

# The Dipstick



“The Newsletter of the Tidewater MG Classics Car Club”

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

Volume XXXVI, Issue 12

Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

December 2009

## MARQUE TIME

Thank you to Paul and Carmen for hosting the November spectacular. What a great meeting! Their beautiful home was packed with MG enthusiasts and the dining room table filled with delectable treats. The street had enough LBC's to suggest a British invasion.

The new club directories look great! Bill Yoshida did an outstanding job compiling the information and photos. At the president's home, we receive quite a few phone books. This is by far my favorite.

Our club membership continues to grow. We are 106 strong. Word must be traveling about what a great investment it is to become a part of Tidewater MG Classics. A \$20 annual fee covers attendance at 11 monthly meetings, tech sessions and a holiday party. Food and beverage along with car talk from Tidewater's most knowledgeable MG aficionados are offered at every gathering. I can't imagine a greater return on an investment.

By the time this Dipstick hits print, we will have enjoyed another tech session at the newly-renovated Bond Plantation. We will have repaired our sports cars, filled our stomachs, and be days away from the holiday party.

As discussed at the last two meetings, our exploratory committee continues to investigate hosting the NAMBGR 2012. Anyone interested in being involved, or sharing input, please contact Mark Davidoski.

As I look out the window at this November Nor'Easter, I miss the MG days of summer. The months ahead will provide plenty of opportunities to take on MG projects—you know the ones that you put off in the summer because it is more fun to be on the road. One of the wonderful aspects of MG ownership is that there is always something to do.

Safety Fast,  
Bill Olcheski



## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

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

- Dec. 11 Friday Night Holiday Party at the home of Jim and Betty Villers.**
- Dec. 15 Dipstick inputs due.**
- Dec. 29 TMGC Event – Holiday Lights Drive through Norfolk Botanical Gardens**
- Jan. 6 Wednesday Club Meeting – Eastside Pizza – 5618 Portsmouth Blvd., Portsmouth. Dinner 6:45, Kick Tyres 7:30, Meeting 8:00**
- Feb. 2 Tuesday Club Meeting – Location TBA**  
Happy Groundhog Day - Do we have 6 more weeks with the top up?
- Mar. 1 Have you applied for your passport yet for MG-2010?*
- Mar. 3 Wednesday Club Meeting – Location TBA**
- Apr. 6 Tuesday Club Meeting – Location TBA**
- Apr. 9-11 GOF South – Jekyll Island, GA  
[www.MGclassics.org](http://www.MGclassics.org)
- Apr. 30 – May 2 Tentative Dates for 2010 Wine Tour to Loudon County, VA**
- May 5 Wednesday Club Meeting – Location TBA**
- June 1 Tuesday Club Meeting – Location TBA**



# NOVEMBER MINUTES

by Mark Davidoski

President Bill Olcheski called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM at the lovely home of Carmen and Paul Thiergardt. The turnout was heavy, thanks to everyone's anticipation of Carmen's usual, over-the-top buffet.

**New Members:** Bobbie Gribble had attended as a guest last month, and is now an official member. I didn't catch what kind of MG is in Bobbie's garage. Bob and Kathy Lankford were also in attendance (1974 ½ BGT). Larry Bass was also attending his first meeting (1976 BGT).

**Vice President's Report:** Russ Ripp reported on a Motorcycle/Auto run to benefit disabled veterans.

**Treasurers Report:** Jim Villers reported that we have a healthy balance of \$3,765.81. Thanks to everyone for your renewal dues.

**Activities:** Tad Carter ran through the list of upcoming events. He reported that a small group made the recent drive-out to Colonial Downs for some evening harness racing. Although Tad said he was 0 for 18 at the betting window, a good time was had by all. Near term events include the Fall Tech Session at the Bond residence on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Holiday Party is being hosted by Betty and Jim Villers on December 11<sup>th</sup>. The charity that we'll sponsor this year is Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters – details to be published in the December Dipstick. Please see Tad's detailed events listing in this issue.

**Clubs:** Nothing to report from Mike.

**Membership:** Bill Yoshida says we're at 106 members, with a few more recruits in the offing. Bill brought the new Membership Directories to the meeting and distributed copies to those present. The rest will be mailed out. The new directories include lots of photos from events of the past year -- nice work Bill!

**Dipstick:** Ron Struewing solicited writers for upcoming events and thanked everyone who has contributed articles in recent months.

**Regalia:** Becky Hassler asked for a heads up email from anyone with an item for the Holiday Party Silent Auction. Proceeds will go to CHKD. Becky also displayed a new T-shirt option with screened art on the front. A bargain at just \$18.00!

**Technical:** Mark Childers brought along some NOS Lucas bits for early MGBs.

**New business:** Nothing to report.

**Old business:** Mark Davidoski reviewed the situation with respect to NAMGBR and MG 2012. A small exploratory committee has done some additional research. The general consensus from the last two meetings (and the committee) is that this is not something that TMGC should pursue.

**Marque Time:** Bob Stein told us about a 1970 MGB at the Pick 'N Pull lot in Virginia Beach. It looks to be largely complete, including decent wire wheels. Anita Edwards-Struewing reported that her Dad's 1975 B is back in Powhatan, but remains for sale. (Check out the TMGC website's classified section – a nice car!)

**Raffle:** Becky sold lots of tickets for a host of interesting prizes. Among the lucky winners were Andy Wallach (Lucas Manual) and Larry Bass (embroidered MG logo patch.) Mike Ash was the luckiest, winning first in line privileges for Carmen's fantastic buffet.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM



## Activities

by Tad Carter

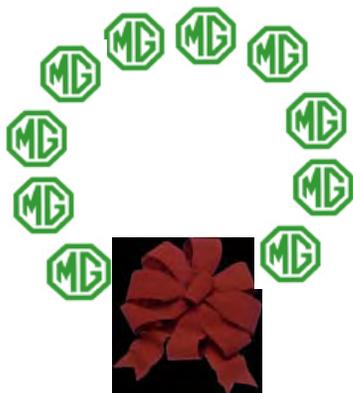
We are being welcomed back to the lovely home of Betty and Jim Villers in Virginia Beach on Friday evening, December 11<sup>th</sup> for our Holiday Party. You are invited to bring a dish to share with the rest of the group. If you are unsure of what to bring, please use the following guideline: Owners of pre-1960 vehicles, bring an appetizer; owners of 1960's through the chrome bumper series B's, bring a side dish. We'll leave desserts to the rubber-bumper crowd. If you fall in multiple categories or have a favorite dish you want to share, surprise us!

As we celebrate the season, it has been TMGC custom to support a local charity through gift donations and the proceeds from a raffle. This year, we have chosen Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters as our charity. **“Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters is the facility of choice for pediatric care in southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina. Whether a child needs hospitalization, ongoing care for a chronic illness, outpatient surgery or primary care, CHKD Health Systems provides the staff, facilities and technologies that address the unique demands of childhood. Since the Norfolk City Union of The King's Daughters established the hospital in 1961, CHKD has undergone two major renovations and expansions and is now at the hub of a comprehensive system of caring dedicated exclusively to children.”** They have provided a “wish list”, which is included elsewhere in *The Dipstick*. Additionally, a copy will be sent by e-mail. As always, we welcome donations to the fun “Silent Auction”, in addition to any gift donations. As CHKD is always supporting the needs of children throughout the

region, any support offered is greatly appreciated.

Also at the December Holiday Party, we will be soliciting hosts for our monthly meetings in 2010, as well as the Spring, Summer and Fall Tech Sessions. Thank you in advance for your support of the club in the New Year.

On Tuesday, December 29th we will brave the elements for our Annual Holiday Lights Drive to the Norfolk Botanical Gardens. We will depart from Franco's Italian Restaurant (6200 N Military Hwy, Norfolk) at 7:30PM. If you would like to eat prior to our departure, it is recommended that you arrive at Franco's by 6:30PM.



## Membership and New Members

Bill Yoshida

**Memberships:** As of 10 November, the 2010 Membership count currently stands at 108 paid members.

Two new members joined at the November meeting:

Bobbi Gribble  
Virginia Beach, VA  
1977 MGB, 1974 MGB, 1974 MGB-GT

Bob & Kathy Lankford  
Virginia Beach, VA  
1974 1/2 MGB-GT

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

**Dues:** All dues have been turned over to Jim Villers.

**TMGC 2010 Annual Directory:** The long awaited 2010 Directories were provided to the members in attendance at the November meeting. Jim Villers was given the remainder of the directories for mailing to members that were unable to be at the meeting.

Safety Fast,

## Note from the Editors

by Ron Struewing

As this year comes to a close, Peggy and I would like to thank all of you who submitted articles, took photographs during events this past year, or submitted other information. Your inputs help to make this a great and informative newsletter. Keep up the good work and we will look forward to another great year with all the pages filled!

If you attend an event and are uncomfortable with or inexperienced at writing an article by yourself, consider collaborating with another member.

When submitting articles, please email them to both editors, Peggy Craig [balloon1@cox.net](mailto:balloon1@cox.net), and me [rstruewing@cox.net](mailto:rstruewing@cox.net). If possible, please place your inputs in Microsoft Word format.

When submitting photos, with or without an article, please send them to me and our historian, Susan Bond [sue007@infionline.net](mailto:sue007@infionline.net). This will ensure that, not only do I get them for our newsletter, Susan gets them for the archives and for the webmaster. Please label the photos either by saving the file name as the photograph caption or putting a note in the email as the photograph caption.

In an effort to assist us in formatting submitted articles for the newsletter, please do not embed the photos in the text but attach to your email. If you wish the photo in a certain location in you article, please use brackets, [1234.jpg] for example with the photo name inside.

From Peggy and me, we wish you all a great Holiday Season!



## Officers and Committees

President	Bill Olcheski	467-4046
Vice President	Russ Ripp	393-9908
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>

## Activities

by Tad Carter

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## Moss Run

by Craig Cummings

November 10, 2009

Chuck Hassler and I took a run up to MOSS Motors in Petersburg today. The trip was warranted partly because the weather was great and partly because I wanted to pick up 2 yards of vinyl quickly for a new dashboard project on my MGC GT. I ordered the vinyl in the morning from MOSS in California and they told me that the vinyl was available at their Petersburg, VA location. MOSS Petersburg called later and said my order was ready, so off we went in Chuck's MGB LE.

The trees were still in beautiful Fall colors on the drive North out of Williamsburg on Route 5. We took Route 5 North to Route 156 and took the bridge to Route 10 and headed North to Hopewell. The back roads were a pleasure and kept us off of the dreaded I-64. In Hopewell, we picked up Route 36 through Petersburg and then merged onto I-95 South. We drove one exit South to I-85 South which put us only a few miles from our destination. If you make the trip, be sure to take Exit 63 off of I-85 South to Boynton Road. Boynton Road merges with Simpson Road where you'll see the MOSS warehouse on the right at 25651 Simpson Road.

The new honey tan padded metal dash project took many parts to complete. I ordered the majority of the items for this project from the Little British Car Company and saved over \$100 versus the MOSS full price. But, if you are in need of a new part in a hurry, Moss is now only a short road trip away. Follow the above directions or just plug in the Simpson Road address into your GPS like we did.

Chuck didn't have his “get out of Moss free card” with him, so he bought a 72-80 MGB TWIN MOLDED CUP HOLDER, item #453-756. It just goes to show you that you can't go into a Moss warehouse with your wallet handy.





Come  
Join  
The fun



This year, we have chosen Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters (CHKD) as our charity. If you wish to participate, please bring gift(s) unwrapped (you may include gift bags). CHKD has provided a "wish list", which is included elsewhere in *The Dipstick*. A copy will also be sent to members by e-mail. As always, we welcome donations to the fun "Silent Auction", in addition to any gift donations.

Becky Hassler is setting up the "Silent Auction" with the proceeds going to CHKD. She requests that members who have something to donate to please email her in advance so she can have an auction sheet ready for that item (not absolutely necessary but will greatly help Becky in setting up the auction. These items can be anything--not necessarily car related--gently used or new. (becky@vaaardvark.com)



# An Evening at the Races

by Andy Wallach

I have passed Colonial Downs on Interstate 64 for years and even just this past summer visited a friend who lives in one of the housing developments near the track, but had never gone to the track. So when Tad Carter, our Activities Chair, organized a drive-out to the races, my wife Cynthia and I signed up. Of course the weather was warmer a month ago and a nice summer weekend drive in a TD or TF seemed like a great idea. As the days got shorter and the temperatures dropped, I started to reconsider my choice of vehicle. MG Ts are reliable ... but not relaxing to drive; the headlights work ... but there have been advances since the Lucas of the 1950s; visibility is great ... with the top down but a bit restricted with top up and Plexiglas side curtains installed; climate control is ... what climate control? In a T, you are always hot when the temperature is warm and cold when the temperature is cool. The deciding factor was precipitation. The wipers on my TF and Cynthia's TD do work (one can always turn them manually if the motor does fail) but their effectiveness is lacking. Increasing the wiper blade pressure on the glass improves rain removal but the increased friction slows the motor down or even causes it to stop. (I have found that the system works best when blades are not in contact with the windshield as long as it is not raining.)

As Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, broke chilly and overcast, Cynthia and I decided that the proper car for the event would be Cynthia's other "T", her Acura TL. Next, I needed to find out about Colonial Downs and horse picking ... to the internet. When I saw that there was the Turf Club with inside dining room seating overlooking the track, I quickly called Tad. But he was one step ahead, he had already made reservations. Well, it had been about 20 years since my previous and only foray to a track so I better brush up on my knowledge of betting and horse picking. On the website are all the statistics. I downloaded the race schedule, and the drivers' (fall is harness racing at Colonial Downs) and trainers' records for this year. Being analytical, I couldn't base my betting on the dartboard method or best-sounding name of the horse.

We met Tad and his son Troy at the Sentara Belle Harbor hospital parking lot on route 17 near Interstate 664 at 2:30 pm. The top was up on Tad's MGB. He claimed that he started off from home with the top down and put it up when he got to the parking lot. The caravan of two, B and TL, set off for the races. As I was navigator and the navigation consisted of following Tad's B, I enjoyed the scenery. There were splashes of fall foliage color consisting of turning dogwoods and a few maples. White fluffy balls of cotton

in brown fields appeared like an early morning dusting of snow. The fading fields of soy beans presented a mottled view of green, brown, and gold. There were also fields of corn stubble and one field of hay rolls. Virginia is still agrarian.

After a Miller Mart pit stop, we arrived at Colonial Downs at 4:22 pm, having traveled 84 miles. We met Betty Davis at the entrance and after paying a \$3 entrance fee each (normally \$5 for the Turf Club but since the track was waving the general admission price of \$2, we got in for \$3) we began an evening of watching, betting, drinking, and eating. There were ten races, one every 15 minutes. Some races were trotters and some were pacers. (Ask Tad, he will tell you the difference.) We each had our methods of horse picking and betting. Betty laid all her bets down for all the races before the first race, betting on a horse in each race to win. Cynthia, Tad, Troy, and I bet just before each race. Tad and Troy based their bets on Colonial Downs provided "Pete's Pix", a listing of four horses in each race picked by Pete someone. I picked based on driver and trainer record, showing preference for horses which were driven by the trainer. One could bet to win, place (come in first or second) or show (come in first, second, or third), as well as many other exotic bets combining all three places or multiple races. Cynthia and I won some and lost many and had lots of fun. (I believe that Tad and Troy went 0 for 18.) The food, beer, and wine were good. (Tad and Troy had Reuben's, Cynthia had crab cakes, I had a chef's salad, and Betty had chocolate cake.) We were on our way home at 8:30 pm via Interstate 64, taking a little over an hour to reach Norfolk.

Bottom line: You do not have to drive an MG to participate. You do not have to spend much money ... a few gallons of gas and \$3 to get in the track. Experience something new and have fun. Thank you Tad for organizing a fun afternoon/evening.



# Waynesboro British Car Show

Hosted by Shenandoah Valley British Car Club

by Susan Bond  
October 2-4, 2009

Barry Tyson, BJ Staneski, Bella Diva, Donald Ladd and I met at a Hardee's in Portsmouth for the annual trek to Waynesboro on a great almost-autumn day. In 2 MGs and a Sebring (a convertible so it fit in) we made all the usual pit stops on 460, and then the long slog around Richmond to route 6 and on to Scottsville –



Barry Tyson, BJ Staneski & Bella Diva at Andre Viettes we have got to find a stopping place next year to recover from interstate traffic on 288. Donna's Place in Scottsville had tables and chairs on the sidewalk in front so Bella could join us for lunch. Did I mention that she's a dog? A very cute Yorkie who charms all she meets, BJ's pride and joy, kept us entertained. After a walk round the town, taking note of the flood wa-



Hatton Ferry

ter markers at second story level on one of the houses, we tried to find Hatton Ferry, the subject of a clip on the Today Show that week. We found out later it is well-marked from the other direction. We topped up gas and oil and

headed for the hills.

Unfortunately, my GT had not been running as well as it should, even with a tune-up, and it ran even worse uphill (Terry later confessed he may have put regular gas in it). I finally pulled over and discovered I had forgotten to put the oil filler cap back on (not the first time for that mistake). Oh well. Let it cool down, dump all the oil I had in it and see if it still runs. It did and there were no more problems with the cars, though Bella had too much good stuff at lunch and decorated Barry's shoes.

After a couple stops at Blue Ridge Parkway overlooks we arrived at the Staunton Holiday Inn in plenty of time for the Friday night social; we



Blue Ridge Parkway

had been trying to beat the predicted rain that never showed up. We met Mike and Denise Haag in the lobby, as well as the Peninsula contingent. After a bit of a cleanup we headed for the Social and watched race movies, socialized and took advantage of free beer till they kicked us out.

Saturday started out foggy but turned out sunny and warm. We all had breakfast at Mrs. Rowe's and took the back roads to Ridgeview Park in Waynesboro.



Doug & Eiko Wilson

I finished cleaning up the oil mess, which startled some friends who know I hate to clean anything, and went sight-seeing. 7

GT's meant we had our own class, and there were as many rubber bumper B's as chrome bumper. 7 T-series, 7 A's and 3 Midgets made for lots of MG's to look at. There were others marques there, too: Mr. Cook's Rolls Royce, 2 Singers!, an Amphicar (British drive train) which won Neatest Car, a Mini Clubman like the one we had in Scotland, one HRG, a friend's '49 Daimler, Paul Wilson's '56 AC Ace Bristol, and Jags, Triumphs, Healeys and Morgans. DJ Bill was there, despite by-

pass surgery 6 weeks earlier, and he played James Bond music for me. Food was plentiful. Restrooms were not, they were under construction. Vendor numbers were down so I didn't find any parts I couldn't live without, but I did win a gift certificate for a distributor from British Parts Northwest.



Bob & Dana Reisse

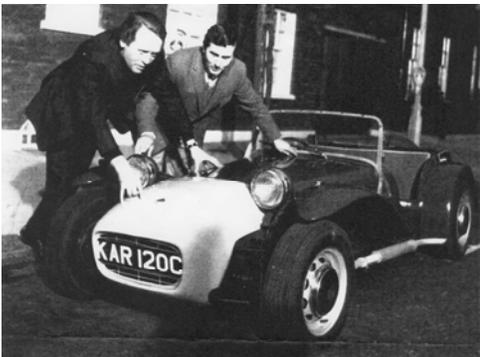
After socializing for the better part of the afternoon, we left to visit Andre Viette's garden center near Fishersville. We didn't buy any plants, but enjoyed the views and the demonstration gardens. Then it was off to Barren Ridge Vineyards going by way of the main road this time, not the miles of gravel we traversed last year. They were closing early to host a wedding, but we had time to taste and buy and sit on the covered patio enjoying more views. We sure do enjoy seeing the mountains!

We had plenty of time to clean up before the banquet that evening. DJ Bill entertained us while waiting for food, and had another



Chuck & Becky Hassler

caption contest for us. The lead-in covered the career of Patrick McGoohan and the cars he drove on TV complete with videos of his roles in *Danger Man* and *The Prisoner*. The picture he gave us had Patrick



Waynesboro caption contest-2009

and someone else with a car. The Wes applause-o-meter registered a tie for the best caption – "Bond gets an Astin-Martin and I get this go-kart?", and my

entry, "Laying on of hands to cast out the demon Lucas." Got a neat model UK Coast Guard Land Rover and boat which will go to my son, the Coastie. And Mike and Denise entertained us with their deer encounter – ask them about the mirror and the dent in the door – that took place in downtown Staunton.

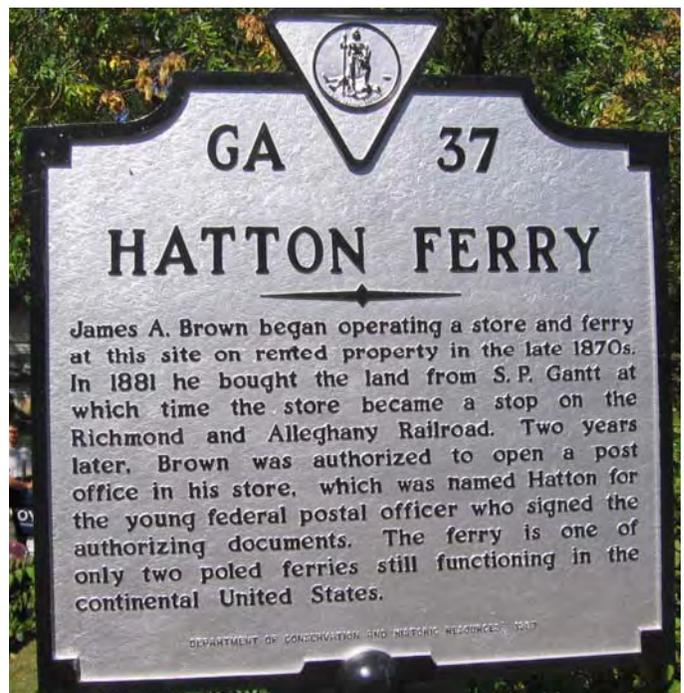
The free beer was gone – I guess we should have left some last night – but the food on the buffet was plentiful and good. Tidewater members occupied 2 tables and won a few prizes. Craig and Joyce Cummings scored second in the MGB and C GT class, and they got free registration for next year's show because they were first to register this year. In the rubber bumper B class Doug and Eiko Wilson placed third. We lingered, enjoying the company.



Joyce & Craig Cummings

The next morning we had a buffet breakfast and watched some video of Ken Brasfield heading for Watkins Glen in his MGA until the speaker, Bruce Elder of Elder Classic Cars in Staunton VA, arrived. He told us 3 stories, including the most incredible towing tale, a nightmare on wheels. It was hilarious. Hated to see it all end, but it was time to leave.

We went back down route 6 and found Hatton Ferry, which dates from the 1870's and is the last operating poled ferry in the country. It wasn't running, but





**Drive-out to**

**Norfolk Botanical Gardens**

**Garden of Lights**

**Tuesday, December 29th**

**We will depart from Franco's Italian Restaurant at 7:30pm**

**6200 North Military Highway, Norfolk**

**(corner of Military Highway & Norview)**

**If you're eating prior to departure, recommend you arrive at Franco's by 6:30pm**

**POC: Tad Carter, 496-9847 or 544-5668 (cell)**

we read all the history boards and took pictures. The web site says there are 5 modes of transportation represented within a small area: ferry, canal, railroad, river and state highway. Lots of history there!

Barry remembered an Arby's we had stopped at a few years ago, just past 288 toward Richmond, which was a prototype, cafeteria-style eatery with a large, up-scale dining area. With full tummies we finished the trip home before dark.

Tidewater members making the trip to Waynesboro this year were: Barry Tyson, BJ Staneski, Bella Diva, Donald Ladd, Susan Bond, Mike & Denise Haag, Chuck & Becky Hassler, Craig & Joyce Cummings, Doug & Eiko Wilson, Bob & Dana Reisse, Bob & Missy McKenna.

This was my 16<sup>th</sup> Waynesboro show, and it's still a great trip. Join us next year!

**Happy  
Holidays!**



## Motor Racing

by Geoff Wheatley

America was one the first countries outside of Europe to promote and support motor racing. We are talking about road racing not track that was to come a few years later with the construction of Indy. The Vanderbilt Cup Race was the pride of all the U.S. racing events, and by the very nature of the benefactor, this trophy was battled for on the streets of Long Island New York. The first official U.S. race was in April, 1900 and the highest speed recorded for that event was 25 miles per hour. In Europe, especially France, open road races had been held for at least six years before this date but were considered dangerous by other countries like Britain, after several French school children were killed watching a motor race and other interested citizens experienced the same fate in Germany. This type of situation resulted from the fact that the street course was never marshaled with any authority; spectators could and would venture into the center of the road to see the approaching cars. In the U.S. it was strictly observed that the route would be policed by safety officials and of course volunteers from the newly- created New York Automobile Club. The actual organization of these events was in the hands of two national groups: the American Automobile Association and the Automobile Club of America. The first few years saw spec-

tator-control enforced without any serious incidents, apart from a damaged cow or cart and a few bruised spectators trying to get as close as they could to the viewing line. By 1907 the average speed had significantly increased to an average of 60 miles an hour through the advance of engineering technology. Regrettably two spectators were killed and a driver seriously injured at the same time that public opinion was starting to turn against the races. The principle complaint was the use of public roads for practice runs by the contestants from early morning to dusk. The State Governor and the New York Chamber of Commerce did not see motor racing as being very helpful to the commercial success or the image of the Empire State. New and tough regulations were proposed and, just to add fuel to the fire, the relationship between the two national automobile organizations that were responsible for the races went sour.

In the fair city of Savannah the Mayor and a Mr. Frank Batty, the President of the Savannah Automobile Club, lobbied race promoters and one of the national automobile organizations to try and get the races transferred to the South. With considerable help from the local media, a couple of politicians, and many supporters who could and did raise substantial amounts of money, they succeeded and the first of a series of Auto Races was organized for March 1908. (It is interesting to note that in New York they would have been digging their cars out of winter storage on this date and this was not lost on the promoters who saw an extended race season.)

In order to attract the right level of competition the roads designated for these races were totally rebuilt. Curves were straightened, new surfaces were laid, trees removed and a host of other improvements were undertaken. In order to help the costs for this work, local jail labor was used—quite a novel idea for that time and copied by other states well into the 20th century. In the March issue of the *Savannah Morning News*, an article appeared stating that large flocks of striped birds, better known as chain gangs, were busy rebuilding the city's highways. One of the rewards offered to the prisoners was to be allowed to watch the races over the summer, and they did. The Chamber of Commerce suggested to all its members that the first race day be considered a holiday, in order that as many people as possible could enjoy and support the events. Aware of the possible dangers both to drivers and spectators, twelve medical doctors were on hand and each one was provided with a car and supplies. Another precaution taken by the committee was to station 150 military guards along the route to provide assistance and make sure that no one ventured into the path of the cars.

Each driver was told that the city speed limits would be enforced by the local police (the limit was fifteen miles an hour however); how they were ex-

pected to enforce this speed was not explained as the vast majorities were on foot! The total course was 10 miles long and on the first day each car was required to complete 18 laps. The first two races took place on March 18<sup>th</sup> and were restricted to an engine size of not more than 375 cubic inches. On the 19<sup>th</sup> this was increased to a maximum of 575 cubic inches and the distance was increased to 360 miles for this event. This was deemed to be the principle attraction and carried the top prize, the Savannah Challenge Cup valued at \$1,800 (1908 dollars!) won by Louis Strang driving an Isotta-Franschini, who completed the course in 6 hours and 21 minutes; that's an average of 55 miles per hour! To make sure that the competitors could change tires and obtain gasoline, various stops were created with ample supplies of whatever was needed—at a price of course! These also served as an advertising medium for the manufacturers. After the 1908 races, however, these service points were guarded by the military, as items tended to disappear overnight especially when the stop was little more than a tent with tires stacked outside! In total the three winners' cups totaled \$4,000; which in 1908 was almost a king's ransom! In order to keep down the dust, part of the track/roads were oiled, a service that was not fully appreciated by certain drivers when their tires refused to keep the desired course, especially on a corner. Just to add further problems, the oil remained on the road long after the races were finished, creating further problems to the local inhabitants. Mrs. Shapiro of New York was the co-driver for a Mr. Herbert Lytle, now recognized as the first woman to ride in an official race. There is no evidence that she actually did drive the car but a publicity picture after the race showed her behind the steering wheel. The promoters of the March events must have been pleased with the attendance and financial returns as they staged a second event in November 1908. No Long island snow to be concerned about, in fact a special train was commissioned to bring race fans from New York to Savannah nick-named the "Wall Street Special".

That same year the Automobile Club of America suggested that a special race be constructed with a winner's cup larger in value than the famous Vanderbilt Cup that carried a \$2,500 price tag. This special race was to be run in Savannah in November and was called the American Grand Prize Race. The value of the winner's cup was \$5,000! A staggering financial prize for the time.

Obviously there had to be at least two races if the event was to attract enough people, so the International Light Car Race was created and this attracted quite a large entry. Like the Brooklands race track in England, all cars were weighed based on the procedure applied to [horse](#) racing. At Brooklands, the drivers were required to wear colored shirts like jockeys but, thank goodness, this was never required in the U.S. To

enter a "Light" car, the vehicle could not weigh more than 950 pounds; there are not that many cars today that would qualify! After only a few months, the Savannah races were becoming recognized as a national event, with people attending from all over the country and even from overseas. The Italians fielded teams, also the French. The future looked good for Southern Racing!

But towards the close of the year the Automobile Club of America and the American Automobile Association, who had fallen out over the transfer of race events to Savannah, returned to the conference table and decided that all future race events should return to Long Island. On hearing this news, the city decided to demolish the grandstands specially built for well-heeled spectators who came to watch the races.

The Savannah Automobile Club sent a delegation to New York to try and keep the scheduled 1910 races in the city, understanding that their plans for 1909 were now yesterday's news. Fate can be a friend or a foe for most of us and the Savannah Automobile Club was no exception. During the 1909 Vanderbilt Race in New York a driver lost control and ran over a number of spectators, a sad event but a boost to the attempt to keep the races in the South. In 1910 three races were held in the city, the Savannah Trophy Race, the Tiedeman Trophy race, and the Automobile Club of America Grand Prize Race.

Interest was fading, however, as far as street racing was concerned. The new race tracks where people could watch the cars go by a dozen times while the promoters could collect money for every seat became the future of motor racing both in the U.S. and Europe. However, the final race held in Savannah was certainly the most spectacular. In 1911 the famous Vanderbilt Cup Race took place on the streets of the city. Cars from all over Europe attended: Fiats from Italy, Benz, and Lozier, Napier etc. Average speeds in excess of 80 miles an hour were achieved, to the delight of the spectators. As late as 1997 attempts were made to get races back to the Savannah but they did not succeed.

For three brief years, this beautiful City of the South hosted the best in American racing; little remains today to remind us of this.

*Postscript: Obviously I could only skip over the details of this southern period in American Automobile history. For those who wish to read more about these events I would suggest they obtain an excellent book by Dr J. K. Quattlebaum entitled The Great Savannah Races. GW*



## On a Sad Note....

Our long-time member, Vince Groover, served his friends in the TMGC club for many years, as a past president and a faithful member, with kindness, humor and compassion and he also served our country proudly as a Chief Warrant Officer in the U.S. Navy for more than 24 years.

I volunteered to put together the thoughts of TMGC members as they reminisced about Vince, our dear friend, resident expert mechanic, comedian and scholar, who departed this life for another, on November 15<sup>th</sup>. We extend our sincere condolences to his family, particularly to his wife, Pam.



Vince and Pam

I originally intended to edit these remembrances, but eventually decided to leave them as they were written – unedited and straight from the heart. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I did, and that in doing so, they conjure up for you the most pleasant and sweet memories of Vince that we will forever carry in our own hearts.

I also know there are many people in our club who could not bring themselves to write because the writing was too painful or because the words that they were able to summon seemed completely inadequate to the emotions that they felt and wished to express about who Vince was and how he affected us all in so many positive ways. But that is OK: Each person has their own personal Vince story – and some of us carry quite a few of those stories in our hearts.

We will miss you profoundly Vince. We will certainly not forget you – how could we? Every day we keep the car repair knowledge that you instilled in our heads, we drive the very cars that you helped us to heal, and we carry a piece of the heart that you gave to us in your willingness to be our friend, every day and in every way, and we always will. Thank you, Vince, from the bottoms of our hearts, and God bless you. Michele



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As with most of the Club Members I was helped by Vince on several occasions. They ranged from a guiding hand (or nudge) in the right direction, to the

laying of the hands to cure the mysterious Lucas issues. He will be greatly missed as his knowledge knew no bounds and his friendship was endless. Donald



Vince helping at a Tech Session

Vince was a warm and caring person who touched so many of our lives in a very special way. He was there when people needed him and didn't mind doing things for them. We consider him a very special friend and he will be deeply missed. Rose

Where there no Lucas parts in Vince's garage that could put him back together again? An MG (mighty good) guy we have lost.... Chuck Hudson

Vince was loved by so many and touched so many of our lives. Mike Haag

When I logged on to my email Monday night and saw Doug's email titled TMC Looses a Dear Friend. I was taken aback. I had tried to prepare for the eventuality of the email for a while by putting the thought in the back of mind and some how it wouldn't happen. I wasn't prepared. Vince was my MG and sometimes life mentor. I consider him a dear friend and on at least one occasion a golf partner, a game he loved. During my tenure as TMC President he was always there when I needed advice. He was always there when I need repair advice or someone to puzzle things out with. My 1969 MGB's heart is a Vince rebuilt engine installed 2001. Vince rebuilt the master brake cylinder installed in 1995. The heater control he adjusted at a tech session and asked whether I wanted it set for summer or winter. I will miss my sage Vince. My "Tool Time" Wilson across the fence. Barry Tyson, former President of TMGC



2006-Williamsburg winery BCS

As one of the newer members of the Club, I probably knew Vince less than most club members. What I observed

in the few times that I was able to attend meetings when Vince

was there was the respect that everyone showed him. It said a lot about the man. I regret not having the opportunity to take him up on his offer to help me with my restoration project when I last saw him at Bill's house in June. Walt Westhoff

When we look at our beautiful Damask Red MGBGT we can't help but think of the hands that have touched it. Long before it was as pretty as it is, it made several trips back and forth visiting Frank Linse's MG Dr.'s office. Vince was always there, lending a hand to solve problems and help reassemble our pile of parts. The result was of course spectacular. We were so proud to win an Antique Automobile Club of America National 1<sup>st</sup> Prize. It couldn't have happened without those talented hands. Our shake-down cruise was out to Gatlinburg, Tennessee for MG2006. Vince was with us all the way, leading the charge in his green B. Those winding mountain roads gave us a thrill and a workout. Vince insisted we take a short-cut home that ended up putting us "in the hollers" in scenery straight out of the movie *Deliverance!* Faster Vince - I

Vince insisted we take a short-cut home that ended up putting us "in the hollers" in scenery straight out of the movie *Deliverance!* Faster Vince - I



Vince carefully studies documentation during the Fall 2008 Tech Session

hear those banjos again! Well, we survived. Nothing fell off the car! A testimony I'm sure to those talented hands of our good friends Vince Groover and Frank Linse. Our tech sessions were always great. Vince was always there to twist a distributor, adjust a valve, or find a better way of doing something to make our B hum. We've not yet tried his "bon-ami" trick to scrub cylinder walls and reduce oil consumption however. Vince was a good friend and companion on so many trips - wine tours, ice cream runs, and trips to the many British car shows we attended together. This year, we will be a couple of hands short at our tech session. We will be one friend less on the road next time. And when we look at our B we will always recall those who touched it. Thank you, Vince, for allowing us to possess an everlasting testament to your talents. God must have needed a good MG mechanic. It's just comforting to know that we'll have help when we get there I guess. But as for now, we're going to miss him. We only hope that the salt of our tears and Joseph Lucas electrics are somehow compatible. Susan and Terry

In preparing for the 35th Anniversary dinner, I

came across the minutes from the very first meeting of TMGC. The minutes read that the "Purpose of the club will be to help one another." I believe that the club members uphold that motto to this day, and no one more than Vince Groover. Vince was the "go to" guy for any obscure MG part, or bit of advice anyone needed. His sense of humor was the greatest, and his company on the wine tours was both a help (for side of the road impromptu tech sessions) and a joy. He taught me everything I needed to know about the "T" series -- mainly that I didn't really want one. Beckey Watson

My fondest memory of Vince, and there are many, was on the visit to the Williamsburg Winery in 2005.

Vince was waiting in line behind me as we queued for the men's room. He noticed that the ladies room had nobody waiting, and after investigation determined it was a single person's facility,



The Ladies Room

he then decided rather than wait in line for the men's room he would use the ladies. I just happened to have a camera in my pocket and I waited patiently for him to exit. The picture I took is pure Vince...the look on his face and his laughter is so genuine, it is the real thing.

<http://www.mg.org/Gallery/2005%20Archive/Wmsbrg%20Winery/Wms%20013R.jpg>

I miss you already Vince. Alan Watson

In September of 2008 I made a comment to Vince about the current status of our MGB. It was having difficulty with a vibration problem which I thought was related to the transmission/overdrive. Vince said oh, no problem, would be happy to look at it. He volunteered Frank Linse to help him check it out. Since I considered the vibration problem acute, and worrying about being stranded, I hooked up the trailer and headed for Franks garage. Prior to towing it over I checked the transmission fluid which was low, and topped it off. Frank and Vince helped unload the MGB. Vince and I drove around the block. Of course the vibration problem was gone.....however Vince did not like the surging. The MG was surging when maintaining a constant road speed. And I thought that is what old MGs do...Vince and Frank went over the timing, checked for air leaks and made sure it was in working order. After much adjusting and tightening of vacuum hoses, it was deemed fit for the road! Vince took it around the block, big smile on his face! It was running much bet-

ter. I appreciate the knowledge and sharing of their expertise to keep the MGB on the road! Thanks Vince! Bob and Barbara Ross 80 MGB

Vince helped me get my MG ready for my wonderful trip to the Watkins Glen Vintage Race and Festival. He spent considerable time on the phone with me and e-mailing and I am forever grate-



2001 Holiday Party

ful. As I got ready for the

funeral today I remembered the recent TV commercial many of you may have seen in which a financial planner tells a 50-something guy to stick with the plan and not to buy the vintage sports car he saw in the window. To him, and anyone else tempted, I say buy it! If it isn't going to ruin your retirement plan, go buy that MG or Triumph or Mustang or whatever is your long-ing and have a blast with it in this short life and you will likely become a member of a great community such as the TMGC and find your life enriched. David J. Kinsey

In May of 1978, we traded a 1970 MGBGT for a 1959 MGA and brought it home, got it running, drove it for about four years

and set it aside in the garage. The car was baby blue and we named it "The Blue Nun" after the wine we were drinking that night. In 1991, the car was sold to Mike Eaton



(a former out of town member of Tidewater MG Classics) in Washington, DC. In later years, Mike Eaton sold the car to Mike Ash. Vince bought the car from Mike at some later date. He restored the Blue Nun to pristine condition and Pam named the car "Ginger" because Vince painted the car white with a red top and red interior. In England, a car with this color combination is referred to as "Ginger". Richard & Sandy Hall



# The Dipstick



## Tidewater MG Classics

Ronald Struewing (editor)

5483 Doon St.

Virginia Beach, VA 23464-7732

Affiliated with



## FIRST CLASS

**TMGC's Holiday Party**  
**Friday, Dec 11 th**  
Social: 6:30pm  
Dinner: 7:00pm

Jim & Betty Villers  
3133 Inlet Rd  
Virginia Beach  
481-6398

# Wish List 2009

## CHKD – Child Life

Thank you so much for your interest in supporting the Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters. Your generosity in providing donations of gifts and handmade items goes a long way towards brightening a patient's hospital stay. This list contains suggestions for gifts and for other items that are used during a child's hospitalization.

### General Guidelines:

- Donations may be delivered to the security desk in the main lobby at any time (days, evenings, and weekends). You will receive a Donation Disclaimer form to fill out for tax purposes.
- Please do not wrap gifts. You may include a donation of gift bags if you would like.
- If you have any questions regarding donations, please call the Child Life Department at 668-7327.

### Toy Safety Guidelines:

- All toys donated should be sturdy. We cannot accept toys made of glass or brittle plastic or that have sharp edges or protrusions. We cannot accept toys with detachable or removal parts which can be swallowed or inhaled by small children.
- All toys must be new. We cannot accept used/old toys or used stuffed animals due to our infection control policies. DVDs and video games in very good condition will be accepted.
- We **cannot** accept any donations that may include **food/candy**, candles, knives, razors, medicines or Latex balloons.
- We cannot accept toys or video games that depict violence in any way. No guns, swords, or fighting figures will be accepted.
- We cannot accept rated "R" movies or rated "M" games.
- We cannot accept any toys or books with religious messages or of a religious nature.
- Only new, non-toxic paint, glue or craft supplies can be accepted.

### Current Specific Needs (2009):

- DVDs and PS2/3 games (new or used)
- Small boxes of crayons (4-8 crayons per pack)
- Coloring Books
- Ipod and accessories
- Infant toys (all plastic, no cloth parts)
- Adolescent activities
- Guitar Hero
- Rock Band
- Items for teens such as gift cards, portable CD players, etc
- Wii and games
- Individually packaged arts & crafts
- Bubbles (small bottles)
- Stress Balls
- Crayola Color Wonder
- Distraction toys

## **Infants -- birth-1 year**

- Baby gym
- Bath toys
- Bibs
- Bumble Balls
- Busy Boxes
- Chubby books
- Hard Plastic Crib toys
- Diaper bags
- Fisher Price Bounce and Giggle Kitty or dog (other animals if available)
- Fisher Price Ocean Wonders Aquarium
- Leap Frog toys
- Light up toys
- Mirrors
- Music CDs
- Musical toys
- Plastic infant toys
- Pop up/cause and effect toys
- Rain sticks
- Hand Held Rattles
- Ankle/Wrist rattles
- Ring stacks
- Sassy toys
- Snap beads
- Star Stacking Toy (lights up and plays music when you stack the stars)
- Hard Plastic Teethers
- V-tech toys

## **Toddlers -- 1-3 years**

- Audio Books
- Balls
- Blocks
- Bubble blower
- Bubbles
- Bumble Ball
- Cars and trucks
- Character toys (Barney, Bob the Builder, Dora the Explorer, Blues' Clues, Sesame Street, Winnie the Pooh, etc.)
- Housekeeping toys
- Light up toys
- Musical toys
- Pop-up books
- Push-pull toys
- See-n-Says
- Shape sorters
- Toddler Duplos
- Toy animals
- Toy phones
- Waffle blocks
- Wooden puzzles

## **Preschoolers -- 4-5 years**

- Action figures
- Audio Books
- Barbie accessories
- Barbie and Ken dolls (all races)
- No Spill Bubble tumblers
- Building toys
- Card games
- Character slippers
- Dress up accessories
- Fisher Price games
- Hot Wheels
- K'nex
- Legos
- Lincoln Logs
- Lucky Ducks game
- Memory
- Model Magic
- Nerf balls
- Playdoh and accessories
- Pretty Pretty Princess
- Puppy Racers
- Puzzles (24 pieces)
- Rescue Heroes
- Rescue Rangers
- Sound books
- Thomas the Tank Engine or other train sets

## **School Age -- 6-12 years**

- Action figures
- Barbie accessories
- Barbie and Ken dolls
- Battleship
- Body glitter
- Boggle
- Book bags, back packs, purses
- Books (i.e., *Harry Potter*, *Goosebumps*)
- Bratz dolls
- Checkers
- Clue
- Connect 4
- Craft kits
- Groovy Girls
- Guess Who
- Hair accessories
- Hand held games
- Hello Kitty
- K'nex kits
- Lego kits
- Lip Smackers
- Mad Libs/puzzle books
- Make-up kits
- Mancala
- Monopoly Jr.
- Nail polish
- Nerf basketball sets
- Nerf sport sets
- Powerpuff Girls accessories
- Puzzles
- Scooby Doo accessories
- Simon
- Snap together model cars
- Sorry
- Sponge Bob Square Pants
- Sport balls
- Trouble
- UNO
- Yahtzee Jr.

## **Adolescents -- 12 years and older**

- Bath gels and lotions
- Books (i.e., *Twilight* series)
- Cameras -- regular or disposable
- Card games
- Catch Phrase
- CD's of current music
- CD cases
- Clue
- Cosmetic bags
- Craft kits
- Cranium
- Gift certificates (Blockbuster, Target, Old Navy)
- Gym bags
- Hats/visors
- Jewelry
- Journals
- Key chains
- Make-up
- Mancala
- Manicure kits and nail polish
- Model sets (cars, etc.)
- Monopoly
- Nail polish
- Nerf basketball sets
- Picture frames
- Phone cards
- Poster pictures to paint
- Posters
- Scattergories
- Skip-Bo
- Sport balls
- Sport team/entertainer memorabilia
- Stationary
- T-shirts
- Uno
- Walkman
- Yahtzee

## **Activity Room/Staff Use With Patients**

### Electronics

- Laptop Computer
- DVDs -- G, PG, PG-13 (especially new releases and teen movies)
- PlayStation 2 or 3 games
- Playstation controllers
- Game Boy color games/other hand-held games
- CD Walkmans with earphones
- CDs -- Radio Disney, Disney collection, popular kids' movie soundtracks

### Arts & Crafts

- Art supplies -- Crayons, jumbo crayons (preschool-size), washable markers, blunt scissors, glue (Elmer's and Tacky), colored pencils, glitter glue, etc.
- Playdoh/Model Magic and accessories
- Swirl Art (Toys R Us)
- Non-holiday coloring books, Crossword Puzzles, Word Find Books
- Sudoku
- Blank Journals
- Poster Board
- Puffy Paint
- Fabric Markers
- Glitter
- Plain T-shirts (Sizes 2T – Adult XL)
- Scrapbooking Supplies
- Small Photo Albums
- Embroidery floss
- Small beads
- Fuse beads

### Department Needs

- Snoezelen products
- 12' X 12' clear containers (Scrapbook boxes)
- White noise or other soothing noise machine
- Environment CDs
- Children's books on medical diagnosis or about the body
- Flash Drive
- Digital Camera
- Portable Printer for Digital Camera
- 4"x 6" photo paper for printing digital pictures
- Disposable Cameras with flash
- Batteries (AAA, AA, C, D)
- Mini containers of bubbles
- Small boxes of crayons (4-8 crayons per pack)
- Party Blowers
- Stickers
- View Finders
- "I Spy" Books
- Find It's