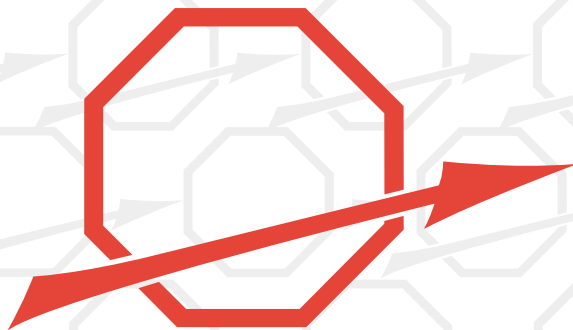


# MASCOT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MIDGET AND SPRITE CLUB



*USA Midget Mk3 publicity shot © BL/USA (& Ashley Hinton)*

**ISSUE NO. 242**

**MARCH 2004**

[www.mgcars.org.uk/midgetspriteclub](http://www.mgcars.org.uk/midgetspriteclub)

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Also see the Club Nights section on page 2 for new areas and contacts.

#### Club Mileage Competition

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Email: dsouthcott@ukonline.co.uk

Compiled by David Hill. 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**

## © Midget & Sprite Club

# Editorial March 2004

Well the snow was fun! Sorry about my closing remarks in last month's editorial, 'Spring Due Soon' obviously a couple of weeks to go yet. Anybody get the cars out in it, have fun, any photos? Letters please. I was sliding around in the company Honda using the trick traction control and the ability to lock the auto transmission into a higher gear to reduce torque on take off. Great fun! Elaine was reminded of her injury as I tried to get a set of snow chains on the wheelchairs (not too good in the snow). Walking with sticks on ice is also not advised, but she survived without further damage.

Club life lifts it self into the new year as we all start warming up for the early events. The Mascot events listing (Thank you David) is comprehensive and well worth a look if your planning a weekend in the car. Reports and planning notes are coming in thick and fast. So don't miss out! I attended an excellent Surrey meeting a couple of weeks ago and enjoyed an evening of non car related collectors stories ranging from Model Airplanes to Antique pocket watches, see report inside.

Also, inside you'll find a host of great stuff. Carson's back thanks to a new e-mail address and after last month's Carson inspired cover, a possible new feature series inside, 'Dogs in Cars'. Got a car, got a dog? You could be in with a chance. Elsewhere Ex 'Ed' Jenny shows us the progress she and David have made with the Bermuda hardtop, we have news and appeals from two of *Mascot's* favourite venues, the Ace and Brooklands. Brookland's want to buy a Concorde, yes the plane Concorde. Wow! How neat is that? Want to help, see details inside. Letters also provide a wide collection of interesting topics to ponder on.

Remember March 2001, 3 short years ago? The very first issue of Mascot that was poly wrapped. I can't even remember the last plain brown envelope I received though the post(!)☺

Still trying to finalise the mileage competition so no results this month. However meanwhile keep 2004 alive as David says the clock's ticking!

Well that's about it from me, hope you enjoy the issue. Either way write to me and let me know what you think. I also require YOUR stories on any broadly related topics. So please get busy, if Reggie can do it YOU can.

Regards to all

**Mike 'Ed' North**  
**Editor at large**



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**All articles and photographs for the magazine must be received by the first of the month preceding publication. Articles submitted for publication should be e-mailed to the editor if possible or on disc accompanied by hard copy. Members should be advised that pictures will be returned the month after inclusion in *Mascot*. Photos will only be returned if supplied with a SAE.**

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**The statements and opinions expressed in each and every issue of the *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.**





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# CLUB NIGHTS

1st Tuesday	<b>Wiltshire</b> – Meet at <b>The Forresters</b> , Leigh, near Cricklade
1st Wednesday	<b>South Staffs and Birmingham</b> – Meet at the <b>The Green Man</b> , Middleton Village, 8.30-8.45pm
1st Thursday	<b>NEW! Lincolnshire Area</b> – Meet at Heneage Arms, Hainton, nr. Wragby. 8pm. Contact Brian Sumner on 01507 328128
2nd Tuesday	<b>Surrey</b> – Meet at <b>The Blue Ball</b> , Walton-on-the-Hill, 7.45pm.
2nd Wednesday	<b>Warwickshire</b> – Meet at <b>The Green Dragon</b> , The Green, Sambourne, Reddich, B96 6NU, at 8.30pm as usual.
2nd Wednesday	<b>North West Area</b> meet at <b>The Kilten</b> , turn off M6 at Jct 20 onto A50 towards Macclesfield. Pub 4 miles on left. Please note new venue.
2nd Thursday	<b>Cambridgeshire</b> – Meet at <b>The Mad Cat</b> pub in Pidley Village, midway between Huntingdon and Chatteris, 8pm
3rd Monday	<b>Dorset</b> – Meet at <b>St. Peter's Finger</b> , Lytchett Minster, Poole 7.30pm
3rd Tuesday	<b>Central Scotland</b> Meet at <b>The Wheatsheaf</b> , Torrance, East Dunbartonshire. 7:30pm in the Lounge. Check first with Carson on 0141-245-6327 day or 013606-22334 evening.
3rd Tuesday	<b>Notts/Derby border area</b> – Meet at <b>The Sitwell Arms</b> near Horsley Woodhouse, from approx. 8:30pm. Just a mile north-west of the A608/A609 crossroads. Contact Ian Cooke for further details on tel: 0115 938 3838 or email: <a href="mailto:ilc@bgs.ac.uk">ilc@bgs.ac.uk</a>
4th Thursday	<b>Hampshire</b> – Meet at <b>The Lord Derby</b> , North Warnborough. Please ring Terry or Harriet Langridge on 01252 626063 for details.
Last Thursday	<b>Somerset</b> – Meet at <b>The Lord Nelson</b> , Norton-sub-Hamdon. 8.00pm

# Club Website

Members Only pages for March,  
User name: area  
Password: 51

# EVENTS

From David Hill and Webmaster Chris Nevard

## Events organised so far for 2004

### March

Tuesday, 2nd

Dorset Area Skittles v Dorset Historic Motor Club. Come and join MGOC 1020 as they battle against their old adversaries. If there's enough of us, we may be allowed our own Team! Wee HEE!! Details from Ian Swinden, Tel: 01202 623002 Email: [Eswinden@aol.com](mailto:Eswinden@aol.com)

Sunday, 14th

Dorset Area's *'The Cobweb Spin'* – Join Winchester MGOC at Hursley Park for this now Annual Event. Good food and bar available to warm up! Plus of course, a raffle. Departure point to follow – normally Mounbatten Arms. Details from Ian Swinden, Tel: 01202 623002 Email: [Eswinden@aol.com](mailto:Eswinden@aol.com)



- Saturday 20th Warwickshire Area is going Greyhound Racing at Hall Green. Details from Alan Couch on 01564 773302
- Tuesday 23rd Ace Café, North Circular Road, London. 6pm MG and Rover Meet Up. Details from [www.ace-café-london.com](http://www.ace-café-london.com) Every 2nd Tuesday, Classic Cars

## April

- Sunday 4th MG Day at Brooklands. More details to follow hopefully.
- Sunday 25th Warwickshire Area's Run in and around the Cotswolds. Details from Chris Yates on 01608 665066
- Sunday 25th Surrey Area's South Saxon Run. Meet at 10:15 at Newlands Corner, ending with Sunday lunch. Contact David Southcott for details. Tel: 01403 273433

## May

- Saturday 1st to Monday 3rd Surrey Area trip to Montreuil, France. Trip with Continental Car Tours. Details from David Wright, Tel: 0208 642 4789 email: [dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk)
- Tues 11th Surrey Area Monthly Meet at Blue Ball – 7.45pm – + 10 mile local evening car run – 8.00pm Start – See David and Chris for details (tel. 020 8642 4789)
- Friday 28th to Wednesday 2nd Warwickshire Area's five day exploration of the Normande-Suisse area of France. Details from Alan Couch on 01564 773302
- Sunday, 30th Dorset Midget and Sprite Club Regional Day at Kingston Lacy. We return for our 3rd year! Lots of planning to do, so we would welcome *your* ideas for this Event. Details from Ian Swinden, Tel: 01202 623002 Email: [Eswinden@aol.com](mailto:Eswinden@aol.com)
- Monday 31st The biggest East Anglian MASC (and friends) Spridget gathering ever at Eric St John-Foti's collector's world near Downham Market. Details from David Dixon on 01733 222810
- Sat 29th to Tuesday 1st Surrey Area Tour of Somerset/Bath Area Contacts –Ashley Hinton and Sue Judd. More Details from David Wright, Tel: 0208 642 4789 email: [dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk)

## June

- Sunday 6th Windwhistle Motor Club Classic Run 2004. Club members Peter and Valerie Young of Chard are organising. Details Te: 01460 62182
- Saturday 12th Surrey Area Victory run to Portsmouth leaving Dorking area 11.00am. Details from David Wright, Tel: 0208 642 4789 email: [dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk)
- Saturday 12th Devon Area's SKITTLES at The Inn, Newton Poppleford. 7.30pm £3.50 per person. Payment in advance please, and we need to know numbers by Sat 7th June latest. We also hope to run a "photo from yesteryear" competition. Please bring a photo of yourself/selves with a motoring theme! Details from David and Jenny Smith 01395 446353 or [bobndook@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:bobndook@tiscali.co.uk)
- TBA MASC stand at the Chester Show. Details when available from Alan Barton on 0121 351 2513

## July

- Sunday 4th Cambridgeshire Area Norfolk Run (Dumpling Drive III). Meet at Safeway Car Park in Swaffham at 10:00. Details from David Dixon Tel: 01733 222810



- Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th Ardingly County Show and Classic Car show. Surrey Area will be present with Club Stand.
- Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th Dorset Area are attending the 31st Historic Vehicle Gathering at Powderham Castle. Details from Ian Swinden, Tel: 01202 623002 Email: Eswinden@aol.com
- Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th Warwickshire Area's weekend in Wales. Details from Alan Barton on 0121 351 2513
- Sunday 25th Cambridgeshire Area Treasure Hunt (Dave's Deliberation). Details to be confirmed.
- August**
- Sunday 1st Warwickshire Area Group visit to Prescott Hill Climb. Details from Dave Parker on 01564 784766
- Sunday 1st BMC Annual Rally and Spares Day at Ferry Meadows, Peterborough. Club Stand. Details from David Dixon Tel: 01733 222810
- Sunday, 8th Dorset MGOC Picnic at Athelhampton. Dorset MASC attending the event which includes Teddy Bears Picnic, Huge Raffle, Swards BBQ, all proceeds to Dorset Scope. Details from Ian Swinden, Tel: 01202 623002 Email: Eswinden@aol.com
- Sunday 15th The Annual Furzewood Autojumble and Frolic, chez Chris and Jacqui. Surrey Area attending. Details from David Wright, Tel: 0208 642 4789 email: dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk
- Saturday 21st Warwickshire Area's Mystery Tour including visit to Hook Norton Brewery. Details from John Platt on 01789 488321
- Sunday 22nd Surrey Area Cliveden run. Details from David Wright, Tel: 0208 642 4789 email: dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk
- Sunday 30th Surrey Area Southdowns Run – Petersfield to Eastbourne. Details from David Wright, Tel: 0208 642 4789 email: dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk
- September**
- Fri/Sat/Sun 3rd/4th/5th Goodwood Revival Meeting. Warwickshire Area are planning a group visit. Details from Chris Yates on 01608 665066
- Sunday 5th MASC stand at Himley Hall Show. Details from Alan Barton on 0121 351 2513
- Sunday 5th? Gransden Flying Day (a stunning event with classic cars and aircraft, stalls and displays all in aid of children in need, places must be pre-booked). Date to be confirmed. Cambridgeshire Area. David Dixon Tel: 01733 222810
- Saturday 11th Warwickshire Area planning a visit to Shelsey Walsh Hill Climb for 60s  
**Or** Sunday 12th vehicles. Details from Stuart Watson on 01562 883076
- October**
- Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th MASC stand at the Classic Car Show at the NEC. Details from Alan Barton on 0121 351 2513
- November**
- Monday 29th Ace Café, North Circular Road, London. 6pm BMC Cars Meet Up. Details from www.ace-café-london.com Every 2nd Tuesday, Classic Cars
- December**
- Wednesday 8th Warwickshire Area's Christmas Dinner. Details from Chris Yates on 01608 665066



Tuesday 14th Surrey Area Christmas Dinner. Details from David Wright, Tel: 0208 642 4789 email: dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk

Saturday 18th Warwickshire Area are having a Christmas Party at Mo and Phil's. Details from Mo and Phil Wood on 01905 456303

**Area Reps please let David Hill have confirmed dates for new events asap.**

Remember there are Club Night Natters throughout the year and that area events are also open to members from other areas!

Please also note that the above lists only M&SC events or events where we have a presence or an interest. General classic events are listed in the classic press.

## Mutual Assistance Directory

We are on the dawn of another season and hopefully we will have another summer like the last one. I did not hear of any member breaking down far from home and having to call upon the goodwill of a fellow member but like insurance, it is nice to know that there is help available if required. Unlike insurance, it costs nothing, only the moral obligation to return the compliment by becoming a member of MAD. So don't delay – Join today!

So that the MAD is kept up to date, please don't forget to tell me if your details change or if you can no longer offer help to fellow members.

Don't forget, if you need a copy of the latest MAD you can download it from the members only section of our website but if you do not have access to the web or don't know someone who does, I will print off a copy and send it to you.

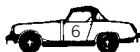
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**The MG Car Club  
(Devon and Cornwall Centre)  
presents**

## ***2004 Atlantic Coast Express Run on Sunday 25th April***

### **ATLANTIC COAST EXPRESS RUN for MG, CLASSIC AND VINTAGE CARS**

The MG Car Club LTD., (Devon and Cornwall Centre), has great pleasure in announcing that the event for 2004 will be the 7th ATLANTIC COAST EXPRESS RUN to take place on SUNDAY 25th APRIL, starting from the Old Okehampton Railway Station (Grid ref. 191/592944).

**THE ENTRY IS LIMITED TO 75 cars, SO PLEASE BOOK EARLY SO AS TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT.** ☺ *Ed says: He means it, see below!*

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**Posted to Ed 10 days later:** Owing to the great interest in this year's Atlantic Coast Express Run (Okehampton to Dorchester), I regret we have had to close the entry list as we are already over subscribed (less than 4 weeks from the time when the entry forms were first made available)! I should like to thank you for your support in publicising this event and would like to bring to your attention two other events later in 2004:-

12th Sept:- Cornish Riviera Run (Plymouth to St. Ives), please contact:- Mick Warne 01752-774289

10th Oct:- The Exmoor Rut (Buckfastleigh – Exmoor – Eggesford), please contact:- Colin Lennox-Jones 01752-892434 or (clj@talkgas.net)

*Ed says: Phew, full even before it's in the magazine! Obviously very good event, have a look at the next two events (Sept and Oct) BOOK NOW to avoid ..etc etc ☺*



# Webmonster Update

Chris Nevard (Webmaster) would like to remind people that his new email address is [nevardmedia@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nevardmedia@yahoo.co.uk) Email sent to the old address will not be retrieved due to excessive junk email.

*Ed says: ALL You guys with his OLD address in your PC's? YOU have been warned!*

## 'Bodger's Corner'

### The Anonymous Bodger's tip of the month'



Not being the brightest 'sparks' in the west I was a little apprehensive about the re-wiring of our Sprite during a re-build. I had marked on masking tape each connection on the old loom. Also found it

useful to photocopy and enlarge the wiring diagram; amend the errors (there was some), delete the unwanted items, and add missing items (the screen washer pump wasn't a legal requirement in those days). With colouring

pencils and a ruler coloured in the wires, using a long line for the main colour and a short one for tracer colour, where appropriate. The name of each component was written next to its symbol. I didn't get any problems, not with wrong connections anyway.

**The 'Not so Anonymous Bodger!'  
Lawrence Langley 2921b**

*Ed says: Thanks Lawrence – another neat tip. Come on you lot I still need more AND I need it now!!!*

## Midget Art



*Ed Says: Thank you to John Henderson of Hailsham who supplied this image from the cover of the BMC Special Tuning manual C-AKD 5097. All copyrights acknowledged, reproduced for review purposes only*



# Cambridgeshire Report

By the time you read this it will be March, the winter gone and only a couple of months before the new Sprigeting season is in full swing. A couple of months to get all those winter projects done, unless you decide to leave them until next year like you did last time (if you are anything



like me). The winter has not been too unkind; I have managed to get out in the Sprite a time or two on some of those crisp clear days (hood down). My Sprite is a MK III, a true roadster so the hood comes off and is stored in the boot, I think of it as an umbrella for use in extreme weather conditions. Nobody walks around with an umbrella up all the time and only takes it down on especially nice sunny days, but lots of people do exactly that with their hoods and they are missing out on so much (see the feature article in March Practical Classics). This time of year I start out just taking the Sprite out on a dry day to give it a run, keep everything moving and charge the battery up and finish up reminding myself what a joy these little cars are to drive.

The Mad Cat meeting went well although a couple of the guys couldn't make it (thanks for the email Mike), the main item on the agenda was setting the dates for the summer events so we can get them advertised. Currently we have five events firmly in the programme. The first event being the East

Anglian MASC gathering at Collectors World near Downham Market in Norfolk. We have set this up as an opportunity for the 100 or so MASC members within 60 or 70 miles of Downham who mostly don't have a local group within easy reach, to meet up on Spring bank holiday and be included in what promises to be a cracking event. You will have the chance to look around the amazingly varied exhibits, with something to interest everyone for the specially reduced fee of just £2 per person as well as taking part in what could be (with your support) the biggest Spridget gathering ever in East Anglia. The other events this year are a Norfolk run starting out from Swaffham (4/07/04), a treasure hunt starting near Peterborough (25/07/04), The BMC rally and spares day at Ferry Meadows (club stand) near Peterborough (01/08/04) and the fantastic Little Gransden flying day (club stand) 05/09/04 (to be confirmed).

Please try to support these events and make them successful, I guarantee you will enjoy showing off your pride and joy to other



appreciative owners, have a fun day out and maybe pick up (or pass on) a few hints and tips. You are going to want to get out in your Spridget anyway and you are a member of MASC so why not join in.

See you at the Mad Cat

**Dave Dixon**



# Warwickshire Report

We had our usual busy meeting, with 5 members of the South Staffs group driving down in their cars to join us. We intend to return the honour and drive to the Green Man next month. The business part of the meeting gave attention mainly to finalising the Greyhound Racing arrangements and trying to accommodate everyone's needs for our trip to France. We



*The Club Stand at Stoneleigh*

have 11 cars going and ferry places are at a premium. Those able to leave at 20.00 hours on Friday had no problems, but both the late ferry and the early morning one were fully booked.

For those wishing to participate in the Prescott Hill Climb there is no need for any special equipment and you can go as fast or slow as you wish, but will need to sign an indemnity form. Alan Barton gave details of several other possible events and these will be considered nearer the dates. We do have one additional item to our calendar, Roger Orgill is organising a drive in the Malvern's, finishing with a skittles evening on Saturday 24th July.

This month we supported the Club at the MG Show at Stoneleigh. The space made available to us was somewhat smaller than usual, so we only had room for two cars, which were kindly lent by Barry Smithson

and Moe Sawyer. The show was very busy and the stand visited by many, including some of our continental members. We even signed up a member from Colorado, USA. I was sorry not to meet the Surrey contingent as it was on their agenda, and apologise if it was my lack of attention. John and Nigel joined us, with Chris and Alan Barton organising the event as usual. Chris feels that she needs a rest, so if anyone would like to take on the Regalia, I think she or the committee would be pleased to hear from you.

Our engineering experts were inundated with questions and our cars were even tried out for size. Nigel Malyan has a Mark II Midget, April 64, which he believes to be one of the first, if not the first off the production line. He has all



*Officials at the Show*

the paper work since it was new, every receipt! It is original, with many interesting features, but in need of some restorative work. He is now hoping to find a good home for it, so if anyone is interested I have his number.

**Sheila Yates**

*Ed says: Thanks Sheila. Excellent report and a good show by all accounts. Well done.*



# Surrey Area Report

Our uneventful first few weeks of the New Year were thoroughly pepped up by the February club night, when we were the guests of the Metropolitan Police at their Social Club in Kent.

There, thanks to Alan and John, we had a room to ourselves, in which to share our knowledge on our hobbies.

It was a mentally very stimulating evening, starting off with a small part of Chris's



collection of miniature dolls prams, from all over the world, including Germany, Japan, Hong Kong and of course the UK. Tinplate penny toys from before the War, plastics from the Far East were all there.

Mike amazed us with his anonymous box of childhood treasures, all boxed Corgi toys, some of which still had their original prices, packing and instructions in – offers were made, but Mike's not selling!

Nic found it difficult to get through the door with his hobby, a 6 foot wing span model Tiger Moth, made of wood and stretched nylon, complete with control box. The world of model flying is not for real pilots, we learned, and it's the helicopters that are the really difficult ones.

Chris Harding's collection of books on Healeys through the years was impressive, some of them signed by members of the

family, and his anecdotes of getting three members of the family at a time to sign a batch at the 25th anniversary celebrations were excellent.

Our Ashley, astounded us with his affliction (oops, sorry, affection) for very old watches, and I'm talking 17th century here. Did you know how wristwatches came to be? – the chaps in the trenches in the Great War strapped their timepieces to their wrists, as they would otherwise fall out of the breast pockets – and in another small way, the world was changed forever.

Ashley also treated us to a mouthwatering display of Midget and Sprite sales brochures, covering all except the elusive Frogeye and Austin Sprite ones, even including some US printed specials. Examining the details showed up minor discrepancies, that hinted at cutting corners by using a Midget for Sprite brochures – the heresy of it all, anyone would think they were badge engineered! (Well, I suppose the Midgets were!)

Finally, yours truly gave a sneak preview of a forthcoming article in Model Collector magazine, of the life and times of the cars, and the models of Frank Costing and Gem Marsh – yes it was Marcos.



*'Ed', assisted by the two Davids selects the next cover shot from Ashley's (seated) collection*



March 20th/21st – Alexandra Palace Classic Car Show

April 4th – Brooklands MG Day

April 25th – Sussex Lanes Run – a morning run with delightful lunch at the end!

Most of our 2004 activities are now available in the events listing, and in the meantime, you can catch me on –  
dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk

All for now



**David** Nic with his impressive 6'

## South Staffs and Birmingham

Well, it surely does pay to advertise! When I arrived at the Green Man with Nick, my Le Mans co-driver. The car park was bulging at the seams with Spridgets, well quite a few anyway!

Before I do the “register”, Mike we need the time for the meeting changing in the mag again. It has slipped back to showing the old time, 1945 hrs. This caused our most recent visitor to sit around for an hour wondering if any of us actually used the pub for meetings. Please revert to 20.30 –20.45 hrs, thanks.

Anyway, on wi’t motley!

Geoff was there with a new visitor John “Skippy” Corser, who recently picked up a nice Midget and is considering joining us soon. Steve and Deb (but no webmaster Matthew) and Bills 1 and 2. Laurence and Trevor and finally Gavin made for some lively discussion.

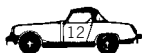
Geoff has had some difficulties with his half shaft seals leaking, so much heavy-duty drawing of axle arrangements ensued... I always take a sketch book AKA note book to meetings nowadays so we can do the traditional working it out with a pencil... Ah, that reminds me, Geoff don’t forget to bring Mr Haynes with you to the meetings... Some minor fettling of plans for the Le Mans trip was discussed.

It was good to see so many faces at the pub, I do hope the trend continues. Maybe we can make them miss us when we’ve gone!

Still some regular faces missing though, Carol and Arthur, Mickey and Bob and Vince and Peter. Jonathan, too! We would like to plan some trips out this year and your input is important, so “Come on down!” Last year’s plans bore little fruit but this year we will be doing at least one evening run organised by Gavin, based around a couple of hours driving around rural South Staffordshire ending at a very nice little pub... Well don’t ask me, Gavin is in the driver’s chair on this one! When we do it you are all invited, we’ll let you know. “Bostin’ South Staffs Run” anybody?

We agreed that some of us would visit Warwick’s on the next Wednesday, meeting at 1945 hrs at the MacDonalDs at Bassetts Pole. Just as I was setting out for the run Lara’s headlights failed due to a weird earthing fault, so I was somewhat delayed trying for a cure. The problem went away so I started late (who said “as usual!”?) and when I arrived was pleasantly surprised to see both of the Bills and Geoff and Gavin. We all set off down to the motorway and drove around through the b\*\*\*\* 50mph roadworks to junction 3 on the M42 then on down to Sambourne.

Made welcome by Warwicks we had an interesting night chatting and they have promised to return the visit on the 3rd March. For the sake of Christine and Gavin we will have to sort out a berth in the “Smokin” part of the pub, not much of a problem I expect...



When we left the pub I was a little behind the others 'cos I decided to drop the hood, as it was a mild night. After a rorty blast down the road to catch the others at the main A435, just as I turned the corner onto it the headlamp problem came back and there I was driving blind in the dark on sidelights, with the headlamp power earthing through the nearside indicators turning on the amber lights all the way home.

As Gavin was going to split off to the M5 I decided to follow him and he shepherded me through the dark bits to the lighted area of the M5. On the M5 as we passed junction 2 the headlights returned to normal and stayed that

way all the rest of the way home. I don't condone or recommend this but at least I got home sooner rather than later. Major dashboard rewiring beckons, I reckons...

Writing this on Sunday the 15th, some of our contingent are visiting the MG Spares day at Stoneleigh. I'd be there myself but I have to go in to work this afternoon, hope they have a good day.

**Bill Mohan 1067**

*Ed says: Sounds like a good meeting. For info 'Bulging' is officially three or more Spridgets ☺*

## Scotland Report

**T**hat lost boy, Jim McGuinness (issue 238) has been saved. MX5, no more.

He's keeping the MK1. All it took, was to see his name in MASCOT and sanity swept over him, the madness of juvenilia, reduced to sub-conscious junk. So. If anyone knows, or suspects they know a waverer, just get their name in the mag, preferably backed up with a pic of their car and they too will be saved! Next. Moving the business forward. Moving the business forward are John and Betty (it's their car and dog on the cover of the Feb issue). You may recall that they had bought 4 Midgets and simpleton me, thought this was mere rampant enthusiasm (they aren't short of that.) No. It's show me the money stuff, because, John is building an embryonic Spridget spares business here in Central Scotland and is already making a niche for himself. 'How have you done this, John?' I asked at the last natter. 'By advertising in the yellow paper'-a buy and sell gazette. I genuinely think that John is single handedly going to rocket- shoot our membership. Not only does he sells parts, he sells the Club to every new customer. Attaboy, John! What we intend to do now, is try and place an Ad for the Club above John's insertion in the yellow paper, whilst he lists that he is a member of MASC. Do you like it? Seems like a double whammy to me. Stand by Nigel with enrolment forms. Quickly man! Meanwhile, we have for certain got a new member in the borders, Stewart and

Christine Campbell. Stewart had been at Chic Doig's, MG specialist in Fife; a long way from home and had got details of us from one of the photocopies of the Scottish reports which I send to a couple of MG garages for attempted enrolment purposes. Stewart and Christine are coming to our end May event with Les and Diane and the NW mob, so that's really great. I hadn't planned to mention our super Xmas lunch at the end of November; but now there's a reason to. Donald Gordon, of the Austin Healey Club, Scotland, had been to Paul McFadden's shrine in Motherwell and similarly he had got details of the Club from a foto of a Scotland report. He came to our lunch and kept us going with his stories and knowledge. Donald has a MK1 with an uprated 1275 and 5 speed box. I have invited him to any of our meetings with the semi-official title of 'Observer'. Meanwhile, Donald, we would be delighted to receive an invitation to one of your local A-H outings. It's fascinating that all this happened before Brian Healey's letter appeared in MASCOT. A rare quirk of good fortune, in a broadening of commonality and a boost to our founding member and Club auditor, Alan Plumtree to get his Big Healey on the road! HEE MEE OORI\_ISHT.

**Carson and chums**

*Ed says: Nice to have you back on stream Carson.*



# North West Area Report

The January and February meetings were quiet affairs but we have managed to put together an event list for this year and details should be in diary section of Mascot. Our premier event for this year will be a weekend visit to Prescott hill climb in August. If you are interested in any of the events then please contact me.

On 14th December we had our Christmas lunch at the Holly Bush and very nice it was too. Many thanks to Andrew for organising this.

Next year however we will have a change of venue, although there's nothing wrong with the Holly Bush we thought a change might be nice. Plus we can pick somewhere that's easy for Phil to find!

The weather's not been too brilliant but I did manage a quick run out the other weekend which was nice. Its good to blow off the cobwebs and get the dampness dried out – it does the car some good too.

I've started work on my Mk3 Sprite, the shells fully stripped and I've been chipping off the old under seal and washing 39 years worth of oil from the engine bay. On the whole the shells not too bad but requires the usual sills

and floor etc. I still can't decide what engine to fit and keep changing my mind depending what mood I'm in. My latest thought was a Ford 1600 X-flow and I was on the verge of putting a bid on e-bay but chickened out at the last minute. Why this engine? Well, one of my boyhood dreams (one I can discuss here anyway) was to have a car with twin Webers and this engine is undoubtedly the best suited to this. The sound of the air intake coupled with a straight through twin cam exhaust system is pure heaven bettered only by a GT40 at full chat.

Talking of restorations, Andrew is finally having his Frogeye body rebuilt to its former glory and hopefully it will be back on the road by summer.

Well that's it for another month. With a bit of luck and weather permitting, we will have some cars at the club night. See you then.

**Les and Diane**

*Ed says: Thanks Les and Diane. Update on the Mk3 has the usual engine dilemma (for a rebuild). Me? K series ... with twin Webers of course. Best of both worlds. Hope this helps the process!*

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# The rebuild of 193PPL – a 1960 Austin Healey Sprite

## Part 2 Continuing the story of John Hendrusson's Sprite

Since then I have fitted the suspension, electrics, steering and brakes etc but by changing the fifteen-leaf springs for ten, the car now looks like a 4X4, also when separating the gearbox from the engine, I found the whole of the bell housing filled with an abandoned mouse nest, and the little buggers had been using my clutch as their urinal.

The other day I was completely buried under the frog with only my feet sticking out when a voice said, "A man after my own heart" all I could see was his legs and shoes, he walked into my garage and started chatting about the days when he used to race Sprites in the late fifties and sixties, and that his daughters wanted him to buy a big Healey. I assumed it was my next door neighbour whom I've yet to meet, in fact I started calling him Derek, anyway he asked me if I wanted lots of period literature and if so, he would leave it by the door. Next day I had original motor show brochures from 59 and 60, an original MK2 Sprite handbook, and a complete 1964 Speedwell catalogue with a



letter from Graham Hill. There's also an invaluable BMC tuning and modification booklet. I was impressed; stuff like this usually takes years of searching around auto jumbles. I had to show my gratitude, and so, with two bottles of fine wine under my arm, I rang his doorbell. The door opened and as soon as he said hello I knew I had the wrong man! My Sprite mad benefactor must have just been a passer by. But why did he answer to the name of Derek? So, if you are reading this, and thinking, I was that stranger, call by and claim your bottles of Chablis.

I am now desperately trying to get the car ready for Le Mans and Goodwood next year, hopefully you will be seeing us both at club meetings in the summer.

**John Hendrusson**



**BRING THE  
BROOKLANDS  
CONCORDE  
HOME**



Brooklands, where so much of Concorde was designed and built, needs your help in our **£1 million** project to bring G-BBDG back home, to join our unique line-up of Sir George Edwards' post-war Weybridge-built Vickers and BAC aircraft.

G-BBDG (known affectionately as 'Delta Golf') was built as aircraft No. 202, the first British production Concorde. She flew for several years in British Airways colours, but always as a trials aircraft, never in airline service. Long-since retired, she has been hangared at Filton for over 20 years, before being allocated by BA to Brooklands Museum at the end of last year.

To get Delta Golf to Brooklands, she will have to be dismantled, moved almost 100 miles by road, then re-assembled and fitted out and put under cover. That will cost us £1 million, and we need your help to raise that money – fast. **Delta Golf has to move here in May, and we need at least £250,000 by then.**

Any donation you can make, no matter how large or small, will be most welcome. All donors' names will be recorded on board. For £1,000, your name could go on one of the wheels; give us £5,000 and we'll dedicate a passenger seat to you; make it £10,000 and we'll name a crew seat for you. Why not club together with others (copy this form as many times as you need to) to make your pounds go further? And please **ask your friends and neighbours to help with this exciting project** – we need every bit of support we can get. Look on our website for more details.



**GIFT AID DECLARATION**

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Signed .....

# Saga of a Sprite

## Part Five – the Wilderness Years 1980–82

Having farmed my Sprite out, so to speak, (it was a very agricultural area) I took to visiting it every few weeks and taking it out for a run, and perhaps a pint in a local hostelry in the nearest village, Micheldever, if any body knows where that is.

The owner Michael was a very pleasant chap, and spent most of the time at weekends maintaining the grounds which were very extensive although he had a handyman cum mechanic who was generally there. If I was hanging about after running my Sprite I was likely to be pressed into service also, I remember him asking my advice on thinning a copse of small trees, he seemed to think I was quite knowledgeable in such matters, although my gardening was usually limited to mowing the lawn at home.

Coming back to car matters, one day when I was there he said he had been to dinner with the boss of BCA (British Car Auctions), as it was then and he had “been a bit extravagant”. We went out to the garage and sitting there were not one but TWO Ferraris: A bit extravagant indeed’.

One was an early front engined one and the other a V8, a fairly current model. The latter one had a broken rear light, but it didn’t seem too bad, so I dismantled it and glued the broken bits together again.

This stood me in good stead the following day when having a drink with a friend asked me what I had been doing over the weekend, and I replied modestly that I had been repairing a Ferrari. His jaw dropped (as they say in books) but he didn’t ask what exactly I had been doing – I think he thought I had been stuffing a new crankshaft in one, or some other minor task!

On another occasion he asked if I’d like to make up a four at tennis luckily I had my kit with me as I had been playing at Winchester the previous day, so I was happy to agree, I

asked him where the tennis court was round there and he replied ‘here’. I couldn’t see one so asked him where it was, “through the kitchen garden”, he replied. I hadn’t seen a kitchen garden either, never mind a tennis court! It turned out to be through a gap in a hedge that I had thought marked the end of his his property. I was partner to a girl who was a friend of the family. Afterwards, having a drink (I always seem to be having a drink) she asked me how I had come to know Michael. “I keep one of my cars in his garage” I replied. “Oh” she said “Is your the Rolls or the Bentley?”

I had to reply that it was the Sprite parked between them, that punctured my ego a bit! Afterward I thought that at least she’d thought that I was the sort of chap that ought to own a Rolls or Bentley. I just hadn’t got round to it! (My typewriter hasn’t got an asterisk key – I seem to use them rather a lot. I wonder if I speak like that’.)

It was parked out there for about five years, but in May 1982 my brother decided to get married, so I moved out of the family house and bought a place of my own. I was sorry. In a way to cease my visits to the countryside, but I could bring my Sprite home and get down to some serious maintenance I’d only done the basic tasks while it had been away. Even though it had been stored the dreaded Demon Rust had got to it, and the brakes weren’t too clever either.

I hardly ever met another car I was roaming the countryside, so the brakes didn’t get much use.

Further ripping instalments follow next month.

**Reggie**

*Ed says: Thanks Reggie, linked the OCR to a Cray Super Computer, working 12 hour days for a week to de-code this latest missive. I wonder if the guys at BLETCHLEY PARK had it this tough, worth it? Of course! ☺*



# the budget-priced sports car that's got the lot

Small in size and cost, big in heart and spirit, the Mk IV Austin Healey Sprite puts the fun and excitement back into motoring. Here is everything the enthusiast-driver looks for in a car—surging twin-carb power, crisp control responses, superb roadholding, rally-trim styling, full instrumentation, powerful, fade-free braking...

From its dramatic Roadstyle road wheels to its quick-shifting, weatherproof hood, the Sprite is rich in sporting character.



Poised facets, with full instrumentation. Race 3-spoke steering wheel with unadorned leather-bound rim.

Easily reared/bumped, quick-throwing integral hood.

A sheet, woven-coated rear lower glass track. Massive struts in the front sports car tradition.



**Austin Healey Mk4 1970** Thanks to Ashley for these scans from his extensive collection of model brochures © Austin Healey 1970. PS: Model looks like Jane Bridges!



# Beads of Sweat

Colin Dimbylow's account of de seaming his frog bonnet has inspired me to tell you about my experiences in doing just the opposite – replacing two rusty seams as part of my first complete rebuild.

BCU 872 was a barn find within walking distance of our house. It was by chance that I heard about a partly restored frog for sale with boxes of bits. I had always told myself never to buy a load of boxes, but here I was parting with my dosh for a frog body perched on top of and surrounded by yank tanks. The package came with 3 and a bit engines, 2 gearboxes, two axles, 10 wheels (inc. a set of wires), discs and lots of ancient (but new) parts. All this proved to be a minor storage problem that I failed to explain fully to my wife until the last wheel barrow loaded with bits had been squirreled away.

That was 3 years ago and I may have another 2 years of toil/pleasure in front of me before I turn the key – so what's taken up my time? The steel bonnet had been the subject of frontal impact. Previous owners attempts had been made to beat and stitch up the metal with some success, but there was a lot of welding and lead loading to be done to pull it round. With no previous experience (but my other classic is a Morris Minor) I set about learning the art of welding and lead loading.

To recreate the correct compound curves and in particular the area in front of the lights I was fortunate to have access to a friend's frog which he first promised to restore 20 years ago – and has done nothing. Using cardboard templates, I was able to use lead to make good the beaten out areas of the bonnet. After moving from one headlight back to the other and taking critical measurements I was satisfied that this was as 'good as it was going to get'. My frog friend remarked that they were all slightly different and that I shouldn't worry too much about the odd ¼ inch!

The beading was rusting in several places but I had never wanted to detach the wings in order to replace the entire length of beading. I had it in mind to either 'make good' or consider 'sticking' a length of bead in a cleaned out channel. In the end I decided to 'surgically' remove the entire beading to check out the extent of the rusting. With pincers and a mini cutting disc (several) the beading was removed in 12 inch long sections, and to my surprise the underlying metal was quite sound.

I then set about cutting down new 'T' sections of beading with the aim of seating them in the prepared channel in a bed of chemical metal. In all, the tongue section



was cut down to around 5 mm. A good deal of time was spent moulding the T sections into the necessary curve. To do this I cut a series of 'Vs' into the remaining 5 mm that would finish up in the cleaned out channel. It proved possible to weld new bead sections into the lower curves of the wing below the indicators and to stitch the whole thing together.

Once satisfied that both sections of beading would sit into the channel and there would be sufficient space for the chemical metal without the bead 'sitting proud', I persuaded my wife to assist with 'operation big stick'. I was concerned that this had to work first time



– there was no easy second go. Armed with weights and clamps the procedure was far easier than I had expected. After 10 minutes the bead was secure and surplus material removed with an old chisel before it was too hard. Sealant was forced into any micro gaps between the bead and bonnet – perfect.

I now revisited the bonnet, conscious that the accident damage had produced slight but unfortunate undulations in the large expanse of bonnet. I decided that I could only rectify this with some plastic padding. The filler was cut back using a 3' long x 6" wide length of ply, onto which I adhered a course paper; this enabled me to sweep over the largest area of the bonnet. I am hoping that any remaining slight imperfections can be sorted out at the intended 2 pack stage.

The bonnet has been give Jennolite and a Finnigans primer to keep the rust out and I took 3 days to position the bonnet and achieve a reasonable shut line all round. The body is supported on a timber dolly and I have hand painted the underside (several times). I am now ready to re assemble the suspension and will be working to achieve a rolling chassis this year.

I am concerned that in removing the bonnet for spraying I will not be able to get it back to the same standard or will scratch the finished paint work. It has been suggested that I drop the engine in, secure the bonnet and have all panels sprayed in situ, but I am not all sure about this – any views please would be welcome.

**Viv Codd**

# The Phoenix Project

## Part Four

**H**aving got the bonnet finished (well apart from rubbing the whole thing down priming and painting it) I decided to turn my attention to the front bumper riser brackets, which I had previously removed when checking the condition of the front chassis extensions.

I originally planned to repair these brackets but after cleaning them down realised they were in a worse state than I at first thought and so decided to make new ones. The brackets are made up from three components a flat section with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch strip turned over at 90 degrees on two sides, a stiffening channel (that is spot welded to the flat panel to strengthen it) and piece of steel rod that is turned down at one end, threaded and has its other end welded into the top of the flat section. The threaded rods poke through the two holes in the front panel of the car below the grill and are used to mount the front bumper.

The shape of the sheet metal part of the brackets is that of a parallelogram or rectangle stood on one of its shorter sides and pushed over a little so two of its corner angles are about 120 degrees and the other two

about 60 degrees. The top 120-degree corner is actually a curve of about 2-inch radius and the top and back edges of the main component of the bracket is folded over at 90 degrees. The folded over portion includes the radiused section. To produce this new main section I transferred the shape of the best of the rusted brackets onto cardboard and then extended the shape on the top and back edges by the width of the folded over section and produced a template. I cut out two pieces of 18 gauge steel sheet to the template shape (I think the original brackets may have been 16 gauge which is slightly



thicker, and I would probably use this if I were doing the job again although my brackets finished up adequately strong) and then cut away the section that would extend round the curve when the edge was folded over. The reason for removing this section was that I thought otherwise it would buckle when folded over, so I decided to fold the two remaining straight sections over and then weld a strip in around the curve afterwards. I produced two of these components folding one over in one direction and the other as its mirror image (in the opposite direction) thus producing a left and right hand vision. Next I tried to produce a template for the stiffening channel section but found this quite difficult



and so resorted to the excellent advice in Mr Porter's restoration manual (the only thing he mentions about these brackets) and that is to make up a section of channel a little larger than needed and cut it to shape and the correct size afterwards.

Having made both the sheet metal sections I drilled ten 5mm holes (5 on either side of the stiffener channel) and plug welded the two pieces together. Note I think it is a good idea to paint a stripe down the middle of the flat plate and also to paint the inside of the channel before welding them together since access is difficult afterwards. I dressed the welds with an angle grinder and generally ground and filed the assembly up to make a neat job and remove the sharp edges. The bottom  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch of the raised channel section has to be sawn off to provide clearance for the chassis flange. Next I cut the threaded rod component from the old rusted bracket

(since once cleaned up and the old welds ground off, it would be fine for reuse and could be welded into the corresponding position on the new bracket. All that remained to do was to drill the securing bolt holes in the brackets (in the same position as in the originals) and clean up and paint the new brackets.

I made a couple of small modifications to my brackets since I suspected that the originals had probably rotted out due to moisture seeping between the two spot welded sections and that there was another potential rust trap in the corner of the bracket between the bracket and the threaded rod. My solution was to run a bead of weld along the exposed edges of the metal sandwich and then grind it down so it became invisible but in effect sealed the edges up. The gap behind the steel rod was sealed by welding up the open ends so as to prevent water ingress.

I noticed that on the Phoenix the securing holes in the ends of the original brackets were both the same distance from the bottom edge of the brackets although the bosses on the chassis they are bolted to are at different heights. The effect of this is to tilt the brackets forward so they are out of alignment with the bottom of the chassis rail when fitted to the Spridget. In my case the threaded rod section had protruded through the front valance panel too low and had resulted in the edges of the holes in the valance being bent over and deformed to accommodate the bracket. Now I believe the valance panel may well have been replaced at some stage and the holes for the bumper bracket may not have been accurate in the new panel but that still did not account for the misalignment with the chassis flange. The brackets are only there to adapt (or bodge) the original frog-eye design chassis to suit the latter design front end and it is just possible the difference in the chassis boss heights was overlooked when the riser brackets were designed. I raised the height of the rear mounting hole by about 4mm and this brought the bracket into perfect alignment with the chassis flange and put the bumper securing threaded rods in the centre of the valance holes.

**Dave Dixon**



Press release for immediate publication

# First International Historic Motorsport Show is a Sell-Out with Exhibitors

All but a handful of the 375 exhibition stands at International Historic Motorsport, the three-day winter show which makes its debut at Stoneleigh Park on 20-22 February 2004, have been sold.

The news was welcomed by show organisers Heritage Motorsport Services Ltd. A spokesman said: "We literally have hardly any space left. I'm delighted, not only for everyone who has worked so hard to develop the show, but for the whole historic motorsport movement. This is a British success story which has until now been largely hidden from public view."

Heritage Motorsport Services have identified over 3,000 individual companies involved in this industry, together with at least 50 historic motorsport series and event organisers; many of these have never exhibited before.

We intend to put that right at Stoneleigh Park in February. The major players in the business will be there: historic and classic event organisers, competition motor clubs, car preparation companies, plus historic motorsport engineering and technical equipment suppliers.

For the first time ever, they will all be together under one roof, where they can meet and do business with each other and, of course, discuss their plans with historic motorsport competitors, fans and the media. Additionally, newcomers to the sport will find everything they need to get started at Stoneleigh Park.

With historic rallying continuing to grow in terms of both events and support industries, the Show highlights this trend with nine blocks of stands devoted entirely to classic road and historic stage rallying, along with famous ex-works cars and drivers, including Paddy Hopkirk, Pentti Airikkala, Russell Brookes and Rosemary Smith.

The Show also features a 50-car Live Rally Stage in Stoneleigh Park with celebrity drivers (Saturday and Sunday only), a charity dinner where the International Historic Motorsport Awards will be presented (Saturday evening), a sale by H&H Classic Auctions of important memorabilia, cars and motorcycles (Saturday), a series of Historic Motorsport Business Briefings, plus a separate hall where competition cars from individuals and specialist dealers are actually on sale to visitors.

**HRH Prince Michael of Kent** will visit the Show and attend The Charity Awards Dinner. The Show will be officially opened on Friday morning by **Max Mosley**, President of the FIA, and **Tom Wheatcroft**, representing the historic motorsport industry. The weekend Visitor Days will be opened on Saturday morning by **Sir Stirling Moss**.

Ticket sales are now open. Admission for Trade and Competitor Day on Friday 20 February is fixed at £20 per person (no discounts). For Saturday 21 February and Sunday 22 February, tickets are £15 (£25 for two days). Advance tickets are cheaper than tickets bought on the day and extra discounts are available for motor clubs and groups. Details from the Ticket Hotline:

**0870 906 2002**

Tickets for the Historic Motorsport Charity Awards Dinner on Saturday evening (£60 each or £540 for a table of ten) should be ordered from Tracy Li at The Motorsports Industry Association by telephone (0247 669 2600), email ([tracy.li@the-mia.com](mailto:tracy.li@the-mia.com)) or online ([www.the-mia.com](http://www.the-mia.com)).

**For further information, please contact:**

Heritage Motorsport Services Limited

Tel: 01367 250001 or 250006

Fax: 01367 250008

Email: [info@heritage-motorsport.com](mailto:info@heritage-motorsport.com)

Website: [www.heritage-motorsport.com](http://www.heritage-motorsport.com)



## Mystery Car



Ed asks: What is this? Letters or e-mails please. Car recently sold on e-bay for £1800! Original photo supplied by [dani.latuskie@agencyfish.com](mailto:dani.latuskie@agencyfish.com)

## Dogs in Cars – a Series?



Ed says: Nice picture of Carson's dog (last month's cover), now we know who is doing the writing for him! Just in case we are doing "Dogs in cars" Bill Mohan, Sth. Staffs attached a shot of Rory getting into "his" little car. Bill says he needs convincing that this car is for Bill to drive, always gets into my seat first... Any other dogs in cars?... or cats, sheep, gerbils what have you? Ed says: Thank to both Carson and Bill for the material and the idea. Apologies to Bill for plagiarising his last report to construct this feature.



# Differential bearing replacement

The bearings in my diff have been getting steadily louder for some time now, so I took the opportunity this festive period to sort it out. I tried to find a maintenance procedure before I started, but unfortunately all my manuals just gloss over the diff, also my Internet searches proved fruitless. So this is how I did it:

With the diff off the car, check the crown and pinion for wear, backlash or broken teeth etc... if it all looks serviceable then disassemble in the following way:

Undo the large nut at the diff nose, this will be tight! Pull the prop shaft adaptor off the pinion spline and remove the oil seal and thrower. Undo and remove the crown bearing caps, I marked mine LH and RH, remove the crown wheel assembly. Using a bearing puller pull the bearings off the crown assy, I had to use two, with the last one ground down to fit into the recess behind the bearing inner collar and the crown wheel. There are shims behind the bearings, so I removed and replaced each individual bearing to avoid any mix-ups.

I then took full advantage of an inductive bearing heater we had on site, this heats the bearings up to a predetermined temperature before fitting. I set the machine for 85 degrees centigrade (there is a chart for bearing type/temp). Once hot, the bearings easily slip onto the shaft and are left to cool before moving onto the next.

Now back to the diff housing, drive the pinion shaft out of the diff housing, the small Timken bearing should easily come off the shaft. This will leave 2 outer races in the housing, which can be drifted out using a flat chisels. The new outer races are easier to fit when cold, so I froze mine to minus 20 over night before fitting. To remove the larger Timken bearing from the pinion shaft I had to grind down another puller as there is little clearance between the bearing and shaft cog. The larger Timken bearing can now be fitted to the pinion shaft.

Next assemble the diff pinion and crown, I torqued the crown caps down to 35 lbs/ft as a guess. Now fit the smaller Timken bearing to the pinion shaft, this will set the preload on the crown to pinion interface. As I had no information available for this process, I fitted

the bearing hot on to the shaft then using some large washers as packing slowly tightened the large nut onto the pinion shaft. This allowed me to still rotate the pinion, when there seemed to be no play I simply left the bearing to cool.

Lastly fit the oil seal and prop shaft adaptor, and torque the large nut up as per the manual specification.

**Brad**



Bearing heater at 36°

# Bermuda Hardtop

*Ed says: Remember Jenny and David's bargain basement Bermuda Hardtop (April 2003). Well look at it now, freshly restored and looking brand new. An inspiration to us all. Another piece of history saved.*



# Letters

## Sprite Trip planned

I haven't sent anything into the magazine before so I thought I'd take the opportunity to write in and tell you about my little Frogeye (LVS 986) and the trip that my wife (Sarah) and I plan to take in it later this year.

I've owned the Sprite for over 10 years now and when I bought it back in the early 90's it had been imported from the US and although fairly sound (well, the bonnet was!) it needed a lot of work to get it up to scratch. So I started my first classic restoration project.



After 10 years of not enough use as it should have had the sprite was due for another bit of TLC. Although the bodywork was still very good the mechanics needed an overhaul so I took the opportunity to liven things up a bit by fitting an uprated 1275 lump and renewing the brakes and suspension, a donor MKIV sprite supplying the engine and brakes etc.

All this work was really spurred on by the fact that Sarah and I had decided to up sticks and move to Turkey in April of this year and we wanted to take about 4 months to drive through Europe to get there and we wanted to go in the Sprite, even though we've got suitcases bigger than our little car!!

Anyway, we've set up a website ([www.medhop2004.com](http://www.medhop2004.com)) which goes into more detail about our trip and also has a page dedicated to the little Frogeye. We hope to raise some money for the Motor Neurone Disease Association charity along the way as well so all donations gratefully received!

If anyone's got any ideas or suggestions about what to take on our travels or mods to make to the car, they'll all be gratefully received. I've made some mods to the car already, apart from the engine and brakes I've fitted a fire extinguisher and made a carbon fibre boot lock to secure our luggage a bit better, I've attached some photos which show this... maybe one for Bodgers Corner? *Ed says: Done! See photos*



Hope some of this is of interest, if you need anymore info or pics etc let me know and I can send em in.

**Keith and Sarah Dicker**

*Ed says: Nice trip, good cause, neat bodge (see photos). Good luck.*





## Carburettor Heatshield from Ashley Hinton

This NEW Carburettor Heatshield fits the MG Midget's and Triumph Spitfire 1500cc from 1974 to 1979 for cars. Just made this week, Made in stainless steel I have put this new part on ebay.

**Ashley Hinton**

*Ed says: The club's resident professional strikes again. How lucky are we!*

## Invitation by Scottish Area

Up until now, membership expansion in our Scottish Area has been, shall we say, slow. So it seemed a good idea to write to the present membership in Scotland for support. However, when I get a bad feeling about something, I put on my Harry Potter wizard's hat and go sit in a corner. Just as well I did. Editor Mike said this is always a NO! NO! [Data Protection]. So, instead of getting an illegal letter, regard this as a legal version of such. The essence is, how about coming to some of our runs guys? We are going North, South, East and West to Ireland. Are you up for any of that? If you doubt your car's ability, remember FDR : 'All we have to fear, is fear itself'; and if Hulot handled getting to Germany, yet I have to call out the AA Homestart to change a flat tyre on the old Citroen, just think of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's head on approach to life.

When and if you can join us, please do. That's why we are here and what it's about.

### **Carson and chums**

*Ps. Are there any members in Ulster we could contact for a bit of help with interesting route planning, please?*

## WSM Re-visited

Attached pix are a 'then and now' scenario – 'WSMGT203' pictures the WSM Sprite GT203 just after export to the USA in 1963. The second pic was received a few days ago from the current Japanese owner, Mr Yahagi. The car was sold by Hayes Harris in the USA a few years ago, in low mileage and original condition, to Ecosse Cars in Tokyo. Mr Yahagi then bought the car recently from Ecosse Cars, and finds the WSM very competitive in historic racing. He is looking forward to travelling to the UK and meeting my father, such is his interest in the WSM marque.

**Tony**  
**tonyws@robinsons-fruit.com**

*Ed says: Thanks Tony, please keep us up to date on these sporty Sprites.*



## Self Help Group Required

If you remember we did a few pages on my 74 RWA rebuild last year.

I know Terry Horler is the club guru on specific Spridget queries. Do you not think it would be useful to have a couple of items in each Mascot regarding where things would have been originally fitted etc.

I have trawled through Terry's book and I have seen nothing relating to a Luggage Compartment Light. I have purchased myself the said item from an Autojumble, but I do not know exactly where to fit it (apart from in the boot!). Now, it gets even more confusing when I look in the fabled Haynes manual, as it appears that it should have a switch itself.

Another : On the b-post of the Midget, on the interior of the car, mine is bare paint and I seem to remember the original shell having the same sort of material as the dashboard capping. Any idea where this can be purchased from and if it is actually the same material and pattern?

I have a couple of other questions, but this one is top of my list!

**Carl Warner**

**[carl.warner@trinova.co.uk](mailto:carl.warner@trinova.co.uk)**

*Ed says: This is the grass roots stuff guys and girls. Carl needs help with stuff that's new to him BUT somebody in the club has been there already, YES? So lets help, e-mail Carl (copy me) or write to me and I'll publish. Could be a 'letters' regular?*

## Reborn Frog

I enclose frog shots to update the progress of our re-born to be frog. In issue No 235 (July 2003, Ed), we asked if anyone knew anything about the cars history, did anyone contact the club? Anyway our frog did not reach the road for September 2003 and went into hibernation for the winter. The frog will be finished this year and will be seen on the road. Progress so far: Frog fully striped to a shell, Nitromors/bead blasted completely, some welding and filling done (lead loading) total shell etched primed, shell underside stone chipped, full 2 pack paint job (Iris blue the original colour), rebuilt steering/discs /springs etc powder coated and now fitted to the shell. New brake /clutch/fuel line pipework in progress of being fitted, chromework back from re-chroming/polishing. the original engine is being rebuilt, rebored/new shells etc etc. The frog should be on the road for mid spring personally we cant wait. I think the car will be stunning. The frog as you can see is coming out of the spray booth to continue having its bits put back on. Anyway that's all for now folks.

**Dave and Ann**

**[bridge1@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:bridge1@tiscali.co.uk)**

*Ed says: Did anyone contact the club? Sorry no, If they had you would have been the first to know. Thanks for the update, keep them coming. Meanwhile: Does anybody in the club know this car? Please contact Dave direct.*



## More “Snakes and Ladders” or How to Get a South African Car Registration



To get a permit you have to write to Pretoria, Department of Imports and Permits, who are very obliging and helpful. On the 18th December I phoned. Yes Sir, we received your letter of the 28th November and we posted your replacement import permit for the Sprite on the 12th December 2003.

On the 8th January the permit had not arrived, and I phoned Pretoria again, five times to get through, and was dealt with most helpfully. Sir, we cannot reissue the permit again, you

will have to write in and say in an affidavit that you have not received it, and you will return the same if it eventually arrives.

So, here goes, we are back again where we were at the end of November 2003, and I keep my fingers crossed for the next issue, hopefully correct in all its details.

Meanwhile, I am using the car with UK plates insured through the Veteran Car Club, and the story of my S.A. driving licence could be another story .... my original was issued in 1955 with a school boy photograph.

John Bentall

*Ed says: See last month's Mascot. Thanks for the update John, nice photo, nice climate for 'our' cars. Mmmm..*

## How to kill an LCB in a year

I'm running a Longman / Dellorto set up on my car, in an effort to keep engine bay temperatures down (no heatshield you see) I fitted some aftermarket 2 inch exhaust wrap to the janspeed exhaust manifold with stainless tie wraps.

It looked lovely and certainly did keep things a bit cooler, however, a year on and the exhaust started blowing, initial investigations lead to the exhaust / manifold connection, this turned out to be ok. Further surgery followed, this involved removing the LCB, only then did I find the problem. The exhaust wrap had been holding moisture in and the centre part of the LCB had simply rusted out, the wrap had actually been holding the manifold together!

An expensive mistake and one I shall not make again.

**Brad**

*Ed says: Thanks Brad. Is this a one off or have other members wrecked a manifold this way? Comments please.*



## Mexican Frogs

I was wondering what has happened to this project? The Sprite was built in Mexico from '59 to '61 by willys Jeep Overland from kit from UK. I own one of these robin egg blue Sprites. This car is dear to the heart of many. Please send me any info that exists.

**Jorge Santillan Laris**

**Mexico, bazardetodo@prodigy.net.mx**

*Ed says: Who IS this guy? Did BMC really send knock down kits to Mexico? Terry, where are you when I need you ☺ Come on Info please!*

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## COMPUTERS AND CARS

At a recent computer expo (COMDEX), Bill Gates reportedly compared the computer industry with the auto industry and stated : "If GM had kept up with technology like the computer industry has, we would all be driving \$25-00 cars that got 1 000 miles to the gallon."

In response to Bill's comments, General Motors issued a press release stating : "If GM had developed technology like Microsoft, we would all be driving cars with the following characteristics:

1. for no reason whatsoever, your car would crash twice a day.
2. Every time they repainted the lines in the road, you would have to buy a new car.
3. Occasionally your car would die on the freeway for no reason. You will have to pull over to the side of the road, close all the windows, shut off the car, restart it, and reopen the windows before you would continue. For some reason you would simply accept it.
4. Occasionally, executing a manoeuvre such as a left turn would cause your car to shut down and refuse to restart, in which case you would have to reinstall the engine.
5. Macintosh would make a car that was powered by the sun, was reliable, five times as fast and twice as easy to drive – but would run on only five percent of the roads.
6. The oil, water temperature, and alternator warning lights would all be replaced by a single "This Car Has Performed An Illegal Operation" warning light.
7. The airbag system would ask "Are you sure?" before deploying.
8. Occasionally, for no reason whatsoever, you car would lock you out and refuse to let you in until you simultaneously lifted the door handle, turned the key and grabbed hold of the radio antenna.
9. Every time a new car was introduced car buyers would have to learn how to drive all over again because none of the controls would operate in the same manner as the old car.
10. You would have to press the "Start" button to turn the engine off."

*Ed says: Old but true and as we get more chips in our new cars the worse they get!*



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No, I won't sell the bonnet separately	650.00
Body shell (several new panels) for rebuild – if you can weld – and identification (1958) retrievable	250.00
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**George 01457 864536 (Derbyshire)**

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**Allan 01827 286632 (Staffs)**

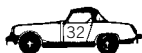
**1973 RWA Midget**, Teal blue, biscuit leather, restored 2000, 165 Energy tyres. Fast road 82 BHP 1275 engine, original 1973 hardtop. 8000 miles since full restoration, always garaged, too much to list. £6500 o.n.o. New 1275 water pump £10. 4.55:1 diff £75. – great for hill climbs.

**Anthony 01763 260238 or 07944 225454 (Herts)**

## WANTS

**1972 RWA Midget**, has anybody any idea where I might purchase outer rear arches for my car. I also need Grill, lights, radiator, bonnet, distributor, dashboard, seats, seat belts, rear shocks, petrol tank, roll bar, rear lights.

**Barry 01395 270979 (Devon)**



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