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Mid-Atlantic Chapter, North American MGA Register

May 2011

## ▲ Chairman's Message ▲

*Submitted by Bill Marshall*

Whew! We have a lot of events to cover based on Chapter activities held in April and May and looking forward into June, July and August. I would like to thank the many *on-the-scene reporters* for their contributions this month, including Alana Adams, Charlie Adams, Betty Ann Johns and Kathy Kallapos.

Looking forward, we have the start of the **Rallye to Reno** on June 4<sup>th</sup> – making the first leg of the run from Ocean City, MD to Winchester, VA. **The Original British Car Day** at Lilypons Water Gardens will be held on Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, a trip with our friends at the MG Car Club to Staunton VA the weekend of June 11<sup>th</sup> and – catching our breath – our **Fourth of July** celebration in Manassas on, well, July 4<sup>th</sup>. Liz Ten Eyck has penciled in the date of Saturday, August 13<sup>th</sup> for her annual **'Ool Party** – one of our best member-attended events of the summer. Our Chapter-sponsored Regional GT **NAMGAR in Solomons Island** in September is about 75% sold out as of this writing and I imagine we will be waiting-list only by June 1<sup>st</sup>. Hang on to your hats and let's get ready to shift into the summer driving season!



On a special note, Karen and I have chosen to participate in the **Rallye for Research** to be run in conjunction with the **Rallye to Reno**, benefiting the Alzheimer's Association.

**Rallye for Research** is a companion event by some of the participants in the overall **Rallye to Reno** where individual cars will join together with special decals on their cars to make people aware of the need to increase research funding targeting **Alzheimer's disease**.

Participants in the **Rallye for Research** will individually promote this event among their MG friends, family and associates by soliciting "Co-Drivers" who can contribute **one penny** for each mile driven – or **\$32** based on the expected mileage to Reno on U.S. Highway 50.

We are seeking **FIVE** Co-Drivers to sponsor our **Team Mid-Atlantic** for the distance.

All **Rallye for Research** donations collected via the internet [www.RallyeForResearch.kintera.org](http://www.RallyeForResearch.kintera.org) as well as those collected personally will be processed through the Alzheimer's Association of Western Carolina and then directed to the national offices of the **Alzheimer's Association**.

Your support in helping us reach or exceed our goal is appreciated.

## ▲ Original British Car Day June 5th ▲

The **Chesapeake Chapter of the New England MG “T” Register** will host their 34<sup>th</sup> annual Original British Car Day on Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at Lilipons Water Gardens in Adamstown, Maryland. Fellow Mid-Atlantic Chapter member John Tokar is the Chairman of the event again this year and we hope for a large Chapter turnout to support the Chesapeake “T” Chapter. This is the ideal car show for our Maryland members to attend as Lilipons is an easy commute from most members’ areas on either side of the Potomac.



It should be noted that flyers will not be mailed out this year to save on printing expenses and to keep registration costs at a reasonable level. Past participants will have received a “Save the Date” postcard in the mail by now with instructions on how to download a registration form online. For those that did not receive a post card, registration forms to enter the car show are available for downloading on the Chesapeake Chapter’s website [www.chesapeakechaptermgclub.com](http://www.chesapeakechaptermgclub.com). We hope to see many of our Chapter members supporting the Chesapeake Chapter by attending the show. Volunteers are also welcomed for show field set-up and other tasks to ensure a successful show. Please contact John at [jtokar51@verizon.net](mailto:jtokar51@verizon.net) if you are able to volunteer a few hours of time.

The feature marque this year will be the Jaguar E-Type to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its introduction.

## ▲ Overnight to Staunton, VA June 11th ▲

*Submitted by Liz Ten Eyck*

Not going to the **MG2011** All-MG Convention in Reno, Nevada June 13-17, 2011, but would like to get out and enjoy driving your MGA? Then drive to Staunton, VA with us the weekend of June 11-12, 2011.



Members of the MG Car Club have invited members of our club, who enjoy doing overnight drives, to join them on an informal drive to Staunton, VA.

Because Staunton remained largely unscathed during the Civil War, it retains one of Virginia’s finest collections of authentic 19th century architecture. Hundreds of restored Victorian-era buildings house an eclectic mix of independently owned shops and restaurants.

Plans are to meet somewhere TBD early-ish Saturday (but not at the crack of dawn), take a nice route down avoiding I-95, stopping for lunch en route, and get to Staunton in time for everyone to relax, putter around the town etc., gather for happy hour enjoying spirits we bring with us, and then go somewhere for dinner. We have a few recommendations for dinner, and the aim would be to walk to a restaurant, so we can enjoy ourselves without having to worry about driving our little cars.

We plan to stay at The Stonewall Jackson Hotel, with everyone making their own reservations for the night of June 11th. On Sunday, we'll stop somewhere for lunch on our way home. If you would like to join us, please RSVP directly to Ruthie Arnold at fltrbg2@comcast.net.

## ▲ Britain on the Green Report ▲

*Submitted by Charlie Adams*



On the first Sunday of May, the **Capital Triumph Register** held their annual car show at Collingwood along the Potomac River near Mount Vernon. This is a lovely garden setting on the grounds of an elegant colonial mansion, a good spot for a car show. The light gray sky made for a pleasant day and undercut the forecast of rain. The weather cooperated provided no more than a short and very light spritzing of the field.

The turnout was healthy, with many more cars appearing than the 118 that had been preregistered. Over twenty five MGs were at the show, including a strong group of MG TDs and TFs. The MGs included a lovely 1933 tan MG J2 which held a sign saying “the best thing about this MG is that it runs.” As for MGAs, three appeared, including the 1962 MKII MGAs of Liz Ten Eyck (who received the first place award) and myself (second place award), along with Dick Farwell with his daughter Kathryn in their beautiful black and tan 1961 1600. Dick told me that he is planning to retire to his lake home near Buffalo NY and pass his MGA to his daughter Kathryn, who is a senior at Virginia Tech.



Of particular interest to me was the 1964 Turner MKIII, the first Turner I have seen. Turners were produced in Wolverhampton England by Jack Turner from 1949 to 1965. Of the 670 cars produced by Mr. Turner, 317 are known to have survived. His cars were known for good competition performance.

In addition to the Turner, this show included a rare 1958 Lister-Jaguar “Knobbly” in completely restored form; a delight to see. An example of this car can be seen at [www.canepa.com/inventory/racecar\\_1/Lister\\_Jag/](http://www.canepa.com/inventory/racecar_1/Lister_Jag/)

## ▲ Looking forward: July 4th ▲



Our Chapter Social for the month of July will be a *4<sup>th</sup> of July* event at the home of Bill & Karen Marshall in Manassas, Virginia. The event will be held conveniently enough on Monday, July 4<sup>th</sup> starting at **4:30** pm and going until the final fireworks explode in the sky somewhere around 10:00 pm. Those attending will have a great view of the firework display presented by the City of Manassas for their *Celebrate America* event in Old Town Manassas.

## ▲ Drive Your MGA Day Report ▲

*Submitted by Alana Adams*



May 7th, Drive Your MG Day, was a perfect spring morning with temperature and sun ideal for a top down ride through the countryside. Ten members of our NAMGAR-Mid Atlantic Chapter assembled about mid-morning at Carderock Park in Maryland. Larry Newman appreciated the start on the Maryland side of the Potomac since he and Diana had only a 10 minute commute to that starting point. Traveling from the Virginia side of the beltway were Jim Makin and his daughter Ally, a student at Radford University, Butch and Judy Smith, Bill and Karen Marshall and Charlie and Alana Adams.

The caravan of vintage MGs snaked along miles of winding country roads, beneath lush leafy canopies that stood as great sentinels along the road sides. The group explored beautiful neighborhoods in Potomac, Maryland, replete with storybook mansions surrounded by wrought iron fences. Stately neighborhoods were juxtaposed to bucolic country properties with horses grazing in fields of bright yellow blooming buttercups. Competing traffic was hard to find on this drive, although we did encounter more than a few bicycle riders pedaling along the narrow roads which required careful maneuvering as we passed them.

We arrived in Poolesville well before noon and parked our cars behind Bassett's Restaurant. We



dined outside on a covered patio surrounded with hanging baskets of flowers. The most popular item on the luncheon menu by far was the tuna melt which was the big winner among our group. The waitress was attentive and accommodating and all agreed we had excellent food and service.

After a satisfying meal, we assembled the cars for a group photo in front of the classic looking Poolesville Bank. The Virginians then said adieu to the Marylanders as we revved our motors and departed Poolesville. Charlie, however, had one last surprise gem to end the day's outing. The group had to cross the Potomac to enter Leesburg, Virginia, and we went in style boarding the historic White's Ferry which took us leisurely across the river. Our ride was a picture perfect end to the day.

## ▲ NAMGAR gets MAD ▲

**NAMGAR** is joining with the *North American Council of MG Registers* to produce a Mutual Aid Directory. This Directory will list the contact information of MG owners by state who are willing to be contacted by a fellow MG owner passing through their area should they be in need of assistance.

NAMGAR Registrar John Drake is collecting the names of NAMGAR members who wish to have their information included in the forthcoming edition. If you would like to be included, please forward your address and telephone number to John at [registrar@namgar.com](mailto:registrar@namgar.com) with a note to add your information in the Mutual Aid Directory.

## ▲ Drive Your FIAT Day Report ▲

*Submitted by Kathy Kallapos*

*Editor's note: Keith and Kathy were not able to join us on our Drive Your MGA Day event due to their vacation in Italy celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Keith compromised by hosting a solo entry Drive Your FIAT Day to be with us in kindred spirit.*

As I write this, I am sitting at the table while Keith is taking a cooking class from Stephania at her cooking school Pasta al Pesto, which is her kitchen. She lives in a little town in a lovely stone house overlooking fields and gardens and is also right on the road. Stephania is a pretty young woman who speaks very nice English. She and Keith are making our lunch, asparagus ravioli, turkey wrapped around Italian sausage, red peppers and vegetables, and tiramisu, and of course vino. He picked it because this is our 25th Anniversary and he knows how much I like it. Keith is making it all with help. When we arrived Stephania had everything sitting out ready to go. Just like a cooking show. The dining room table is set for two and is very pretty. It will be quite a lovely meal.



On Saturday we picked up a rental car – our FIAT for our *Drive Your FIAT Day* - and I drove it back while Keith navigated and made sure I was driving properly. We did some city driving and then had a nice drive through the country side to Fortezza della Brunella, a small fortress/castle that is featured in a book both Keith and I are reading. It had wisteria growing all around. I picked some seeds, I'll plant in a pot when I get home. We have not had good luck with wisteria, maybe these will bloom!!!!



Sunday I slept in and enjoyed listening to the water, the people playing on the boat ramp. Yesterday, we moved out of our seaside apartment and drove to our second stop. Erosion, a house on the side of a hill overlooking olive trees, vineyards, fruit trees and 100 meters to the small walled town of Vertina. Erbolino is filled with antiques and souvenirs from the owner's travels. It is beautiful and it has a bath tub!

Keith is having fun and enjoying himself, as am I. The gelato and vino are enough to keep me here! Love and kisses, Kathleen

## ▲ A Charleston Adventure ▲

*Submitted by Betty Ann Johns*

Our group met at Marshall's house bright & early at 8am on Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. We all departed shortly thereafter on our adventure. Liz opted to tow her MGA. Bill & Karen Marshall, Charlie & Alana Adams, Larry & Diana Newman and Butch & Judy Smith all drove their MGAs. We were on our way to Charleston with an overnight stop in Lumberton, NC. After driving on I-95 South in frustrating stop & go traffic, it was delightful to see Terry & Martha Anne King's smiling faces in Sandston, VA.

We stopped for a long lunch at a Denny's and continued on I-95. Our trip to this point was quite uneventful. Then we began to hear NOAA tornado alerts. While Liz was driving, I, with map in hand, was pinpointing where the tornadoes were hitting down. The weather was so unpredictable. "We don't need to worry about the tornadoes – no, it doesn't look good – yes, the storm is behind us – no – yes – OH NO!"

Suddenly, we ran into lightning & thunder, and horrendous rains followed by a devastating hail storm– some as large as lemons. Fearing we would run into the eye of the storm, we thought it



would be smart to stop. Bill Marshall took a chance and found an overpass to park under. Charlie Adams drove down in to a ditch under trees & the rest of us pulled off to the side of the road, the cars "bare-naked" to the storm. Liz & Charlie covered Liz's MGA with the car cover. I found myself jumping out of the car to help as well. Looking back, I couldn't believe I did that since I am petrified of storms! Sitting in the tow car, Liz's Toyota 4X4, the pounding of hail on top of the car was very loud & frightening. All the while, "Auntie Em" was reassuring me that we were going to be all

right – as usual, she was right. Then came tremendous winds whipping pine branches & sap onto the cars. We were on the periphery of a tornado! We later learned that no less than eighty- three tornadoes touched down in eastern NC that day.

After the weather calmed down, we regrouped at the next exit at Dunn, NC. We stopped at a service station to gas up the MGAs. But guess what – no electricity – no gas! Worse yet – no electricity – no bathrooms! We all decided that we would wait it out hoping the electricity would come on before too long. In the meantime, the guys found a place between two buildings that accommodated both MEN & WOMEN – but not at the same time!

Cars were lined up at the gas pumps hoping for electricity soon. We waited for a few hours until someone came along with info on an up & running gas station several miles away. We all headed down to the Wal-Mart service station along with many, many gas-thirsty cars. It was another long wait and the only fear was the station would run out of gas – didn't happen, yea! Sadly, a man was asking if anyone saw two little children along the road. A few miles down I-95 past Dunn, NC we saw devastation where the tornado crossed the interstate. Had we been a few miles further down the road we may have been toast. That day, as fate would have it, we had a long wait before being served at Denny's. *Someone was watching over all of us!*

Totally exhausted, we limped into Lumberton, NC much later than we anticipated to a very nice motel. The cars did fine mechanically in spite of driving through a lot of water but took a "hail" of a beating. We planned on a nice dinner that evening & were so exhausted, a pizza party in Butch and Judy's room sounded good to all of us. We were a team that day and were there for each other, so grateful we had escaped what could have been very a devastating experience.

What a difference a day makes! Sunday morning, the sun was shining; the birds were singing & it was a beautiful driving day. Unfortunately, Charlie & Alana had to return home for a family emergency. They were very much missed for the rest of the trip.

The remainder of the trip was wonderful. Liz knocked herself out planning activities, restaurants, motels, etc. as only Liz can do, all via the internet. We left Lumberton for Charleston Sunday

morning on Routes 41 & 17. We owned the roads as we saw very few cars in either direction and it was a very pleasant drive for MGAs.

Arriving in Mt Pleasant, SC, we checked into the Holiday Inn Express. Bill & Carol Shamonsky – our hosts at NAMGAR In The Poconos - had arrived the previous day and Bruce & Bert Rauch from Tampa, FL arrived shortly after we did. The Shamonsky's had scoped out the area & suggested Sticky Fingers restaurant for lunch. After lunch, unpacking & relaxing we left for the scheduled boat trip to Fort Sumter. The entire tour was about two hours & fifteen minutes with a 35 minute narration while cruising historic Charleston Harbor. One hour was spent at the fort, very interesting and well preserved, then 30 minutes of continued narration on the return trip. That evening we had dinner at Vickery's on Shem Creek.



On Monday morning we enjoyed a carriage ride through Charleston – a must for everyone visiting the area. Next was shopping at the open market in downtown Charleston. Sweet grass baskets are made in the area & can be found everywhere to include road-side stands. Liz & I passed on the Charleston walking tour & instead took a drive to Wadmalaw Island. There we visited Charleston Tea Plantation. I hadn't a clue as to how tea was grown. Not only did we learn about the plants but also the harvesting & processing of tea leaves. We had lunch at Poogan's Porch restaurant & dinner that evening at Hominy Grill, both very good.



The food in the Charleston area was great! I enjoyed fried green tomatoes, fried oysters, crab cakes, pulled BBQ pork, she-crab soup, sweet potato fries, BBQ ribs AND the desserts were to die for!

Boone Hall Plantation was scheduled for Tuesday. It was all I envisioned a plantation should look like – massive live oaks with hanging moss, & beautiful gardens. I did not envision chiggers but learned about them in short time! If you haven't noticed, I am from the northern part of the east coast! We had lunch at a very interesting restaurant called the Graze – excellent food!



The Spirit Line Dinner Cruise was outstanding & not a buffet like most cruises. The menu consisted of three main choices – fish, chicken or filet. I chose the filet & it was done to perfection! I highly recommend the dinner cruise – it is well worth the price!

Instead of going to the Naval Maritime Museum tour, Liz & I drove out to see some additional plantations and stopped at the Middleton Place Plantation Museum Shop and the Garden Market and Nursery. We then returned to Mount Pleasant and had lunch at Boulevard Dinner – a hole in the wall but great southern food. Martha Anne, a gifted artist with a great eye for picture taking, spent an entire day in Charleston taking tons of pictures. Wednesday evening we had reservations at Tbonz Gill & Grill in the historic area of Charleston. While walking from the parking lot to the restaurant, I ran smack into a friend from home, small world! After dinner, we went next door to Kaminsky's, known for their outstanding desserts.

It was a wonderful trip with a great group of people & the weather was quite pleasant while in South Carolina. The girls managed to get in a game of Mexican Train Dominoes one evening in the motel lobby, while the guys talked MGAs. One evening returning from dinner to the motel, we got lost. Martha Anne was also lost as we learned after returning to the motel. When she & Terry, and Diana & Larry got out of their car, they burst into laughter, because they didn't realize it had been us on their bumper following them back to the motel. Apparently they had a few choice words in the car about those #\*+% who were following them – not allowing them to turn around.

Sadly, Thursday morning came and it was time to leave Charleston. Bruce & Bert and Bill & Carol headed south to their homes in Florida. Larry & Diana stayed on an extra day. Bill & Karen; Terry and Martha Anne; Butch & Judy and Liz & I headed north on 17N. On the way north we stopped at the Wheels of Yesterday Car Museum and later lunch in Myrtle Beach, SC.

The accommodations & fine restaurants did not stop here. We stayed at the Holiday Inn Express in Wallace, NC & walked to the Mad Boar restaurant right next door – great motel & fantastic restaurant. If anyone should drive to Charleston, do stop in Wallace, especially for the restaurant! Another great “Liz choice”!

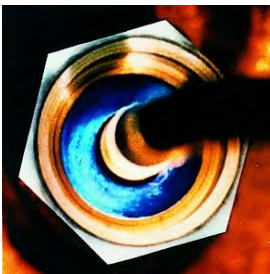
Terry & Martha Anne and Butch & Judy left us on their way to Mathews, VA. We experienced bouts of rain again in Virginia but bearable after our “trip from hell” heading south on Saturday. Nevertheless, we all survived & Charleston was enjoyed by all! Can't get any better than that!!!

Though I do not have a MG, I very much enjoy traveling with NAMGAR folks. I am in the market for an automatic MGA with AC, the color doesn't matter. If anyone comes across one, give me a holler!

## ▲ Gunson's Colortune Tech ▲

*Submitted by Charlie Adams*

For the past year, I had found myself dissatisfied with the adjustment of my carburetors. First, I had thoughts that a lean fuel/air mixture may have contributed causing a crack in the head of my engine. Once I replaced the head this winter, I was again not fully satisfied the mixture was set well. Also, I was having difficulty using the adjustment method which relies on detecting small variations in the speed of the engine at idle as the adjustment nuts are turned. Watching a video of John Twist set the mixture of an MGB by listening to variations in idle speed was of little help; I found myself doubtful I was replicating John's expert precision. This spring, as I added miles to my engine, the hue of the spark plugs confirmed the mixture was set improperly. The electrodes of the spark plugs 1 and 2 were clean and white, indicating the mixture was too lean, and 3 and 4 were beginning to foul, indicating the rear carburetor was set too rich. Also, the beat of the engine at idle was not even.



As I searched the internet for further advice, I came across an advertisement for *Gunson's Colortune* which claims to be a unique mixture setting device. It is a spark plug with a glass insulator making it possible to observe combustion. With the engine running at idle, the color of the combustion flame is revealed and indicates the strength of the fuel/air mixture.



By golly, I found this tool does what the maker claims it will do! When I first started my engine with the *Colortune* plug installed the number one cylinder, the color of the combustion appeared very bright blue, indicating a lean mixture. Several turns of the adjusting nut were required before I could detect the mixture getting rich. In contrast, the combustion color in cylinder number 4 was yellow, indicating a very rich mixture on the rear carburetor. By observing the color of combustion as I adjusted the carburetors, I have been able to set both carburetors to a mixture that appears to be slightly rich at idle. This setting evened the idle of my engine. Also, the color of the spark plugs after 100 miles indicates that the mixture is set far more consistently across the 4 cylinders and my engine is running more smoothly.

Butch Smith and I tested his MGA with the *Colortune* and it again proved to be useful. Butch had been getting about 20 miles per gallon which indicated the mixture of his engine was not set correctly. We observed the color of the combustion for his number 1 & 4 cylinders and found both running rich. As we turned the carburetor adjusting nuts to lean the mixture, the color of the combustion became more blue and the idle of his engine responded by increasing about 500 rpm. If you would like a demonstration of this little tool, or wish to check your car, let me know. Perhaps it would be worth a short tech session.



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