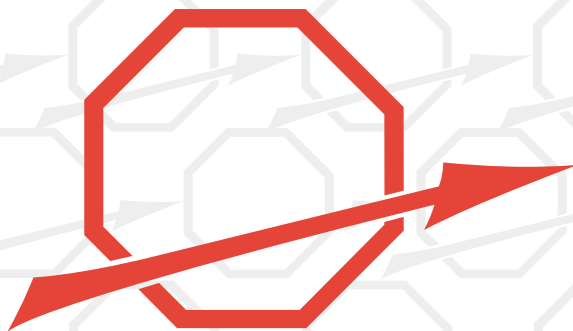


MASCOT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MIDGET AND SPRITE CLUB



*Peter Jackson's "Gladys", sporting her shiny new Midget and Sprite brooch
(see letters: Ed)*

ISSUE NO. 258

AUGUST 2005

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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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

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Editorial, Ed says

7th July 2005

I know I speak for all of you in sending our deepest sympathy and condolences to the victims and families of those unfortunate enough to have found themselves in the midst of that bloody mess on Thursday the 7th of July. Our heart felt thanks also goes out to the men and women of the emergency services who did such a selfless job in very difficult circumstances.

As far as I can tell no Club members were involved. Gary Lazarus, as Central London Area rep has additional comments. Sad sad day, pause, remember and move on (otherwise they've won! Ed).

Talking of nothing related, did you see the Club grill badge modelled so expertly by Peter Jackson's "Gladys" on the front cover on the way here (to the editorial!) No? Well have a look now and then contact Mike Grout, our new Regalia officer; I'm sure he'd love to hear from you. OK Mike, that's the free 'new boy' plug, over to you...

Whilst on the subject of plugs, here's one for 'Market Place'. David and Jenny Smith are doing an excellent job of running this free market economy. However, it appears that we (the membership) aren't! In the last year the average number, size and item count has fallen consistently, so what's wrong with it? Format, layout, font or content? I can't believe that within the whole membership we have **nobody who has something to sell in the garage, needs something for the restoration project or simply to keep the 'daily runner' running...** I know you have garages as I've seen the photos, so come on place an advert and convert that stock to cash, don't let e-bay get all the credit!

What else? Well since I last talked to you I've been to Scandinavia and back via Germany, exhibiting our crew at a Classic Car/MG show in Malmo Sweden. However my absence cost me dear as I missed the Surrey area natter at the Blue Ball, the annual Surrey BBQ and the Ace Café meeting at the height of this short season. Ever get the idea that sometimes you'd be better off just staying at home? MMMmmm...

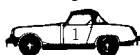
Regards to all

Mike 'Ed' North
Editor at large



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.

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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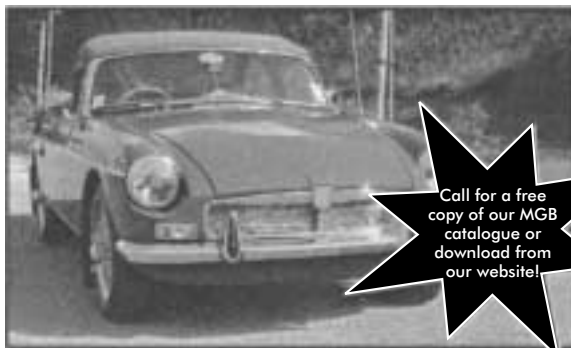
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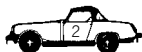
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Club Nights

- 1st Monday **NEW! London Area** (Congestion Zone) – Meet at **The Mulberry Bush** Pub, Southwark (200 metres or so East of the London Eye) 7:30pm. Also generally meet at the Ace Café on 2nd Tuesday together with the Classic Cars Magazine night. Details: Gary Lazarus on 020 7700 5696 garylazarus@blueyonder.co.uk
- 1st Wednesday **Wiltshire** – Meet at **The Forresters**, Leigh, near Cricklade. NOTE CHANGE OF NIGHT
- 1st Wednesday **South Staffs and Birmingham** – Meet at the The Green Man, Middleton Village, 8.30-8.45pm
- 1st Thursday **Lincolnshire Area** – Meet at **The White Hart**, Lissington, nr. Wragby. 8pm. Contact Brian Sumner on 01507 328128 brains@redimps.com
- 1st Thursday **Notts/Derby border Area** (note change of day) at the **Sitwell Arms** near Horsley Woodhouse from approx. 8.30. Just a mile north-west of the A608/A609 crossroads. Ian Cooke 0115 938 3838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk
- 1st Thursday **Yorkshire Area** –Thursday 4th August – **Cross Keys**, Hillam, Monk Fryston, LS25 5HE. Meetings from 7.30 pm onwards, food available. Details, call Anita on 01423 862738 or 07720 725429 email: spridget.girl@ntlworld.com
- 2nd Tuesday **Surrey** – Meet at **The Blue Ball**, Walton-on-the-Hill, 7.45pm. Details: David Wright, Tel: 0208 642 4789 or email: dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk
- 2nd Wednesday **Warwickshire** – Meet at **The Green Dragon**, The Green, Sambourne, Reddich, B96 6NU, at 8.30pm as usual.
- 2nd Wednesday **North West Area** meet at **The Kiltan**, turn off M6 at Jct 20 onto A50 towards Macclesfield. Pub 4 miles on left. Please note new venue.
- 2nd Wednesday **NEW! Bristol Area** will meet at **The Star**, Pucklechurch at 8pm. All Bristol, Bath and surrounding areas members welcome. Contact John Ruderman 0117 9678351, email: johnruderman@blueyonder.co.uk
- 2nd Thursday **Cambridgeshire** – Meet at **The Mad Cat** pub in Pidley Village, midway between Huntingdon and Chatteris, 8pm
- 3rd Monday **Dorset** – Meet at **St. Peter's Finger**, Lytchett Minster, Poole 7.30pm
- 3rd Tuesday **Central Scotland** Meet at **The Garfield Hotel**, Stepps, East Dunbartonshire. 7:30pm in the Lounge. Check first with Carson on 0141-245-6327 day or 013606-22334 evening.
- 3rd Thursday **NEW! Northern Ireland** – Venue to be decided. Please contact Barry Stanage on 02890 401726 or mobile 07769 705497 or email barrystanage@aol.com
- 4th Thursday **Hampshire** – Meet at **The Poacher**, South Warnborough. Note Change of Venue. Please ring Terry or Harriet Langridge on 01252 626063 for details.
- Last Thursday **Somerset** – Meet at **The Lord Nelson**, Norton-sub-Hamdon. 8.00pm

Club Website

Members Only pages for August

User name: bodgers Password: corner



Events

From David Hill and Webmaster Chris Nevard

Events organised so far for 2005

August

- Sunday 7th Dorset Area are joining the MGOC Picnic at Athelhampton House. Nigel's big fund raiser for Dorset Scope. Having the date this early, there is no excuse for not attending! Details from Ian Swinden Tel. 01202 623002 or email: Eswinden@aol.com. See www.1020mg.org.uk
- Sunday 7th NW Area are going to the Ripley Castle Classic Car Show, Harrogate. Details from Les or Diane Robinson, Tel. 01772 432138 or email: lesrobinson@blueyonder.co.uk
- Sunday 7th Cambridgeshire Area are attending the BMC Rally and spares day with MASC Stand and parking area at Ferry Meadows near Peterborough. Advance tickets available or pay on the day from 10am, contact Dave Dixon for details (01733 222810)
- Sunday 14th Surrey Area are attending the Annual Furzewood Auto Jumble and Frolic. Chez Jacqui and Chris Harding. Details: David or Chris, 0208 42 4789 or email: dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk
- Sunday 14th The Pendine Dash. Organised by the Pembrokeshire MG Car Club, this event starts at the end of the M4 and ends at the Museum of Speed, Pendine via some wonderful scenery. Entries by July 15th via www.pembsmg.co.uk or from Neil Thomas, The Hollies, Gumfreston, Tenby, Pems. SA70 8RA. SAE please with all enquiries.
- Friday 19th to Sunday 21st Dorset Area are attending the Purbeck Rally and Auto Jumble near Wareham. Details from Ian Swinden Tel. 01202 623002 or email: Eswinden@aol.com
- Sunday 21st Surrey Area Cliveden Run. Details: dsouthcott@ukonline.co.uk
- Wednesday 24th Ace Café, London. MG and Rover Day. Meet from 12:00. Details from Ace Café, www.ace-cafe-london.com
- Saturday 27th to Monday 29th Hampshire Pageant of Motoring at Broadlands, near Romsey. Dorset Area will be there with the Club stand. Details from Ian Swinden Tel. 01202 623002 or email: Eswinden@aol.com
- Sunday 28th Cambridgeshire Area are attending the Little Gransden flying day. Great event with a combined classic cars and aircraft ticket, only limited numbers so contact Dave Dixon for details (01733 222810)

September

- Saturday 3rd NW Area are joining with the MG Club for their West Lancs Club Run. Details from Les or Diane Robinson, Tel. 01772 432138 or email: lesrobinson@blueyonder.co.uk
- Sunday 11th Warwickshire Area's "Shelsley Walsh". Organiser: Stuart Watson, 01562 883076
- Sunday 11th NW Area are going to the Hoghton Tower Classic Car Show. Details from Les or Diane Robinson, Tel. 01772 432138 or email: lesrobinson@blueyonder.co.uk



- Sunday 18th The Club have been invited to The Annual Vintage and Classic Show at Turweston Airfield. This is an informal day giving each owner a chance to look at the other vehicles present and for a good natter about things mechanical! Event covers cars, bikes, tractors, military vehicles, commercial vehicles and aircraft. Parade of vehicles at 13:00. Gates open at 09:30. Turweston is near 3 miles east of Brackley, off the A43.
- Friday 16th and Saturday 17th Warwickshire Area are going to the "Goodwood Revival" meeting. Organiser: Chris Yates, 01608 665066
- Wednesday 21st Dorset Area are visiting The Ringwood Brewery. Tour includes "Unlimited Tasting!", a Ploughman's Supper and Souvenir all for £9.50. Tour starts 6:30pm. Book with Vi Morris, morris@vic-col.freeserve.co.uk
- Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th NW Area Weekend Run to Hadrian's Wall. Details from Les or Diane Robinson, Tel. 01772 432138 or email: lesrobinson@blueyonder.co.uk

October

- Saturday 8th Dorset Area Barn Dance with 3CCVCC. Details to follow.

December

- Sunday 4th NW Area are joining the MG Club for their Christmas Cracker Run. Details from Les or Diane Robinson, Tel. 01772 432138 or email: lesrobinson@blueyonder.co.uk
- Sunday 11th NW Area Christmas Dinner. Details from Les or Diane Robinson, Tel. 01772 432138 or email: lesrobinson@blueyonder.co.uk
- Tuesday 13th Surrey Area Christmas Dinner. Details: David or Chris, 0208 42 4789 or email: dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk
- Wednesday 14th Warwickshire Area's Christmas Dinner. Organiser: Chris Yates, 01608 665066

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

Until this week it was really summer. Tops down motoring in the best tradition. Oh dear, it couldn't go on, could it?

With reference to last month's plea for new MAD members in Cornwall, Shropshire, North and Mid Wales, Westmorland and Nottinghamshire, we haven't had any offers to join the scheme from members in these areas. Come on, don't be shy! It is not a very onerous task, the chances are that you will never be asked for help. Even if you are, it's good to help a fellow member! So let's fill in the gaps!

Contact me at david@hillnet.clara.net or phone me on 01239 811423.

If you don't carry your copy of the Mutual Assistance Directory and you would like a copy you can download it from the members only section of our website. However, 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. Please remember that it is constantly updated so to be up to date, download it at least every month.

David Hill





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Webmonster

Auto site of the month

Latest in the 2005 series of featured sites that help members link to the world of motorcars, motorsport and motor enjoyment! This month is...



www.rivergate.5speed.com

Hot on the heels of the excellent 5x5 article elsewhere in this issue is the Riverside 5 speed conversion site. Midgets, Sprites and MGB's are catered for on this site PLUS loads of other good kit, from roll cages to camera mounts. The Surrey area have three conversions under their belts, so look for running reports soon plus tech support from Alan!! Nice: **Ed**

Mystery Car(s) Competition

Carson sent this photo. Three cars for you to identify. Answers on inside rear cover. *Ed says: If you have a strange/rare car in photo, send it in.*



Your Club Needs You – Now

August it may be, but we now need to consider our annual election of committee to take the Club on from October 2005. This is your opportunity to stand still as everyone else takes one pace back and enter your name for election onto the committee.

The Club constitution decrees we require a minimum of six and a maximum of eleven committee members, the designated positions are as listed on the front inner cover of *Mascot*. If you would like to know more about being a committee member, please contact Terry Horler who will be only too pleased to tell you all about it. Should you like to take the plunge, likewise contact Terry who will send you the official nomination form. We really needed to have had the nominations in by the end of July so please don't delay in

responding to this special offer which will not be repeated until this time next year.

Being a committee member is not an arduous task, mainly because I don't know what arduous means (it's just a word that seems to sound right about here). The job has its benefits, like the members throwing food at you at the AGM (sometimes its edible), and you get to know what's going on in the Club shortly before it hits the fan.

Just to let you into a little secret, our chairperson, John Ruderman, will not be seeking re-election and the remaining five committee members have yet to make their declarations. There will be no shortage of space around MASC table, it could be yours for the volunteering of. And quite a nice table it is too!

Terry Horler for the committee

Blooper's Corner

At first sight, the mistake described last month by Alan Lo in his inaugural article for this new feature corner is dwarfed by an editorial blooper which assigned authorship of that article to 'John Lo'! My initial knee-jerk reaction to this was to ask editor Mike North to write the second blooper article, telling us precisely how this happened. Upon reflection I have decided not to do this, partly because it is never a good idea to antagonise editors (god-like creatures who should be wooed at all costs) and mainly because 'John Lo' is, of course, a master-stroke of editing: when confessing bloopers, the adoption of a pseudonym is an excellent tactical move and I shall adopt one myself for this story ... *Ed says: Phew! Think I got away with that one ...*

When I primed the oil pump and attempted to start the engine of my GAN2 midget for the first time in more than twenty five years, everything seemed fine at first: after a few coughs it sprang to life and ran well although the 80psi oil pressure indicated on the original gauge did seem a bit high. It continued to run well during extensive road

tests but with one really annoying feature: once the engine had attained its proper operating temperature, the oil pressure on the gauge was low (25-30psi at 30mph in top gear, 2-10psi at idle).

Low oil pressure on A-series engines can be due to a faulty oil pressure relief valve: a simple device built into the right-hand side of the engine at the rear, just below the oil pressure unit take-off point. One end of the relief valve spring rests in a domed hexagonal nut, the other end rests in a metal cup which bears against a machining in the block. When the oil pressure exceeds approximately 60 lb/sq in. the cup is forced off its seat and oil bypasses it, returning directly via a drilling to the sump. Because this valve is inexpensive and relatively easy to access (and because I couldn't think of anything else to try), I decided to replace it to see if this would improve matters. In making this attempt I ignored the fact that a weak oil pressure relief spring cannot easily explain a high 80psi oil pressure on start-up: this was my first blooper but the blooper that followed was much more spectacular ...



Replacing this valve seemed to be an easy task although I worried about my ability to retrieve the metal cup valve from the bottom of its hole (I had never fussed with this valve before). The workshop manual recommends using special tool 18G-69 which has a fancy screw-driven rubber plunger that can be inserted into the cup and expanded to grab it. Lacking this service tool, my imagination ran away with me and I managed to convince myself that the little cup must be hard to remove. In a flash of rare brilliance, I purchased one of those little magnet gadgets on a flexible rod, hoping that I would be able to extract the cup with that. In the end, this purchase proved to be money extremely well spent, but not in the way that I had planned!

When I opened the bonnet and examined the valve I realised that I had another problem: the instructions in the workshop manual obviously assume that the engine is on the bench. With everything in situ it is impossible to get either a socket or a spanner onto the hexagonal domed nut (not one of my sockets or spanners anyway!). Undeterred by this, I decided to release the starter motor and move it forward a few inches, sufficient to allow me to get a socket onto the nut. So far, so good: my socket turned the nut easily and it was pushed out smoothly by the spring in an act of mechanical anti-climax. Then, just as I withdrew the nut and spring with a feeling of profound triumph, disaster struck! To my utmost surprise, the cup valve – which I firmly believed was stuck in the block – came out dangling from the bottom of the spring! My relief at the unexpected sight of this cup was momentary however, for the thing promptly fell off and clattered away, somewhere below.

I was not worried at first because I am used to things dropping down and I sweep the floor regularly to enable bits to be located easily: I hadn't actually seen the thing drop but I knew from the clatter that it didn't fall far and that it didn't roll much. I became more worried when the usual search and sweep failed to produce anything except a bit of dust, a couple of small spring washers and a dead beetle. I became distracted when a more exhaustive sweep of the whole garage and a minute examination of the engine compartment with a torch both failed to

produce the missing bit. Finally, applying Holmesian logic (when you have eliminated the probable, whatever remains however improbable must be the truth) I began to consider the awful possibility that the cup had dropped down into the bell housing, through the little gap left by the loose starter motor. The more I thought about it, the more I began to believe that this is what had happened – but how to be sure? Looking back, the worst part was the uncertainty of it all – if the cup was in the bell housing, it seemed that the engine would have to come out to retrieve it and it would be nice to know positively before grabbing the engine hoist! Later than many of you (but earlier than some, I hope) I remembered my brand new magnet gadget, purchased the day before. I unwrapped it, poked it into the bell housing and – miraculously – up came the cup valve on the second attempt! Even now, I am unable to estimate how lucky I was and I am reluctant to try it again in case I fail! I have resolved to try the experiment next time I have an engine/gearbox combination on the bench ...

Once installed, the new spring and cup valve did improve matters slightly – but not nearly enough. It was my friend Niek Herwegh in the Netherlands (another GAN2 Midget owner) who properly diagnosed the problem for me. When I explained the symptoms to him, he pointed out immediately that with modern multigrade oils, the range of observed oil pressure should be much less than 5-80psi and that the problem was almost certainly a faulty gauge! The bourdon tube inside the Smiths oil pressure gauge fitted to all Spridgets works on the same principle as that of the snakelike, paper party whistle at a child's birthday party which straightens when you blow into it: it is notoriously inaccurate even when new and a weakened tube inside a geriatric forty two-year-old gauge can give high readings towards the top of the scale and low readings towards the bottom because the movement of the tube is not linearly related to the pressure it is attempting to measure. My car now possesses a newly reconditioned gauge and my oil pressure readings are now socially acceptable (60psi at startup, 50psi at 30mph in top gear, 20psi at idle). Thanks Niek!

Alan Davies
(Email: jed2@cus.cam.ac.uk)



Cambridgeshire Report



This was a really busy month for us with a 17-day Sprite adventure in France and two local weekend MASC events. Firstly I will bore you with the trip to France stuff (since I missed the pub night, being away). We set off on the Friday afternoon for the three hundred mile trip down to Plymouth in the heavily laden Sprite. We have made numerous similar continental trips in the Sprite over the years and have packing off to a fine art (it's amazing what the little nooks and crannies will swallow up as long as you are prepared to slot individual items in to small spaces one at a time and watch out for the waxoil) and the Sprite has generally been very well behaved. This time we were doing quite well with 160 miles under our belts when just after a junction on the very busy A303 halfway up a hill we felt that sickening sensation of loosing power, by some miracle there was a small patch of overgrown tarmac on the otherwise inhospitable grass verge so we just managed to get off the road before she cut out.

I looked at all the usual suspects but all seemed OK until I pulled the fuel pipe off the carburettors and found it dry as a bone. I jacked the back end up crawled under and thumped the fuel pump which resulted in a shower of petrol all over my hand. I could not locate the leak and since the pump wasn't ticking (not to mention the big black cloud which appeared overhead) we decided this was not going to be a roadside repair so we phoned our recovery service (which came with the car insurance), although with the

incredible traffic noise and poor reception this was no easy task. Having been told help was on the way I walked the short distance to Stonehenge visitors centre to get cleaned up; yes we had managed to break down directly opposite Stonehenge. When I got back to the Sprite the heavens opened so we suffered the added indignity of having to put the hood up while we waited for the recovery vehicle. The recovery vehicle made good time from Salisbury, the driver told us this was a special vehicle for recovering sports cars with low ground clearance. I watched in amazement as the flat bed slithered off the vehicle and lay in the road leaving almost no step for the Sprite to be winched over and everything controlled by a TV remote control. The Sprite was soon secured on the back and we were comfortable and dry in the crew cab, now having never been recovered before I expected we were off to the nearest garage however it seems the drill is to take you either home or to your destination. I told the driver we were going to southern Brittany but he laughed so we settled for the 140-mile trip to Plymouth.

If you remember I did include a slightly embarrassing picture of one of our troglodyte friends being recovered from Stondon last month so maybe all this is poetic justice. We managed to get the fuel pump replaced on Saturday morning at a great little back street garage (the guys loved working on the Sprite) near my daughter's house, and the ferry company put us on the Saturday afternoon ferry (having missed the Friday night one) at no extra charge, so we only lost a few hours of questionable weather in France and eventually arrived at our destination in bright sunshine. The great weather was with us for the rest of the holiday (as usual) with us both returning home singed. I can't leave this topic without saying a big thank you to Dyson's Recovery, Alexandra Motors (if you ever need a Spridget-friendly garage in Davenport) and Brittany ferries.

One week on and it was Nigel's run, now I wasn't too sure what Nigel was planning and ever keen to get our events advertised in *Mascot* it was listed as Nigel's mystery tour.



However Nigel took me at my word and devised a fabulous run visiting lots of brilliant mystery stops. We started near Ely and travelled through Cambridgeshire, Essex and Suffolk visiting the Anglo-Saxon village at West Stow, Lavenham for lunch and the wonderful Flatford Mill to name but three and finishing up at the Plough Inn near Hundon for our evening meal. The weather forecast had been a bit poor for the day (as you all know the sun always shines on Cambs MASC events) but true to form the hoods (oh ye of little faith) soon disappeared and out came the sun cream (even I with my French tan and Australian hat I got a little singed). It was a brilliant day (thanks Nigel and Diane) and the mystery stops were so interesting that we ran out of time and had to miss the last one out (another time) I think I must have covered 200 miles in all (where's the mileage competition when you need it) but then I probably live furthest from the starting point.

Another week on and it was my treasure hunt and once again Cambs MASC defied the weather forecasters and the doubting Nigels (even though I missed the Mad Cat meeting I still have my spies) and enjoyed a hoods off run in the hot sun. We started the run from Haddon Services just west of Peterborough



and finished at the Cuckoo at Alwalton (birthplace of Royce of Rolls Royce fame) for a nice meal. The run itself had a royal theme, it is amazing how many Kings and Queens were born, hunted, or were beheaded in these parts not to mention other royal associations. The clues also included a poet, a painter and a stone slate maker and a trip to the fabulous Seaton viaduct (three quarters of a mile of 100 foot high Victorian brick arches spanning the Welland valley. I think everyone had a good day out in their Sprites (where were the Midget men) especially Hubie and Sally who scooped the trophy with an incredible 496 out of a possible 500 points (I am impressed). I think it was a popular victory with almost everyone apart from one gentleman (you know who you are) who may have scooped the coveted (and I mean coveted) trophy himself if his progress had not been impeded by his authentic original "strangle straps".

I had better cut this short (before it becomes a novel hadn't I Mike) but that's what happens when you have so much going on.

One last thing, all of MASC are invited to our stand at the BMC Rally on 7th August (see events page for details).

See you all at the Mad Cat.



Dave Dixon



Northern Ireland Report

Northern Ireland may look like quite a big place but, even though the area is quite large, the population is about that of Central London. Just think about all that space and, as for the empty roads, well what can you say! I may not work for the Tourist Board but you would be very wise to come over and see for yourself. There really are so very few places as have been shown in the media. As for the hospitality, it just has to be seen to be believed. Also, we have an E in our whiskey and our measures are bigger too. Enough of the tourist board stuff and back to what this article should be about. Prior to 1973 there wasn't a club for anyone interested in vintage or veteran motor vehicles in existence over here. Some people got together and decided to rectify this and the Association of Old Vehicle Clubs in N.I. was formed. I must add at this stage that the initials AOVC do not stand for the Antique Owners Vehicle Club, as some might think. There are now more than thirty individual clubs here catering for old motor cars, motorcycles and commercial vehicles and most of these come under the umbrella of the AOVC. A lot of other details can be found on their Website <http://www.aovc.co.uk>. When I mentioned that I was going to introduce another club over here, I knew that there were already two clubs in existence dealing with MG's, the MG Owners Club and the MG Car Club. I emphasised that I was not trying to dilute any interest in either of the existing clubs but rather to concentrate any interest in the Midgets and Sprites and for the owners to get together either for a bit of car waffle or to go for a bit of a drive to see some of the scenic countryside over here.

I had previously been in contact with the MASC and asked about any membership in N.I. and didn't have too much luck in contacting any existing members. Only last week a second current member got in touch with me and I hope to meet him soon. Goodness knows whether there are any more out there and, if there are, would they please contact me. I have so far been in touch with quite a few people who would rather go for runs in their cars so we will have to see what can be done over the rest of the summer but there are always the holidays with the kids to be taken into consideration. Even though I have found some ordinary Midgets, I have

also come across some which are far from standard (more details to follow) but, as yet, only one road-going Sprite, which I have heard about and a few other basket cases. So far, I have only seen one (very nicely) prepared rally Midget which is used in retro events.

Carson and some other Scottish region members have got together with some of our friends with similar interests (whatever that means) in Holland and I sincerely hope that more will come of that. I have been in touch with a former school-friend who lives in the South of Ireland and enjoys forays in his Sprite and another interested person phoned me to ask if I knew of any other Sprites on the market (already mentioned in a previous report). Yet again, if there are any owners of Midgets or Sprites in the South of Ireland, I would love to hear from them.

Must get a digital camera and take a few photos to fill up a bit of space in my reports but, until then, Happy Motoring to all our readers.

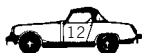
Barry

NW Area Report

We went to the Hoghton Tower Classic Car Show on 17 July. Glorious weather, Peter's birthday (I was going to make some comment about how very old he is but want a ride in his Ferrari so I'll keep quiet), nice BBQ, naff auto jumble, toilets miles away, but overall not a bad day out. Some very nice cars and one or two unusual ones such as a VW based Nova. I remember these from when they first appeared in the 60's and they still look OK 40 years on. Guess who won the stand of the show award, no not us, but the BMW owners club. What a farce, they're all modern cars and not classics. Shouldn't even be allowed to have a stand at a classic car show. I've expressed my views on this matter before on previous occasions so shall say no more – honest. Hope you're all making the most of the good weather.

See you at the next meeting on 10 August.

Les



London, Generally Dashing about a Bit

As the words from one of the songs in the film "Grease" states "*Summer Lovin, had me some fun*". We in London have been out and about a bit in the heat of the city.

Our monthly meeting at the Mulberry Bush on the 4th of July had a decidedly American flavour to it, as we welcomed Bugeye (see, I speak American) owner Rod Miller from Springfield Missouri. Rod and his wife, Brenda, were over for a couple of weeks to see England, Ireland and to visit Brenda's family Clan, the McRae's ancestral home on the Isle of Skye. It's our second American visitor this year and it gives us yet another excuse to do some scarin of the locals in Olde London Town (or bumpin with the Bro's in da hood).

Our now regular route including a loud blast through Kingsway underpass, followed by various bridges in our search for a pub which not only sold food and drink but also provided somewhere safe to park our Spridgets without incurring the wrath of Mayor Ken's happy band of Gauchos. Two out of the three we could manage quite easily, but to find a Central London pub where food, drink and parking were available together defeated even our considerable collective knowledge of the City. Having said that, we settled down for a slap up meal of crisps and peanuts with good drinks and our cars safely parked within the grounds of the pub. We finally returned our guest back, happy and carbon monoxide poisoned, to his child bride (of 29 years) at about 11:30pm. Rod added that the evening's event was surely going to be the high spot of his trip to the British Isles. We said that we were honoured but hoped it wasn't! Thanks to Steve in the BRG Frogeye, Nick with passenger Paul, good to see you up and around again, in Cherry Scoop (Frogeye), and Bob T in the EFI Rubber Bumper Midget who all joined Rod and myself (in my Frogeye).

The monthly trip to the Ace Café was one of the busiest ever. There were probably 150-200 classic cars of every description. Matt arrived slowly, in his university's Dennis



Photo: Steve Murrell

Fire Engine while I chatted with JK of Jamiroquai fame (name dropping) about his 300SL, my Frogeye and my upcoming trip to Le Mans.

If any MASC members get the chance during the summer to make a midweek dash down to the Ace Café for Classic Cars Night on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. I can assure them that they won't be disappointed. My details for information can be found in the front of *Mascot*.

I'll leave the Le Mans description to Bill Mohan (of the North Birmingham and South Staffs area), as not only is he more eloquent than I, but also because he was there for longer and had more adventures.

Finally, the events of the seventh of July in London, brought home to me how fickle fate can be and thankfully a roll call of the London member's found us all to be present and correct. I am grateful for that, but my heart goes out to those who lost loved ones and who were affected by the lunacy.

I am more committed than ever to the idea that it is our duty to enjoy ourselves and have good times with our friends and family while we have the opportunity. A good part of my enjoyment is derived from the ownership of my little car and the friends I've made because of it. I, and the London area members look forward to even more fun and even more friendship in the future.

Gary Lazarus



Scottish Report

The Birds

I had hoped Carson's George 3rd-like bout of insanity would have been cured by his annual pilgrimage to Tiree and he would have taken up the reins of this report again....but the madness of King Carson continues so you will have to suffer another intelligible report.

In the fastness of winter Betty shrewdly suggested a Longest Day run midweek in the then distant promise of June. Suddenly it was upon us and the gorgeous setting of Culcreuch Castle near Fintry beckoned – MASC dads should all marry off their daughters here, guaranteeing a memorable setting, good Scottish beer and a unique nuptial bedroom with its 17th century silk Chinese wallpaper.

Waved off once more by Ricky (it is a driving club Ricky, not a spectator sport!!), the crocodile set off from Glasgow and promptly dissolved into the wacky races type chaos that only Carson's approach to trusting human nature rather than maps engenders. Aileen had again pressed the British Leyland optional extra "Splutter Button" on her rubber bumper. This option was designed for ladies and guarantees a clutch of fellas will be poking about under their bonnets in no time. Ewan and Ann realised they were taking an alternative route when they drove over the Forth Road Bridge for the third time, pursued by Alan and Carson almost severed the tip of Linda's finger when he let off the handbrake with gusto, not realising Linda must have left her hand resting on the transmission tunnel (why do gorillas have large nostrils? – because they have big fingers!). Keith and Juliette in their B looked on serenely at the mayhem and David and Austin rendezvoused at the castle, so avoided the high jinks but impressed the squad with their muscular Mad Max interpretation of a Midget, making its first outing all the way from Kenmore and back (180 miles as the crow flies, 1,000 miles using a Carson virtual reality route!!).

All's well etc tho as a sound meal and less eventful trip home down the Carron Valley soothed nerves. Carson has however been drummed out of the RSPB as he competently

Scottish Austin Sprite (at rest)



used his windscreen to obliterate the last surviving lesser Japanese kamikaze sparrow in Scotland. Sadly I missed the above run – hence the account above is entirely fictitious and based on what I thought would happen....wonder how near the mark I have been! Think we will do it all again in June '06 ... it seems so far away though! Next up is our annual handshake across the Border with the NW MASC ensemble, through the swooping grandeur of the Tweedsmuir Hills. Very limited places – quality not quantity...bit like the Midget eh?

Dutch Lustrum '05 – Revenge of the Bitterball

I recently fulfilled a long-standing promise to Richard/Anke and Tom and Inge, Midget owners in Holland, to attend the Dutch MG 50th anniversary rally, called The Lustrum and modestly billed as "the greatest MG rally ever held and far better than anything the English could ever put on" – I paraphrase of course. I learned two things, firstly I am far to old to camp (so left my tent in a skip in Holland to save room for beer coming home), and Holland is not suited to good rallying due to its low speed limits (so that's why they are called the Low Countries!), its high and prolific speed bumps, known as DREMPELS! and of course the essential tedium of the countryside, which was until recently featureless seabed and is now featureless polders with the addition of trees and wind generators. Good rallying needs swooping hills, surprising vistas and an average density of 1 speedbump and 1 traffic cop per 1000 square miles e.g Scotland! We may be crap at footie, but...



Having said that the welcome in Holland was fantastic and every MG waved at every other MG all the time – which in itself became a grim game akin to the poor attendees at one of Stalin’s speeches where the first one to cease applauding at the end was dragged off to the Gulag (also known as Belgium).

The organisation was also excellent and my doughty navigator Colin and I got some fabulous goodies, such as MG badged body warmers an enamelled plaque and a picnic box stuffed with wine, peeces (sarnies to you Sassenachs) muffins and fruit. The photo shows us stuffing our faces with these treats and ignoring the hundreds of fabulous MGs in the field behind; the Scots and Dutch share a common hierarchy of priorities of bevvy, food, footie, cars and dirty jokes.

There were 70 cars from England and 2 from Scotland and over 500 in total. I thanked my stars Carson wasn’t with me as he would have made me tour the field looking for those sporting a bloody MASC sticker. We saw many Brit number plates at the checkpoints on the Octarun, which involved dodging windmills, dykes and drepels to check in at 8 different towns and get a stamp in your book at each.

Our group invented a variant called the sextarun, which involved only finding 6 checkpoints but stopping frequently at Dutch car boot sales and scoffing salted herring. Richard’s car expired an hour before my will to live, but fortunately it was only a set of closed up points. When we finally got lost and the heavens opened so we blatted to the campsite at the dizzying speed limit of 60MPH on the motorway for a BBQ under the awning of Tom’s mammoth condominium on wheels (with Satellite Telly).

2 things to avoid in Holland though:

1. the DFDS ferry from Newcastle to get there, which has all the facilities and charm of a Botany Bay prison ship – drive the extra 150 miles North and get the sumptuous new ferry from Rosyth instead.



2. A Dutch ‘delicacy’ called Bitterballs, which are a husk of breadcrumbs injected with a vaguely protein slurry and served so hot it vapourises your tastebuds as you bite into it. These are really only to be used for their true purpose – throwing at the MGs of insanely waving Octarun competitors who smugly got all 8 stamps in their book!!

Bob Miller



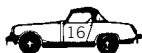
Yorkshire Report



Harewood Father's Day Show

Well, what a fantastic day and a splendid venue! We had booked space for 10 cars and had a big enough plot for double that. Just as well, because we were joined by other Midgets and Sprites who decided to park with us rather than fight for a spot in the late entry area. Tim and Sarah and Shawn and Oliver (Dawn and Daniel arriving later with the provisions) were already there when Mark and I turned up, closely followed by Chris and Lin, Matt and Lizzie and Nick and Jo. Ken and Adam were our first 'strangers' from York in a RWA Midget. Chris and Jean, who had to cancel their place on the Daffodil Run at the 11th hour, arrived in their Frogeye with Andrew in his. We then managed to entice Chris from Menston in his MKIV Sprite to join us. Chris was later joined by his brother Peter and other family members. We then had the opportunity to welcome Don and his dog Kiefer from Leeds in a lovely Frogeye that Lulu drove in Heartbeat. Ian and Claire from near Wakefield asked to join us. Mark and I

first met Ian last July at Oulton Park and have seen him at other events, most recently on the Kimber Run at Chatsworth. This time Claire was driving their Midget. We were soon joined by three 1500 Midgets. One in Inca Yellow brought by Liz and Tony from Brighouse, and two in different shades of green. Malcolm and Brian from Doncaster and Graham from Dronfield. Simon turned up on his bike (not a motorised one!) as he and Nick hadn't quite finished fitting the new wiring loom in his Sprite. He has a few days to get it finished before the next rally. Jason and Michelle didn't make it as Jason discovered a pool of brake fluid in the driver's footwell when he got Sybil out to wash. George and Ellie from Batley brought their Frogeye. John and Julie drove all the way from Scunthorpe in their Midget. John was driving his Mini Cooper at the Croft sprint event that a few of us went to a couple of months ago. Martin and Julie brought their Frogeye in the box trailer they use for their drag racer. This was so they could bring their children and the huge gazebo that provided very welcome shade on such a hot and humid day. Tony and Clare arrived later with their very clean and sparkling Midget. Tony was delighted I'd noticed. Phil announced his arrival by phoning us to say his Midget had conked out in the queue at the entrance. The problem turned out to be the condenser. So we ended up with 20 Spridgets on our patch, I handed out details of our next two meetings to all and gave new folk a copy of the May issue of *Mascot* (thanks to Nigel Williams for sending me a stack of them). Maybe one or two will join up. The little cars attracted a lot





of interest and other Spridget owners took details from us. Metro Turbo Midget owner Rob (see the Retro Cars article) who lives in the area hopes to get to one of our meetings soon. I recognised a white MKII Sprite parked in the general area. Mark and I bought a gearbox from the owner, Peter, nearly 2 years ago. We were able to tell him and his wife Jane that it's doing a great job in my Midget. The Harewood Red Kites soared overhead on the thermals whilst we picnicked. In the afternoon Shawn arranged for us to do a parade around the arena, 'volunteering' me to say a few words about the Spridgets over the Tannoy. I lent my car to Mick and his daughter Jenna for the parade as Mick's car isn't ready just yet. Sorry if you missed the parade, I forgot to tell everyone.

Most of us managed to get home before the storm but Andrew and Chris and Jean got drenched on the way back to Brompton, and Shawn and Daniel had to take refuge under a petrol station canopy.

July Natter

I always seem to have to make the longest outings on my own. Last year Mark was in hospital. This time Portugal. Thankfully the weather improved dramatically on the day after a bit of a cold, damp spell. Tim and Sarah and Arthur were there just ahead of me and as we were heading for the entrance to Shibden Mill Inn Peter and Dorothy from the NW Area turned up in their Frogeye. They had the advantage of already knowing this pretty venue that is tucked away down some steep and twisting roads near Halifax. Shawn had arranged for an area to be reserved for us so we laid claim and ordered drinks and food. Shawn and Dawn arrived soon after with Tony and Elaine. Mike and Sarah were not far behind in their Midget coming all the way from near Selby. Hilary and Tony didn't have

far to come to this meeting. Hilary's car now has the refurbished rostyles they purchased on ebay whilst the original wheels go off to be done. Ann and Pete from Sheffield came along specifically to meet Nick to ask questions relating to MK1 Midget restoration. Ann showed me some photos of the restoration of her car. It looks as though it is coming along nicely. Rebuilt engine and a new coat of Clipper Blue. Luckily it wasn't long before Nick and Simon drove up in Nick's Midget and soon there was a group around the car with Pete discussing various points with Nick and Ann trying the seats out. George turned up in his Midget when I popped out to take photos. Mary wasn't with him this time as she had flown off for a few days in Ireland. Shawn's advice was sought on electrical matters as Simon's Sprite is going through fuses whilst he and Nick try to solve the wiring loom problem.

*Nick's Mkl
Midget*



*George and
Midget*

I had an interesting journey home following Nick and Simon to Menston before turning off down a very bumpy road into Otley. At one point I was following a badger as it waddled down the road.

Next Meetings

Thursday 4th August – Cross Keys, Hillam,
Monk Fryston LS25 5HE
Thursday 1st September – Otley area

Anita

Ed says: Good turn out, excellent day.



Warwickshire Report

Unlike last year, the weather for the Wheels and Wings Show in Wellesbourne was sunny and hot. It was too hot for some of us, particularly as an airfield offers no shade. We met at the Greenway in Stratford to ensure that we entered the airfield as a group and parked together. Nick and Mo who arrived separately luckily found a space immediately behind us. There seems to be an increasing interest in the show and the number of cars attending was much greater, providing an extremely varied display of classic vehicles and included a very rare Rover. Quentin Wilson attended again as a spectator and took an interest in our Daimler Dart, his being more special because it belonged to a member of the royal family and has coronets on the door.



In Front of Ludlow Castle

The following week Roy and Stuart took us on a run around Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Hereford. At least, I think that is what they finally called it. The day started with a breakfast of croissants and bacon butties at Roy and Geraldine's home. Chris and I, unfortunately missed breakfast, but were able to join the group for the start of the run. Stuart and Roy have the record for the number of cars in attendance with sixteen on the run. Moreover, we only lost two cars on the last leg, when they took a slightly different route to the final meeting point. The drive took us along leafy lanes across the undulating countryside and through pretty villages, which still had their red phone boxes. We stopped in Ludlow for lunch, where, inspirationally, Stuart and Roy had

gained permission for us to park on Castle Square and even provided us with pieces of carpet to ensure we left no oil stains behind! Lunch was held in the courtyard of Greys, providing us with a choice of sunny or shady spots, and an excellent meal. With a few sun hats purchased from the market, and a short wait while John had to go back to retrieve his piece of carpet, we set off again. The route took us up the hill behind Ludlow Castle and on to Clee Hill with a superb view over the countryside and the lower road we had followed in the morning. The final stop of the day was for tea in the garden at Stuart and Sybil's home. Our thanks go to Stuart, Sybil, Roy and Geraldine for a really wonderful drive with excellent planning.



Nothing but Spridgets for Miles

The last jaunt this month was the weekend trip to the Peak District, courtesy of Dave and Chris Parker. 8 cars and their owners met at Alan and Rosemary's on Friday afternoon and set off for the Yorkshire Bridge Inn in Bamford, by the Ladybower Reservoir. The route took us mainly through the sort of roads our spridgets love. We arrived at the inn with time to check in and an evening drive around the reservoirs before dinner. The road, which goes to the end of the reservoirs, is closed to cars at the weekend, so this was our only



In Front of the Yorkshire Bridge Inn



chance to drive it. Although it is a dead end and you have to return the way you came, it is a narrow road, which provides spectacular views. We returned to the inn to find that Mo, Phil, Geraldine, and Roy had just arrived, having made a later start. Nick and Mo were to arrive a little later still. The food at the inn was well cooked, provided an interesting choice and gave very large portions so no one went hungry.

At breakfast on the next day, the proprietor of the inn asked for a photo-shoot in front of the building and provided Dave with a copy in the evening, also promising one each, to be sent in the post. Before setting off Dave gave each of us a folder containing the routes and briefed us with sound advice about brakes and long hill descents. The Peak National Park is just breath taking and with the added advantage of having frequent refreshment stops planned and the beautiful weather, the driving was exhilarating with steep hills and wonderful views. The following day was Roy's birthday, so with we had drinks on the patio after dinner. The midges were biting so all 21 of us crammed into Mo and Phil's room. Our latest challenge is to see how many Spridgeteers we can get on one bed. The banter was lively assisted by drink supplied by Dave and Chris, left over from their pre-dinner get together and not to be taken home again!

The next day we returned home taking a scenic route through Matlock. The weather was very hot and with the slow progress through Matlock, a few engines began to get very warm and ours finally decided to stop on a hill outside Matlock, with the problem diagnosed as the petrol vaporising, causing an air lock which was soon cleared. We, then, returned home, using a variety of routes without further incident. Chris and Dave are



Party time

to be congratulated on a very professionally organised tour and a wonderful choice of hotel; the weather could have been turned down just a little, but added to a wonderful weekend. Nick and Mo supported Dave and Chris by taking the lead from time to time. We all agreed to go back again and spend some more time in the area.



In the Peaks National Park

This month's meeting saw a huge number of cars, with many visitors, as well as our South Staffs friends who are becoming regulars. Unfortunately, it was so busy I did not manage to count them. We also had an interesting variety with an E-type Jaguar, Daimler Dart, XJ Jaguar, Mercedes SLK and MGB GT. The meeting was held mainly outside, although we went in to discuss future events. Barrie and Margaret are to be congratulated on their new grandchild; I think that makes eight.

John has organised a tour to the Coventry Museum On 24th July, and, although the council insisted on £5,000,000 of public liability insurance, which has been kindly provided by Jim's Company, Clark Roxbrough & Co, we are now able to park on the Millennium Place in front of the museum. Dave has arranged for us to join the Healey Day at the Prescott Hill Climb on Sunday, 31st July and we meet at 9.15 am at the Alcester Little Chef on the A46. Roger is offering a Malvern Outing on Sunday, 7th August, which includes a surprise activity – very curious to know what, but Roger was giving nothing away. Mo and Phil have also extended a Christmas Challenge – the Scrap Eat Challenge on Friday, 30th December.

Chris and Sheila



Surrey Report



outside the pub doesn't it? So whilst we'd planned to go for a run, there was so much social intercourse, and car sorting – Nick fixing a leaky float chamber, Bob showing off his fuel injection, visitor John from Eastbourne with his impeccable leaf green Frog, word of Geoff's latest project – a Ginetta G12 from 1967, with Hewland gearbox, but no Lotus twin cam unit just yet – what a project! Planning was afoot for the ladies'

Surrey Area's June meet was as guests of the Brooklands Museum, and by all accounts it was a grand evening, with over 300 cars in total, many rarities. Chris and I were touring Norway and Sweden by train, a test to see if I could cope without driving for 2 weeks. Great trip, but you can't just pull over when you like in a train! Surrey took off to Ardingly on 9th July for its annual pilgrimage to the Sussex County Showground, where this year our club stand was blessed by Alan's lovely Sebring replica, John's restored Frog, and Nic's Healey Frogeye, and alongside the "littlies" lurked my "biggy" the green beast of a Jensen CV8, which certainly helped pull the customers. We met up with April and Don Wright, members for some years, but now feeling it's time to make themselves known, as their Frog needs some TLC! (Sorted their 1970s Morgan first though, is there no justice!) Good to meet them, and a number of applications were given out, with very keen potential members off to browse the website for more info.



Brooklands meeting



Another week into busy July, and the Blue Ball comes around again. The hot spell brought out a marvelous group of cars – 7 Frogeyes, 2 Austin Sprites, a Caterham 7, and 5 other Spridgets totaling 15, and that's not including Paul's well loved Amazon estate, and Kirk's motorbike! Looks brilliant



annual pilgrimage to the bright lights of mainland Europe – Cologne is the destination, and Helen is the organiser, so if you're interested, talk to Helen quickly!

Thoughts were turning also to our BBQ the following week, and sure enough just 6 days later, a fantastic turnout again for Laura and Chris's annual BBQ at Outwood. 24 cars, including a fantastic 9 Frog-Eyes, and a Healey Sprite boat. The weather was idyllic, the setting superb, no-one wanted to go home, and Laura and Chris's first class hosting meant that all present were just able to socialize, look at the cars, and generally chill out – a very big thank you to Laura and Chris. That's enough for now, but –



Our next events will be – 7th August MGCC show at Groombridge Gardens – come and join us, we will have a club stand. 14th August – Clyveden Run, starting from Bocketts farm. Keep in touch regarding other local runs, but in the meantime, you can catch me on – dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk

David

Birmingham and North Staffs

Visiting day at the Green Man, July '05

A very successful night, almost more visitors than the pub could cope with. But under new management again it seems, so time for another chance for 'em.... (ps I have to admit, I was taking as long getting served as Geoff last night...) Visitors were Nick and Laura, of CZ fame. John (Kinver), Gavin and Peter with a nice 1500 and Paul and Simon from Stone as well as Kaj and Caroline who we hope will make us their regular haunt and drove up from Stoney Cove way over in Leicestershire in Caroline's recent acquisition a very dark green GAN2 car. I agree it is a long trip for Nick but car parks, benches outside, could be a difficult call for him tha knows. We do hope the others will become regulars. You all please, come back, now! John, from Kinver had graced us with a visit before but it is quite a trip so we hope he will at least be a frequent if irregular visitor, he did do the tunnels run with us back in February. (Thinks... We must sort out another of those soon...) Paul who drove down from Stone with Simon his Squash playing mate has a beautiful blue Sprite with gas struts on the bonnet, and a collection of mods under the bonnet to please any petrolhead for hours, including a rather fetching selection of Weber carburettor

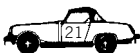
things and Lumenition Ignition to make the enhanced mixture burn rather smoothly. Paul was a member from Surrey and will be remembered there for having shared his honeymoon in 1999 with their trip to Wales with his new bride, Joanne. He sends his best wishes to David and the other Surrey members. Peter drove up in Gavin's car fully intending to let Gavin drive back afterwards, a very wise division of labour I thought)

Matt is setting up our website too be more user friendly too, more anon. Of our usual "crew" we were without John who was away gambling his fortune way at the dogs, and our regular Gavin who phoned to say he would be unlikely to make it (excuses passed on Gavin, but oi, watch it!) We had Geoff, Trevor, Bill2 (and me) and Malc. We will be without Malc for the next six months as he has a new job to deal with, a 300 mile drive away. Seems fair enough to me, come back when you can Malc.

John says he will try a run to Warwickshire if we go this month though, more on this later...

Well I will have gone to Warwickshire, but Mike needs the copy early so any pending gossip will be, pending!

Bill



Quay for My Car – Dorset Area



This event has been running on Poole's Town Quay very successfully for a number of years now. Traditionally each Friday from May through to the end of August, sees cars of a specific marquees on display alongside the picturesque harbour. Up until this year most of us were precluded from the event due to our cars colour or type. This year the 4th Friday has been opened to pre 1983 classic British sports cars, thanks mainly due to continued lobbying by local car clubs and Chris Adamson, Editor of the motoring section of the Bournemouth Echo.

Friday 27th of May saw the first such event, a bright sunny evening attracting nearly 100 cars of various types including many MG's, Morgans, Jaguars, Aston Martins, Triumphs, Sunbeam Alpines and even a Midget from Germany. The unusually warm weather saw the quayside packed with visitors and classic car enthusiasts, who all enjoyed the free show. At last Poole has an event to compare with Bournemouth's Classic Cars on the Prom, hopefully these two events will compliment each other throughout the summer season. Long may it last.



If you weren't there, it's a must for this month, don't forget its 6 p.m. on Poole's Town Quay (which is closed to traffic for the event) on the 4th Friday of the month through to August, however if your Midget or Sprite is red, then it's a double bonus for you, you can also attend the 1st Friday's meet which is Red open topped sports cars, and **it's free!**

Pete Downton



Wiltshire Fuel Supplies Dry Up!

On our previous visit to 'the Vine Tree' at Norton near Malmesbury when we met up with Terry and the 'Bristolians'. Malcolm reported that he had experienced problems with his R.W.A. Midget losing power while hill climbing and accelerating. After some discussion we wondered if the fuel pump or the inline filter might be at fault. At home after an uneventful return Malcolm decided to replace the fuel pump with a new electronic one but later found the problem had returned. He then examined the fuel cap and noted that the rubber seal had expanded to fill the groove and, he felt, was preventing the tank from venting, this being most noticeable when the tank was full, which it had been on starting the trip. After replacing the cap the problem appears solved (we hope) with no problem during the last trip to 'The Vine Tree'. Oddly enough shortly after Malcolm experienced his problem I had a similar one with the '71 Midget cutting out

after only about 500 yards. This happened several times on a short journey and appeared again to be a fuel problem, although the pump appeared to be 'ticking' O.K. When I eventually got home I found that fuel wasn't being delivered consistently so I figured the pump to be at fault. Fortunately I decided to try again before a new pump, and tried a direct feed to the pump, when it began to behave normally and this led me to find a corroded connection where the fuel feed wires connect to the loom by the 'A' pillar on the R/H side of the dashboard and when this was replaced with a new connector the problem was resolved! MEMO TO ME!! – the obvious answer may not be the right one!!!

I might add that it's been great to meet up with other members socially and look forward to more of the same.

Ian Rider



JULY 2005

New Book from Haynes



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Britain's favourite sports car

Malcolm Green

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The second edition of this highly respected history brings the evocative story of MG right up to date. This large-format, well-illustrated book charts all MGs from 1923 to the present-day TF sports car and 'hot' saloons, concentrating along the way on models with particularly strong interest to classic car enthusiasts, such as the T-types, the MGA and the MGB - the most popular British sports car ever. The authoritative text is supported with buying tips, personal impressions of individual models, and data boxes on topics as varied as the EX257 and Le Mans TC, the XPowerSV and the ZR, ZS and ZT in competition.

Hardback, 270 x 210mm, 176 pages, 100 colour and 50 black & white illustrations

[Visit Haynes.co.uk to see more info...](http://www.haynes.co.uk)



2nd Innocenti Coupe Photo Book



*Ed says: Hot on the heels of last months excellent follow up story on the 2nd coupe, the missing photos! Barry and Jill gave me loads of grief so be prepared to answer questions ☺
Meanwhile, nice car! Thanks for sharing guys.*



What's in My Garage?

This ferocious looking cherub is my stepson and by his skill, our house continuously reverberates with him playing the sound track from 'American Graffiti' which gets him petrol-heading; so he's a good guy. One of the characters in the film is Wolf Man, a DJ. In a moment of ensnarement, I said 'Fancy a chance at being Teen Wolf, kiddo? Bring the music'. So he did. And the flag. And the Calvin Kleins. And the strange hair band. And now you've got this foto of braveheart, our garage guardian.

Carson

5 x 5 Speed

(The story of five conversions: Ed)

My Replica Sebring Coupe is fitted with a Ford Sierra 5 speed gearbox. This uses a bellhousing, modified clutch plate and propshaft supplied by Morris Minor (Birmingham) Ltd. Initially I purchased their chassis strengthening kit but in the end my car was fitted with a strengthening plate by Brian Wheeler, of Wheeler and Davies, Leics, when he supplied a new Frogeye monocoque.



Fitting a Sierra gearbox entails cutting the chassis cross member which runs across the car adjacent to the jack mounting holes in the sills. The cross member is cut and removed, where it bridges the transmission tunnel, where the A – series gearbox mount is situated. Once removed the remaining cross member is strengthened and a brace added to replace the chassis strength and stiffness and also support the new gearbox mount.

The transmission tunnel also has to be cut and modified as the Sierra gearbox is longer than the A – series and the gearlever closer to the driver. This conversion usually uses the Sierra speedometer drive cable. In practise this appears to be prone to breakage but an angled drive and suitable cable are available from Speedy Cables www.speedycables.com. who can also recalibrate speedometers The speedometer will require recalibration.

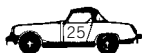
This conversion can be done relatively cheaply as Sierra 5 speed gearboxes can be had from Breakers yards for £50. The necessary parts for a conversion cost about £480.

Although the Sierra gearbox is a bit notchy compared with the Datsun it does give approx 20mph per 1000revs on a 3.9 differential. Parts are plentiful.

Chris Banton, Mike Gorman and John Larrington have had their 1275 engined Sprites converted to Datsun 5 speed gearboxes. The reconditioned gearboxes and conversion kits were supplied by an American firm – Rivergate. (www.rivergate.5speed.com See *Webmonster else where: Ed*). The kit uses a new thicker rear engine back plate (which incorporates a rear main oil seal), a new prop shaft, modified clutch plate and high torque starter motor and Rivergates own slave cylinder. Savings can be made by retaining the stock sprite starter motor but this requires cutting the bell housing and making a suitable cover and reshaping the bell housing. A Mk1 sprite clutch slave cylinder can be used having the same bore as the Rivergate item. The appeal of this conversion is that it is advertised as being able to be fitted without cutting the body shell. Researching on the MG BBS site found that previous conversions had resulted in hammering the underside of the heater / battery mount to give clearance and / or taking off the sump pan. In each of these three conversions a five inch section was removed from the underside of the heater / battery mount and replaced with a modified panel welded in to facilitate fitment of the gearbox. A drawback of this conversion is that the engine and gearbox have to be fitted as a unit whereas the Sierra allows each to be removed separately. Also such gearboxes are getting rare.



The latest conversion is to a Triumph Spitfire 1300 (the conversion is primarily for 1500 Spitfires and thus suitable for 1500 Triumph engined later Spridgets) again using a Ford Sierra 5 speed gearbox. This conversion should have been the cheapest. The gearbox was sourced from a Breakers yard for £50. A clutch plate for an Avenger – two for £5 and a spacer plate for £50 (see www.the-wizardsden.com). The most expensive piece was the



prop shaft from Frontline Costello. This kit is available complete and ready to assemble from Autogear Transmissions (www.autogear.co.uk) for £1111. The cheap route was chosen which entailed making the slave cylinder support and gearbox cross member. If fitting this conversion to a Spridget then chassis modifications as per the Sebring Replica conversion are necessary such modifications being shown, in colour, on www.the-wizardsden.com and MASC member Bob Tooke's site www.bobtooke.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk

As aforesaid this conversion should have been the cheapest but on taking the gearbox out much to the owner's surprise his Triumph Spitfire was found to have a Toledo engine and gearbox to which the prepared gearbox and clutch would not fit. Luckily a modified sprite 6.5" clutch would fit and another Masc member Bill McDonagh (www.hardyengineering.com.) modified the gearbox input shaft to suit the rear crankshaft spigot of the Toledo engine.



Alan Anstead (Surrey Section) Mail to

alan.anstead@btopenworld.com

Ed says: Thanks Alan. Food for thought indeed for all you 4 speeders!!

Carson Ramble No. 2

When you remove your spectacles – what a fabulous word, spectacles – everything shimmers, is hazed, like all personal views of the past; imperfectly visioned.

Back in '72-'74, things weren't going well here, and the close-to-the-source Daily Telegraph often released drumbeats from the Home Counties of retired Generals forming private armies. (The stock market was headed for zero). Against that background, Sir Oswald Moseley was invited from exile in Paris to take part in a TV chat show to help clarify the way forward: what an unbelievable spectacle. (All of this really does have something to do with our Club; so let's see if we can get there, please).

I have an idiot's view on democracy; not ever having voted, because democracy has never seemed that much under threat. Oh, how the Moseley East End boys would have lovingly chomped me! But things are different now. Do you remember Mike saying that a *Mascot* contributor was going to sue him because a few of his words had been changed, and this, at a time when Mike hadn't even become the Editor? Now, if any nutter ever 'deserved' being edited, that's me and I haven't been. Whereas, for six months, I was a stand-in

scribbler in a Technicolor car club magazine until it all went wrong when I reported of a concern, expressed at the local AGM, over HQ spending big bucks on a project. Then the dreaded red pencil swathed the subject, taking out freedom, and me with it. I won't miss those temporary scribbles because there was a need to dainty around everything, never traipsing far from the mainstream and its acceptabilities.

So what's the connection, you exasperatedly ask, when everybody knows that MASC is a trinity of purity? Well, between all these disjointed threads, the connectivity is absolute. For what we enjoy here, right now, is a great Club in which freedom darts and weaves between quirkiness and soundness sharing Communication Openness Fairness Fun. (COFF if you will. Vote for COFF!) And in these vibrancies, these intangibles, are our strengths.

Carsoni

Next month. Does Guinness exist because writers of Irish Tourist brochures need to drink so much of it?

Ed says: Well It's all quite here in the 'Bastion of Freedom' head office ☺



Brooklands Eight Club Meet

June 2005



Ed says: Attended Brookland's with the Surrey boys last month, as always, lots to see. Captions in order, left to right, top to bottom 1) Nice Frogeye (who owns it ?). 2) TR2/3. 3) Very early Morgan daily driver. 4) Big boys toys. 5) The pretender, 18 yrs old, mint. 6) Early pull Handle MGB, 3 bearings, tidy and straight. (Also see Surrey report).

Le Mans in the Heat, 2005



It was a hundred degrees plus at the trackside ceremony at the end of the race this year, even more at the campsite.

We had quite a time of it this time round. Lara lost her clutch hydraulics en-route to Le Mans, just North of Rouen on the motorway at an "Aire" (rest area). Sharing the driving with my friend John it occurred at the start of John's stint behind the wheel. His luggage was in the boot of another car, so he was very reluctant to stop over night at Gacé in order to make a "next morning" repair. He asked that we should try to make the campsite to meet up with the others. As Lara was engaging enough gears to make it feasible I agreed, starting in gear was working well in traffic light and toll booth situations.

Spridget content at our campsite was restricted to Lara, with a later arrival planned for Gary Lazarus' Sprite. We travelled in convoy with a Porsche 944 and a Jaguar XJ6. The Jag had sat-nav fitted, which meant he took us completely the wrong way out of Boulogne, into the town centre and its backstreets.

After this we played catch-up trying to get them into road sign mode and getting us pointed the right way. The Jag driver ended up with a 90° fine for driving across a solid white line right in front of a Gendarme at the scene of an RTA! Don't ask!!

All along the route we kept losing then finding the other cars, until they made a wrong-slot at the motorway and we split... We lost hydraulic pressure as well as our companions

while they were heading for Paris and the Periphérique in the early evening. There was no way I was having any of that trip, so John and I set off alone towards Rouen and the impending breakdown.

We made the meet up decision for the campsite (Hoorah for the mobile telephone!) and actually arrived well in advance of the others at the service area on the A11, just before the Le Mans Sud exit. John and I had our meal while watching the clock tick down towards closing time, they made it with minutes to spare. After the meal they went up to the next junction, came back and formatted on us again so we could all head for the Houx Annexe campsite.

Uh uh, this time I got lost! We had arrived before the signposting team and couldn't find the site. After an age driving inside Le Mans, still without a clutch pedal remember John and I found a sign and headed for the site, but our companions didn't!

The race was great and so I am told was the Legends race, with Stirling Moss forcing the ACO officials to let him race in his old style helmet (I would not have allowed that, but it is their race after all!) In the main race the Aston Martin team had immense support but their race failed at the end of the game, an hour or so to go and the Corvettes powered on to the class victory. The Astons certainly look good for the next time out, it seems a few team errors let them (and me) down. All to play for. Tom Kristensen won the main LMP race in the Audi again, but everyone at the podium was happy for him, a great driver seven victories at LM, beat that! And the MG-Lola won her class too, great!





Camping at the race is getting more familiar to us now, this year we had a gazebo over the cooking area and another over the POOL! Yes we had a pool and with temperatures over the “ton” we needed it. It was a real relief, too. Our inflatable armchair made the return journey too and was used to drift around the pool upon... Because of the clutch pipe fail I had telephoned Gary in London to ask if he could bring one across with him. His local MG shop unfortunately sent him over with all the wrong parts they could and we were unable to make the expected repair on Saturday morning. And I missed the Legends race in the process...

On the Monday morning my mate took the broken pipe around a few garages and engineering shops in Le Mans and finally returned with a new end flared into the old pipe. My plan A for use at Gacé! Oh well never mind. Due to some collateral damage to the dizzy cap and plugleads they also needed replacing but finally we left the Le Mans area and had a great drive up to Caen so that we could pay a visit to the Mulberry Harbour at Arromanches next day. The weather held, hot and sunny as we drove back to Boulogne, and as was becoming expected we lost one of our number as he sailed past the Le Havre exit on the road towards Rouen. Soon put right and we joined up and made it in time to “shop” before embarkation on our Fastcat ferry. Speedferries only cost me £50 for the two-way trip, pocket money in view of the prices other ferry companies were charging.

The run home got me home for about 21.25hrs, just a little after the time I had estimated the week before. Tired, dusty, but triumphant after overcoming the obstacles thrown at us and having had a marvellous time. Thanks to my wife for encouraging me. Without Gwyn you couldn't read this after all.

Bill Mohan

Letters

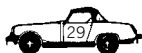
Prop Shafts: A Member's Experience

On my return from holiday I read John Davies' article with interest and would add the following:

1. My Gan5 Midget appears not to have the spline greasing access hole, it's not visible as a rubber bung in the carpeted tunnel and I am reluctant to tear up a glued down carpet only to find no hole – if you follow!
2. I haven't, (he says, clutching wood firmly) had to remove the shaft on its own for some time so have had no opportunity to try out an alternative of which I've read using a length of rain guttering to guide the shaft and keep it clean.
3. The all in one approach will only work on a Frogeye, there isn't enough angular movement in the front universal for the shaft to go in with the front of the engine still clear of the slam panel, I did try it once, just to prove to myself that it was impossible.
4. My usual method, working alone, is to protect the front end of the shaft in a plastic bag and put it in place about six inches forward, so that the front is readily to hand through the gearlever aperture, and support the rear end on an axle stand. It's then a matter of putting in the engine and gearbox far enough for box and shaft to be joined with access from the gearlever aperture. It's prudent to have a piece of string through the front universal in case the shaft makes a bid for freedom as you try to unite it with the box and then get engine and gearbox onto their mountings.

The above is a second instalment of things I've learnt the hard way .

Willie Richmond



MORE Propshafts

I was very interested to read the John Davies article on installing the propshaft and the wisdom of using official manuals. I bought a new Frogeye in 1960 (price £668, registration SCH 53. Has anybody seen it in the last 40 years?) and I still have the BMC Workshop Manual which I bought at that time. This states Although the propeller shaft can be removed separately by withdrawing it rearwards from the car, replacement presents some difficulty. It is therefore advisable to remove and replace it together with the engine and gearbox. The much more practical advice given in John's article must be in a later issue of the manual, mine is issue 4. I do remember changing the clutch on this car and replacing the engine, gearbox and propeller shaft together without swearing too much.

The shell of my current Frogeye was rebuilt with a later model floorpan so I have the very convenient hole to line up the shaft into the gearbox.

Incidentally, are there any other members who can claim to have bought a new Frogeye and still have one? Or even better, to still have the one bought new.

Keep up the good work of editing the magazine.

Jim Clark

Derbyshire

AH Sprite

I've been a member for 15 months now and not made any contribution to *Mascot* but I've just spent half an hour looking around the club website, I was motivated to fill in the guest book with the following message:

I was part-owner of an old frogeye sprite back in 1972 when I was in the 6th form – the daft thing was I couldn't drive then! However, nostalgia struck last year and so I bought a 1965 MK III from the club's sale/wants section (and then joined in April).

We call our 40 year-old 'Gladys' after the first named owner on the registration document (what a girl!). Since we've had her she's had six months in rehab for a full back to metal hair-do in the original colour (Tartan Red); had surgery on her smile (full dashboard strip-out respray and restoration); a few nips and tucks on her curves (moderate uphosltery work); nice new plimsoles all round (tyres); and a full overhaul of her mechanical bits and pieces, including converting her over from Babyshams to Pink Gins (you wouldn't believe some of the bodesges I found – I'd have



been proud to make them myself!). Wife and bank manager both think I'm insane – Moss-Europe thinks I'm Santa Claus!

Took her for a little medical check-up last week (Gladys, not the wife) and unfortunately the spring in her step let her down – now I'm getting desperate, the weather's warming up and it's another week in the garage!

Officially, she's GJJ 533C. If she's a past girlfriend, let me know and I can send you some pics. This is a great hobby and a great site. plastered48@hotmail.com Oh, and I wasn't plastered when I bought her...

It occurred to me that some readers of *Mascot* might have previously owned Gladys so I thought I'd send the message in with a couple of pics (during and after rehab) in case any past owners might recognise her.

If you have any space and a need for a fill-up in the next edition, I'd be pleased if you could edit/print it. Great club and magazine! Keep up the good work.

Peter Jackson

Northampton 01604 518036

Letter of the week

Further to my email to you a couple of weeks ago, I thought you might like to know that following two weekends of mending her suspenders and greasing every nipple in sight, Gladys (GJJ 533C) went to see Dr Mot today (sporting her shiny new Midget and Sprite brooch) and I'm happy to announce that he has declared her fit for flirting.

We immediately went to collect her free bus pass, only to find that the insurance document has her down as JGG 533C... Oh, and now it's raining... Good grief!

Cheers and happy motoring... We'll do it ourselves one day.

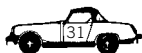
Peter Jackson

Northampton

Ed says: Amusing script and nice brooch photo (see cover)

Members' Info Service

This item is a NEW Heater Intake Ducting Hose part number AHA8501 for all Heater units, and comes with a Clip made in Stainless Steel and is a new part. 'ebay' is currently the place to find this part, the part number AHH5714s (or AHA8768s) the clip holds the ducting hose on to the inner wing and will look nice in your engine bay, the parts fit the MG Midget from 1961 to the 1500cc MG Midget 1979 and the AUSTIN HEALEY SPRITE from 1958 to 1971, the clip is a new part It may be some weeks before this item get's in MG and Austin Healey parts catalogues, so I have put some on ebay item number 4562574863. *Ed says: You heard it here first!!*



Seen at Le Mans

Bling Midget (but is it art?)



I saw this on the campsite at Le Mans. I am not sure whether this is art or a way to bling your midget, but I thought you might be able to use it for *Mascot*.

Rob Sheldon

Ed says: Thanks Rob, love to see this guys garden!! Do we know the owner?

Market Place – August

Adverts to be received before 10th each month

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Or Post to: David Smith, Doric Lodge, 10 Mansfield Terrace,
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SALES

Midget RWA Moss Body Panel new CZJ 408/9 rearwings (pair). BMH 8020/1 Inner rear wings (pair). AHA 5837/8 Boot floor extensions (pair) . AHA 5834 Boot support. BMH 8000/1 Doors (pair). AHA 7428 Door hinges (set 4) £575 the lot will split. Also extractor exhaust manifold GAC 7018 £75. Stainless steel single silencer exhaust system for above MGS 50801 £100. Or £170 the pair both new and unfitted to car.

George 01457 864536 (h) 07913 341926 (m) (Derbyshire)



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