad poking with a screwdriver allowed me to get a socket on each and work proceeded. Of course, it was at this very moment, when I was pulling down on a wrench, differential three inches over my face, that my garage helper Bree, a 65 pound ball of golden retriever mischief decided it was time to bolt out into the driveway. Normally this wouldn't be a big issue but recently when I was installing the exhaust her mad dash preceded a squirrel

Is Your Car in Need of a Tech Session?

Bring it to Mathieu Huovinen's Garage
Sunday, April 26th Kick tyres at 11 AM, meeting to follow
with tech session to follow.



9614 16th Bay Street
Norfolk, VA
23518



charging over my legs and into a box of rags, dog inches behind, and the kind of chaos reminiscent of a three stooges movie or that scene in Christmas Vacation when the squirrel jumps out of the Christmas tree. This time Bree was only rushing out to get some petting from a neighbor but as my attention was taken from the task at hand I allowed the socket to tilt, pull off of the nut, and be yanked straight into the side of my nose, missing my teeth by a few inches and what



Project Cheapskate in her finished exterior appearance.

would have been a few new crowns at best. Going back to wrenching I started to wonder what was leaking onto the side of my face when I realized it was me, and a nice new wrench-produced laceration. Wriggling out from under, the cleanest rag I could find nearby grabbed and some garage first aid duct-taped in place, the last few nuts came off. And then, the small challenge of removing a 45 pound ball of gears from in front of your face or from above with the battery cover removed. Short answer, a little of both with some gentle flathead screwdriver prying to get it started.

So, we've all seen the instructions "Assembly is the reverse of disassembly" and thought "I bet it isn't!" In this case it pretty much was with the addition of the step "Bang head on gas tank trying to slide under car with differential in lap" and "Pull muscle in lower back trying to lean over battery cover opening while you lower diff into place." Some prying and jerking, twenty trips underneath to bench press the square diff into its round hole, and it was back to bolting. Being careful not to rearrange my face any further it all slid back into place with a little dead blow hammer "persuasion." Half-shafts slid into the diff, hubs bolted on and wheels back on and the job was done. Other than some unforced user-errors, this was a couple hours that will make a huge difference. Now, instead of Project Cheapskate sounding like it was always looking for another gear over 50MPH it sounds much more reasonable at speed. Maybe not true overdrive territory but when MG made the B it knew it needed to improve the drive ratio. Thankfully this direct swap, and club member Bob McClaren's pile of rear ends made it possible to benefit from the B's re-engineering. On the MGA A-Mod scale of 1-10 with one being "Run away, you don't need an LS crate engine swap" and 10 being "It's easy and the benefits are worth it, DO IT", I'd rate this a solid 9. Next up...three-point seatbelts, the MG Career continues.

TMGC Dipstick Technical Article Index



MG T'series

Subject/Title	Year	Month	Page	Author
Engine - Mechanical				
TF engine crankshaft & other topics	1986	December	5	Mike Ash
Spark Plug Update for 'T' Series engines	1987	April	5	Author unknown
TC Spark Plugs	1995	September	5	from the Octagon Bulletin, June 1995
Stripped oil pan plug	1980	June	6	Fred Driver
Engine PreLuber	1987	October	5	Mike Ash & Robert Davis
Electrical				
Turn signal switches	1979	December	5	T-Party Times article
Wiring harness replacement and testing	1980	June	5	Dan Philen, Southeastern 'T' Register
Alternate T series turn signal relay	1981	May	5	R.E. Richardson, 'T' Times magazine
Turn Switch Repair	1981	November	5	Dave Kuhn
TF wiring color code & other topics	1987	March	5	Mike Ash
Guages - Refurbishment	2003	November	8	Peggy Craig
Suspension/Driveline				
Wheel nuts	1979	December	6	T-Party Times article
Changing rear end gear ratio Part 2	1979	February	5	Bob Grunau, Ontario 'T' Register
TF clutch adjustment	1987	February	4	Mike Ash
Rear Shock Absorbers	1991	June	3	Mike Ash
Fuel System				
Low pressure SU fuel pump	1979	August	3	Sorry Safari Touring Society club, CA
%\$&#?! Fuel pump!	1981	June	6	Dave Dubois, Southeastern 'T' Register
Ask a Fuelish Question	1981	November	5	Jarl deBoer
Rebuilding 'T' series & MGA SU carburetors, Part 1	1988	May	3	Mike Ash
Rebuilding 'T' series & MGA SU carburetors, Part 2	1988	June	5	Mike Ash

Dipstick Technical Article Index by Mike Haag

As discussed at the March meeting, over the past 50+ years many technical articles have been written by club members and published in the club newsletter, The Dipstick. These technical articles cover a wide range of MG related issues so a couple of years ago I developed a listing of these tech articles in chronological order as they were published and posted it on the website on the Dipstick page. Although complete, it was not easy to quickly find a tech article that may be of interest.

Recently, Jim Villers and I re-worked this index to make it more "user friendly". It is now broken down by MG model to include T'series, MGA, MGB, and Midget along with All MG and General Info categories. The different MG categories are further broken down by areas such as Engine-Mechanical, Electrical, Suspension/Driveline, Fuel System, Cooling/Exhaust System, Brakes, Body and Other. In the near future, the General Info category will be broken down similarly. Each tech article is identified by title or subject matter and the year/month/page/author with a link to the Dipstick issue, see the sample screenshot.

The index is located on the website on the Dipstick page at <https://www.mg.org/dipstickindex.html> and will be updated regularly to include the latest articles. So, before you Google or search on the MG Experience, (a great resource tool) try looking up a technical article for a particular problem from our own MG experts.

TECH STUFF – Portale Tire (TYRE) Inflators By Terry Bond

No, the “Prince of Darkness” doesn’t make tyres. But-that doesn’t mean the air won’t somehow disappear (insert Lucas Smoke jokes here if needed).

Normally, when your tyre appears to lack sufficient air it’s the result of a puncture of some kind. I’ve seen some strange things sticking out of them and am a believer in “anything can happen” on a road-trip. For tyres on our LBCs, there are a number of choices. Perhaps the easiest is to pull out your handy AAA card, or one for whoever you have alleged “roadside assistance” with. It can be anything can happen day there too, and again, we’ve seen it all.

There are lonely country roads where cell phone signals don’t exist. There can be hours-long waits for help when you do manage to finally reach someone and survive the “press 1, Press 7, automated response hot-line while the battery charge on your phone keeps dropping. A simple country drive could easily turn into one of those survivor reality shows.

That’s why we carry spares though. When did you last check the air in that thing? Could be it’s in the same condition as the one you already have on the car – FLAT! No hole, but not enough air either.

Fear not! There are some handy devices you should be carrying in your tool kit that just might get you back on the road quickly. You might not even be late for dinner.

Several years ago, when we met at a Waffle-House somewhere for an early departure on a tour, someone mentioned one of our tyres looked a bit low. Sure enough, it did give the appearance of pending doom. A quick inspection though did not reveal any particular reason. Don Ladd quickly came to the rescue with a neat device that resembled a battery operated drill. But, instead of a drill bit extending from its snout, there was a length of flexible air-hose. Connect the hose to the valve stem and pull the trigger. It rattled loudly but quickly re-inflated the tyre. We motored on in minutes and the tyre never lost any additional atmosphere. Still don’t know why it was soft, but the fix was quick and easy. So, I rushed out to the nearest Home Depot and bought one. I’ve since learned that there are much smaller units that



This Ryobi inflator is a good example of the larger inflators that use manufacturer standard batteries.

do the same thing.

I've not tried them all, but most have been reviewed extensively and various results are easy to find with a simple Google search.

Here are some things to look for when considering one for your own tool kit:

Are they really portable? Brands like the Ryobi can be bulky and won't fit easily under your seat. Other "Gun" type devices are made by Craftsman, Milwaukee, DeWalt and just about any company that makes a portable battery operated drill but by the time you attach the rechargeable battery it becomes the same size as a large drill. Add in a length of air hose and they can be difficult to stash in the car. Don't forget these will need a separate detachable battery, often sold as an extra charge item significantly increasing the cost. Oh, and you'll also need a special battery charger too. Will it all fit into your MG? Another drawback – they can be really noisy. Of course they are also among the most powerful to use, providing up to 150 PSI. They also have large easy to read pressure gauges. If you want a "BIG" one select a brand that already matches your other battery operated tools so you can remain consistent with the type of battery and charging system used.

Pocket-sized units are available and many have a lot of built-in features like pre-set pressure limits with automatic shut-off. They are easily charged with a simple USB cable. Their size is a big advantage of course, easily fitting into your glove box or under a seat. There are a lot of different brands on the market, but the one most highly rated is the Airmoto. I bought four of them last year as Christmas gifts – so far, no complaints.

There are a lot of variations on these that are available on Amazon or from Walmart. As always its best to do a little research before spending your beer money on an item of unknown quality (of course there are bad beers available too!).

Whatever you choose, carrying one of these on a tour might be the smartest tool in your bag.

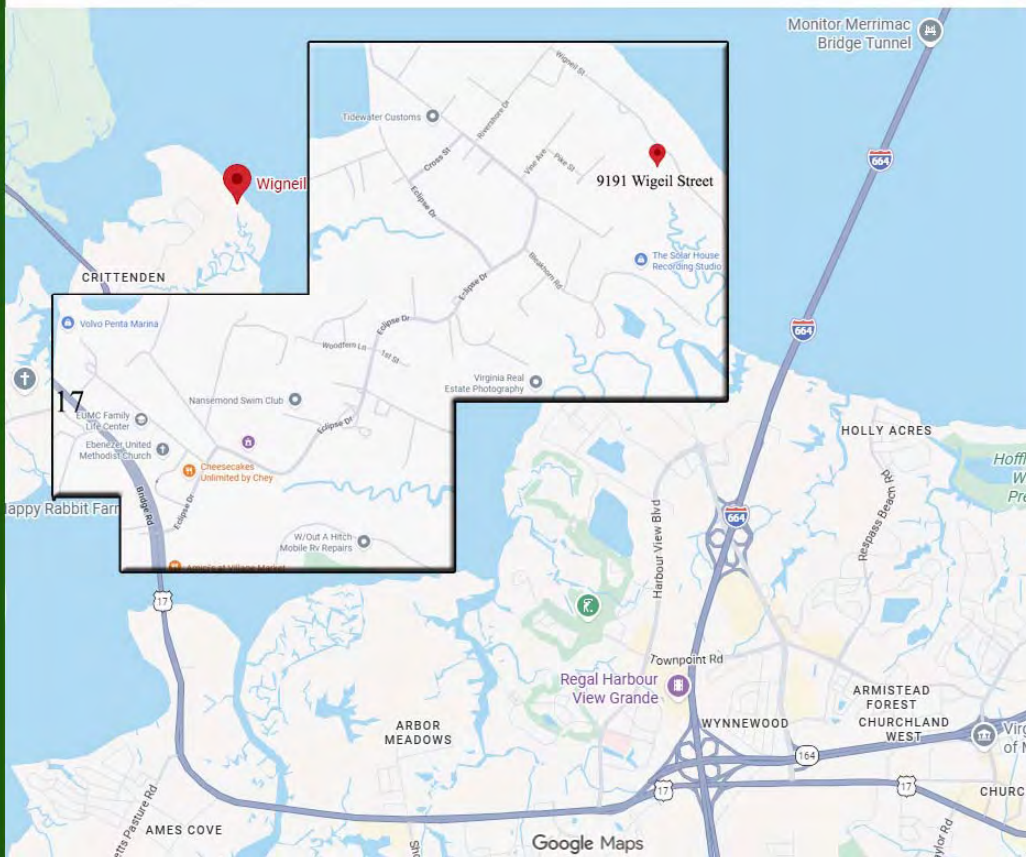
Keep em rolling –

Safety fast as always. Terry

The advertisement for the Airmoto tire inflator features a central image of the black device with a digital display showing '00' and '35.0'. To the left, text reads 'Quickly Inflate Virtually Anything in Minutes for Total Peace of Mind' and 'Easy-to-Use Portable Tire Inflator That Inflates Virtually Anything in Minutes with the Push of a Button'. Below this are four bullet points: 'Inflates Virtually Anything in Minutes', 'Portable and Easy to Use', 'Perfect for All Vehicle Types (and More)', and '90 Day Money-Back Guarantee'. A yellow button says 'ORDER NOW AND SAVE!'. To the right, a '90-DAY MONEY BACK GUARANTEE (excl. S&H)' and '1 YEAR WARRANTY' are listed, along with a 'US COMPANY' logo. At the bottom, a row of logos for media outlets (HBO, BET, VICE, MSNBC, FOX, AMC, CBS, ESPN, COMET CENTRAL) is shown, followed by the text 'Helping Drivers Everywhere' and a quote from Fox News and Good Morning America.

The Airmoto is a good example of the smaller inflators.

Monthly Meeting
Saturday, Apr 18th
Janet and Steve Charles
9191 Wigieil Street,
Suffolk VA. 23433.



11:30 am - Kick Tyres
Meeting to Follow