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Mid-Atlantic Chapter, North American MGA Register

June 2006

▲ Pub Night ▲

There will **NOT** be a Pub Night on June 27th since a number of club members will be attending the MG International 2006, in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. This is the once-every-5-years combination GT, Gathering of the Faithful, etc. for all the MG registers. It will also be the MGA GT-31 for 2006.

▲ Chili Party ▲

The editor was having a senior moment and forgot to include in the description of activities at the annual Chili Party the most exciting event of the day. Just like Santa Clause at Christmas, we had a surprise visitor. Donna Kacmarick from Oceanside, CA arrived in town on business just in time to join us for the party. It was great seeing her and we were sorry that Mike did not tag along. They are still enjoying driving the "A" around California these days instead of around ole Virginia.

▲ Britain on the Green ▲

Britain on the Green, sponsored by the Capitol Triumph Register, occurred on Sunday, April 30th on the Collingwood Library grounds on the banks of the Potomac River. There were 14 MGAs in attendance. Dick Farwell and Butch Smith won first and second place, respectively. Congratulations guys. Your cars were looking great.

▲ British Car Day ▲

The original *British Car Day* sponsored by The Chesapeake Chapter of the New England MG "T" Register (their 29th Annual Meet) occurred on Sunday, June 4th at Lilypons Water Gardens in Buckeystown, MD. There were about nine MGAs in the show and Bill and Kathy Wemhoff won first place in their newly restored "A." Congratulations! All that hard work is paying off. Liz Ten Eyck won an "Honorable Mention."

▲ Grind and Wine Drive ▲

On May 21st, 10 cars met the Aldie Mill to begin a great day of touring the back roads west of Middleburg that offered some spectacular views of the mountains as well as the

beautiful Virginia piedmont. The first stop was at the Burwell-Morgan Mill in Millwood. The mill is the oldest "operable" merchant mill in the Shenandoah Valley where our club members got a private tour of the waterwheel and the massive wooden gears that rotate a two-ton grinding wheel. Then it was on to the Naked Mountain Winery where they sampled their wines and had a great picnic on the winery's deck overlooking the beautiful countryside. Thanks to Bill and Kathy Wemhoff for organizing and leading this great day. Check our website at <http://mga-midatlantic.org/gallery/grind2006/grind.htm> for pictures of the event.

▲ ‘OOL’ Party ▲

Mark your calendar and don't miss this one!!! **AUGUST 5, 2006:** Bill and Liz Ten Eyck will again be hosting our club's 'OOL' PARTY. 'OOL'? That's because there is no 'Pee' in the Ten Eyck's pool. More details will follow.

▲ Other Upcoming Events ▲

July 8th - Volunteer to participate in the Braille Rallye sponsored by the MC Car Club. This is a really fun and worthwhile event and they are always in need of cars. Please see www.mgcarclubdc.com for additional information.

July 16th - We have been invited to join the MG Car Club of Washington, D.C. at their annual picnic at the FLYING CIRCUS in Bealeton, VA. Relive the days of biplanes and stunt flying, wing walking, and vaudeville in the air. It will be a great opportunity to see a great show, have a drive in the country and meet and socialize with MG Car Club members.

▲ New Members ▲

We would like to welcome the following new members to our club:

Bob Mason, of Kill Devil Hills, NC
Dr. Barrett Burka of McLean, VA
Louis Primovich of Alexandria, VA
Jim Mackin of Burke, VA
Keith and Kathleen Kallapos of Clifton, VA

▲ Miscellaneous Information ▲

CHAPTER WEBSITE: <http://mga-midatlantic.org/> Don't forget to check out our new website and send a picture to Amy so it can be posted in the gallery. Check our website for recently posted pictures of past outings.

“TECH SESSIONS FROM MGA” book is available from NAMGAR, e-mail regalia contacts Bruce and Carol Woodson at: cvmga@aol.com. The price is \$45.00 plus shipping and handling. This is the real 'Bible' for MGA articles.

“CLASSIFIEDS”

Rear tube shock conversion kit for your MGA, TD, TF and all chrome bumper MGB's. Later model B's without a rear sway bar. \$60.00 plus shipping. For an extra charge I can supply the shocks, but they are available at any auto parts store. I get them at Fairfax Auto. Butch Smith, 8408 Gambrill Lane, Springfield, VA 22153. Tel: 703-569-1508, bjmga@verizon.net

“FOR SALE”

Various MGA parts available, call (540-272-4264) or e-mail (tomowog@adelphia.net) for information.

*Please forward articles, classifieds, or any information for the **Distributor** and changes of home or e-mail address to Liz Ten Eyck, 11101 Rich Meadow Dr., Great Falls, VA 22066 or e-mail to bytheoak@msn.com.*

▲ **Interesting Article** ▲

Brand heritage: why the Chinese must build MGs and Rovers in Britain

The collapse of MG Rover, Britain's last volume car manufacturer, was depressing news. Yes, I was concerned about the effect on the value of my own MG ZT, but it was heartbreaking to witness the final chapter of a once proud and world-beating industry. Ironically, the UK's automotive sector is positively booming. Last year the country made 1.6 million cars, a figure which approaches the production heights of the 1970s. Many famous British brands have never been in ruder health. Though it is inescapable that none remain under British ownership, vitally, all retain at least some manufacturing in the UK. Herein lies a lesson for the new custodians of the MG and Rover brands.

Desperate to bring its automotive industry to the world stage, China has been working very hard in recent years to improve the design and quality of its home-grown products. Arguably, some of its latest models are good enough to compete internationally, but what all of them lack is a strong brand. Names like Geely, Chery, Soyat and Zhonghua are utterly meaningless outside of China, so when the opportunity arrived to gain the designs, technology, but most importantly of all the brands of MG Rover, China leapt at the chance.

Prior to the collapse, MG Rover had been working on a deal with Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (SAIC) and the company was the favourite to emerge as the approved buyer after the firm fell into administration. In the event, it was the smaller Nanjing Automotive Corporation (NAC) that won. Confusion and disagreement over who owned the rights to the cars and the brands ensued, but it now appears that NAC will produce cars under the MG brand while SIAC looks close to purchasing the rights to produce under the Rover nameplate.

What isn't clear is if manufacturing will return to the UK. NAC has stated that it will build updated versions of the MG ZT and TF at the historic Longbridge plant, MG Rover's former home, but is seeking financial support from the British Government. The Independent recently

reported that Wang Yaoping, the legal and commercial director for NAC in the UK, said that car production would still restart next year, as promised, even without government assistance. But he admitted that in this scenario NAC would have to scale back production levels and the number of workers to be employed. “Whether the Government gives support will have influence on our plans,” he said. But he confirmed he would suggest to the Government that without its support the company would not be able to employ as many people. “It will influence the amount of our activities,” he said.

Deciding whether or not to base significant MG production in the UK based on Governmental financial assistance is short-sighted and could potentially damage the brand that NAC was so keen to acquire. Think about it. MG cars have been built in Britain since the marque was established in 1924. This heritage is intrinsic to the value of the brand and to not build MG’s in their country of origin would, over time, denude the brand of its worth.

Of course, there are many examples of cars that are built far from their country of origin and yet are very successful. However, it is significant that no carmaker wholly manufactures this way. To be fair to NAC, it maintains that at least some MG production would take place in the UK, though whether it’s enough to keep the integrity of the brand intact remains to be seen. SAIC, on the other hand, intends to sell Rover badged cars built only in China. Having produced cars in the UK for over 100 years, Rover really is as British as they come, so to expect to be able to cash in on this legacy without making any investment is as reckless as it is foolish.

Other carmakers clearly understand this. BMW builds its MINI at Oxford and its Rolls-Royce at Goodwood because Britishness is fundamental to the appeal of the brands. The same is true for Volkswagen with Bentley, and Ford with Jaguar. Malaysian owned Lotus continues from its base in Norfolk for the same reason. And though its cars are essentially badge-engineering Opels, even General Motors appreciates the importance of maintaining at least some UK production if its Vauxhall nameplate is to continue to have resonance with British buyers.