

November 2012

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Mascot

The Magazine of the Midget & Sprite Club

**NEC
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THE WHO, THE WHAT & THE WHERE of THE MIDGET & SPRITE CLUB

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Also see the Club Nights section on page 4 for new areas and contacts.

Compiled by Richard Flynn (richard.flynn@live.co.uk). Please advise me of any changes, errors etc.
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: IF YOU EXPERIENCE 'MASCOT' PROBLEMS UPON RENEWAL, PLEASE CONTACT THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY OR THE TREASURER STRAIGHT AWAY. The Committee

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November Editorial

Well hasn't it got dark all of a sudden? I'm getting up when it's dark and by the time I get home from work again, the sun has long since dipped below the horizon.

Are your thoughts leading you to the conclusion that it's getting close to the time when you usually take your car off the road for the winter? My thoughts are that I wish I had my car on the road so that I could at least think about taking it the road again. Another month has passed and I'm still waiting for this X%&X# part to arrive from America. I'm sort of still wishing that I'd left the original four speed gearbox in the car but I know that the moment that the five speed gearbox is back in the car, all the memories and frustrations of the last three months without the Frogeye on the road will disappear into thin air.

If the car is back on the road anytime soon, come rain or shine, sleet or snow, I'll be out driving it, given the merest excuse.

This will be the first time in the last eleven years that "Gaps" has failed to join me at the AGM. And by the time that you read this, the 2012 MASC AGM will have come and gone. Did you attend? If you did, then you will have heard me make a proposal that the Midget & Sprite Club once again joins the FBHVC (FEDERATION OF BRITISH HISTORIC VEHICLE CLUBS). While I'm personally undecided about the true value of the Midget & Sprite Club joining the FBHVC. The replies from those who answered my call for their opinion on the matter, has come back in favour of the club rejoining.

Also on the 21st of October, we said goodbye to the outgoing committee members Phillip Sellen (General Secretary), Natalia Flynn (Treasurer) and Richard Flynn (General member).

Since late 2009, Phillip has been the lynch pin of the committee tirelessly organising and minuting the quarterly committee meetings as well as the director's meetings and the AGMs. It is probably the most important, yet least glamorous committee

post. Over the same time period, Natalia has managed the club's finances and kept us on track through our infancy as a Limited Company. It can be no coincidence that since she became Treasurer the Midget & Sprite Club's finances have reached the incredibly healthy state that they are today. Richard Flynn seems to have been everywhere at all times. From chasing up late payment from some of our previous advertisers (a job that he seemed to take to like a fish to water), to ferrying the club's stand and gazebo all over the place. The jobs which he successfully carried out on behalf of the club far exceeds the title of "General member". The club really owes a large debt of thanks to Phillip, Natalia and Richard.

Taking over from Natalia as the club's treasurer is Gloucestershire-based member David King. While also joining the committee from January 2013 (when she returns from working in India for Nissan) is Kate Andrews, who I'm sure will be a very great asset to the club. The rest of the committee, on behalf of MASC, would like to welcome them aboard.

Hopefully by next month's editorial, I'll be able to tell you about all the fun that I've been having once again driving the Frogeye. Until then.....

Have a great month

Gary & "Gaps"



*Is it a Ferrari?
No it's Brian Arculus' Midget based WSM (see page 18 and 19)*

The deadline for articles and reports for inclusion in the December edition of Mascot is Wednesday 14th of November

The statements and opinions expressed in each and every issue of Mascot are not necessarily the considered views of the Midget and Sprite Club. The views expressed by the editorial contributors, letter writers and advertisers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Club. The Midget and Sprite Club accepts no responsibility for the results of following contributor's advice, nor does it necessarily endorse the services or products offered by advertisers.

Cover image: John Collins' K Series Midget at Middleton Hall, North Warwickshire

Club Nights

- 1st Tuesday **Essex Area** – Now meet at **The Green Man**, Green Man Lane, Kelvedon Road, Little Braxted, Essex Cm8 3BL. For further details contact Jane Gates Tel: 01255830 509 or email: jjganegates257@googlemail.com
- 1st Wednesday **Devon Area** – **The Dartmoor Lodge Hotel**, Ashburton, TQ13 7JW 1930 – 2200. Please contact Dave Price for details, 01805 603133, daveprice@daveprice.plus.com
- 1st Wednesday **South Staffs & Birmingham** – Meet at **Whitacre Ex-Service & Social Club**, 66 Station Road, Nether Whitacre, Coleshill, Birmingham, West Midlands. B46 2EH, 8.30-8.45pm Contact: John Collins, Tel: 07970 213084 email: green_mx5@hotmail.com
- 1st Wednesday **Oxford Area** – Meet at the **Blackhorse Pub**, Gozzards Ford, Nr Abingdon. 7pm for those eating or 8pm for those not. Contact Grahame Gibbins at grahame_gibbins@unipart.co.uk
- 2nd Tuesday **London Area** (Congestion Zone) – Meet at **The Ace Cafe** at 7:30pm. together with the Classic Cars Magazine night. Details: Gary Lazarus on 020 7700 5696, garyfrogeye@gmail.com
- 2nd Wednesday **Heart of England**, covers Worcs, Warks, West Midlands and surrounding areas – Meet at **The Green Dragon**, The Green, Sambourne, Redditch, B96 6NU, at 8.30pm as usual.
- 2nd Wednesday **North West Area** meet at **The Kilton**, turn off M6 at Jct 20 onto A50 towards Macclesfield. Pub 4 miles on left. Please note new venue.
- 2nd Wednesday **Bristol Area** will meet at **The Rose and Crown**, Pucklechurch at 8pm. All Bristol, Bath and surrounding areas members welcome. Contact Terry Horler on 01454 881770
- 2nd Thursday **Notts/Derby border Area** at the **Sitwell Arms** at 30 Wood Lane, Horsley Woodhouse, Derby, DE7 6BN from approx. 8.30. Just a mile north-west of the A608/A609 crossroads. Ian Cooke 0115 938 3838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk
- 2nd Thursday **East Anglian Area**. Previously the Cambridgeshire Area meet at **The Ferry Boat**, at Holywell, 8pm
- 2nd Saturday **Yorkshire Area** – meet each month at lunchtime from 12.30pm at **Ye Jolly Farmers Inn**, Dalton near Thirsk YO7 3HY – more information at <http://yorkshiremasc.blogspot.com/>
- 3rd Monday **Dorset** – Meet at **St. Peter's Finger**, Lytchett Minster, Poole, BH16 6JE 7.30pm
- 3rd Tuesday **Scotland** – Meet at **The Windmill Tavern**, 4 Thorniewood Road, Uddingston G71 5QQ at 8pm. Contact John Pardo on 01698 814791
- 3rd Tuesday **Surrey** – Meet at **The Chequers**, Chequers Lane, Walton-on-the-Hill, Surrey KT20 7SF. 7.00pm onwards. Contact Mike Gorman, mike@birchwood44.freeserve.co.uk Tel: 01737-552256
- 4th Thursday **Sussex** – Meet at **Bolney Stage**, Bolney, RH17 5RL from 19:00. Contact David Southcott at dandlsouthcott@btinternet.com
- 4th Thursday **Hampshire** – Meet at **The Fox and Goose**, Greywell, RG291BY. Please ring Terry or Harriet Langridge on 01252 626063 for details.
- 4th Sunday **Kent Area** – Meet at **The Angel**, Addington Green, West Malling, Kent, ME19 5BB at 12:00 for lunch. Contact Alan Anstead, Tel: 01322 384050. alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
- Last Monday **Wiltshire** – Meet at **The Barge Inn**, Seend, Nr. Devizes, about 7pm except on Bank Holiday Mondays when it will be the Bell Inn at Yatton Keynell near Castle Combe, 6.30pm. Contact Andy Cross on 01225 743554 or e-mail andy@cross743.freeserve.co.uk
- Last Wednesday **Home Counties North West** for members in Herts, Beds, Bucks, Berks, N. London or anyone interested! Meet at the **Chequers Inn**, Redbourn, AL3 7AD from 6:30pm. Please contact Mike or Sue Gahan on email mike@mgahan.demon.co.uk or on 07850 488636.
- Last Thursday **Somerset** – Meet at **The Lord Nelson**, Norton sub Hamdon at 7pm for those wishing to eat or at 8pm for those not. Phone Ray Darch on 01460 72040 with any queries and to ensure we will be there!
- Northern Ireland robertholmes25@hotmail.com. If enough interest, will arrange a meeting.
- South West Wales Non regular and occasional meetings and runs arranged throughout the summer months. Please contact David Hill on 01239 811307 or email: david@hill.be

Club Website

www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

Members only pages: Password: Radiator (which is case sensitive)

Events

Area reps please continue to make Richard Flynn aware of any events already in your diaries for 2012, so that they can be added to this "Events" section of the magazine and the website.

For the magazine Richard can be contacted at Richard.flynn@live.co.uk or 0121 559 3103

For the website Richard Mumford can be contacted at richardmumford@me.com

Nov 16-18	NEC Classic Car Show (MASC stand)
Dec 12th	Heart of England Area's Christmas Dinner. Contact Dave Puzey email: davepuzey01@aol.com
Dec 16th	East Anglia Area's Christmas Lunch. Contact David Dixon Tel: 01733 222810, email: e-dave@ntlworld.com

FUEL NEWS from FBHVC

INTRODUCTION OF E10 PETROL

The FBHVC and member clubs have previously been led to believe that the widespread introduction of E10 fuel was unlikely before 2015. However, following a recent Stakeholder meeting at the Department for Transport it does seem that this has changed and E10 could be with us as early as 2013.

The BSI committee (the Federation has a representative on this committee) is working on the E10 fuel specification for the UK which is expected to be in place by the end of 2012 and fuel retailers are to be given guidance over the introduction of E10 petrol. There is currently no planned national roll-out for E10 and not all fuel terminals have ethanol blending facilities, so a piecemeal introduction of E10 can be expected.

A DfT vehicle compatibility working group will be compiling a list of modern E10 compatible vehicles and this should be in place by early September. There is also a working group

subset which is concerned with classic or historic vehicles, including motorcycles, to which the Federation is invited.

We are already well aware that E10 is not suitable for historic vehicles, unless steps have been taken to proof fuel systems for this blend. Members should be aware that E10 may start to penetrate the UK retail fuel market early in 2013, and they should avoid it unless they have adopted measures to ensure compatibility with E10 petrol. Pumps selling this fuel will be clearly labelled E10, and also will carry a warning message. It should also be noted that super grade petrol will continue to be the 'protection grade' and will not have more than 5% ethanol.

LEADED PETROL

A list of garages selling leaded fuel can found on the FBHVC website: www.fbhvc.co.uk/fuel-information/ This list has recently been updated and there are now very few places left to fill up with leaded petrol. The list is laid out in post code order.

Dawson Engineering (Burley) Ltd,
BH24 4EB 01425 402388

Maple Garage, HU11 4NA
01964 670392

Redhall Garage Ltd, LE67 8HG
01530 222323

R E Mills Motor Engineers, LE7 7NU
0116 230 2295

Renlut Properties Limited, LL12 8DY
01978 352428

Stoke Row Garage, RG9 5QL
01491 680411

Park End Motor & Engineering Co. Ltd,
SE13 6TR 020 8697 2865

Platts of Marlow, SL7 2NJ
01628 890909

H J Taylor, WR12 7PL
01386 852338

New Members Sept–Oct 2012

We extend a warm welcome to the following new and rejoined members

4641	John & Joanne Clements	Kent	Austin	Sprite
4642	Nick Cooper	Bristol	Midget	Mk 3
4643	Julian Eustace	Bishops Stortford	Sprite	Mk 2
4644	Mark Matthews	Ramsgate		
4645	Benjamin Rhodes	London	Midget	1500
4646	Michael Fairclough	West Midlands	Midget	Mk 3
4647	Brian Ingram	Kent	Midget	Mk 3 RWA
4648	Judy Mella	Dorset	Sprite	Mk 1
4649	Richard Thompson-Hill	West Sussex	Sprite	Mk1
4650	John Nicholas Williams	Surrey	Sprite	Mk 1
4651	Ian & Bernadette Clifton	Kent	Midget	Mk 3 RWA
4652	Bobby Vilas	Hawaii USA	Midget	Mk 1
4653	Richard Wilkins	Kent	Sprite	Mk 4
4654	Kevin Fryer	Middlesex	Midget	Mk 3



1. From last month – Graham Smith's newly acquired Frogeye. **2.** This is the one that Graham has had for the last 35 years.
3. Nick Cooper with his MkIII Midget earlier this year at a Castle Combe Track Day.



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4. Mark Matthews with his 1970 Sprite which spent some time in the Isle of Man before returning (complete with its original registration number) to the mainland. 5. Mike Fairclough's Midget that is undergoing some recommissioning after nearly 20 years. 6. "Richard Thompson-Hill's Mk1 Sprite. 7. Nick Williams with his Frogeye at Goodwood. 8. Bobby Vilas from Hawaii with his very original Mk1 Midget. Look out for more on Bobby's car in future Mascots. 9. Kevin Fryer's Mk3 Midget at the old motor racing pits at the Reims Gueux Circuit.

A Problem with Parts Quality

I have in front of me a picture of the editor's car "Gaps" in recovery mode having eaten his gearbox. I sympathise. And I blame Terry Horler. It was he who instigated the festivities for the fiftieth anniversary of the ribbed case gearbox and my orange Sprite, the Austin one, decided to join in with the celebrations with a bang too. This happened while on holiday as the Cumbrian Paragraph of the Hampshire Chapter of MASC in deepest Shropshire and after the bang, we spent the rest of the week with no first and no reverse.

A refurbished unit from a well-established supplier is now in place, but I have to say I am seriously underwhelmed by the quality of the product and have let said supplier know my feelings. Half the set screws holding the extension to the 'box were overtightened, one to such an extent that it had stripped the thread in the casing.

Luckily I was able to clean it up with a tap and torque it up correctly. The other half were only finger tight. It runs quietly with a full complement of frontwards and backwards selections, but jumps out of third on the overrun. I can live with that, but this is the latest in a long series of shoddy replacement parts. A "new" distributor proved incapable of providing the correct dwell angle unless the contact breaker gap was closed so tight that the engine would barely start or run. A succession of spare, previously proven contact breakers made no difference. I suspect that the shaft had been reground to an incorrect profile. I took one look at the cap and threw it away. In the end, I rebuilt a working distributor with electronic ignition out of the best of the new and old. New bumpers for my white Sprite, the MkIII Austin Healey one, were so distorted that they had to be rejigged in a body shop to avoid fouling the wings.

I could list a long catalogue of minor, but irritating deficiencies that leave a nasty taste behind. I know that to some extent, this is part of the price we pay for the wide availability of cheap parts for what were always cheap cars that we keep going way beyond any point that anyone associated with the original design would have expected. But, I don't think we should have to tolerate

simple shoddy workmanship or incorrect specification of dimensions or tolerances. It does not add to the rebuild cost to torque nuts and bolts up correctly.

The obvious remedy is send faulty bits back, but the real consequence then would be a car sitting in the garage which I couldn't use at all. I'm not sure what the point of this rant is, but I'd be interested to know how others feel about the quality of spares and replacement parts.

On another topic, I recently experienced what could be a manifestation of the effects of ethanol. The fuel pump on the orange Sprite stopped delivering as required. It is about four years old and similar to the original type but with solid state electronics driving the diaphragm rather than a contact breaker. The diaphragm is sealed by a rubber, or presumably nitrile, O ring rather than a paper gasket. When I separated the diaphragm unit from the pump body it was apparent that the O ring was too large in diameter to fit the groove in which it should sit. I think, but I cannot be sure, that the reason the pump failed was that the ring had moved out of its groove and jammed the diaphragm.

Wondering how on earth it had ever worked, I left it on the bench and retired muttering. Lo and behold, the following morning, the O ring, which had been obviously soaked in petrol, had dried out, shrunk and was a perfect fit in the sealing groove. Reassembled, the pump worked fine and still, at the serious risk of tempting fate, does. Leaving aside the possibility that the O ring is not designed to come into contact with petrol, I can only assume that it swelled through long-term contact with some additive.

I invariably use high octane petrol, some brands of which do not use ethanol, but some do and I've never been that picky about what I've put in. So ethanol has to be one candidate for the cause of the problem. However, I also habitually use Millers octane enhancer and lead substitute as recommended by the FBVHC. Could that be the culprit?

I'd be interested in any feedback or similar experiences other members have had.

Dale Lodge 4168

On the BLINK

Should your Spridgley thing's indicator warning lamp suddenly speed up, you know that a bulb has failed. However, if the rate of blink slows, what's up? You may think that a replacement flasher unit will provide a cure, it might, but what if it doesn't? Time to reach for a multimeter and make some checks. Firstly, check the battery voltage without the engine running, this should be around 13 volts. With the engine running, the dynamo or alternator will increase this by about 1 volt or so. Again, with the engine switched off, check the supply voltage to the flasher unit, disconnect the cable at the flasher unit but remember to have the ignition switched on of course. Is the voltage exactly the same as at the battery? Just half a volt drop will slow the rate of blink; the flasher unit is very sensitive to supply voltage. Should the voltage be less, run a jump cable direct from a fused source at battery voltage to the flasher unit, now how is the blink rate? A small voltage drop will not affect most electrical components on a Spridgely thing but the flasher unit is the exception, it needs all it can get. You may find that when the engine is running, the increased voltage from the generating circuit overcomes a slow blink rate but when loading the system up with lights, wipers and blower, the blink rate slows, especially at idle speed. The MOT test often finds this when everything is switched on and the blink rate slows to 'failure' speed!

The voltage drop may be caused by elderly, poor connections or eroded contacts within the ignition switch. Simply work back through the circuit to find where the variation in voltage is occurring. It could even be within the cabling itself. A connection may be easy to clean or remake but otherwise, you could have quite a problem. Instead, you could run a separate cable from a full voltage and fused



supply direct to the flasher unit. This should of course only be live when the ignition is turned on. However, if the ignition switch is the culprit, you could connect to a permanent fused supply. Just don't accidentally touch the indicator stalk when leaving the car or it could just flash itself to death! I always look back when leaving my car to see if anything is left on or running out the bottom of it. Ideally, your Spridgely thing may require a new ignition switch, wiring loom, battery, generator, starter solenoid, any of these or any combination of could be contributory factors, hence a separate cable may just get you through that impending MOT.

Terry Horler



Original Lucas flasher unit

Letters



Amicale Spridget

Hello from Amicale Spridget

I'm Franck Thibaud from Amicale Spridget (the French twinned club)

Just a few words to relate the good times spent with Alan Anstead and Lisa when they came here near Orléans. We shared a meal and it really was a pleasure to talk with them despite my bad English. Unfortunately I had to go back to work and leave my friends.

Alan was so kind to bring me the carpets I bought on ebay and he also noticed one tenax broken on the Frogeye. A few weeks later, I received a good tenax in my letter box sent by Alan.

Just want to thank this good friend you have in MASC, but I sure you already know that!

Franck Thibaud, France

Hi Frank, I have to agree with you. There are many people in MASC who owe their arrival at a destination to Alan's generosity and knowledge. It goes to prove that Spridget owners are in general a very friendly and helpful bunch.

A Tracking Question

I read with interest the article in the October issue of *Mascot* on a wheel tracking device, by Graeme Williams. I would like to ask a question on this bit of kit.

Perhaps either Graeme, Terry Horler or Alan Anstead would respond. Is this bit of kit capable of ensuring that all four wheels are lined up and the car is NOT crabbing? Because I don't see how it can.

While on the Trackace site I followed various links and ended up looking at the old fashion one using stretched string around all four wheels.

This is my method, time consuming I know but, at least one can see which way ALL four wheels are pointing!

Maurice Stacey.



VHO 671 as it looked when up for sale last year

Frogeye VHO 671 Where are you?

Hi Gary.

I was directed to your website by Bob Kemp of the Healey club sprite register and I am glad to say I have found the car I was looking for.

VHO 671 was bought new by my grandfather in 1959 and run by him for many years. I have very many happy memories of going out in with him and my sister when we were quite small, (I could hardly see over the dash board) and I have always wanted to trace its whereabouts. I knew it still existed as it showed up on the DVLA Database.

How do I get in touch with the current owner? Do you do that for me? If so please pass on my email and other details and ask if they would like to get in touch.

I am fairly sure that somewhere we will have photos of the car from those days and if I can find them I am happy to provide copies if desired.

Andrew Haywood Smith

Do you know the whereabouts of VHO 671? If so please let the Editor know.

If you are looking to trace your old Spridget why not drop me a line.

You can check out the website that Andrew mentioned at www.frogeye.smugmug.com

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Restorers Report – Part 1

Building a Climax-Sprite replica

By Paul Webb

Jack Brabham surveys the Climax engine installed in the Midget



The plan is to give you a taster of the up's and down's of the project spread over the next three months of *Mascot*

Right, so where do we start ??, well some of you may be aware that back in the early 1960s Jack Brabham re-engined several road-going cars with Coventry Climax engines, but for those of you who did not know this I will give you a little background information.

Back in the mid 50's Jack Brabham came over to Europe to better his racing career and based himself in the UK setting up Jack Brabham Motors, a garage and car dealership in Chessington Surrey. In late 1959 Jack asked fellow Australian Ron Tauranac to come over to the UK and work with him. They started a company called Jack Brabham Conversions Ltd.

The two were later to set up and run the Brabham racing team using cars constructed

by Motor Racing Developments Ltd, another company setup by the pair.

Jack Brabham Conversions Ltd at the Chessington garage site initially went to work tuning and producing upgrade kits for the Sunbeam Rapier. The next car to get the Jack Brabham Conversions treatment was the Triumph Herald.

The Herald was to receive a new heart in the form of a Coventry Climax FWE 1216cc single overhead cam engine the same engine that powered the Lotus type 14 Elite. As you can imagine this transformed the performance of the Herald but its handling was still poor. It is thought that 2 Coupes, 4 Saloons and 1 Estate were converted but it seems that only 1 Coupe survives today.

Around this time two rear-engined Renault Dauphine were to receive the Climax engines but proved to be very unstable wanting to swap ends most of the time.



*The Climax engined Herald Coupe.
The first ever Triumph to appear in Mascot?*

Jack was involved and racing for Cooper at the time and there would appear to be confusion as to whether it was Jack or Cooper's that carried out the conversion.

Jack Brabham Conversions next turned their attention to the Sprite Mk2 and Midget Mk1. With both the Sprite and Midget being powered by a 948cc OHV engine producing 46.5 bhp and the Coventry Climax FWE 1216cc single overhead cam engine producing 83bhp the step-up in power was going to have a big effect on the Sprite and Midget performance plus the Climax engine was 40lbs lighter and revved to 7000 rpm.

Rather than going into long winded details and description of the Sprite-Climax and Midget-Climax you can read the more articulate car magazine articles of the time in a specific folder on the members section of the Midget & Sprite website.

So why did I choose to build a Sprite-Climax replica?

Well as a lad my uncle had a garage business and was a keen and pretty good club racer in his Frogeye. I spend many a happy school holiday tinkering at his garage and going to race meetings with him and at a lot of



ROAD TEST/9-62 **MG MIDGET CLIMAX**
Midget with a Giant Stride

Original Road test image from Sports Car Graphic magazine (USA)

Sprites, now there was a Sprite I would like to own.

Moving on to early 2008 and a re-read of the article, I decided to do a bit of research into the Climax conversions but pretty well drew a blank. At this time it appeared that there were no surviving cars and as the magazine article said that Sprites were converted I decided to build a reconstruction based on the under bonnet photos in the article.

I knew that the Climax FWA's B's and E engines were derived from the Coventry Climax all aluminium engine used to power the Godiva lightweight fire pumps and that it was possible to convert the fire pump engines for automotive use so my attention turned to sourcing a fire pump as a pucker FWE engine was well beyond my pocket.

A quick run down on the FW engines (FW for Feather Weight), the FW fire pump was 1020cc which mainly had a cast iron crank as it was designed to run for hour at 2000 rpm with little load.

The FWA (A for Automotive) was 1098cc with a forged steel crank and purpose built for car



The Climax fire pump

use but starting life with the basic fire pump block and head castings.

The FWB was 1460cc with a new block casting to take a long throw crank, a long throw forged steel crank and 3" bores and was purpose built for car use. This was the capacity limit of the FW series blocks.

The FWE (E for Lotus Elite) was 1216cc which used the FWB 3" bore block and a FWA forged steel crank and purpose built for car.

There were also a small number of 750cc FWC engines built for the 1957 "Index of Performance" class at Le Mans which it won with ease. These were ultra short stroke (45.2mm) engine that have little or no power below 6000 rpm.

The 750cc FWMA (Marine Automotive) unit was chosen by Mike Parkes to be further developed into the engine for the Hillman Imp.

The 1020cc engines for the Godiva fire pumps were the core product for Coventry Climax and a government contract and my understanding is that at times when the 1020cc engine production line ran short of parts the automotive line was robbed to keep the 1020cc engine production line running. This meant that some fire pump engines left the factory with FWE blocks and cranks and few even went out as 1460cc. The FWE blocked fire pumps are of course the most sort after when they come up for sale as your half way to a car engine. These fire pumps are currently fetching over a £1000 when they come up for sale.

The search for a suitable donor engine began on eBay and after a few weeks of looking a reasonable priced fire pump came up near Rugby on a 'Buy it Now' auction. The guy I bought it from owned a boat yard and used the fire pump to pump out and re-float boats and assured me it was a runner but it had not run for a couple of years. It turned over but would not start but it was a FWE unit so I haggled a price and loaded up. On the way home with the fire pump in the back of my truck, the ball was now rolling, but I now needed a Mk2 Sprite to fit it into, preferable a mid to late 1961 or early 1962 to keep it within the time window that the cars were converted.

Having got the fire pump home I drained down the oil which was like treacle so, lucky it did not fire up and run then. Next I part the engine from the Godiva pump unit and extricated the engine from the pipe work



The engine extracted from pipe work and frame

and frame. Now the engine was sat on the workshop floor in front of me but having now got it what did I need to do to convert it to full FWE automotive engine?

The road test article gave a few details of other mods to the car and as there was no mention of a different gearbox the assumption was that the existing gearbox was used. Now I knew that Turners used both A series and Climax engines in their car and I was sure that mostly they were both hooked up to A series gearboxes but as I stood looking at the engine with an A series resting behind it I thought you can not fit a starter motor.

With the list of questions getting longer it was time to get on the internet and make a few phone calls. The first phone call was made to Russel Filby who is the Turner Registrar.

It seemed pretty obvious that the starter motor would be fitted to the opposite side of the engine via an adapter plate to that of the standard Sprite engine so the question was asked as to what provision is made for the starter bendix on the A series gearbox bell housing. The answer, cut a lump out of the bell housing big enough for the bendix. Do you weld in a section or leave a gaping hole where the "A" series starter motor fitted? Fill it in if you want.

The conversation turned to Climax engine builders as there are several machining processes that need to be carried out on a firepump engine to convert it for automotive use that require expert knowledge of the Coventry Climax engines. There are several Climax engine builders out there but most come with a fairly large price tag. Russel put me on to a chap in East Sussex by the name of Peter Waller who has a good name in Coventry Climax circles and as he operates

from home would have a lower charge out rate. I phoned Peter to have a chat and gave him an outline of the project. Peter has converted several firepumps in the past so it looked like he was the man for the job. Cost was always going to play a part so we agreed that I would strip the engine down to its component parts and then take a trip down to East Sussex for Peter to look over what I had and to discuss, what we could and should do. I stripped down the engine cleaning and bagging up the parts as I went. The exterior aluminium parts such as the block, head and outer casings had been sprayed with a silver paint at the factory and this was proving a nightmare to get off.

The best way to remove this paint proved to be soda blasting as we had used this method in the past on aluminium panels. Soda blasting differs from normal sand or shot blasting in that the soda blasting is what's known as a non-invasive process.

Sand and shot blasting use an abrasive media which as well as removing paint and rust it also removes a small amount of the surface of the item you are blasting leaving a lightly roughened surface. The soda blasting process uses what is essentially a coarse baking powder.

Compressed air is used to force the soda at high speed out of a nozzle and onto the surface of the item that requires cleaning or stripping. As the soda crystals hit the surface they explode and it is this that lifts and removes the paint or grot. This process can be used to remove paint on glass, chrome, fibre glass as well as steel without damaging the original surface. The only real downside is that soda blasting will not remove rust.

A trip was organised down to Peter Waller and this proved to be a very good day for me as Peter pointed out that the engine I have as well as having a forged steel crank on standard size journals, it also has forged main bearing caps, the preferred conrods, an automotive oil pump drive and distributor gear.

So what needs doing to the firepump engine to convert it for car use?

Working from the bottom up. The sump is ok as is but an aluminium oil baffle plate is made to the automotive pattern which will fit between the sump and block. This also adds stiffness to the block.

The "B" block has a snail shaped section cast into the block. On the automotive engines



The snail casting

there would be a take off plate for the remote oil filter but is unused on the firepumps. Behind the snail casting is the main oil gallery. Two holes are bored through the snail casting into the oil gallery for the oil to flow out the remote oil filter and the back into the oil gallery.

As this oil gallery is normally a tube from one end of the block to the other, we now need to block off the oil gallery between the two holes we have bored to force the oil out of one hole and back in the other, rather than just following from one end to the other. Blocking the oil gallery is achieved by accurately boring a hole from the top of the block right through to the oil gallery. This hole is then threaded and a plug is then screwed into place to partition the oil gallery. A plate is then made, fitted with oil pipe unions and bolted into place over the snail.



The Snail casting cover

In next month's *Mascot* we can read about Paul's continuing efforts to source parts to convert the engine as well as a chance meeting which facilitated a change in direction.

So How did you meet her?



Martyn in a Sprite called Sexy

Although I am a new member of the Midget and Sprite club I have owned my Austin Healey Sprite for 15 years now.

I am curious about how other members came to obtain their own cars.

My own tale of how I met 'sexy' (SXC 316J) came about is quite interesting.

I had just started a new job in a different town to where I lived and after a few weeks of public transport I had just about had enough of buses being late or even cancelled, so my wife said I should get an old car that would get me to work and would give me something to tinker with too.

I searched the small ads (no internet then) and found a likely candidate in Derby, it was a Midget, round wheel arch and so the ad said VGC, Perfect.

Off we went one Saturday morning up to Derby where we saw this sad vehicle that the owner had described as VGC!

It was hand painted in 'Aqua' Blue and was in a dreadful state, there was no throttle pedal and the owner couldn't start the engine because he didn't have the key! Needless to say we drove away, a 160 mile round trip for nothing. Heading for home I said "let's go to Bromsgrove MG centre and see if they have anything".

As we turned the corner we spotted this Teal blue 'Midget'. On closer inspection it wasn't a Midget but an Austin Healey Sprite. I test drove the Sprite and was hooked, the hood was knackered but otherwise it was in quite good condition so I bought it there and then. When I picked up the car a week later Bob at Bromsgrove M.G. handed me the keys the car had a new MOT and had been fitted with a new hood! I was over the moon.

I have loved 'sexy' from the first time I drove her. Sadly she had been off the road for the last 5 years whilst I attended to a rusty rear end but this spring she went for an MOT which she passed without even an advisory note. A week after Sexy passed her test, my everyday car blew its head gasket and spent a whole month off the road, this meant my Sprite was pushed into full service from the start.

I have enjoyed every moment of Sprite ownership and for an old car she has been quite reliable.

So, how did you meet yours?

Martyn Griffin

As Martyn says "How did you meet yours?" Was it something that you'd lusted after for ages? Or one you reconstructed out of a pile of bits. Or perhaps it just followed you home one day. Let Mascot know the story and we will feature it here.



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Eight original WSM cars, and three completed Sanction 2 cars with some of their owners and ex-owners

The Celebration of 50 years of WSM cars took place at Roothams Farm, Colmworth in Bedfordshire on Saturday last. On a bright sunny morning, a good crowd of WSM enthusiasts past and present gathered at Paul and Sharon Woolmer's premises to celebrate 50 years since Douglas Wilson-Spratt completed his first WSM Sprite.

The proceedings were started by Tony Wilson-Spratt welcoming those former members of the original Delta Garages of Leighton Buzzard WSM team and the throng in general who gathered around the marquee in which the three recently-built WSM Sanction II cars sat beneath their fitted covers. He told of his meeting back in 1995 with Paul Woolmer and of the friendship which built up between them leading to the idea, forged in 2001, of building more of Douglas's babies. It took them seven years to get the project off the ground but

finally the results are worth seeing. Tony mentioned the long search for the original cars many of which were present including the WSM 3000, with only the Jaguar Estate and the car based on the BMC 1100 not in evidence.

Tony then handed over to Paul who organised the unveiling of the three new cars, firstly Ian Hulett's race car which is gradually proving itself on the tracks, then Lorraine Noble-Thompson's silver grey road car just completed, and finally the burgundy example for American Bill Emerson, all of them with gleaming paintwork in the sunshine.

Next came the cutting of the birthday cake baked by Paul's wife Sharon, complete with an image of DWS 97 in Douglas's favourite Chiron blue. Former members of the original WSM crew Peter Jackson and Jim McManus (the "M" in WSM) did the honours to murmurs of 'We hope you will both be very happy!'

The line-up of Historic WSM Spridgets



The one of a kind WSM 3000



Peter Jackson and Jim McManus cut the cake

Finally, came a very enjoyable lunch all spread out on the dining table of the farmhouse. I wandered around the display workshops chatting to people like Gary Lazarus, Paul Webb, Jack Wheeler and David Scothorn and saw Barry Sidery-Smith and Rae Davis among many other notables. PMO200, the Super Sprite, a recently restored pair of Swallow Doretts, a couple of Healey 100s and David Markham's little A35 pick-up added to the display. Healey Club Competition secretary, Joe Cox had brought his Austin-Healey 4000, and Mick Darcey his other 100S.

Tony tells me there was "a dinner for 50 at The Plough in Bolnhurst that evening, where Barry 'Whizzo' Williams also joined us, and further presentations were made as thank-you mementoes to those who had brought WSMs to display. I also presented Jim with a framed picture of two shots, himself with Dad at the Rockingham re-union in 2001, and with Dad in 1963 alongside WSM201 at Swiss Cottage with Joel Nelson, which we had not seen as Joel went back to the USA after ordering WSM207".

Mascot would like to thank everyone involved in such a magnificent and unrepeatable day. Especially Paul and Sharon Woolmer as well as Tony Wilson-Spratt and his family. Finally Once again, many thanks to Martin Ingall for writing this report and allowing me to reproduce it here. The original can be viewed on Martin's excellent Sebring Sprite website www.sebringssprite.com

The WSM story can be viewed on Tony Wilson Spratt's wonderful website www.wsmcars.com

Gary



Paul Woolmer introducing Lorraine Noble-Thompson's to her new road going WSM402



Ex-NASA space engineer and Austin Healey historian Bill Emerson with his LHD WSM 403



Peter Jackson & Clive Rooke with Tony Wilson Spratt and DWS 97



Rae Davis's WSM arrives



Other historic Sprites. The Super Sprite and ex Sprizel PMO200 of Paul Woolmer with Jack Wheeler's 7080AC and the Alexander Sprite of Paul Freeman

This year's Midget & Sprite Club Stand at the NEC, once again shows the diversity of our Spridgets. These eight cars highlight the great cross section of the range, from a standard Mk1 Sprite built in 1958, the very first year of production, through to two rubber-bumpered 1500 Midgets, the second of which was built in 1979, the last year Spridget production.

Along side these standard cars we have three competition cars. A historically important alloy bodied MkII Sprite built at "The Cape", Warwick, by the Donald Healey Motor Co. This Sprite which competed in long distance circuit racing is displayed with two street legal cars built for much shorter drag races of a quarter of a mile.

The last two Spridgets, one built as a replica of the very rare Mk1 Sebring bodied Sprite, the other on a tubular chassis and with the approval of the Healey family, further highlight the diversity of club member's cars.

Once again we suggest that you consider parking at Hampton-In-Arden railway station B92 0BJ for free and travel in one stop by train which will avoid the inevitable traffic queues and the high £8 car parking charges at the NEC (not the fault of the show organisers Clarion Events !)

This year's show is even bigger than before spread over 7 halls with some 1,500 classics on show. Please do all come and introduce yourselves to us on stand 8C123, buy regalia and take the opportunity for maybe a rest and a chat.

I do have a small number of tickets still available for each day, so if you fancy coming along and helping the club out, with a couple of hours on the stand and the opportunity of going round the show, please contact me on a.pritchett@btinternet.com strictly on a first come first served basis. Enjoy the show.

Alan Pritchett

Spridgets Appearing on the MASC Stand at this year's Show



Mk1 Austin Healey Sprite

Registration Number 909MUY
Owned by Dave Colclough

The Car was manufactured in October 1958 just after the 9-stud screen was stopped.

Registered and Sold in Jan 1959 in Worcester

The car still has 948cc 'A' series engine and drum brakes all round.

History. Not much is known about the car prior to 1984 however the owner does know it had been in a field for many years rotting

away during the 1970's. At some point a modification was done to give it easy access into the boot space, it's really useful and Dave have no intention of ever turning it back. Also it was de-seamed at some point probably because they had rotted away.

The Frogeye has owned by Dave for about 9 years. The first year was spent on the upper body, removing the badly crazed paint. It was then re-spraying with the original Dark Green colour. Other than that, Dave had a couple of years of the usual issues with old cars, fuel, mixture, ignition etc. All now seem to be fixed and they have had some fantastic trips around the country, With the Heart of England (Warwickshire Area) Midget and Sprite club.

MkII Alloy Bodied Austin Healey Sebring Sprite

Registration Number 9253 WD
Owned by Jonathan Whitehouse-Bird

9253 WD is one of only four alloy bodied MkII Sprites built at "The Cape", Warwick, by the Donald Healey Motor Co., to compete in the 3 Hour race at Sebring, Florida in March 1962. In the race, 9253 WD was driven by Pedro Rodriguez who finished 6th.



Three of the cars returned to the UK. All three cars were again shipped to Sebring the following year for the 1963 3 Hour, 9253 WD was used only as a practice car.

When the cars again returned to the UK, both 9252 WD and 9253 WD were sold by the Healey Motor Company to private Sprite enthusiasts. 9253 WD went to a good friend of the Healey family (and Healey 'works' driver), John Harris. He employed the car as his everyday transport and used it for his daily 25 mile commute to work. The car was made a little more comfortable with the addition of some trim, carpets and a radio!

It was entered into various race and hill-climb events during the 1964 season and achieved some level of success. At the end of the year the car was sold and it continued to compete in over 30 race events, at club level, from 1965 to 1968. By 1968, the Sprite had become somewhat uncompetitive, so it was into a garage following its final race and the doors were closed. 9253 WD subsequently 'disappeared' from public view for the next 30 years!

In 1998 the current owner, Jonathan Whitehouse-Bird happened, by chance, to purchase a Healey 'works-modified' MkII Sprite, registered 9256 WD, from a classic car dealer in Norwich. Realising the car to be only two digits away from Stirling Moss' Sebring 'works' car – 9254 WD – He wrote to *Classic & Sportcar* magazine appealing for information regarding 9256 WD, also making reference to the four alloy bodied 'works' Sprites and making the suggestion that none of them had survived.

Again by chance, a previous owner saw Jonathan's. He replied stating that he still owned 9253 WD. Jonathan drove over to view 9253 WD.

A further 15 years on from that first visit, and exactly 50 years on from its creation and first appearance at Sebring, the opportunity arose to acquire the Sprite. Aside from the few minor modifications made by both first owner John Harris and second owner John Willetts, during their respective ownerships, the car is in incredible condition (albeit a little dusty!) and survives as an amazing time-capsule. A sympathetic recommissioning is planned at some point in the future.



Turbocharged MG Midget

Registration Number FHA 10K

Owned by Steve Cowling

This car was woken from a 10 year sleep in a barn some 15 years ago. From standard it progressed to a typical fast road car. Then about 5 years ago two major events followed in quick succession – turbocharging and an introduction to drag racing. The car is still a work-in-progress, but is essentially now a street-driven drag racer, devoid of windscreen and weather gear. Turbocharged and intercooled, with electronic ignition and nitrous oxide injection, it has an all Ford transmission and home made traction system. The suspension, against all conventional wisdom, has long soft front springs and dampers, but stiff and jacked up rear end, all to promote rearward weight transfer on launch. There are lightweight front wings and bonnet, but ballast in the boot for the same reason.

The aim is to drive it to the drag strip, loaded with race tyres and gear, frighten the competition and (hopefully) drive it home again. The best time to date for the quarter mile is 12.8 seconds, with a terminal speed of 107 mph, which equates to a 0-60 mph time of a little over four seconds. Currently there is a problem getting traction off the

start line and development is focussed on that. Although the engine develops 200 bhp at the flywheel on 18 psi of boost, there is some scope for further power when the traction is sorted. Despite this, the car is tractable and well behaved on the road, until provoked!



1978 MG Midget

Registration Number EAB 574S

Owned by Dave Parker

Dave bought EAB earlier this year as a stop gap vehicle to use while building a Spridget project car at home.

In 1996 EAB was completely rebuilt using a fully painted British Motor Heritage body shell, which cost £2291.25p at the time. The insurance valuation in 1996 was £5500. It is in superb condition, with excellent panel fit and paint finish. The doors do NOT need to be slammed; they close with a satisfying click. The windows wind up and down easily. Dave says that he has had Spridgets where two hands are needed to operate the windows! His only modification to date is the fitment of Mazda MX5 seats, which he says are superb.

EAB is Dave's 5th Spridget but his first 1500 Midget. "The 'rubber bumper' body style is not liked by many people and is seen as something of a poor relation to a 1275 chrome bumper model".

The main difference between the two models is experienced in the driving. The larger capacity 1500 engine has more torque and is a much more relaxed drive and requires less gear changes around town.

Maybe one could say that the earlier cars are a more 'sporty drive' and that the 1500 Midgets are more for touring.



Sebring Sprite Replica

Registration Number 577 DNX

Owned by Alan Anstead

577DNX is a Speedwell blue Sebring Sprite replica. Its reincarnation took place in 2004 when Alan rebuilt the car using an Archers Garage Sebring fibreglass coupe top and bonnet. The idea behind the project was a car suitable for long distance continental travel, so with only a few miles on the odometer, it was run in on the 2004 M.S.A Euroclassic, partnered on that occasion by John Larrington, which took it to Florence via circuits of Dijon Motor Race Track and Ferrari's test track at Fiorano.

To make the car more suitable for such travel, Alan fitted front disc brakes, a modified 1275 engine and a Ford T9 5 speed gearbox. As stowage is always a problem, with early Sprites on tour, he has made and fitted, an under bonnet tool box. With the home made sidescreens in place the cabin can get very hot so Alan took a leaf out of Healey rallying history and approached the problem, as the works had done with the Big Healeys, and fitted an A35 van roof vent. Alan no longer has to strip naked in hotter climes! The car has proven itself over the intervening years as it has taken Alan safely and reliably on many trips many of which he organises for MASC club members and himself.

Super Sprite V8

Registration Number VNR 448

Owned by Philip Herrick

Philip purchased this 1960 Sprite in Nov 1973 as a "Write-off" and re-built it in a variety of drag racing guises.

However by 1985 he decided to build a Rover powered street legal Sprite. Philip purchased



a badly bent, written off, 1500 Midget. This was stripped and modified to fit the Rover V8 engine and gearbox

A six-point tubular roll cage was fabricated and welded into the body shell. The midget rear axle was replaced by a stronger one from a Ford Anglia 105E. The old fibreglass Frogeye bonnet was reused. At the back the Frogeye fibreglass rear wings were fitted. Suspension and braking is based upon the uprated Midget components. It was then drag raced for three years and finished runner up in the 1987 Street Machine Rover V8 Street Rover Championship.

Since then the car has been used on the road and Philip finally achieved a long held ambition and fabricated another inlet system. This now uses 4 x 40 IDF Weber downdraft carburetors on a pair of aluminium manifolds. A second fibreglass Frogeye bonnet has an "aero scoop" to cover the 6" ram pipes. Philip has recently run the car at drag racing RWYB events and has achieved a best time of 14.2 seconds 0-99 mph

Isle of Wight Frogeye

Registration Number FUE 317
Owned by Roy Cole

FUE 317 is an Isle of Wight Frogeye, built in 2001. The Healey Frogeye was conceived by Donald and Geoffrey Healey prior to Donald's death and taken through to production by



Geoffrey and Keith Brading. In the early days it was available as both a restoration assembly and as a complete car.

It has a Glass fibre Mk1 Sprite body on separate multi-tubular chassis using genuine parts, built on the Isle of Wight by the Frogeye Car Company with the approval of the Healey Family. The very last cars gained Limited Type Approval, were powered by the K Series engine and were registered as new cars. In all, approximately 250 cars were produced over a period of around sixteen years.

Roy's car has a 1330cc A series engine with a Metro cylinder head and 1.5 inch SU Carburetors, which produces 60 BHP at flywheel. The transmission is a Ford type 9 long nose gearbox fitted by the late Brian Archer. The rear axle is axle 3.7:1

FUE 317 has been on many MASC club continental runs including trips to France and Holland as well as Northern & Southern Ireland.



One of the last MG Midgets

Registration Number SYD248W
Owner Alan Couch

SYD the Midget was bought in May this year to go alongside the owner's Frogeye, but to be used on longer distance events. It is a late production car manufactured in 1979 with a chassis number 220 before the end of production. The colour is black as were all the last batch, and is fitted with the dashboard plaque to commemorate 50 years of production of the Midget. The mileage is believed to be 242,000.

One week after purchase SYD was successfully taken to the Spridgetreffen event in Bremen Germany and Alan thinks it is the most comfortable and practical of the Sprite/Midget variants made.

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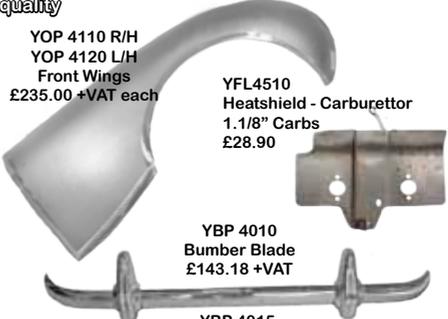
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Molegrip Vice

This year's Loire Valley / Le Mans Tour threw up some challenges with several mechanical failures.

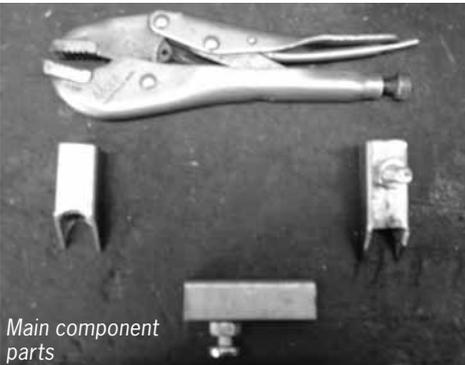
Molegrip vice on farm gate



The first failure was a rotor arm that chose to fail en route to, and some miles from, our base, for the Tour, at Parçay les Pins.

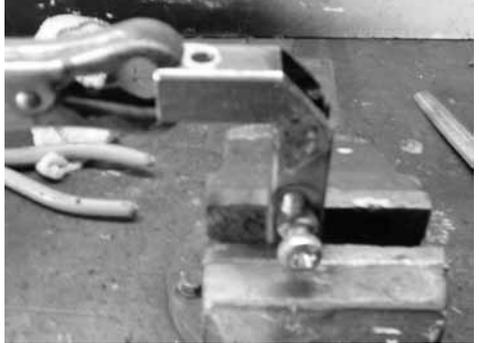
This was not the usual failure of some poor quality item. Rust had formed on the distributor spindle to such an extent that the rotor had become "glued" to the spindle and resisted attempts to remove it by hand. As the rotor appeared to be a quality brand I can only suppose that the swelling rust had caused a hairline fracture that I could not detect. I had not ever seen such a rusty spindle not even on spindles in breakers yards exposed to the elements.

Suspecting a failed rotor rather than a failed Aldon/Pertronix type electronic ignition I set up a simple test, once the vehicle had been recovered to our Gîte. Removing the Dizzy cap I fired the engine with ignition on to watch the rotor contact take a spark from the coil lead held near to it showing that the insulation of the rotor arm was failing.



Main component parts

Ready for welding



Fortunately, or luckily, our Gîte Host had a bench vice that I could use to hold the Dizzy whilst I sawed a shallow slot across the rotor, having marked its position and withdrawn it from the engine, and then effecting its removal with a hammer & chisel. A "spare" rotor was replaced once the build up of rust was cleaned from the spindle. The car soon roared back into life.

Then a member, not touring with our group but at Le Mans only for the Classic event, reported a leaking rear brake slave cylinder but I was unable to assist in supplying a mole grip to clamp off the rear hose to cut off fluid to the rear cylinders whilst allowing the use of front brakes only to return home.

In a quiet moment of contemplation I pondered "what if". What if I needed to use some Mole grips and what if we were away from the Gîte and I needed a vice to clamp something in. I recalled somewhere in the past seeing a bracket that turned Mole grips into a vice.

Returning from our Tour I sought out my Mole grips (mine actually are Mole brand Grips manufactured in UK) and then looked for scraps to make a tool to act, in tandem with the Mole grips, as a vice. I found some 20mm square tube suitable, and some 8mm nuts and bolts. The pictures show the make up of the main components which I then welded together.

The Grips can be mounted on many and varied objects found along the way such as gates, seats, fences and street signs. All I have to do now is remember to pack the combination when next travelling abroad.

Alan Anstead

Kent Area Rep www.masckent.org

Scotland Area Report



On the Time Line at Blenheim

Firstly apologies for no Scottish report in the last edition of *Mascot*. Hopefully, normal service is now resumed.

For those of you who have read these reports over the months you will have appreciated that I run one of those cars associated with the “over 60s” – an MGB. This is the 50th anniversary of the launch of the MGB and a series of celebratory events have taken place over the year. In September, MGB50 took place at Blenheim and I was fortunate enough to have had my car selected for display in the “Time Line”.

Steve and Pauline with their “B” and Elspeth and myself in mine left on the Thursday morning in heavy rain for a run down to Chester. Unfortunately, it became evident within only a few hundred yards of leaving that my newly fitted windscreen was leaking badly at both bottom corners where the frame assembly and especially the side posts are in contact with the body.

By the first motorway service station stop, the packets of paper handkerchiefs in the car had all been reduced to a soggy pulp and the hand towel that I carry was also soaking. Pauline supplied a kitchen roll and progress continued. However, a trip off the motorway and a motor accessory shop provided sealant which when applied reduced the tsunami to manageable proportions for the rest of the holiday.

The Friday morning was spent sightseeing in Chester and then the drive down to Banbury, once again in heavy rain. Saturday was a glorious day and with the tops down the day was spent in the Cotswolds and the carpets successfully dried out from Thursday.

Sunday was the day of the show. An early start from Banbury, to access the Time Line, was made in cool, dry weather. All was well until about 11am.

When the first drops of rain fell. From then on, the weather went from bad to worse with the rain intensity steadily increasing. In common with most of the show attendees we made our way to Blenheim Palace. When we exited the Palace and refreshment facilities our car was one of only a handful left in the Time Line and very few others left anywhere.

It was estimated that some 2500 MGBs had been present. We found out later that the organisers had decided at about 2.30pm to abandon the show.

On the Monday, we went our separate ways with Steve and Pauline heading north to visit some of their relations while Elspeth and I went in the direction of Bromsgrove to similarly visit family members.

Over the next week we visited Bletchley Park, The Shuttleworth Collection, Imperial War Museum at Duxford and various other friends and family.

Leaving the Bedfordshire area we headed up through Northamptonshire where I was able to revisit my old haunts as I was born and raised in this area. Driving back into Scotland over Carter Bar on the A68 followed two nights in Durham.

The break stretched over 11 days and we had rain on 10 of them. Fortunately, the rain was not continuous and did not adversely affect the enjoyment of the trip.

It does make me think however when I see these adverts in classic car magazines for cars, which have allegedly had “dry use only”. This is Britain; surely “dry” and “use” are mutually exclusive when used in this context?

John Pardo

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Ed's note. The long held secret is now out. The Scottish area rep for MASC, drives an MGB. We're still proud to have you in the club though.

Home Counties North West



A summary of the last few months' activities in the HCNW, starting with the **Glenn Miller Run – 5th August.**

Glad day – sad day. Glad as five Spridgets met at our monthly venue, The Chequers at Redbourn, for a road run and a visit to The Glenn Miller Museum and Twinwood Aviation Museum north of Bedford.

Sad day (personal) because it was our first club meet without DFF 778D – – The Red Lady (2002 to 2012). She has moved to a new home. If you see her somewhere in the Kent Department please wish her well. We were mounted in a modern monster whose name shall not sully these hallowed pages. The seventh car in the group made a matching pair with ours.

Off – time was 10 am and we turned north up the A5. First stop was to pick up two more, appropriate, cars. Onwards toward the pole through local towns and the beautifully named Marston Moretaine, adjacent to the Millbrook vehicle proving ground; eventually arriving at a concrete road, so typical of wartime establishments that rattled our teeth and led us to a long and very stony and holey track to the Airfield.

The Airfield has been returned to the Farmer from whom it was requisitioned during the war for use as an RAF training base, so there is no runway. The few buildings left, the Twinwood Aviation Museum, are used to house a wide range of memorabilia from ration books to Rolls Royce Merlin engines, reclaimed from mother earth, bent and shattered. The sheer size of these incredible

pieces of engineering begs the question 'how on earth were they made airborne in such relatively frail vehicles?' To put four into one aircraft and then add a belly full of bombs seems ludicrous.

Our first port of call was to the Glenn Miller museum. He and his orchestra were based in Bedford, on the supposition that it was safer than London, and they commuted to gigs from Twinwood. The display is principally of photographs of Glenn Miller and his orchestra and singers, but a Wurlitzer juke box filled the air with his music. Nostalgic to a few of us and a history lesson to most.

It was from Twinwood that Glen Miller took his last flight, to France, on December 15th 1944. He was never seen again.

The old NAFFI hut is now the café, where we enjoyed a really good 'mugga' tea for a quid – probably a penny in wartime, and we were allowed to eat our sandwiches sheltering from the storm.

We dispersed and made our own ways home – – Jenny and Dave, Lily and Vic, Maggi and Roger, Bill, Ian, Mark (team leader), Pat and Zara, Pat and myself – and Anne and Keith who organised a really good day out. Thanks chaps.

Chris Jackson 3056

Hampshire Open Day – 9th September

This event has become a regular on our events calendar. It was good to catch up with other MASC members and our Hampshire friends. We managed three Spridgets with five pilots, while I took on the role of tale end Charlie in my everyday car.

It was a sunny warm day and an enjoyable drive to Hampshire. One thing I did learn on the day is that people will let out three Spridgets at a junction, but if you have a German car with the engine in the wrong place you get left behind. This meant I didn't see much of the planned route and had to use the M3 to catch up with my colleagues.

A good day out I recommend to other areas, just watch out for speed cameras on the way home Keith!



Attendees of the Pumpkin run

Pumpkin Run – 14th October

Maggi and Roger 'offered' to arrange our last road run of the year. Unusually for this year's events we had a lovely sunny autumnal day to enjoy the countryside. The route Maggi and Roger had planned for us took us on good open roads, mostly new to me, in fact most of the time I had no idea where I was even though I wasn't far from home. Spectacular

views and interesting points to note on the way; a man made from car wheels and an amusing sign asking us to 'slow down due to free range children! We stopped for coffee at Pearce's Farm Shop and Café, just south of Buntingford (well worth a stop for coffee or breakfast if you find yourself on the A10). Hot beverages and cream cakes all round.

Unfortunately HCNW members were dropping like flies. It was nice to see two members who came to wave us off, their partners left at home in the warm. Five cars made the journey ending up at Maggi and Roger's for soup, sandwiches and plenty more. Thanks go to Maggi and Roger for the run and their hospitality.

Now I need to plan next year's events. Thanks for the suggestions so far. Keep them coming!

Mark

<http://hcnwmasc.blogspot.co.uk/>

Mk1 Midget's Previous Owners Sought

Hi folks,

I'm trying to track previous owners of my Mk1 Midget. I was in contact with the previous owner, a Mr A. V. Young in Chertsey, Surrey, but that source seems to have moved, though he was an MGOC member in the 1990s. The vehicle was acquired by me in May 2009.

• Vehicle details.

- MG Midget Mk 1 – built 14/3/62 to 4/4/62
- Chassis: G-AN1-11483
- Engine No: 9CG-U-H/26048 (thought to be original)
- Colour: Tartan Red, with red interior and black trim.



Although I was not aware at time of purchase in 2009 – (I bought it because it was love at first sight!!!) it now appears the car is one of the most original ones around of this, the rarest of the Midget marque.

Anything you can do to help would be really appreciated.

Many, many thanks.

Ken Cothliff MGCC: 112837, MASC: 4364

Aviation Historian, Author, and Display Commentator. Any information can be forwarded via Mascot

By the way, the Aircraft is an Aero L-29 Delphin – a Czech training aircraft, now at Brighton Aerodrome, Yorkshire.

East Anglian MASC Report

September 2012

Not too much going on east of the angles in the belly of Britain this month, other than the trip to Buntingford Classic Car Show reported by Mick Hall below.

The weather was warm and dry for the five cars that started from Royston Tesco car park. When we arrived at Buntingford we were marshalled into the high street which had been closed for the day. There were cars, motorcycles and other vehicles of all types and ages. We were parked at an angle so that everybody had an easy one-way exit at the end of the show, just one part of the very good organisation for the show.

Coffee, Tea and for two of us bacon butties was the first order of the day, after the refreshments it was a nice easy stroll looking at gleaming cars and bikes, there were courtyards to explore containing some really beautifully maintained cars. Live bands and a Disco played at each end of the high street, but not loud, and not within earshot of each other, food was plentiful with BBQs and Tea and cakes at various areas, including the local church, and as it was held on a Saturday, the shops were open, an extra bonus for our ladies who were not only able to discuss the technical merits of the various cars but were also able to check out the jewellery, craft and gift shops as well.

The day was rounded off with a meal at the Red Lion Inn at Grantchester, all in all a very pleasant and enjoyable day, and one that we hope to repeat next year, along with our other favourite Kimbolton classic.

I managed to catch a couple of weeks of glorious French sunshine at the beginning of September (the best of the entire, so called, Summer) and started to fantasize about an Indian summer. Sadly we didn't take the Sprite to France (although it would have been fantastic), this was due to torrential rain and horrendous weather conditions on our departure day, which was then followed by two weeks of near perfect sunshine, it almost made up for the rest of the summer. I had even made a last minute decision to replace the rear springs on the Sprite before our trip (to cope with Pat's baggage) and had to burn the midnight oil to get it done in time. Incredibly the car now sits almost two inches higher at the back than it did previously (but still not as high as my rebuild project).

While in France we came across one of my personal favourite little known classics, a thing called a Méhari, this is a mini Moke style vehicle produced by Citroën and built on a modified 2CV chassis, with 2CV running gear. The very nice example I photographed in Fouesnant has a badge on it proclaiming that it belonged to the 2CV and Méhari club.



The not very Spritely Citroën Méhari

The original Maharis had a plastic body, no not glassfibre but horrible Tupperware-style plastic, the Mahari (like the 2CV) was so horrible, quirky, ugly and brilliantly simply designed that it was really really great!

I suspect that the Tupperware bodies have long since all disintegrated in the French UV and have now (like this example) had the body replaced by a glassfibre reproduction. I want a Mahari, just the thing to carry my surfboards down to the plage, and I expect with its 2CV running gear, high ground clearance, big wheels and massive suspension travel a much better off road prospect than the Moke.

The last event before the dreaded deadline was the pub night, which was surprisingly well attended (well done guys) considering what a filthy black wet night it turned out to be. Biggles (did I really just write that) and HTJ entertained us with some wonderful stories, twisted shafts (with his new engine now installed) told us of his sailing exploits with deliciously politically incorrect comments about his crew. We discussed events and the fact that the Xmas lunch is now fully subscribed (we have filled the pub!) although I have put it on the events page as a reminder of the time and date, some real ale got consumed and a few Spridgetly trinkets and bits of advise were dished out.

See you all at the oldest Inn in England and beyond.

Dave Dixon (AKA Red Leader)

NW Area Report November 2012



Arley show line up



Dennis and Daniel's newly painted Sprite

Sunday 23rd September was the Arley Hall and Gardens classic car show. This was the first event at this venue and as such was free entry.

There was myself, Pete, Lee with Maddie and Dennis with Daniel. This was the first time we had seen Dennis and Daniels car since its restoration work. It looked really good in its new colour however there were still a few niggles to sort. There had been a few delays in completing the car and it must have seemed like a life time waiting to get it back. Not sure they were too impressed with the company that did the work!

The show was only small and the auto jumble wasn't up to much. For some reason no catering vans turned up, but the organisers eventually managed to get one from somewhere. Overall a pleasant enough day, the venue reminding me very much of Capesthorpe Hall.

On 29th September we had a visit to the McLaren showroom in Knutsford. Something Ian had organised, although I think it was just an excuse to chat up the young girl who is the salesperson there! We had five of our cars go along. There was me, Ian and Jane, Bernie and Lynne, Pete and Dennis and Daniel. We were welcomed by Saiqa, Ian's

Lynne & Bernie, Dennis & his son Daniel, Me (Les), Pete, Ian & Jane with the MP4



young girl, who was very friendly, helpful and knowledgeable.

A brew was provided and we were left to drool over the cars. There were three examples of the MP4 plus a rolling chassis and a 1970 ex Denny Hulme F1 McLaren. We had a sit in the cars and a fiddle with all the knobs etc, pretending that we could actually afford the £170k plus to buy one! A set of tyres cost £5k, that's more than my Sprite is worth. The showroom has been there just over 12 months and I couldn't believe it when Saiqa said that they have sold over 80 cars so far.

Following on from here we went up the road to have a look around the Bentley garage. Some lovely cars, although no my thing really. They had a secondhand Aston Martin for sale which was more like it but way far too expensive for me – very nice though. Just need that lottery win.

After finishing here we went on a short run that Ian had planned, ending up at the Bears Paw at Warringham for lunch after which it was time for home. October club night was Quiz night, hosted by last year's winners Bernie and Lynne. Very good turn out, 21 of us I think it was. Excellent quiz, won by Mike and Karen – we won't talk about who came last! Also, it was nice to see Andrew again, he has not been able to come to recent meetings due to other commitments.

For November club night Dennis has 'offered' to give a talk on the subject of the trials and tribulations of his and Daniels recent Sprite restoration. Looking forward to that. Well that's all for now, see you at the Kilton on 14th November.

Les

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Vintage



Modern



American



Prestige



Household



Heart of England

Saturday, September 1st, saw Kate and I whiz up the M69 and A5 to Shackerstone Family Festival, in the Midget 1500 (well more of a Kangaroo once we got onto the A5. On inspection I found the rocker cover oil filler cap sitting on the inlet manifold!! It's an age thing!). On arrival we headed for John and Ann Platt's 1976 Viking Fibreline caravan, in their classic lineup. After a cup of tea and some of Ann's delicious cake we went to prepare the Midget, only to find it included in the South Linc's MGOC lineup! Very soon we were also joined by Stuart and Rose Gunn in the superb Midget Mk 3 V 8.

This festival raises funds for Air Ambulance, Macmillan cancer support and many other notable causes. For our perusal were many stalls and trade stands, classic cars and motorbikes, military vehicles, traction engines, models and crafts and of course the Ashby Canal, with a huge variety of narrow boats and the Battlefield Line preserved Steam railway. There was a real ale festival and Fairground so Mum and Dad could sup a drink whilst keeping an eye on junior on the rides!

On Sunday we were joined by Mo and Phil Wood in their A.H.Sprite Mk 4, with John's next door neighbour (also called John!) coming along in John's A.H.Sprite Mk1. The two Johns, Anne, Kate and I met up for Sunday lunch in the Rising Sun Inn nearby. The plan then was for us to rendezvous at the Caravan for tea and cake – however Kate and I took advantage of the discounted Steam train ride, for exhibitors, only for the engine to fail at the far end of the track (a

lady driver I noted – I was met with a stony glare from Kate). The upshot of this was we missed the cake, arriving back just in time to depart for home via the Fosse Way. A great drive with the hood down and low sun highlighting the countryside and the happy burble of the exhaust in our ears!!

On our last club night, Wednesday 12th Sept. Member Andy Smith announced his engagement to the lovely Jane, an enthusiastic round of applause followed!

Our next outing was organised by Rosemary and Alan Couch (Rosemary having been tasked with arranging a classic car line-up, to help raise money for three local charities, at Solihull's Fun in the Park on Saturday 22nd September.)

Thus it was a group of Spridgets descended on Rosemary and Alan's home for bacon butties and coffee prior to driving to the Tudor Grange Park, in convoy. Once lined up we had seven Spridgets, Alan and Rosemary's Lotus Elan S4, Dave Puzey's Sunbeam Tiger and Rosemary and Jim Willis superb Mercedes SLS (6.3 litres to dwarf our cars!)

There was a full programme of events to see, many stalls and bands and the Touchwood shopping centre just a stones throw away. The sun broke through giving us a good dry day and drive home afterwards.

Our next event will be the MASC AGM on 21st October (or the Restoration Show at Stoneleigh Park for those still tinkering with their cars!).

Andy Bourne



The Midget at the Shackerstone Family Festival



Midgets, Sprites, Mercedes, Sunbeam and a Riley at Tudor Grange Park

From the Bowels of Bristol

If you are new to the club and this is your first read of *Mascot* – skip this report, it may not make much sense. However, if you are a regular reader of my reports – this may not make much sense either. As you know, I report things just as they are so the complexities of the life and times of this area are not of my doing, so hold tight, here we go all the same.

As (regular) readers will be fully aware, October was to be our celebration of 50 years of the ribbed case gearbox. All was planned, the Pucklechurch village green was booked, tickets printed, public liability insurance paid for, risk assessments completed and the emergency services alerted – just in case.

The local Morris dancing squad, the 'Pucklechurch Pounders' had rehearsed a new routine – 'The H gate 50' especially for the occasion. The only protester, Gertrude from the Pucklechurch W.I. mud wrestling team had been removed, along with the village green gate to which she had chained herself, and all was looking good for the day. Then, the village elders imposed some obscure and ancient law that entitled them to the full rights to any event held on the village green. Our tickets were seized, I received a severe talking to and our assets exposed in the local Gazette (page 3). Naturally, I tried to inform all who were looking forward to attending that the event was no longer the Club's. Instead, the elders found an old Fordson gearbox for the Pounders to dance around (actually, this was more of a squelch around) in their gaily decorated wellies.

It rained – whoopee! As usual, the village youngsters celebrated the event by performing fertility rights behind the cricket pavilion, now that the rotting remains of Gertrude have been removed. Gertrude was buried the previous weekend, still firmly chained to the gate, the biggest hole the village grave diggers have had to dig since the air ship disaster.

Despite this, the publicity resulted in an influx of new members to our October club night at the Rose and Crown. I was quite unprepared for this; our well organised 'table allocation' system simply could not cope. We had good people on the 'naughty table, bad people on the 'good table', Alan Lo on the 'don't believe you've got one table' and new members on the 'mild indiscretion table'. What a mess. There were at least six



Terry swears in new members

conversations going on simulatiously, (four of which seemed to have involved Alan – the other two were about Alan) Even the Landlord left his position guarding the till to see where all the noise was coming from. I had to send round the Club attendance form to clarify who was there (So who was the clever wag who wrote Gertrude then? – your banned until next February) Anyway, a warm welcome to our 'newbie's' – Nick Cooke, Alison Oag, Jim Sherry and Russell Brown (2nd visit) – a record 15 MASCites. Now most branches would see such an increase in numbers as a measure of success, but we are not like other branches. It's all about Quality rather than Quantity at the R&C. Hence, following careful consideration, I will be contacting members to inform them who is and who isn't welcome at the next meeting. I have one name on the 'Your not' list already so Alan, you have saved me the stamp.

Congratulations to Andy 'all weather' Cross and Jim White for being the only members to attend in their Spridgely things (you are on the 'Welcome' list fore next month so another two stamps saved there). At this point, I would extend a big Bowels of Bristol thank you to our National committee who come up for questioning in October (AGM time). A special thank you to the outgoing committee members and a 'Bl**y Good Luck to their replacements. As always, you have our full support and appreciation for what you do for the club. (Now who accused me of not writing the truth then?)

Signed off as a true and accurate report.

Terry Horler

The line up at the Hants Area open day



Open Day ...

It was a wonderful morning, Terry and I got to the Fox and Goose to find Ken and Ian already there, watching a guy flying a radio control helicopter. Could the day get any better?

The team-building exercise went well, and the gazebo went up in no time, we just had to decide how to arrange the cars! Decision made; a slight angle – in a line – up the field.

Hampshire Chapter members started to turn up, and by the time we had been there a couple of hours the tally was about 15. The maximum during the day was 21. Home Counties brought four, the remaining cars were local – we were told that our ad' had been seen in one of the local supermarkets ... who was the phantom fly-poster we wonder? I had even persuaded one of our publicans in Fleet to advertise the day, but it wasn't as effective.

All in all a very relaxing day, sitting talking to folk, seeing people we hadn't seen for years, and also people who we see once a year. Thanks to all who joined us this year – thank goodness we didn't have it earlier in the year when it was wet. So, do we keep it at this time, or go back to April? Answers on a postcard please ...



MASC cars and banner at the Cranleigh Classic Car Show

Oh, and just when three-quarters of the people had left, the Basingstoke Gazette turned up. Barry will be signing pictures if they make the paper.

Terry & Harriet Langridge

Cranleigh Classic Car Show & Autojumble

Who would have thought that after the awful weather we have had, this Classic Car Show would be on one of the hottest days of the year? Even a lunch time thunderstorm didn't dampen the heat or enthusiasm for long.

Unfortunately a substantial amount of rain had fall earlier in the week so parts of the usual showground couldn't be used which led to a more spread out show than usual.

[This show is always well supported by vehicles of all shapes and sizes, stallholders of all kinds plus many visitors enjoying a family day out and is a huge fundraiser for the Cranleigh Lions. Donations will be made to each the four charities they have directly supported this year; Alzheimer's Society (Haslemere & Waverley), Diabetic Association of Guildford), GRACE and Rowleys 50+ Centre in Cranleigh.

Jenny Green

Who can resist a dog in a Frog, certainly not the editor





Surrey Classic Vehicle Show

This was about the fourth time we have been to this show held in the lovely surroundings of the Tilford Rural Life Centre. The organisers encourage exhibitors to 'dress up' in the clothes of yesteryear and with some of us having been to the Goodwood Revival just two days previously that wasn't too difficult. This show is always well attended and over 500 cars were on display this year, including our group of six cars. Being parked under the trees it was a little cold at times, but this encouraged us to walk around to see all of the other fascinating exhibits and 'rusty bit' stalls. All proceeds went to local charities.

Barry Green

Goodwood Revival

Alison and I decided this year to go to Goodwood Revival. This was our first visit and the weather could not have been better. We set off early on Saturday morning and arrived in good time so as to avoid the queues that we had been warned about.

There was more than enough to see in one day, from Vintage show cars and motor bikes, numerous shops from the post war years, racing cars and bikes and all the mechanics in the pits keeping the cars / bikes all tuned up for the races, (many engines were been dismantled and re placed between races).

There were also numerous planes which included fly pasts by Mustangs, Hurricanes, The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, Spitfires and a Naval Sea Fury.

Dads' Army were also at Goodwood having Tea in the Marigold Tea Rooms and there was an excellent act from Laurel and Hardy.



There were numerous food and drink kiosks though Alison and I decided that the Champagne was somewhat expensive so had coffee and teas instead. Vintage clothing stalls were numerous but still no Sprite boot badge!! Numerous cars were for sale privately with a Rolls being cheaper than a Mini Cooper and there was also an on-site Auction.

Jonathan & Alison

First Time

Barry and I also went to Goodwood for the first time this year but went with John & Vic who are 'old hands' and could give us the benefit of their experience – like not wearing 'killer heels' and taking something warm to put on, and take a brolly; very good advice as (a) we walked miles (or at least it felt like it) and (b) we were unfortunate enough to get a shower of rain so were grateful for the extras. The sun came out in the afternoon but it was quite windy so was thankful for the hat pins.

We had a fantastic day, loved all the dressing up and the great atmosphere. We also 'bumped into' Chris Tunnicliffe whom you may remember from the days when we had our meetings at The Poacher. He is doing fine and sends his regards to everyone. His Frog is still not on the road but hopes that it will happen some time next year.

Jenny & Barry

Area Rep Terry Langridge
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Kent MASC

Sadly this month saw the death of member John Larrington. A goodly number of members, representing Kent, Surrey, & Sussex MASC Areas, at the behest of John's family, attended John's Funeral, with their Midgets and Sprites.

In April 2002 John & I attended the 'last' race meeting at Monthlery – Linas, France. The event was also a memorial to Jaques Protherac. The old circuit was to be demolished.

En route John thought that the clutch, on his Frogeye, had failed but opening the passenger door it soon became apparent that, in slow moving traffic, we had stopped in a large pool of diesel causing the driven wheels to spin wildly.

Demolition never happened and vintage meetings are again taking place at this historic circuit. Yet again on 28/29 April 2013 a Vintage Meeting is to be held at Monthlery–Linas. Is there any interest in a four day run to this event to cover one day driving a Spridget there, two days at the circuit, and a day return journey? Perhaps John's family would allow it to be run as a memorial to John. Interested?

There was no "Old Boys" midweek run this month as I was away in France. Whilst abroad I spent a nice time having lunch with Amicale Spridget main man Franck Thibaud. Since MASC has been "twinned" with Amicale some of their website www.spridget.fr has been captioned in English so do have a look.



An original advert for the Atlantis Midget

An e-mail dropped in this month re the finding of a derelict Atlantis Midget. This was a conversion, in period, using a Ford engine. Are there any in the Club? If anyone has one I can put you in touch.

Also this month a Midget has been found, under a tarpaulin, in woodland in deepest Sussex. Off the road since circa 2004, and not apparently lost or stolen, enquiries continue to find more information and an owner.

Mutinous Dogs! I with only a skeleton crew, was left adrift, at the monthly meet, at the Angel P.H. Addington Green, Kent. On Sunday 23rd. Even the landlord deserted ship as he cast off for the MGB 50th anniversary celebrations at Blenheim Palace. I believe that he still awaits delivery of his MGB, from the restorers.

The mutineers had chosen to attend a car show at Bearsted. Can't complain, too much, as the event at Bearsted, was in aid of the Kent Air Ambulance. But it seems that attendance at the car show was not a good decision. Instead of the warmth and conviviality of the Monthly Meet, the weather must have made car shows on this day a bad decision. It tipped it down! Such was the volume of rain that on my journey home, in Classic Ford, it became apparent from the flooded roads, at Trottscliffe and Swanscombe, that had I have chosen to

20-21 avril 2013

VINTAGE REVIVAL MONTHLERY

Venez revivre la Légende !

A black and white illustration of several vintage open-wheel race cars on a track. One car in the foreground is tilted, with the number '13' on its side. The cars are depicted in motion, with motion lines around them. The artist's signature 'R. DUBOIS 04' is visible at the bottom right of the illustration.

Titres d'époque Obligatoires

Plus de 300 véhicules d'avant 1940 sur un circuit mythique !
www.vintage-revival.fr

l'association des amateurs de circuits, sur le règlement de Vintage Revival

attend in a Spridget I would have needed Goggles and snorkel. I jest not!

However our monthly meet was not a disaster and afforded time to look forward to next year. On the cards so far Monthlery (above), a week in the Loire Valley 24th June – 1st July (Mon – Mon) taking in the Bressuire Historic GP on the last Sunday, and dates yet to be announced for September 2013 a third running of a Miglia Tour through France, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy. I will put more details in *Mascot* when I have finalised plans so that members from ALL areas have the opportunity to come.

There were no Spridgets in the car park until Ron Edwards dropped in on his way home from the Bearsted show and then future member Brian Ingram arrived in his Midget on his return from the Aylesford Car Show.

If the weather permits there should be an Old Boys mid week run out in October to Bentley Wildlife Park.

Also in October, on Sunday 7th, there is the MG & Spares Day at Sandown Racecourse where we have a small, club stand.

Several new members have recently joined but appear to be shy. Or is it perhaps that the Membership Secretary is plucking names from the phone book, or off tombstones, just to give me the impression that we have new members in Kent.

Come on folks show your faces, and your cars!

Alan Anstead

Kent Rep www.masckent.org

Mailto: alan.anstead@btopenworld.com

Attention Area Reps and Club stand organisers

AVAILABILITY OF CLUB EQUIPMENT (GAZEBO, ETC)

Ever wondered how you are going to keep out of the sun (or the wind and rain!) at a MASC event you have organised?

Did you know the club might have the answer?

The Midget and Sprite Club Gazebo!

The Gazebo is 3 metres x 3 metres and comes in a bag, together with 4 side curtains, there are also 4 weights for each corner for outside windy conditions – It is stored together with other MASC equipment, folding table with cover, freestanding display boards with laminated posters and 2 banner flagpoles.

The gazebo and other equipment is available to all area reps to use for MASC events. First come first served though. The equipment is stored on behalf of the club by Jim Willis at his home in Redditch, Worcestershire.

If you do want to use any of it then you will need to get in contact with Jim and make arrangements to collect and return it to him. Jim's contact details are:

Jim Willis, Walkwood Farm, Morton Lane, Redditch, Worcestershire
B97 5QA. tel 01527 402804 / email: jim.willis@tiscali.co.uk

If you do use any equipment please make sure it is returned to Jim promptly and in the same condition as when you received it. Please report any breakages or issues to Jim or any of the committee members.

Somerset Area Report



By the time anyone reads this in *Mascot* we will have returned to our Winter Quarters at The Lord Nelson in Norton sub Hamdon and will remain there 'til around April/ May 2013 at least as far as Club Night is concerned so if you want to join us you will know where we are on the last Thursday of the month.

The weekend of the 14th–17th September saw us on the last big run of our Summer Tour for 2012, did I say Summer, ah well, when you get to my age you are entitled to forget some things and perhaps the Summer of 2012 is best forgotten with poor weather causing many events to be cancelled. Wings and Wheels at Henstridge Airfield, where we had hoped to see a fly past of the Historic Flight of the Lancaster and Spitfire was one casualty. At least we were lucky when we chose the date for our closing run some six months ago and decided to motor to North Devon and Exmoor and the Coast as we enjoyed “top down” motoring over the four days.

Friday the 14th saw us gather in Taunton at Dave Bearnes for coffee before setting off across Exmoor and a planned lunch stop



at Withypool then going on to the delights of Lynmouth for a stroll and ice creams, finally on to Huxtable Farm at West Buckland for a three night stay from where we could explore the delights of the area. On arrival we were greeted by two very friendly farm dogs and then by Jackie the farmer's wife, who organised a welcome cup of tea, well a full Devon Cream Tea actually and we still had dinner to come! A good job we planned not to eat 'til 8pm that night. If you are ever that way we can thoroughly recommend a stop over.

Saturday and we were off on a coastal run around Combe Martin, Ilfracombe, Woolacombe Bay and Putsborough Sands, popular with the Surfing Fraternity, not a place to park up though, at £7 a day and they still charge £5 mid afternoon; we only stopped for a cuppa for about an hour! Then on to Braunton where we had a fish supper at the award winning Squires Fish Restaurant and boy were we lucky; no booking but they found a table for the twelve of us and whilst we tucked in, we watched the queues building! Off then to Chittlehampton and the Bell for a swift half, before zooming through the darkened lanes for a good nights rest at Huxtable Farm

Sunday dawned and after another breakfast feast, Full English for most of the men who are well known for being good trenchermen, we set off for the RHS Gardens at Rosemoor, Nr. Great Torrington. What super roads on the way for our little Spridgets, up hill and down dale with twists and turns, great fun if you don't have some slow moving VW Polo in front who braked every few seconds! We had more luck on the return journey though and really enjoyed a good blast.

Our very last meeting of this year's Summer Tour was Club Night at the Quarry Inn in Keinton Mandeville at the end of September, near the home of Bob & Frances Underwood, the latest national members to join us in the Somerset Area.

So with Xmas just around the corner, judging by the shops who are already stocking large tins of sweets and all sorts of goodies, then it must be time to organise our Xmas Lunch, Turkey anyone?

Ray
Somerset Area Rep

Wind and Steam in Wiltshire

Wiltshire might not be the first county to come to mind when thinking of England's industrial heritage, but there was some frontline technology here a few hundred years ago. The Wiltshire Group of MASCeteers had a wonderful one-day tour recently, taking in some of the county's best industrial heritage sites, and plenty of typical Wiltshire chalk downs, white horses, spring-line villages and of course sweeping Spridget-friendly B-roads. And what a great day it was too!

Early Saturday morning a small team of Sprites and Midgets of all varieties met up at our usual meeting place, the Barge Inn at Seend near Devizes. We were particularly glad to be joined by Dave and Donna, as comparative newcomers to our Wiltshire regulars, but Colin Gale and Helen, were forced to leave their hesitant Morris back home, with both Sprites and come in "something modern".

It was cool but bright and thankfully dry, so we folded or stowed the tops, wrapped up well and in rally style headed off at decent intervals clutching our route instructions. The planning, by Jill and Dave Hansford, had been meticulous, so no one went astray or missed their lunch!

The highlight was the Crofton Beam Engines, which were working at full steam just for us. The oldest one is from 1812, by Boulton and Watt, which shares the pumping work with its partner the later Harvey of Hayle engine, keeps the summit level of the Kennet and Avon canal topped up during the steaming weekends. The classic coal boilers and beautiful working mechanisms entertained us, plus a Stanley steam car [pictured], lovely M-type Midget, a showman's engine, vintage tractors ploughing,

John Rennie's famous canal itself and even the West Somerset Steam Express thundering by on the railway line. Our cars were joined by an eclectic bunch of other classics, and drew a small crowd, but we had to leave for our lunch at the excellent Swan at Crofton.



Wilts Area
Spridgets at
the Swan at
Crofton

The next stop was the Wilton Windmill. A beautiful feature and classic design with some clever mechanisms here too, but it was interesting to learn later (from my father, who had been involved in the rescue and first restoration of this and several other industrial archaeological features of the Kennet and Avon) that they made some big mistakes back in the early seventies, and some of the work has had to be re-done properly later. Some of us with older cars can relate to that!



We all had a giggle here when a small child became convinced that the man in the green pullover and noisy little car HAD to be the real Mr. Toad, and wouldn't go home without talking to him! I escaped quickly, dressed as a washer-woman...

The convoy continued through Pewsey again and to the edge of Savernake Forest, via tea at a garden centre, the Pewsey white horse and back to Devizes. Just the right length for a good day out, plenty of fresh air, perfect beer and food, and some Big Engineering too; what more could you want? Well, already Dave has suggested he has plans for another of these Wiltshire tours, so watch this space.

Andy Cross

Box, October 2012



Differing Quality of Parts

Hello to all club members,

Eighteen months ago I knew nothing of the Midget. I was looking for a long term project to help me adjust to being a civilian after 22 years in the Army. Then one day this little blue car caught my eye and 18 months later I am the proud owner of a large pile of rusty bits.

I was unaware the MG factory was such a green and environmentally friendly company back in 1972. To produce such a biodegradable vehicle, they were years ahead of their time.

You can tell then I've found out that it was not just rusty on the outside but the inside as well; at times these two areas were one.

So then off to the internet to start the purchase of new panels. This was my first lesson in Midget repair. Not all panels are the same and they are not all equal. It seems that we have two types

- British Motor Heritage.
- Other manufacturers

The parts arrived and the mock up started. Oh dear someone in the store room sent the wrong part, quick check of the part numbers all seems correct. It turns out that one company makes the correct part while another company makes what can only be described as a "it's Friday" part.

British Motor Heritage use **good gauge metal sheet** and make **high quality part** that was made to fit the Midget. Whilst the other company use a thinner gauge and make a bad quality part that does not fit unless a hammer is used.

So First lesson, always ask for British Motor Heritage.

Watch this space for lesson two.

Jenks

Market Place

Adverts to Alan Lo, 23 Charnell Road, Staple Hill, Bristol, BS16 5NE
email: alan@mobuzzing.net Tel: 0117 9572617

For sale: 1978 MG Midget 1500 CC Sport needing some TLC. The car runs but has no MOT, ideally it requires a new hood and general repairs. There is some corrosion and rust spots evident otherwise it is intact. Steve Watmore (West Wales) 01559 371070 and 07738792854.

For sale: 1975 Midget 1500. Orange with Wire Wheels. Recent welding with photo evidence. Mechanical overhaul with many new parts. Front suspension rebuilt apart from wishbones and springs, new mid and rear exhaust. MOT until 10th June and tax until the end of November. Pictures and further details available. £1500. Phone Rylan Mob:07914207182 Email: rbw@twl230.plus.com

For sale: 1977 MG Midget 1500. Tahiti blue. Always garaged, dry summer use only. Complete history file. Much admired car in very good condition. Owned for twenty five years. £2,950 Tel Keith Robinson on 01895 622033 (Middlesex)

For sale: Two MG Midgets that require restoration – one 1966 D reg British racing green with round rear wheel arches the other 1969 G reg red with square rear wheel arches. Both have 1275cc engines; both have been standing on concrete and on SORN notice. Price £2000 for both. Contact Graeme Spong; tel No 01306 884449 evenings & weekends; viewing weekends only

For sale: Mk 1 Sprite 1960 in old english white, red interior on a heritage shell, unleaded head, 1275 engine, wire wheels, disc brakes on front, with hood and new tonneau cover. MOT June 2013. Stainless steel exhaust also works hardtop requiring restoration. Hampshire £12250 o.n.o. j.clark270@ntlworld.com

Wanted: Small twin axled car trailer, suitable for a Midget/Frogeye. Ideally it will have an 11 foot bed. I would like a Brian James Clubman or a Minno Max if possible but will consider other makes. Must be in good condition. Contact Neil on 07891 684435

Midget and Sprite Club Regalia Details

This year we have made changes to what and how we sell Regalia.

After long discussions the committee have decided that holding large stocks of clothing regalia was not cost effective. To offer different styles, colours and sizes of regalia involves a big investment for the club and this does not seem to be a good use of our funds. As explained in the June 2012 edition of MASCOT, if we wanted to sell sweatshirts, for example, in four colours we would need to stock four colours, in four sizes which means 16 sweatshirts just to have one of each.

To meet demand we would need to have say 5 in each size and colour which means holding 80 sweatshirts. Then multiply that by the number of items we would want to offer and you can see this becomes a huge stock control and investment activity. We also found that some styles and sizes didn't sell well leaving us with old unwanted stock

After considering the options available, which kept decreasing due to the economy, we have settled on a new supplier of clothing regalia that can offer you and your members good quality clothing in a wide range of styles, sizes and colours and at a reasonable price. The company is called Howsafe;

www.howsafe.co.uk

You can order items direct from the website simply by selecting your item and stating you would like the MASC logo embroidered on it. The item will be delivered straight to your door!

Non clothing items of regalia can still be ordered through the club website and these are dispatched by Mike Grout, our hard working Regalia Officer. There is a flyer delivered on the back of the address label with every MASCOT and details of the current stock are shown over the page too. We are gradually updating these items with our new logo as stocks run out; so even if you have a car sticker or tax disc holder you can update it to a new one whenever you like.





Sprite hardtop, white
MGH004W £408.95 (**Sprite Mkl**)

Library image



SuperPro poly bush kit, complete car
SPK21CK £99.95 (**S&M 1964-On**)



Leather key fobs, with logo
VARIOUS £9.95 (**AH OR MG**)



Headlamp dip switch bracket
2A9102 £12.95 (**Sprite Mkl**)



Lucas performance distributor, 45D
TMG10873 £153.95 (**Weber carb**)

Others available



Speedi Sleeve, timing cover
520-515 £44.95 (**S&M 948-1275cc**)



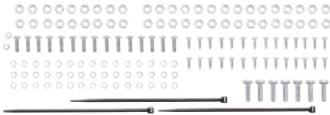
Headlamp relay kit
117-515 £32.95 (**Universal**)



Supercharger kit, 1275
150-080 **NOW** £2,694.95 (**1275cc**)



Oil filter, original felt type
8G684 £9.95 (**948-1275cc**)



Hardware pack, 223 pieces
HK001 £24.95



Starter motor, high torque
GXE4405X £187.96 (**948,1098,1275cc**)



FLEXiT LED light
386-460 £22.96



Autoglym valet collection case
AGPACK10 £53.95



Frontline 4-pot brake kit, x-drilled
FLD309501 £804.95 (**Bolt-on wheel**)



Window drop stop bracket kit
AHA7431SSK £8.95 (**Sprite/Midget**)

Insist on the best for your Sprite & Midget
PARTS & ACCESSORIES FROM MOSS

Prices include UK vat, exclude p&p and are correct at time of going to print. E&O.E.



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