



# The Dipstick



Dedicated To Preserving The Marque Since 1973

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

**Volume 47 Issue 2**

**February 2020**

## Rare and Rusty – Hoping to Salvage a 1962 Arkley SS

*By Bob Stein*

As many of you in the club are aware, I have a weakness for oddball cars. OK, I have a weakness for just about anything with wheels, but those that are a little bit different carry a stronger attachment. This is a quick and dirty first chapter of what could be a success story or another failed project – salvaging a 1962 Arkley SS roadster.

What's an Arkley? I had to look it up myself when I first saw the ad many months ago. Short answer is the Arkley was a conversion of a 'Spridget' – a 1958-1980 Austin Healey Sprite or an MG Midget – that makes it look like the love child of a Bugeye Sprite and a Morgan. In 1969, British sports car racing driver John Britten designed the Arkley kit as a fiberglass front-end and rear-end body conversion to be fitted to Spridgets. When initially offered, there was a plentiful supply of battered or rusty Spridgets which could be economically resurrected by the Arkley conversion. The fiberglass sections actually improved performance over the original car due to saving 700 pounds in weight and much wider tires.

Less than 900 Arkley's were sold either as do-it-yourself kits or as turnkey conversions constructed in Britten's Arkley Engineering workshop in Hertfordshire. However stock "Spridgets" have become valuable classics on their own and are usually restored to their original configuration. This means that while there are still some Arkley conversion kits still unbuilt and available, few people are willing to sacrifice a Spridget to build a new one.

One particular 'Spridget', a 1962 Austin Healey Sprite Mark II, was probably one of the early conversions. It has the flat windshield and side curtains of the Bugeye Sprite and is more sought-after than the later cars. The car was obviously professionally built, quite possibly one of the turnkey cars offered by John Britten's dealership. It was on the road until May of 1984, when UK road tax was no longer paid.

Unfortunately, despite being stored somewhere that protected the paint and components, the floor of the body tub was almost totally rotted out. Despite that, the car was not scrapped, or stripped of a single component. Even the top and side curtains stayed with the car when it ended up as part of a package deal sold to local vintage sports car racer Hank Giffen.



The car sat in storage until Hank determined he didn't want to do anything with the Arkley and advertised it to the Tidewater MG Club. I had seen the ad for months, and finally got curious. I didn't have room for anything else, and I still had several unfinished projects in and around the garage. Just a quick look to see what it was, no harm in that, right?

I was hooked as soon as Hank opened the storage unit door. The Arkley was unique looking, and classically British with right-hand drive. Then I saw the interior. Or more accurately, the concrete beneath the car. There was a pretty even mix of rust and air where floorboards and side rails were supposed to be. I took photos and left to do some research.



Best Bud Chip Woolford (yes, I am publicly blaming you) ventured the opinion that Spridget floors are much easier to deal with than the MGBs we are both used to, and also showed me a new argon MIG welder in his garage. That information, plus a drastically reduced price, convinced me to go ahead and take a chance. I bought the Arkley with the known risk that I may not be able to repair it. At worst, I'll get some good experience in welding and mechanical parts that fit my Morris Minor. With some luck, however, I'll have a very unique little sports car that will be a lot of fun to drive. I'm sure a bunch of you are already placing bets on how long (or short) a time will pass before I give up! Stay tuned to find out!



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### ***Historical note from Jennifer Ash....***

Our DIPSTICK logo was designed in the late 1970's by the son of a club member when the boy was in high school. Well....L.B. Tarr died just before Christmas, age 58. Our son let us know, and here's a bit of info that will be of interest to the membership, most of whom know nothing about our logo.....

*L. B. Tarr, III, worked for area advertising agencies then became self-employed. One of his major clients was The Chrysler Museum, which recently mounted an exhibit of some of his work. The Club had come up with the "Dipstick" name and it was probably a couple of years before someone said 'how about we have a masthead?' Levi Tarr said his son could do that, so young L.B. drew a logo for us, and there it still is, gracing the front page of every issue of The Dipstick!*

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## TMGC Meeting Minutes

### January 7, 2020

The first TMGC meeting of the Roaring 2020's convened promptly at 8:00 P.M. on January 7<sup>th</sup> at the Ocean View home of Cindy Lee Hall. Robert Perrone called us to order and began with a discussion of backup assignments for key club positions, such as Treasurer, Secretary and Membership. More to follow on this subject at a future meeting.

Minutes were approved from the December meeting.

Treasurer's report reflected a balance of \$1720.14.

The Dipstick Editors reminded everyone in attendance that articles about individuals' MGs (or other vehicles) are always welcome. Please consider dashing off a few paragraphs about your special LBC and submitting it for publication in an upcoming issue.

Activities update:

\* February 5<sup>th</sup> – Next regular meeting at Oozlefinch in Phoebus (Fort Monroe.) Pizza arrives at 6:30 p.m. with meeting to occur concurrently.



Our hosts: Cindy and Eric



\* February 15<sup>th</sup> – Horrible Idea day trip departs at 9:18 a.m. from the Waffle House just off of I-664 in Suffolk.

\* March 22<sup>nd</sup> – Hanover Theater day trip to see "The 39 Steps."





A small portion of the large turnout for our January meeting

Activity Report continued...

- \* April 18<sup>th</sup> – Williamsburg British Car Show (see their website)
- \* April 26<sup>th</sup> – Spring Tech Session hosted by Frank and Deb Linse.
- \* May 1 – 3<sup>rd</sup> – Spring Tour XVIII (Basing out of Lexington, VA)
- \* May 1 – 3<sup>rd</sup> – Mini-GOF (Gathering of Friends) Coordinated by Hank and Stevie Giffin in VB
- \* September 20<sup>th</sup> – Wings & Wheels (Military Aircraft Museum, Pungo, VA)  
Let's get a mess of MGs out there this year!

Marque Time: Mike Ash gave away two MGA rims.

Motion to adjourn at 8:23 p.m.

Onward to Cindy's fantastic Portuguese soup from an old family recipe. *(Awesome!)*





## Marque Time

I consider myself very fortunate, even blessed, to be a part of this club. The friends that I have made, and the experiences that I have had have been some of the best of my life. Yes, it may make you wonder how boring the rest of my life is, but that's another story for another time.

But sometimes the things that happen by pure happenstance are some of the finest things that happen in life. With this club it was a chance meeting, some time in the summer of (I think) 2005, when I was in a Farm Fresh parking lot, having a bit of car trouble with my Bugeye Sprite. A man pulled up, offered to help, told me about a friend of his named Frank that could likely help me with my repair, and then invited me to a car club meeting the next evening. That was Bernie.

I went to that first meeting, and was warmly greeted by everyone. Andy, the club President at that time, was there and I could see that this was not just a meeting of car enthusiasts, but really a group of friends that also happened to share a common interest in cars. Of course, Cynthia was there and made me feel welcomed, and helped put me at ease. I also met Alan and Beckey, Sue & Terry, Mike and Denise, (although her name wasn't Haag just yet) and many other TMGC members. (please don't be insulted if I do not mention you by name; my memory is fuzzy at best).

I also remember the Membership Director, Robin Watson, cornering me for an on-the-spot sign up. It was a bargain then, and it still is the best use of \$20 that I have ever seen.

And more than 15 years later I know that accepting the offer to attend the club meeting of Tidewater MG Classics was one of the best decisions I ever made. And I'm sure there are a number of others that feel the same way.

Safety Fast,  
Robert

## Dipstick Calendar – February 2020

**Feb 5 (Wed) - Monthly Meeting –Hampton**  
**Oozlefinch Brewery**  
**6:30pm Pizza followed by meeting**

**Feb 15 (Sat) – Horrible Idea Tour v3.0**  
**9:18am departure from Waffle House**  
**4800 Portsmouth Blvd, Chesapeake.**

**Mar 3 (Tue) – Monthly Meeting – VA Beach**  
**Vino Italian Bistro**

**Mar 22 (Sun) – Theatre at Hanover Tavern – *The 39 Steps***  
***Sold out***

**Apr 1 (Wed) – Monthly Meeting – Norfolk**  
**Smartmouth Brewing Company**

Apr 18 - Williamsburg British Car Club – British & European Car Show [www.wmbgbrit.com](http://www.wmbgbrit.com)

**Apr 26 – Spring Tech Session - Norfolk**  
**Hosted by Deb and Frank**

**May 1-3 – Spring Tour – Central VA**  
**Hosted by Beckey and Alan**

May 1-3 – GOF Virginia Beach  
Hosted by NEMGTR - For info –  
[HankGiffin@cox.net](mailto:HankGiffin@cox.net)

**May 5 (Tue) – Monthly Meeting – VA Beach**  
**Hosted by Betty and Jim**

**May 27 (Wed) – Dessert Drive – Peninsula**

**May 28 (Thu) – Dessert Drive – Southside**

May 31 – June 4 – GT-45 – NAMGAR – Colorado Springs

**June 6 (Sat) – Monthly Meeting – Beaverdam**  
**Hosted by Beckey and Alan**

June 28 – July 1 – MG-2020 – Calgary, Canada

## Activity Report – February 2020

As we have done for the last several years, we celebrate the big round birthdays of some of our cars, starting with the MG-TD, first released in 1950. To quote *The Autocar* magazine, “The Series TD may be new, but it still looks like an MG and has not gone all futuristic, for which many thanks people will say”. Yes, there were improvements over the TC series. It could be configured with RHD for the home market, or LHD for the international market. By the end of its run, more than 75% of all TDs built were destined for the US. With a slightly larger cockpit, improved brakes and rack and pinion steering, it was a more comfortable ride than its predecessors. And who came up with the brilliant idea of having both the tach and speedometer in clear line of sight for the driver? What a concept! If you were paying close attention, you may have noticed an MG-TD in episodes of *The Six-Million Dollar Man*, *Eight is Enough*, *Munster Go Home*, or *The Simpsons*. On your 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we celebrate Jack Pavlidis’ car. Here’s wishing many more miles on the road for both of you.

By 1960, MG had gone back to the start of the alphabet, with the MGA. Initially released in 1955, by the turn of the decade, the MGA 1600 was all the rage. Again, brakes had been improved (but who wants to stop these things?) and the larger twin-cam engine brought the top-end speed to a little over 100mph (that explains the need to be able to stop.) I know you couldn’t have missed the MGA in *Animal House*, *The Return of the Pink Panther*, or in Britney Spears’ *Radar* music video. But if you want to see one up close, come out and celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bill Cochran, Mike Haag, Ray Hicks, Hillary Pavlidis and Barry Tyson’s MGAs.

That’s enough celebrating for now - it’s time to drive. Our first outing of the year is the Horrible Idea Tour v3.0 on **Saturday, February 15<sup>th</sup>**. We have a 9:18am departure from Waffle House (4800 Portsmouth Blvd in Chesapeake – just west of I-664). Destination #1 is still in question as this is being written, but it should be in either the Smithfield or Waverly area. The morning run will take us across back roads to one of two venues that should be of interest. From there, it is off to the Williamsburg area via the ferry. We’ll stop early afternoon to wet our whistles, whet our appetites and grab lunch at Billsburg Brewery. Then we’ll take a round-about drive to the other side of Williamsburg for a tour and tasting at the Copper Fox Distillery. And obviously, this is weather-dependent. This is a Show-n-Go event – no reservation required. However, if you decide to let me know you will be joining the drive, I can make sure we are looking for you at the starting line.

Drive # 2 is the **Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>** trip to Hanover for the theatre. This year, we will see *The 39 Steps*. Our block of tickets is sold out. If you haven’t signed on yet and want to join us, please let me know quickly and I can check availability of additional seats. We’ll have an early lunch stop on the way to Hanover. Time and place details will be in the March edition of *The Dipstick*.

Our Spring Tech Session is being hosted once again by Deb and Frank Linse at their home in Norfolk. Save the date – **Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>**. For Spring Tourists, this is the Sunday before that event.

Spring Tour, you say. A grand idea. We have 2020 visions of Central Virginia with a return trip to the Lexington area. As always, Beckey and Alan promise a fun-filled weekend with historic visits, good food, curvy back roads, and perhaps the opportunity for an adult beverage or two. If you are interested in joining this **May 1-3** trip, please contact the Watsons at [ABWatson723@gmail.com](mailto:ABWatson723@gmail.com). They can provide you with details about timing and lodging. As we get closer to the date, a convoy will be organized to lead Tidewater travelers to the meet-up point. I look forward to seeing you there.

Until we meet again, enjoy the ride!

*Tad Carter*

## Getting a Real ID

After October 1st of this year, you will need to have a Real ID to board a domestic flight in the United States. A real ID is a form of identification that meets increased security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards. Travelers will be required to provide either a real ID or another TSA-approved form of identification, such as a valid passport.



Make sure you understand what documentation you need to bring to DMV. I went to DMV this week with my Driver's License, Birth Certificate, original Social Security Card, and a valid US passport – and got turned away! I also needed proof of residency in the form of a utility bill or mortgage statement with my name and address. Here is the official documentation list:

- Identity; (e.g. Unexpired U.S. passport or U.S. birth certificate)
- Legal Presence; (e.g. Unexpired U.S. passport or U.S. birth certificate)
- Social Security Number; and (e.g. Social Security card or W-2 form)
- Residency (two proofs required). (e.g. utility bills, mortgage statements, Virginia driver's license displaying current Virginia residential street address)
- Proof of any name changes (e.g. marriage certificates or divorce decrees)

Note: If the name on your identity document is different than your legal name, you must show proof of your name change.

If you plan your visit to the DMV in the middle of the month and the middle of the week, you are likely to have a much shorter waiting time. I went on the Saturday before Christmas, which could have been ugly, but was done and out in about 30 minutes.

There is still quite a while before you will need a Real ID to board a plane in the United States – but October 2020 will be here faster than you think, and it is better to get it early than too late.

*Provided by Bob Stein*

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### TMGC Officers and Committees

|                |                          |                 |
|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| President      | Robert Perrone           | 574-3233        |
| Vice President | Mike Haag                | Mikehmg@cox.net |
| Secretary      | Mark Davidoski           | 831-4196        |
| Treasurer      | Jim Villers              | 822-9182        |
| Editors        | Mark and Kathy Davidoski | 831-4196        |
| Membership     | Tad Carter               | 496-9847        |
| Webmaster      | Mike Haag                | Mikehmg@cox.net |
| Historian      | Susan Bond               | 403-1169        |
| Technical      | Terry Bond               | 403-4614        |
| Activities     | Tad Carter               | 496-9847        |
| Clubs          | Mike Ash                 | 678-0963        |
| Regalia        | Rose Ladd                | 373-2468        |

## ***It's All in the Family –***

***By Terry Bond***

Most of you know the “M” in MG stands for Morris. Our first British antique car in fact is a 1935 Morris 8 (8 BHP, not 8 cylinders). Many of you have visited it during our annual Tech Sessions in November. Only trouble, it was lonely. So, Susan bought the 1948 TC. It's amazing how similar they really are.

### ***Our 1935 Morris 8 and the 1948 MGTC together***

While in the UK, I'd managed to collect a good supply of “spares” for the Morris, but wouldn't it be great to have a “parts car” available if ever needed?.

I'd always been curious as to how many were in this country. Darned few! I managed to track down about a dozen.

About 5 years ago, I received a tip from a friend who was chasing some later Morris parts. He had come across what he thought was a match for my Morris 8, near Ashland, Virginia.

A phone call to the owner revealed he had purchased the Morris as a basket case with the intent to construct some kind of unusual hot rod from it. Realizing it was too far gone, too incomplete, and would be very difficult to turn into a hot rod, it was on the market. I immediately made arrangements to see it.

Alan Watson accompanied us on this first adventure. We were all surprised/shocked to see the bare body sitting directly on the ground, rotting away, the rest of it spread all over an old farm.

A nice frame was nearby on the trailer that had been used to haul it down from Northern Virginia 15 years earlier. Boxes of odd pieces were everywhere, with no particular organization. There was one box in the horse barn filled with dirt, a bunch of nuts and bolts and half a carburetor. Still another box held window winders and brake drums. Other boxes contained an inch of dirt, cobwebs, and things attached to wires that were unidentifiable. What I could see and recognize was disassembled and scattered between several containers. Under a pile of straw in the barn there were two and a half seats. In a shed out back, doors, window glass and odd body parts (for the car).



***Remains of the 1935 Morris 8 in Ashland***



***Our 1935 Morris and 1948 TC together***



***Open shed with Morris sheet metal inside***

An engine (incorrect for that year of Morris) and a radiator and shell were in a workshop so full of stuff you could hardly move through it sideways. Outside under pieces of a 1920s International truck we found the transmission, springs, rear end, steering and front axle. There were no wheels, only one rough running board, and many other small items. It was sad to realize that over the years, as the car changed hands, pieces disappeared.

The price was unreasonable so I left it where it lay. Fast forward a few years – a friend in Richmond had visited the farm, to purchase a few pieces, and seeing

he had purchased, I asked him to inquire about it. The next weekend I got a call – the first \$500 takes it all!

A fool and his money are soon parted! In the name of “RESCUE” or “SAVING FROM DESTRUCTION” or for some other reason, I proceeded to Ashland to SAVE the remains of the Morris.

I talked Mark McApline into joining me for the adventure, and we departed mid-morning on a Saturday to retrieve everything. I’d calculated there would be room for the parts in the bed of my Dodge Ram, and the body and frame would get tied down onto my open trailer.

When I made the commitment to buy, the owner said he would organize everything so it would be a fast load and a quick trip home before dark. NOT!



***Body shell and frame on my trailer***

He had done nothing to organize things, and we spent hours scrounging the farm, collecting pieces, carefully packing them into the truck. It was nearly dark and starting to rain by the time we left for home. We arrived home hours later than expected but lost only one piece of the wooden floorboard somewhere along the way. It all awaits a chance to unpack, clean and organize everything.

When all is done, I’ll have several boxes of valuable spare parts, and what I don’t need will remain with the car as just that – spare parts – rare ones.

I believe I saw my Morris smile.

## ***Considering an MGF in your future?***

*from Mike Haag*

As Robert mentioned in his January Dipstick column, Hagerty Insurance in an email blog listed 7 cars you can now import legally into the US, one of them being the first year of the MGF. Yes, it is hard to believe that the MGF first began production 25 years ago in 1995. A recent check on eBay UK showed only one 1995 MGF, a nice looking car with 70K miles with a starting bid of £795. A check on [www.autoscout24.com](http://www.autoscout24.com), a site for buying European cars, did not show any 1995 models for sale. Most were 1997 or later, so you may have to wait another year or two to get a much wider selection to choose from. An advantage of buying one from this site is that they are LHD models and some of them come from warmer, drier climates that may reduce the chance of rust. We have seen some MGFs at recent NAMGBR conventions, mostly from Canadian members. Canada may be an alternate place to look for MGFs -- since it is close, any shipping costs will be much less. There's the added benefit of not having to deal with all the associated hassles of shipping a car from overseas. You can learn more about the Canadian MGFs on the Modern MG forum on the MG Experience web site. I saw in one post that there is a dealer who converts MGFs with RHD to LHD. One issue to be aware of with the MGF is the head gasket failure problem that is common to the K-series engine due to its design. There is much written about this problem and you can learn more by Googling it. The January/February issue of the MG Driver has a related article about replacing the MGF head gasket.

Going to the EPA and DOT websites and downloading the various forms mentioned in the email blog, it was interesting to note that the EPA allows engines 21 years and older, while the DOT still restricts vehicles to 25 years and older. It would be nice if the EPA and DOT would get together and agree on a common year, such as 21 years or older. Better yet would be if they adopted Canada's 15 year rule, but that is likely not going to happen any time soon, if ever.

An alternative to the MGF is the MG RV8 which was in production from 1993 – 1995. This “modern” MGB is now 25 years old! All of these are now legal to import. Of course, be prepared to spend much more as there was one for sale recently in Canada for \$30K!



## **HEAD IN THE CLOUDS (1963 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III)**

**By Eric Fee**

After recently completing the restoration of my 1958 MGA, it was time to rest & enjoy. Wrong...Frank would have nothing of that. His "therapy" couch was relentless in opening my repressed needs. I've been a "car guy" before I could drive detailing vehicles to fund my college education.

Then a friend said "Your Silver Spur is nice but not "Rolls-Royce" enough!" As an MGB then MGA owner this made perfect sense. Off to the races.

Unearthing a Silver Cloud meeting my "Triple Crown" standards proved elusive. A visually appealing body not begging restoration. Mechanically sound engine not requiring major work. Finally (the most difficult of all), a pleasing interior without nasty foam exploding from cracked olive green leather seats!



What does your doctor do between patients?  
Found...The Vault, Jackson, Mississippi.

I am better when breaking all the rules of car buying. Purchase sight unseen, do not test drive, never meet the seller, wire a stranger full payment then use their shipper!

The Rolls-Royce Owners Club is composed of members like TMGC. A Friday afternoon call to Kelly was met with enthusiasm. He graciously volunteers to inspect the Cloud the next day..."she looks good from 20 feet, still nice at 10 too, easily starts but unable to test drive. SOLD!

The original owner received SCX47 on November 23, 1962. He was the top Rolls- Royce salesperson in the United Kingdom & Canada, Major J.S.P. Armstrong, a WWI veteran. In 1975 she crossed the Atlantic to reside with the mayor of a small Ohio town for 30 years. Afterwards, her story becomes dark and promiscuous.

My motorcar arrived in Ocean View on a dark cold rainy night (3 AM) crammed into a black unmarked enclosed trailer (2 inches of clearance on each side). I do not know how the 350# driver got in! Dropped her curbside without stopping the engine and hurriedly pulled the old girl into her new home.

What next? I drove my Cloud 75 miles. Discovered I needed at least 100 yards to reach a complete stop at 10 mph. Frank & Mark's heads got stuck under the bonnet. Made a punch list & called Abacus Racing. Loving every smile my elegant British lady brought to each person's face.

Let the journey begin. It's all worth it.





**Monthly Meeting**  
**Wednesday, Feb 5th**  
**The Oozlefinch**  
**Craft Brewery**  
**81 Patch Rd**  
**Fort Monroe,**  
**VA 23651**



Take exit 268 from I-64 W/Hampton Roads Beltway  
 Continue on S Mallory St. Take E Mellen St and Stillwell Dr to Patch Rd

- 6 mm (1.7 m) Turn left onto S Mallory St  
 Pass by Hardie's (on the right)
- 0.3 mi Turn right onto E Mellen St
- 0.7 mi Continue onto Ingalls Rd
- 440 ft Turn left onto Eustis Ln
- 483 ft Continue onto Stillwell Dr
- 0.5 mi Turn right onto Pullman Rd
- 335 ft Turn right onto Patch Rd  
 Destination will be on the right

**6:30 - 9:00 pm**  
**Food and Meeting**



## The Dipstick

**Tidewater MG Classics**

C/O Kathy & Mark Davidoski

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Virginia Beach, VA 23455

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*Affiliated with*



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