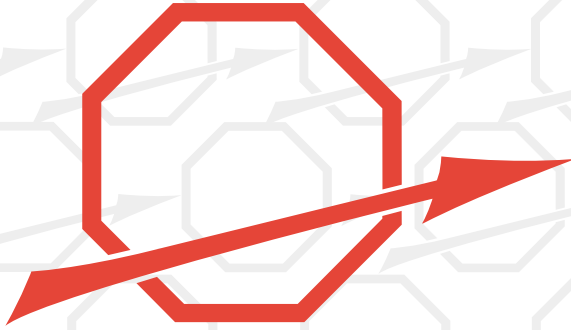


MASCOT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MIDGET AND SPRITE CLUB



Barry and Jill's excellent Frogeye in profile (think about it) ☺

ISSUE NO. 259

SEPTEMBER 2005

www.mgcars.org.uk/midgetspriteclub

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

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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

© Midget & Sprite Club

Ed Says

August already, wow! Attended the August Surrey meet at the Blue Ball, it's nice to be back. I forgot to mention in last month's column that I also attended the MG bash at Silverstone early in July. Where you there? I know we had some presence at the show but missed the stand (how?). Not much column inches popped up to support the event but I was there for both days, 2nd day as pit crew in the pouring rain supporting one of my crew in the MGA twin cam. Raced in the handicap MGA 50th anniversary race on the Sunday and came 13th in a field of 42. Not bad for a black cross (yellow background). Obviously my screen cleaning immediately prior to the race did the trick:)

Ref the above, I note that Anita and Yorkshire were there judging from the photos. Also some of Surrey's friends from Groombridge were there (see Ed's notes), anybody else, over to you. Meanwhile we have some great stuff inside for you.

Have a look at Pete Dowton's little garage (What's in your garage?) isn't it great. I mean it's Frogeye sized, custom made no doubt. Got a better one? Well, nobody will know unless YOU SEND IN YOUR PHOTO AND DETAILS!

More 'Tin Top Sprites' (cover photo). Well, we seem to be almost overrun with Innocenti stories and photos. These little guys sure seem to punching above their weight don't they. So what's next? Maybe we should track down some Sebrings, or Arkleys, or Specials ... YOU tell me or send in your story, project car etc. Alan Anstead, last month's 5x5 story and Surrey stalwart has been promising to send me the story of his Sebring project re-build... (didn't you Alan?) Well that's enough of me trying to drum up future articles and material, you lot just need to send it in now, or settle for the adverts!!! Carson also catches Ed out on the Mystery car feature last month, did you?

Finally, some committee business. As Lord Kitchener would say, WE need YOU! (did I spell Kitchener right?) Yes the committee nominations are due now, voting due any day and ad hoc nominations to the committee are VERY WELCOME. We are stretched very thin at the moment. Ask not why *Mascot* is late or why your membership hasn't been processed, ask what you can do to help. Less than 1% of the membership are on the committee, do the maths, run some numbers. We do need you if we are to get above the provision of just the basic services.

It's YOUR club ...

Look forward to hearing from you, meanwhile enjoy the Summer.

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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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 & 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 1st September – **The Black Horse**, Askwith, Otley, LS21 2JQ. Thursday 6th October – **The Old Bells Inn**, High Street, Campsall, Doncaster, DN6 9AG. 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 johnruderman@blueyonder.co.uk
- 2nd Thursday **Cambridgeshire** – Meet at **The Mad Cat** pub in Pidley Village, midway between Huntingdon & 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 Stange 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 September
User name: bloopers Password: corner



Events

From David Hill & Webmaster Chris Nevard

Events organised so far for 2005

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 "Shelsey Walsh". Organiser: Stuart Watson, 01562 883076
- Sunday 11th NW Area are going to the Houghton 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 & 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.freeseve.co.uk
- Saturday 24th & 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

Events organised so far for 2006

July

- Friday 28th & Sunday 30th Silverstone Classic Event. Dedicated parking under M&SC banner. Details to follow.

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.



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 <http://www.turbomidget.co.uk/index2.html>



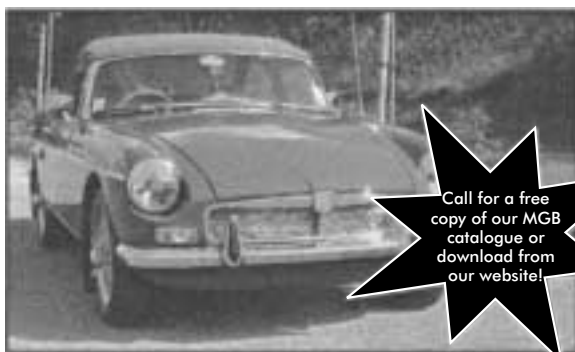
This is one for the petrol heads, the engine spec alone is worth the cost of dialling in. I'm sure Rob (the owner/driver) is one of us but due to data protection I can't check!! However there is a link to our site from his so he's a discerning gentleman if nothing else.

But read about the car, we could all do this, now there's a thought, couple of hundred turbo Mk3's in convoy. That would scare the TR6 boys!! Enjoy: **Ed**



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Blooper, an interesting tale of things that can/do go wrong!

Part 1...

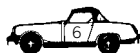
Alan Lo in Bristol had planned to write here this month about one of his more spectacular bloopers – but he has become totally distracted (a) by the precipitous sale of his ageing but otherwise immaculate GAN2 midget and (b) by the purchase of an even more aged and even more immaculate Clipper Blue GAN1 midget! This latter stunning car is apparently complete with all its proper equipment including an original Abingdon registration number and Alan's purchase seems to be anything but a blooper, something that has left Nick Herwegh in Holland and me in shock, both of us green with envy. The Pucklechurch gang are probably in shock too (I'm looking forward to reading this month's Bristol report). In the absence of any other offerings I have agreed to write again this month – but I do hope that my own bloopers will not continue to dominate these pages. In an attempt to encourage others to write, may I point out that it is by first making bloopers that we all learn and that there is no disgrace in admitting them. Committing the same blooper twice, of course, is a different matter – for this means that one is slower to learn than most animals – but I have never done this and if I have done it I am certainly not going to admit it here. Following my great oil-pressure relief valve disaster, for example, I am highly unlikely to ever again leave an exposed opening in my engine for more than a few seconds without stuffing an oily rag into it – and it's just possible that some *Mascot*-reading amateur mechanics will now avoid the same disaster without ever doing it themselves, even once! In other words, we can all learn from the bloopers of others and I am very much looking forward to being educated. So, please do give me a break and write in. Here's another one, selected from my frighteningly large personal archive ...

When confronted with the task of installing the fuel gauge sensor unit of my GAN2 midget I was unusually confident, convinced from the outset that this, at least, was going

to work. This charming little gadget is inaccessible once the fuel tank is in place and I was determined to get this one right, first time! I selected the unit with commendable care from a box full of spares and I knew it was working because I bench tested the thing with its fuel gauge and a battery, everything connected properly together with little crocodile clip wires: a really professional job. Once I had realised that the body of the fuel gauge must be earthed, the test assembly worked beautifully: the needle of the gauge moved most satisfyingly from one end of its scale to the other as the float was moved smoothly by hand between its upper and lower limits – perfect! Installation was simplicity itself: after a new gasket, some petrol resistant sealant and six set screws, the sensor unit was in the tank with its little male Lucar connector arranged to point towards the rear of the vehicle, ready to receive its electrical wire. This wire dives *down* through a hole in the extreme rear of the boot floor and then *up* and over the rear top of the tank to the sensor unit. Continuing my professional approach, I checked that the body of the sensor made a good electrical connection with the body of the tank and I remembered to connect the wire to the unit before waxoyling the top of the tank and bolting it up to the underside of the boot floor. Although 'forgetting to connect the wire before bolting the tank in place' is the sort of blooper that I am quite likely to commit, I anticipated it on this occasion and avoided it with uncharacteristic good fortune. I was on a roll: for once I felt in complete control and, as I tightened the last nut, I remember muttering to myself 'well, it will be a while before I have to take this lot out again'. Sadly, this was not to be: I would soon be muttering something quite different. I had already committed my blooper but I was, at this stage, blissfully unaware of it.

to be continued

John Davies
Email: jed2@cus.cam.ac.uk



The 2005 Great Western Rally

Bowood House, Wiltshire



Terry Horler about to start the Road Run. Alan Lo had gone to get some new batteries for his Sat-Nav. It wasn't needed – I know when I'm lost!

It just gets better. The nineteenth GWR happened over the weekend of the 16th and 17th of July and received the largest gathering and variety of interesting cars yet. Even the sun smiled throughout the whole proceedings yet cried on the Monday when it was all over.

Around 80 cars passed under the starting gate on Saturday to start their 50 mile Road Run. Happy snapper Carol Higgs came all the way from Tamworth to record each vehicle and crew on film as they began their adventure. Suitably armed with Rally plate, Road Book and question sheet, the road run organiser Steve Neathey decided to give crews an easier time of it this year. The theme being the war time airfields of Wiltshire, with two stop off villages of Colerne and Hullavington to hunt down some clues. These were either of the questions and answers type or a photo match type. These plus the clues hidden within the text of the Road Book ensured that crews had more to do than just admire the scenery. This year, Alan Lo navigated for me in my Sprite MkIV, tempting fate or not, at least the Sprite had a “blooper” free run. Despite encountering some familiar territory, including passing Castle Coombe circuit, itself a war time airfield, we failed to find all the answers. Finishing at the Atwell-Wilson Motor Museum of Calne, all cars and crews returned safely, if not a little worn, to check out the museum and a BBQ whilst Carol distributed

the photographs of the start when we were all a little younger and fresher, if not the wiser! Steve, faced with a pile of crumpled answer sheets, soon had them ironed out and marked up, only to find that the Horler-Lo crew had sportingly allowed other crews to record higher scores. Winner for yet another time was Nicky Latham in her Escort RS 2000.

Onto Sunday and a new look to the rally field in front of Bowood House. We now have two large arenas set up for the days events. Occupying far more space than we have used in previous years, it was good to see so many cars soon filling the spaces. The large driving test could now be run throughout the day in its own, larger arena. A good move as business was brisk keeping marshall Garry Higgs busy all day. The morning produced some spectacular moments on the wet grass for some crews, however, as the day wore on and the temperature soared, the grass turned to dust and times fell dramatically. Despite some fairly modern and hot machinery, including a Cobra, eventual fastest time was set by a 1953 MGTD. Over in the other arena, the blindfolded driver test provided much amusement for the onlookers, if not the crews. We may engage a marriage councillor next year along with a pre-event workshop in the accepted terms of “Left” and “Right” and their application in a motor car. It still amazes me why navigators point and say “That way” when their driver is blindfolded. Anyway, no damages to vehicles, can't say the same for relationships.

Judging that the day was now at its hottest, it was time for the car push event. A team of five, four to push and the smallest member to steer, just one lap of the arena was all that had to be done. Eight teams sweated it out, literally, to find out who could do this the quickest. No one asked for a second run this year! Less physical, our other team event was the Autohoopla. Again, a team of five tried their skill at ringing various automotive bits with an oil filter sealing ring.

With so many cars attending, the Parade of Cars had to be seriously “edited” but we still managed to put over 50 cars around the



arena with commentary. One car that we simply couldn't edit out was Volker Herzog's recently acquired Innocenti S. Volker had just purchased the red (aren't they all?) Inno from Chris Eccles and this was to be something of a farewell appearance for the Innocenti. As quickly as Barry Lowe brings Innos into the UK, this one is on its way to Germany. As I write this, Volker and Barry plan to bring the two red Innocenti Spydys together for one final meeting (with plenty of piccys for *Mascot* please) at the end of July.

Also circulating the arena, was HM the Queen's Daimler, although she wasn't driving it. This car has recently been acquired by the Daimler Lanchester Trust. The owners club being a special feature and guest of this year's GWR. Also bringing a large presence was the Triumph Stag Owners Club. More and more come along each year and hotly contest the driving test. For a big car, it is surprising how nimble they are, and how quickly the automatics can change direction. One Stag demonstrating that in a complete spin, the radiator grille can fall off. Fortunately, the driver was stopped before driving off again – over the fallen plastic grille!

Amongst the Traders, a sizeable collection of Spridgley bits this year. It was nice to meet again Nick Fussell, now moving his business from Spridgley work to Mercedes SLKs. Sorry to hear that Nick!

As always, we like to acknowledge our member travelling the furthest to the Rally, this year it was Tim and Sarah Saunders all

the way from our Yorkshire branch. The rumour that Anita ordered Tim and Sarah to drive the 245 miles to ensure that the Yorkshire branch don't go un-noticed in the South, is – probably true! This did at least prevent an awkward moment when it looked as though we would have to resort to GPS to differentiate between Steve Clark and Ron and Sue May who came from Southampton with, not surprisingly, very similar mileages. An award that we have not thought of before, the member bringing the most Spridgley things to the GWR. If we had, then the easy winner would have been David Lunson who brought along both an Abingdon Frogeye and an Isle of Wight Frogeye. Here I must apologise for the lack of MASC representation at this year's GWR, but thank Alan Lo for stepping into the breach whilst I ran around the Rally field on "other duties".

As usual, events were wound up with the draw of the raffle, thanks to Carol once again, and the prize giving for the weekends events. Without a doubt, this was the best GWR to date, the number and variety of cars attending, the weather and the flow of events, all contributed to a very successful weekend. Although MASC numbers were down on previous years, those that attended all had a good time.

Next year marks twenty years of the Great Western Rally – we hope to make it even better. To find out if it will be, you will have to be there.

Terry Horler

Mutual Assistance Directory

Well, the summer continues! Great open top motoring weather, at least here in Wales. Went on the Pendine Dash last week. Great. Loads of MGs but only a handful of Midgets – no Sprites of course as it was an MG do organised by the MG Car Club. It was the only event for me within a 100 miles. Read all about it elsewhere in the mag.

Still no new MAD members in Cornwall, Shropshire, North and Mid Wales, Westmorland and Notts. Come on, lets get the country covered! Just contact me at david@hillnet.clara.net or phone me on 01239 811423.

Has any MAD member helped another member in extremis! If so, please let me know so that we can show the sceptical world out there that the system works!

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



Warwickshire Report

Although, this month's agenda had appeared to emulate that of last year, with John and Ann's Mystery Trip, Prescott Hill Climb and Roger and Sue's Malvern Event, the experience was totally different, thanks to the ingenuity of their respective organisers.



Help and advice



At Coventry Transport Museum

Unfortunately, the day of John and Ann's "Mystery Trip" to the Coventry Transport Museum was a very wet one and hoods were required. The day began with breakfast provided by Ann, followed by a drive through the Warwickshire countryside, via rally routes that were popular in the '60's, to the Victory Inn for lunch. The ship theme of the restaurant seemed very appropriate with rain lashing the windows throughout the meal, so nobody seemed to mind that the service was a little slow and lunch became an extended event. After eating, we travelled to the Museum, where we parked on Millennium Square, carpets underneath to catch the stray oil drip and £5,000,000 of public liability insurance, courtesy of Jim Willis. We were warmly welcomed at the Museum, with a sign proclaiming the guest appearance of the Midget and Sprite Club. Dave Parker was a little late arriving, needing to replace a throttle cable. Fortunately, he had assistance with the umbrella! From the museum, we returned to Aston Cantlow Village Hall for tea with some wonderful cakes prepared by Ann.

The following week was the Austin Healey Club Calvacade on the Prescott Hill Climb.

Andy was so keen to come that he M.O.T.ed, taxed and insured his mini pickup especially for the event and, probably spent the same amount again on the track. Dave brought a stopwatch, which added to the competitive spirit, with Dave achieving the only run under 60 seconds. Roger's son gave him a heart stopping moment as he ran onto the gravel on a bend and seemed to be heading for the barrier, but no damage was done apart from gathering a few stones. His Dad responded by showing him how it was done, clocking a faster circuit. The weather was fine and added to the enjoyment of the day, with participants already planning their strategies for next year. We also met Les and Diane Robinson and friends from the North West, who returned for another attempt.

It was only one week later that Roger took us on a tour of the Malvern Hills, with a water tasting at the Holy Spring. John's car protested about being parked on a hill and the gears jammed so that for a while he could only find first, but it freed itself as we drove and has given no further problems since. The beautiful drive finished around the locality of Roger and Sue's home where Sue kindly provided us with tea and cakes. Roger had set up a crazy golf course and Hoop-la competition to amuse us and both John and



Water tasting group



Ann Platt took prizes, not that there was any collusion! Mo, found the water trap a little wetter than the rest of us, thanks to Phil. The sun shone, the day was warm, and we rounded it off with a very nice pub meal.

We are truly blessed with having such a wonderful group of willing people to plan and provide such a variety of social and driving experiences. Thanks to everyone.

The activities over the last two months have attracted up to 16 cars, but our calendar is a little slower next month, with some more individual, local activities, which include the Shelsley Walsh Centenary Celebration, The Coventry Run, The Town and Country Show and the Evesham Steam Rally, which Steve Farr has mapped out for us. Our next group trip is to Shelsley Walsh, meeting at the Droitwich Little Chef, in time to leave at 9.30a.m. on Sunday, 11th September. Picnics are essential.

Discussions turned to the winter season, with suggestions for a trip to the Ace Café, an NIA Classical Music Evening and a weekend on the Continent, taking advantage of

Continental Car Tours offer of £99 per person. On Wednesday 2nd November, we will join Bill Mohan's group and return their club visit, which is now a regular monthly event, and enable our beer drinkers a taste of IPA. We are also beginning to plan next year's trip abroad, with Ireland being favoured and thanks to Chris Jackson, we have an invite to Silverstone in July of next year for the Pre-66 Grand Prix Cars Race event. What busy lives we lead with our cars!

Chris and Sheila

The Warwickshire Area members are saddened by the sudden passing of Sylvia Wright, following a brief struggle with cancer, and offer our condolences to Keith, her husband. Many members will have met Keith and Sylvia, who frequently gave such cheerful support to the club at the NEC Classic Car Shows, accompanied by their beautiful red Frogeye, restored by Keith.

Somerset Report

The Somerset group attended the Branscombe Air Day on Sunday the 31st July. This included Peter and Valerie's 1500 Midget, Malcolm and Elaine's Frog Eye and my own 1275 Midget.

This annual event is a composite private air show and classic car display and generates huge interest. This year Peter and Valerie provided a gazebo and club banner, the latter home-made but looking very professional. The Somerset Midget and Sprite Club had arrived! Unfortunately the organisers located our stand at the far end of the show ground adjacent to the aircraft parking area. This did not provide much privacy especially during the lunch break as crowds gathered to gain access to the static aircraft. However this was excellent advertising for the club and a few potential members discussed their Spridget stories with us.

As is traditional in our group we set very high standards on the catering front and today I was not to be disappointed. As arranged I provided some fizz for lunch, Elaine and Val

the appropriate foodstuffs for lunch and tea. Suffice to say we did not go hungry.

The air display included a staged dog fight by a team of replica WW1 fighter aircraft which was very impressive and a fly past by two Mustang fighters of WW2 vintage. Weather conditions were marginal for flying with a gradual improvement during the day although we were caught in a heavy downpour mid-afternoon which tested the gazebo.

In excess of 500 classic cars attended the show which inevitably resulted in some late afternoon traffic jams as display cars left the show. So in accordance with Somerset area tradition we settled down for late afternoon cream tea and strawberries before leaving once the congestion had eased.

My thanks to Peter and Valerie for providing the gazebo and club banner and for the excellent catering facilities by the whole team. See you all at the next meeting.

David Bearne



Surrey Report



Groombridge



Looking back to that very sunny August, MASC was ably represented at the MGCC's summer gathering at Groombridge Gardens. Nic, John and Diane, John and Noreen, and Chris and I were in attendance, and that meant 2 Spridgets and 2 Frogeyes – well-balanced don't you think!

We parked up close to the Trade stands, and had an excellent opportunity to inspect the Lenham Midget on show, and pictured here. A really good bonding and riveting job, though I say it myself!

MGCC are keen on autotests, and Nick and Laura came along to entertain us in their Frog with the bonnet bulge. Also competing was this lovely M-Type Midget – yes it looks gleaming, but its owner was throwing it



Silverstone

around the course, mud flying everywhere! Also competing were an Arkley Midget, and a Sprite, both with limited slip differentials, so performed handbrake turns for the crowd.

It was a great show, with acrobatics from a biplane in the sky, steam engines clattering away, and the MGCC trademark – a treasure hunt around the house and gardens which entertained us all.



Many thanks to our intrepid crew for being there – could be an annual event?

Next up came the monthly meet on the 9th and welcome to Nay and Colin, and John from Hailsham in his lovely Frogeye, and a welcome return for Reggie, albeit in his Carlton, as the MkII needs some TLC which Reggie has decided to invest in. It sounds like we'll have a good group for our Cliveden run, but next month will reveal all.

Thanks to an intro from Terry Horler, both Alan and John have seen their cars photographed for Classics magazine, and we all look forward to seeing this in a future edition. (*Look for it in October: Ed*)

Some of us will be at Goodwood Revival this year, but it looks like on different days. Look out for some pics next month, and I'm sure intrepid Ed will be there too.

That's enough for now, keep in touch regarding other local runs, but in the meantime, you can catch me on – dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk

David

Ed says: Midget No 43 (Groombridge doughnuts) was also at Silverstone MG bash, seen in Paddock.



South Staffs and Birmingham – holiday month... at the Green Man

Had a great ride out to Middleton, Lara purring happily after I had cut down the “fuelling” on her HIF carburettor. When I arrived the guys were sitting outside and a long row of Spridgets in the car park told me there would be quite a turn out for a holiday month.

John from Kinver, Trevor and Geoff, Mike the Marshall (racing not US!), Bill 2 and Steve, Matt and I were at the table outside whilst indoors John Collins was dining his young lady, later joining us outside.

As the evening air cooled down and John and friend took their leave we went indoors to a conveniently vacated table and enjoyed a convivial natter.

More discussion with Matt about the SS&NB website reconstruction, on hold for a week or two as Matt was heavily involved with work. I see that the back of *Mascot* this month has a mystery car photographed in Le Mans on a camp site. Well mystery no more, that is Henrietta, Mike’s car and although he didn’t say anything about the car’s decorations he had tales of Le Mans past and recent to regale us with. Mike was marshalling at the race and has done for some time and is a member of the Race Marshalling Club, I understand.

After most of the membership had left for home Geoff and I were treated to a graphic description of the power of nature. Bill McKenzie had been inside one of the buildings in the Moseley area of Birmingham that was severely damaged in the recent tornado. He and a workmate actually saw the twister rushing down on them, through the windows at work. With airborne debris

hurting around it the thing charged straight at the building, Bill electing wisely to head for the stairwell and get down stairs. He almost made it I understand but was able to watch as the power of the awesome wind tore the roof off the building above him and threw it and cars around in the yard outside. After the wind had gone the whole area was in chaos. One side effect is that his company car, though well protected by a strong steel fence, now needs a respray!

On the Thursday after our meeting three of us, Geoff, Gavin and I were joined by Rob our visiting Westfield driver in a trip to visit the Notts/Derby Area at the Sitwell Arms.

Rob with his daughter out for a ride, Geoff and I met at Geoff’s house and soon after we set off I got separated from the others (I wrong slotted through a housing estate) and ended up making a solo run up to Alrewas where we were to meet up with Gavin. Gavin and Dawn were awaiting me when I arrived and the threatening rain decided to keep its promise. I put up the hood very quickly with Gavin’s help and then waited for Geoff and Rob.

I should have known better, the evening had started as it intended to carry on, they couldn’t find our rendezvous, so we decided that they should head north from their present location and we would meet them en-route!

Some chance, we (I) got lost after leaving the A38 and had to retrace our steps in order to find the Sitwell Arms and after phoning Geoff expecting to hear that he and Rob were enjoying a friendly pint we discovered that they had gone even further off course and couldn’t recognise any landmarks...

We, Gavin, Dawn and I finally arrived at the Sitwell Arms and settled down with OUR beer still minus one half of our expeditious forces. I called Geoff to gloat (“Some of us were in the pub!” part of Fletcher’s speech in



Ed says: Recognise this car? August: page 32



Porridge after he had been on home leave) to discover they were still miles away. However I was able to give more guidance now we knew where they were and soon they joined us. We had a fine chat with the Notts/Derby bunch before setting off into a much drier night. A great run home down the A38, I love highway driving in Lara as well as the more traditional Spridgetey roads.

It wasn't too much after midnight when I parked Lara in her garage, either. A great night out all things considered, plenty of conversation with like minded people, just what club membership is all about I think.

(Co-incidentally, a day or two later Porridge was on the TV at home and it is hard to believe, but it was the episode I had quoted from on the phone to Geoff! "Some of us was in the pub!"...) spooky!

On the second Wednesday of the month Gavin, Geoff and I met Rob (Again with his daughter) at McDonalds for a run down south to Warwickshire.

Geoff has been having some trouble with "torque steer" when accelerating or slowing down. It became very pronounced en-route to McDees so we had the wheels off and

attacked his rear axle U bolts which were in need of a good bit o'tightening after he had fitted a lowering set to reduce the cars nose down into the tarmac attitude.

With that sorted we set off for Warwickshire's lair, somewhat later than usual. It was a much nicer evening than when we visited Notts/Derby though and we had a good "hoods down" run cross country via Coleshill, Hampton in Arden and Henley in Arden to Studley and Sambourne, where the Green Dragon lives. We parked up without even putting up the hoods "just in case" and after an evening sharing chatter and banter we had another great cross country "Bimble" back home. Poor Geoff has not been having a good time lately with his car and to cap it all his nearside headlight decided to play up so I led the way for a change. A rare chance for me to let Lara off the leash so to speak. Both Geoff and Rob in the Westfield seemed happy enough and we made good time home.

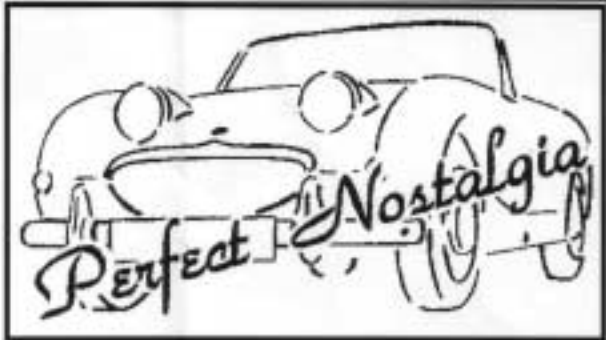
Geoff's lighting problem has been traced to bad crimped joints in the offside headlamp mini-loom, now replaced with good soldered terminals and back in business.

Bill Mohan

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STOP PRESS!

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rebuids, original
Speedwell rebuild,
modified race Sebring
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Car supplied for Ch4
TV filming

Scottish Report – Tour de Tweedsmuir



Carson will write separately and lucidly (honest!) about his stout-hearted dash (well, almost) to the edge of Northern Britain, with Arie de Best and his lovely partner, but their presence was a welcome boost to the natter – though it was more of a gnat as holiday call offs took their toll!

Our focus this month was on the cultural exchange with the NW Region – 3 Frogeyes, posh or what – so don't tell me England didn't get the best deal out of the Act of Union!! Enjoying the tousled but appealing 1930s charms of the Crook Inn at Tweedsmuir as our base, we used the flimsy excuse of the MASC greeting to eat steaks the size of 145 tyres and sluice down large gills of malt whisky – as the puce countenances of Carson (aka King Ralph) and Linda showed the next day. But I leap ahead.

Saturday 13th saw us straggle into the Inn for lunch – which is the oldest working pub in Scotland and in Ricky it had the oldest lush drinking there that night. Yes, you did hear me correctly, Ricky came on a run – instead of just waving us off at the start, he dusted off his dodgy patter and his 1757 MG Methusala (later copied in retro style by the MG Roadster). The run was full of rarities – Aileen's MG didn't overheat, Betty didn't win the quiz and I didn't have to crawl under my car to re-attach my exhaust.

We did swoop along the magnificent trilogy of Lochs that run off the Tweed Valley: Talla, Megget and St Mary's, with the colourful skein of Spridgets complementing the bright purple patchworks of heather on the hillsides.

John – or should we say Jonah, copped a flat tyre. This was spotted by the owl-eared Mark who heard the gentle hissing at a photo stop and seeing no tartan coloured Cobra, alerted the company. John put the Ferrari pit crew to shame with his speedy swapping of wheels and we were soon up on the Ettrick Moor ... well as soon as I had found the correct way – who said that just because you scope the run you should know the way! John then tried the interesting experiment of driving Scottish Hills without brakes, but decided that life was interesting enough just living with Betty. Carson spotted the opportunity of a captive audience to try out his latest draft ramble article on and gamely stayed behind to give encouragement as John fettled his calipers. The English posse had no troubles whatever. No wonder their reports are always so dull!!

Dorothy and Peter had obviously heard of my cartographical impediment and set off on their own, never getting lost once and being home for Gin while we were still catching bugs in our grilles at Capelcreuch. We soon caught up on the libation stakes however at the evening meal where the benefits of booking every room in the hotel meant we could laugh as loud as we liked and drink as long as we wanted. So we did!

Andrew and Rachael marched off with the bottle of malt prize and Bolshie Boys trophy from the dastardly quiz crafted by Lorraine. Interesting to note from an anthropological angle that the custom of sharing liquid prizes hasn't permeated south of the border.

The promise of sun was not realised on Sunday – until we had all split up for home. God isn't a Spridget owner, we all know he's Alfisti. This somewhat took away from the dabbled sunlight effect I had hoped for from the woodland routes planned, but we



nevertheless zig zagged over the Tweed and filled our faces with scrummy cake at Traquhair House. The miserable guides here wouldn't let us take a nice line up shot in front of said house for "health and safety reasons", so we ran over two of their peacocks in retribution and screeched south for the border and political asylum. Having won the virtual prize the night before for fittest couple on the run, we were all aghast when

Les and Diane languished at the bottom of the stunning Grey Mare's Tail waterfall while Chris and Mark bounded up the spiral path – adding a whole new meaning to the concept of a hill climb. And so on VJ day +60 years we motored through Moffat shunning Hondas and whistling "we'll meet again" as the company dissipated – until next year and Les' Hadrian's Wall Run.

Bob Miller

NW Area – September Report

End of July, Diane and I went to Prescott Hill Climb for the Austin Healey meeting. We joined up there with Peter and Dorothy – he went in his Ferrari! Also there were the Warwickshire lot so we said hello to them. It doesn't seem twelve months since we last met them, it was nice to say hello to Dave and Chris etc.

This is a brilliant day out. You pay £4 for a run up the hill and can go as many times as you want. Last year I had a problem with my back axle wandering a bit from side to side ($\frac{1}{4}$ elliptics) so for this time I made a Panhard rod. This appeared to make a huge difference with the back end feeling more taut,

Peter took me up the hill in his Ferrari, very nice indeed, sounds glorious.

13th/14th August we joined up with Carson and chums for an Anglo-Scot weekend. We stayed at the Croke Hotel in Tweedsmuir located in the wonderful Scottish Border country, I do like it around there. As always we had a wonderful time, that was in spite of the horrendous journey there (6 hours) and back (5 hours).

The weekend's events saw the return match for the coveted 'Balshie Boy Challenge' trophy. This was introduced for the first time last year at our Yorkshire Dales run and, although it pains me to say it, Carson's lot came out triumphant then. Well this year was a different story and thanks to the heroic efforts of Andrew and Rachael the trophy is returning home south of the border where it truly belongs. It is a bit worrying though that two highly qualified teachers new so much about TV programs from the '80's.

Bob managed to find some terrific roads for us and led the snake of cars, I think it was 9 on the Saturday and 10 on the Sunday, at a rather brisk pace! Alright for those with disc brakes but some of us are on drums all-round which can make things entertaining.

Just as an aside, I am in the process of upgrading to discs, sent my master cylinder and calipers away for refurbishment and currently rebuilding the stub axles. I was going to fit wire wheels at the same time, which will also involve shortening a spare axle case that I have, but can't really make my mind up. I do like wires but I also like my alloys. The plan was to fit wires to this car and put the alloys on my other car when it's finished so I might put off the decision till then. There's also the option of knock-on alloys, mind you at £800 for a set perhaps not.

Back to the Anglo-Scot weekend, thanks to Bob, Carson and chums for once again making us feel at home and entertaining (Ricky!!) us. Looking forward to meeting up again soon.

Well that's it, see you on 14 September – sorry I couldn't go to the August meeting.

Les

PS Did you notice there was no moaning about the BMW owners club this time, so the medication's obviously working. Incidentally when we got to Prescott the first car we saw going up the hill was a BMW – what on earth was that all about then.



Ed says: Hot on the heels of last month's Le Mans report, another!

Hampshire goes to Le Mans

So, a question, what does it take to get five frogs to Le Mans? Well the answer so far is:

2 head gaskets, 1 new head, 1 radiator, 2 wheel bearings, 1 alternator, 2 dynamo bolts, 1 distributor, 6 front suspension units, 3 radiator hoses, 2 trips on a transporter, 1 bucket of water and a sponge

What started out as a good idea one evening over a few pints has turned into a major undertaking. So the following brave souls have decided to make the trip. Lyn and Alf (green frog), Harriet and Terry (white frog), Jenny and Barry (blue frog), Chris and Alan (white frog) and Ellen and I (white frog with red rusty bits).

Luckily for us, Harriet, Terry, Lyn and Alf are all old hands at Le Mans (38 times between them) so that's a few less things to worry about. The advance party will be leaving on Tuesday to reserve a spot with the rest arriving in dribs and drabs up to Friday.

A special mention for Barry who has just completed a 3 year rebuild on his Frog and will be starting out on his journey with less than 500 miles on the clock.

Do come and visit us, we're in the Houx Annexe (should be easy to spot) and we will be more than willing to re-tell the stories of bravery, courage, determination and downright bloody mindedness that made the whole thing possible. Alternatively come along to one of the Hampshire meets, which will be less noisy, probably!!

*John Ferguson
June 2005*

ps. The bucket + sponge? A good wash was the only preparation Chris thought was required...

Stop Press – add another head gasket to the list – at the 11th hour my Frog has blown another one after only 432 miles. Will have to take Ellen's MGF (similar idea to the Frog, hood leaks like a sieve, stops working unexpectedly, mysterious rattles). If I'm lucky the others will probably be too full of alcohol to notice.



Breakfast

More Stop Press – oops, spoke to soon. Chris took his Frog for an MOT but it sadly ended in a very large rusty hole. All is not lost however, instead he will be taking his rather nice XK, a 120 fixed head coupe for those that are interested. Although Chris loves a challenge, it's not turned a wheel in the last 9 months...

Hampshire returns from Le Mans

OK, quick summary for those in a hurry: drove down, was hot, watched cars, was very hot, drank beer, was still very hot, watched more cars, drank more beer and drove home. All in all, great fun. Oh, did I mention it was hot?

So on to the extended version. I'm pleased to say that all who embarked upon this wild adventure returned safely, albeit some with a few minor dents but more on that later.

Ellen and I got off to a good start early Friday morning by almost missing the ferry, we were 3rd from last on. The look on her face was priceless when she thought she might have to reverse all the way up the loading ramp with 100s of petrol heads on the deck above ready to comment on the fairer sexes reversing ability!

Had a pleasant drive down from Caen on our own, as the rest of our happy band had arrived earlier in the week. However lots of entertainment watching the suicidal antics of our fellow countrymen – all obviously got their licences out of cornflake packets. Stopped at St. Sartine for the "Great British Welcome"



which was very pleasant where we even got to park with the interesting cars.

Arrived late afternoon on Friday, after only a few wrong turns which wasn't bad as we had no idea where the camping was. Managed to drive down every track in the campsite except the one we wanted. Eventually gave in (it was very hot and dusty) and phoned – of course they were only about 30 feet away! Luckily copious quantities of beer and tea quickly defused any sense of humour failures.

Big news on arrival was that Alf had gained a large dent in the back of his frog. He had stopped at a set of traffic lights but the following E Type Jag had not: Although still drivable the rear light lenses were broken on one side. But, in best Blue Peter style, some replacements were made out of a bottle of fizzy drink and some gaffer tape.

Luckily our group's trusty gazebo was with us – much amusement came from trying to fit 8 of us underneath it throughout the day. Every now and then someone would give up and wander off up to the circuit or go in search of supplies, thus losing a good spot under the canvas.

The weekend's racing was good, surprisingly you got used to the noise after a while. We were very keen on supporting Aston Martin until we discovered the tee-shirts were £34. It was both dustier and tattier than I expected but also quite unique. I loved watching the cars roar past in the 'relative' quiet in the early hours of the morning.

Lots of fireworks as well, although we could have done without the impromptu display at 4 in the morning. It was so hot you had to vacate the tent by about 8am, which is rather early for me.

Chris and Alan get the award for the longest walk – they made their way all the way up to Arnage in the middle of the night. Both of

course were sporting their new shorts which Lyn and Jenny had spent ages selecting for them, on an impromptu shopping trip, having discovered the chaps had forgotten to bring any!

All drove back on Monday morning in convoy through interesting windy roads. Highlights included stopping at a cafe with no bread or pastry for breakfast (got chokky bikkys instead so all were mollified) and amusing the locals in one small town by driving around in ever decreasing circles trying to escape. I'm pleased to report that everyone made it home without incident.

Snippets

Overheard Comments: On boarding the ferry, 'oh wow, smell the testosterone' and just before dinner, 'would anyone like to feel Lyn's peaches?'

Painful Decisions: Chris deciding to accept a lift in a BMW rather than walk the 5 miles back from Arnage at 2 in the morning.

Best Expletives: Alf realising that his brakes were much better than those of the following Jaguar E Type

Momentous Moment: Terry almost deciding to miss the finish for the first time in 28 years as it was just too darn hot.

Best Exhaust: Hotly contested but as this is my report it has to be the Corvettes, sorry Harriet.

Catering Event: Barry who managed to fall asleep while sitting up watching the BBQ.

So will we do it again? The answer is yes – already organising to take the frog next year, just have to get through another MOT, but as they say, that's another story.

John Ferguson

PS I should of course mention that the fairer sex can reverse most excellently in our household – am I allowed back in the house now, please?



Cambridgeshire Report

Another great month with lots going on in Cambridgeshire, first we had a stand at the Kimbolton Castle Charity Classic.

This is a wonderful event in a great setting with a huge number of classic and interesting cars, stalls and exhibits covering everything from sailing, wood carving, garden furniture, an owl display to exotic cheeses (too hot to buy any though) not to mention the blind quad bike drivers and Morris dancers. This great event attracts thousands of visitors and raises vast amounts for good causes as well as generating a lot of fun and enjoyment.

Next a few of our guys joined up with Chris (from the London mob) for the Silverstone Classic. Chris organised infield parking for MASC members and access to the pits and other interesting areas (thanks Chris). I was unable to attend however judging by the photos and comments from those who did we will be negotiating with Chris to make this a joint London and Cambridgeshire event for next year (joint events are good, twice the attendance, half the work and three times the fun). Another of our guys attended the Silverstone MG day the previous week and maybe a few MASC members from other areas so we could probably fill a decent sized MASC area between us.

Next came the 12th annual BL/BMC Rally, a truly wonderful day, and one of Cambridgeshire's little secrets, for although this is a national event open to all BL/BMC cars and does attract hundreds as well as 30

or more genuine autojumble stalls it is not advertised and more or less relies on word of mouth. Properly advertised this has the potential to be one of the biggest and best classic events in the country. Next year the event will be under new management who may well exploit its potential a little more. The other great thing about this event is that throughout its 12-year history it has always fallen on a dry sunny day. We had a record attendance with eleven assorted Spridget's turning out, it was especially nice to meet Anita and Mark (of Yorkshire MASC fame), and to see the Guys from Coventry and Nottingham again. We kidnapped one stray Midget, which turned out to be local and so a potential new member, and had several enquiries from other potential new MASC members who visited our stand.

There were a number of other Sprites and Midgets at the Rally on other stands, in fact there was one on the stand adjacent to ours (the owner of which kept casting longing glances at our exclusive M&S group). There were some great cars on show (besides the Spridgets) a lovely E type roadster parked directly behind my Sprite on another neighbouring stand, we had other stands on three sides of our patch and had taken advantage of the adjoining commercial vehicle stand to shelter our gazebo from the breeze. There was a brilliant white Bentley from the 1930s and a range of incredible Mini derivatives including a shortened two seater convertible, a camper van, and another open Mini with a conventional front but with almost no other body panels apart from floor and custom rear mudguards. There were the inevitable Minis and 1100s with matching trailers made from cut down cars (you wonder if they should maybe have saved both cars) and the shiny show cars together with every BMC car you could think of. In the past I have managed to find some real bargains and rare parts I had been looking for for ages in the auto jumble, however the rebuild is at the bodywork stage at the moment and I currently have all but one last panel in stock so no auto jumble for me.



Nigel on the other hand managed to find the correct original Frogeye jack handle (that he had been searching the World for for months) in perfect condition at a very good price although he did spend a lot of the day sifting through the auto jumble (but what a prize). I think everyone had a good day as usual in the August sunshine, I know I did, meeting up with old and new friends and potential new members at this great venue.

Next came the Mad cat meeting, I was dissuaded from taking the Sprite due to the weather forecast and so was surprised to see a silver Sebring replica awaiting our arrival at the Mad Cat. The Sebring belonged to one of the people who had visited our stand at Ferry Meadows so it was great that they had followed this up by attending a pub meeting. It turns out the couple in the Sebring have a collection of several Spridget's and other classic cars and have been involved in some major world class car events, so we had quite a chat. Now the main item on the agenda (not that we have an agenda) was planning

the additional run to Dave's fish and chip shop in Sheringham on September the 11th . While I was engaged in chatting to our new recruits a good group of our stalwarts arrived. Mick had taken the trouble to research a list of interesting places to visit en route to Sheringham (thanks Mick) and the ladies sat round a large table and planned the run between them (that's what I call teamwork). I was left with just the task of coming up with a silly name for the run and producing the rally plates.

This is a bit short notice since we squeezed this extra run in at the last minute however details are as follows; – Meet at Swaffham Safeways car park (near the wind turbine) for a 10am start, visiting Holt for coffee followed by a visit to the Muckleburgh Collection then on to Dave's in Sheringham for the best fish and chips in the known universe, at 4.30pm.

See you all at the Mad Cat.

Dave Dixon

Bristol Area Report

Fear not, I will keep it brief. Our July meeting at the Star at Pucklechurch saw a repeat of our summer evening runs out to the Vine Tree at Norton to meet up with our Wiltshire based members. Joining us for the first time was Philip Sellen who is well into the final stages of returning his Midget MkII to the road. Chairperson, J.R. gave Phil a taste of what he has been missing whilst his Midget has been in pieces. A ride in the passenger seat of John's Midget MkII through the beautiful Gloucestershire/Wiltshire countryside must have given Phil the final impetuous to get his Midget back on the road. Not sure if Phil was aware that J.R.'s Midget is a well modified example, please don't be disappointed if the performance and handling isn't quite as good as the MASC supremo's MkII.

Another run will have come and gone between me writing this and you reading it, such is the disposition of our monthly gatherings, deadline and publication dates. All contrive to make our quick decisions a matter of been and gone by the time *Mascot* flops

through your letterbox. Hence, I plan to fire off some local newsletters plus phone rounds to advise local members of any impending gatherings and events that we have suddenly discovered.

I made an appeal a couple of issues ago for local members to register with me if they wish to be included in our rapid communications service. The response was, to say the least, rather minimal, but thanks to those few who did. So, one final rallying cry, if you do want to be included in the Bristol area rapid communications service (BARCS) then please contact me with your name, address and phone number. Me being – Terry Horler, 63 Littledean, Yate, Bristol BS37 8UQ. 01454-881770.

Other than that, we continue to meet at the Star at Pucklechurch on the second Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm if we are leaving on a run, or 8.00pm if we are not. You should register with BARCS to find out which it may be or anything else that we may be up to.

Terry Horler



Yorkshire Report



Nice line up at Hillam



August natter



Jacob's Midget



Midget car park MGCC Silverstone

In – Between Meeting

13 people with 9 Spridgets attended our first in-between meeting at The Chequers Inn, Dalton on Tees on Wednesday 27th July and another 2 came the day after. Oops! Tim followed Mark and I for the tops-down drive up to find Alan Anstead (yes, all the way from Kent!), Arthur, Andrew, Lisa and Rob from Whitley Bay and John from Darlington already there. Alan was in Leeds for a week's bodywork course. He didn't bring a Spridget but he did bring some photos of a European Run he did 2 or 3 or years ago. I was very cross about forgetting the camera again as I wanted to get some pictures of Lisa's 1500 with its famous leopard spot seat covers. John was just back from a driving holiday in Ireland and came along in his Frogeye leaving Susan at home babysitting their granddaughter. Mike's seriously low Midget arrived soon after as did Geoff and his son in the Frogeye. Jim in his MK1 Midget was the last to arrive that evening. Andrew passed on apologies from Chris and Jean. They'd had a last minute chance for a holiday so were elsewhere. We won't be seeing Andrew for a

while, as he'll be back on a 4-month duty soon. As usual the evening passed too quickly and we all went our separate ways. Mike followed Mark and I down as far as Thirsk with a fantastic full moon lighting the way.

August Natter

August 4th saw an unbelievable 28 of us turn up at The Cross Keys at Hillam, near Monk Fryston. As usual Arthur was already there in his Frogeye, this time bringing his brother Roy. Tim and Sarah, Jason and Michelle and Shawn were inside ordering food with Nick M whom we haven't seen since the Daffodil Run. We were soon joined by Geoff and Pauline from the Yorkshire Centre of the MG Car Club in their white Midget. I'd given them details of the meeting when I met them at MGCC Silverstone (see 'Other'). Mandy had decided to join Mick as her choir is on its summer break. They are both looking forward to getting the restoration of their Midget restarted soon. It was good to see Ian and Claire at one of our meetings. We keep bumping into them at events. Claire was wearing her MG earrings bought at a recent



show. Mike arrived soon after and it turns out he and Mick were at school together. Tom, whom we 'met' on the BBS recently, wants to buy a Midget so spent a lot of time out in the car park looking at the different examples on show. Simon and Sarah and Nick and Jo arrived soon after. Then Nigel and Sue and Matt and Lizzie. Taffy and Jayne came in the Frogeye that he has owned for 25 years. We met them recently at an open day held at a Buddhist retreat. Nigel and Sue had set out in rain in a newly acquired black 1500 Midget. They decided to go home and change car when the back window blew out. We still managed 11 Spridgets and a ZR. A big 'Thank You' to all for coming to the natters and making them so enjoyable.

Other

Mark and I went to Oulton Park for the annual MGCC race meeting in July. Andrew from the NW area was there in his newly taxed and tested Frogeye and we met Ian in his Midget again. There were more Midgets this year for the parade lap that was run on the full circuit. We had an enjoyable day watching Spridget racing and chatting with the drivers in the paddock.

A new series of Heartbeat is due to start soon and you are guaranteed to see a Midget in episode 4, 'A Miller's Tale'.

Yorkshire MASC attended MGCC Silverstone. Folk there during the weekend were Tim and Sarah, Mike, Shawn and Daniel, Matt and his brother and us. On Saturday Mark was racing a friend's 1936 PB Midget and finished 3rd

in class under the handicap system. On Sunday Mark and I were on Midget car park duty giving us ample opportunity to meet and chat with other Spridget owners despite the pouring rain. We met 3 lads from Durham in their 2 Midgets down for the California Cup auto tests. A few of us met up in the beer tent at lunchtime to try and dry out. Gary L and Nick and Laura from the CZ, Bob from Croydon and Shawn and us from Yorkshire.

Mark and I visited Silverstone again the following Saturday for the Classic. We had a great day out enjoying the racing. Saw a Jacobs Midget and other fantastic historic cars.

We drove the Midget the 130 miles down to Ferry Meadows on 7th August and met some of the Cambridge MASC folk. Good to meet David, Rob, and Nigel and Diane in their superb Frogeye. Also chatted to Ian from Coventry about his Sebring conversion project. KCY killed her radiator on the way home so we were very efficiently recovered home courtesy of my insurance policy.

Better go and pack for our holiday to the States! Hope to bring back some Spridget photos.

Next Meetings

Thursday 1st September – Black Horse, Askwith, Otley LS21 2JQ

Thursday 6th October – Old Bells Inn, High Street, Campsall, Doncaster DN6 9AG

Anita

Tin-Top Sprite (AKA This month's cover photo)

This example in Gardenia White is the first of two Innocenti Coupes we brought into the UK in April of this year.

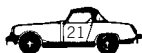
The Coupe was produced between '67 and '69 in small numbers by OSI. Most authorities say the total produced was between 400 and 700. However from our research we would be surprised if this number actually reached 400.

Our white car is a very early model, being built in March '67, with the 1098 engine. They are a very unusual car, very similar in appearance to our 950 Spider from 1961, but with many differences, such as being

almost 6 inches longer (all behind the seats before the back axle) and some 3 inches wider.

Interior trim is virtually as the "S" models of the Spider except for some unique carpeting instead of rubber mats (no, these were quite different to the ones in the Frogeye!).

They were pretty expensive at the time (1,044,200 lire in Feb '69); more than a Fiat 850 Sport Coupe (1,043,700) and a Fiat-Abarth 695 SS (963,157) and this might well account for its low production figures. However, the Innocenti Coupe was still



cheaper than more exotic marques – an Alfa Romeo GT 1300 Junior, for example was listed at 1,688,000 and a Lancia Fulvia Coupe Rallye 1.3 at 1,658,020 lire.

These figures might seem fairly meaningless at first, until you start making comparisons with “non-home manufactured” vehicles ie. Imports ...

Both the 1275 Sprite MkIV and Midget MkIII were priced at 1,550,000 and a Mini Cooper

“S” was priced at 1,855,000 ... so at the time, you really did have to love British cars to own one in Italy. We know which we would have bought if we’d been in Italy in the late ‘60s with 1.7 million lire to spend!

Anyway work is progressing on our red example (more news later) and then we’ll be completing this white version.

**Barry Lowe and Jill Taylor
Ilkley Innocentis**

3rd Carsoni Ramble

From last month’s trailer about the Irish question, the question of Guinness follows: is it the source of exquisite insights from the fourth pint downed and does ‘the blarney’ spring from the bottom of an emptied glass, then spreads like wildfire through the atmosphere to touch the essential character of an entire people and, if so, what impact does the atmosphere have on under age drinking? Sadly, these questions will not now be researched because of family illness. So our Midget tour round Eire and the North has been cancelled, which is a particular shame having bought a copy of *Carson: The Man Who Divided Ireland* a book recommended to me to carry everywhere, especially if I wanted to chat with strangers and make new Irish friends.

Against this background of disappointment, a positive sensation occurred when I got a phone call from Holland, from an unknown Midgeteer, Arie de Best, who said that he was coming over to Scotland, with his girlfriend Marissa, to attend our monthly natter. ‘Holy cow!’ I thought ‘This megalomania stuff really is all right!’

When we met, I knew right away that Arie was my kind of guy although half my age and the beautiful Merissa, well, she had forgotten to bring the detailed road map to find Torrance, but she had remembered all the directions! How do you do that kind of thing, I ask, when I still have to consult a penciled map from home to the bus stop? I’m all right from the bus to home, for some reason.

Arie’s car is great. It’s a 1500 R/B stripped conversion with a 5 speed box the first of which failed when he tried to get to John O’Groats when he was over a couple of years ago. Now he was back to try again, this time,

with another 5 speeder which he had done a repair on and changed the diff only hours before rolling onto the ferry for Newcastle with grease still on his arms.

I had always wanted to go to John O’Groats, and as Linda granted me dispensation from the family crisis, with teen wolf my step-son as passenger, the two wee cars did that; they drove to John O’Groats. Not the biggest thing that ever happened certainly, but very pleasing to the four of us.

This unintended trip, with yet more new friends from Holland, seems to link Scotland with the Dutch ever more and more. It’s very exciting and I hope this continues so that we can build on it throughout the entire Club.

It would be good if someone could go to Richard Rieksen’s Midget event in September at Overdinkel. But, if none can do that, would anyone like to join us next year and meet Richard and his friends when they come over in a variety of old cars? Things happen when you make them happen.

Carsoni

Ed says: Who’s this Italian bloke and what’s he done with Carson?

Mystery cars

Mike, your secret is safe with me! It’s a 1934 Alvis speed twenty and it was huge. The driver was to scale. Six feet seven, at least! **Carson.**

Ed says: Well done Carson. I was sure of the Jaguar and took a fairly good shot (I thought) at the back of that ‘30s tourer. Nobody else pick me up on it?



The Pendine Dash



In West Wales there is a great lack of events for MGs in general, and Midgets and Sprites in particular. So when the first MG event was organised by the Pembrokeshire MG Car Club, I put my name down for it. As a first event it was a modest affair but great fun as it turned out.

The meet up was at the services at the end of the M4 and we had a gentle amble through some good Carmarthenshire country to the coffee stop near Narberth. There were 73 of us with 8 Midgets. After coffee, we set off and we had our lunch stop at Cresswell Quay on the upper reaches of Milford Haven. This place was fantastic. There was a quaint pub and sitting on the quay we were all



entertained by the antics of a very obese man in a canoe!

After lunch we set off for Pembroke via Carew Castle. Great photo stop. Then we went along the absolutely stunning south coast to Tenby and finally on to the end at Pendine, scene of the pre-war speed attempts.

The museum has "Babs" on display. This was the car that laid buried in the sand for 30 years before being dug out and restored.

It was a super event and I hope that there is another one next year.



David Hill



My First Track Day



*Ed says: Pit lane garage shot MMmmm.....
(what's in YOUR garage?)*

When I restored my 1967 Midget, I had no intentions of keeping it standard, there are enough standard Midgets and Sprites about for the purists. I intended to modify mine as a fast road car, with all the modifications I could, to make it handle and perform to modern(ish) standards. While I have always been connected with the motor trade, I had never undertaken a project this big. My wife and I found the car in a barn in Cornwall while on holiday. It took 3 years to totally rebuild it using a very second hand rwa shell. The car now has a well tuned 1380 engine with 45 weber, 5 speed gearbox and telescopic suspension. I have done quite a lot to the suspension lately, as I always felt the rear end was a little 'loose' shall we say. I raised the rear spring front brackets so the car sits lower on the springs, fitted polybushes all round, Gaz rear shocks, and a frontline front kit with lowering washers. The car was now getting somewhere near where I wanted it.

Earlier in the year I was talking to MG's on track. They contacted me to tell me about a beginners evening at Donnington. Three 20-minute sessions for £60, I couldn't go wrong. And even if the car was a dog, I wasn't going to get in anyone's way! The trackday was due the week after the superb Daffodil Run around north Yorkshire. I did several hundred miles that weekend without a problem, things were looking good.

I decided to drive the car to the track. I could have trailered it, but decided against it. It was a club night in Huddersfield that night, and I figured I may be able to get back in time. I filled the car with Shell Ultimax, stiffened the shocks up, inflated the tyres to 28 psi, and off I went. I left in plenty of time, and got to the track early. There was a commercial track day on during the day, ours was an evening event. The people out on the track were really going for it. A TVR spun twice while racing an M3, and generally the driving standards looked frightening. It was soon time for our briefing. To the uninitiated, this came across as a little daunting. There were a lot of rules. I have been involved with motorcycle racing, and had actually done a trackday at Donnington on a superbike, so I already knew most of the stuff. The main thing was that there was to no overtaking in braking zones or corners. You had to overtake on the left, and only when the car in front had seen you coming and recognised it by indicating. I know it was my first time, but all the same, I had come to get maximum fun, and to learn whether I had made a good job of building a sports car. I chose a pit garage and unloaded everything that wasn't bolted down. I like to keep my car almost show car clean. It attracted a lot of attention as most of the pit was full of modern MG's. I think people were thinking of it as cute, not knowing about the (little) beast within.

I decided that I would like to be as close to the front as possible behind the safety car, that way, I didn't have to wait for very nervous looking ladies to indicate to let me past. They had enough to think about for the first few laps without watching their mirrors. The track was ever so slightly damp, and a little greasy. The safety car sped up on the second lap, I was following him as close as I could to see his lines. As he pulled off the track, I gave my little car all it had. I know my car is not slow, it regularly hits 65 in second gear, the engine is well balanced with a lightened flywheel and wedged nitrided crank. It is high revving and smooth, if not a little loud. The first corner was at the end of the start straight, I slowed and selected the right



gear, turned in, and to my surprise, no understeer or oversteer, it was fantastic! There was a little oversteer at the exit of the old hairpin, but it was easily controlled, as in, keep your foot in until it stopped! The rest of the corners were a little tricky to master, but I had booked a session with an instructor, so I just wanted to learn more about the car before I got him on board. I just got to about 100 mph in 4th down the straight, dropping to 2nd for the chicane. On the way out of the chicane onto the start straight, the car was slightly sideways, with the tyre squealing all the way through 2nd until I changed into 3rd. I felt like a race driver. After 3 laps, I was seriously into slower traffic. I admit to turning my headlights on to let them know I was coming, but was later told that this is bad form. Either no-one was trying very hard, or Midgets are quick on a track. MGB's were slaughtered on the straights, and modern front wheel drive Rover MG's were not much more difficult to pass. The instruction was really good. He told me that I was taking motorcycle lines, and put me right. The laps were much smoother after that, and I could carry a lot more speed on to the straights. I eventually reached 105mph on the long straight. After 20 minutes the brakes were fading badly at the chicane. I run greenstuff pads, drilled Brembo discs, synthetic fluid and aeroquip hoses. I have since been told to change to Mintex 1155's and new Castrol srf fluid. The Lotus guys had cancelled, so it turned into an open pit lane for the full 3 hours. I only managed 20 minutes at a

time, so I wouldn't damage the brakes. There were a few imposters, two Lotus Elise, and a brand new Caterham 1.6 (which I passed!). I was only passed by one of the Elise, and a V6 MG ZS, though I let the ZS past as he was getting into a braking zone. No doubt, there were cars which just happened not to be on the track at the same time as me, and everyone was supposed to be a first timer, but it still felt good all the same.

I am in no way bragging about my abilities, I am simply letting everyone that doesn't know already, that our cars make great track tools. Mine certainly seemed to be foolproof, even when I braked far too late and arrived at corners sideways, it still looked after me. I have booked another evening at Donington on the 5th of August. This time I am taking a friend as a second driver so the experience can be shared.

Oh, and I made the meeting at Huddersfield within an hour of leaving the track. I must apologise to Mark for my excited ranting, I was on a high for a long time. I stripped the car the next day. The brakes were perfectly OK, no glazed pads or cracked discs, and the tyres were not worn at all. Over an hour and half on track and all I used was half a tank of fuel.

I learned a great deal about myself and my car that I could not possibly have learned on the road. I feel a great deal more confident when pressing on now.

Shawn Moore
Yorkshire Group

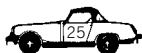
A Long Time Goal

As all good yarns it is better to start at the beginning and this saga as it became is no exception.

It was some seven years ago in 1998 I first had the strange idea of supercharging my frogeye 9086NX. I started researching all the information I could and reading the report on the supercharged midget in the *Mascot* magazine just spurred me on. Then of course the unthinkable happened I had a rush of blood to the head and did the unthinkable I sold 9086NX to a friend from Bangor, North Wales, and within a couple of weeks regretted

ever selling it. Well moving the story on in November of 2002 I started to look for a new project frogeye to restore, and in December of 2003 I found one at The Frogeye Spare Co. I borrowed a friend's trailer (with the friend) and purchased 881 LMH in a very sorry state she was too, and proceeded to restore her which I finished in January 2004.

In the rebuild I decided to fit 881 LMH with a 1275 engine, which I managed to get a respectable 110BHP from as the car was only to be used on the roads. Now driving 881 LMH around the obsession with a





had to go in the Frogeye to collect it). The elusive crank found which I hasten to add was in very good condition.

All the main parts collected I proceeded to change the head and block from nine stud to eleven stud, this done I took the stripped engine to Malvern Re-bores for them to undertake the necessary machining and balancing of the component parts, when I arrived at Fred's workshops (Malvern Re-bore) and told him what I was going to do with this engine, to say the very least he was amused and asked if I had any experience in low level flying?

supercharged engine returned to me, so the hunt for information began once more. I now had a new tool at hand the internet which speeded up the collection of information no end; I started to look for a Shorrock supercharger but to no avail, I then found a web site for High Performance Products (of Australia) the company is owned by Hans Pedersen, I decided to purchase a supercharger kit for the A series engine from him as he will supply the complete package for you, with regards to manifolds, pulleys, supercharger, carb. and filter, which saves a lot of time getting every thing in one package.

The supercharger was the easy bit. Undertaking the hardest part was yet to come, I made a list of the parts I would need for the heart of my Frogeye:

- A basic engine block with head
- New Kent 266 cam
- Mini turbo pistons
- New timing gear
- New oil pump

And all the other little bits and pieces you need to rebuild a race engine and oh yes the small matter of an EN40B crank as the EN16 standard crank just would not cut in.

Well some six months later spending every evening looking for this elusive crank one was found outside Coventry. Now have I mentioned I live on Anglesey North Wales not exactly central for picking up parts, well an expedition to collect the crank was undertaken which took the a whole weekend (of course I

The engine having been machined, the crank been night ridden and balanced, I proceeded to build the new beast. The engine finished I removed the existing engine and fitted the new purpose-built engine for the supercharger. This done the supercharger manifolds and carb were fitted; a modification to the front end of the bonnet had to be done to accommodate an air intake for the carb. At the REAR of the supercharger, all this done the beast was brought to life (for about 90 seconds) it fired and ran then a rather loud squeal was heard, this was the belt squealing over the superchargers pulley as the supercharger had seized. After getting over the shock I stripped off the supercharger and manifolds and decided to fit the Dellorto off the old engine to see if the engine at least was running OK. Happily the engine ran well, so my attention turned to the supercharger, which was seized solid, after stripping the carb off I found that their was only one screw



in the butterfly spindle so logic dictates the other screw must be the source of the seized supercharger.

One phone call later and the supercharger and carb were winging their way back to Australia.

After several phone calls and emails later a new supercharger was dispatched from Australia, but only a new screw supplied by SU for the carb.

The supercharger and carb. Arrived back some two months after they were first returned to Australia. On inspection, the supercharger was a factory new unit and there lies the fault, Hans Pederson had the unit shipped to me with no oil feed pipe connections and blanking studs fitted just the

factory plastic bungs in the holes (he has posted these items by air mail). The carb. **with the new screw** fitted was inspected, no chance been taken this time, which was fortunate, as both the butterfly fixing screws were loose. I would have thought as the screw was the cause of the demise of the first supercharger these items would have been fitted correctly (not panned over). To take no chances this time I have soldered the screws into the butterfly spindle. Still awaiting the oil supply fittings from Australia.

**Ken Jones
Isle of Anglesey**

Ed says: Super story (och!) thanks Ken. More to come as it's not quite finished, watch this space.

What's in Your Garage

Mike – I love the new feature running at the moment, 'What's in yours' I thought you might be interested in my garage.

You will notice that my garage isn't what you call large, in fact if I owned a Rubber Bumpered Midget, I could get the car in but I wouldn't be able to open the doors! My Frog fits in snugly, with inches to spare. However I am unable to carry out any major work on the car in the comfort of the garage, only minor tinkering can be undertaken. You can see from the photo that the garage also doubles up as a store: a works hardtop hangs suspended from the roof on a custom made framework, my son's competition BMX bike hangs on the wall (it's worth nearly as much as the Frog) and an assortment of miscellaneous Frog / Midget bits are boxed up and stacked on the shelving. Comfort for those cold winter nights comes in the form of an electrical tubular heater, and a high grade woollen carpeted floor (shame about the colour but it was free). Whilst my garage is compact, its as big as I can make it, so I have to make do, I would love a double garage but would have to move house – I think I will struggle on with my 'midget garage'. It's a good job I didn't buy a bigger classic car like an Aston or a Lotus!!!



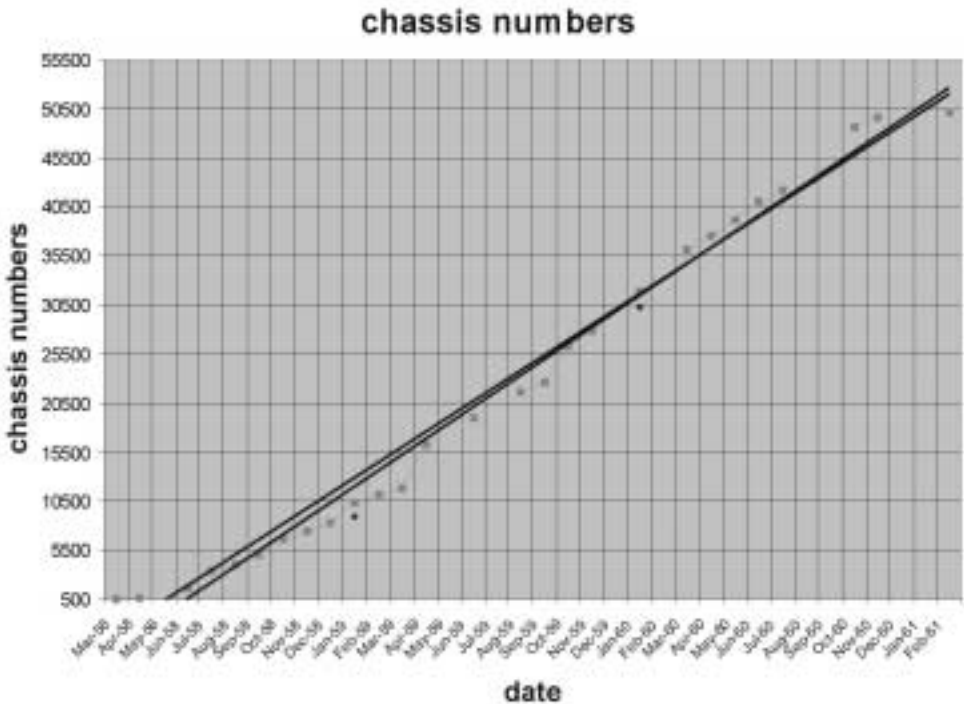
Pete Downton, Dorset Area

*Ed says: **Great frog-sized garage, I love it!***



Numbers – When is a Frog not a Frog?

Inspired by the “Frog Letter” from Steve Naczkowski in July 2005 *Mascot*



Steve Naczkowski’s Frog letter in the July 2005 *Mascot* raises some interesting points. I would think that unfortunately, it is almost impossible to trace the original history of such a vehicle. As well as the Frogeye Car Company, it was also quite possible to modify a later Spridget to look like a Mark I Sprite. Nowadays with the better spares situation it must be possible to build a complete car from spares.

What may help is to go back to 1958 and review the process of how Mark I Sprites were made. This topic is admirably covered in Lord Horler’s superlative ‘Original Sprite and Midget’ book. To recap, life begins with what we would now call a floor pan, at John Thompson Motor Pressings of Wolverhampton. This was then sent down the country to the Pressed Steel factory at Swindon to obtain the car’s outer body

panels. We would now see this sent on to the BMC/Morris Motors company at Cowley for painting. Finally finishing its journey at the late MG factory at Abingdon for final assembly.

There can’t be many cars that were produced that travel around 150 miles before turning any wheels! During this process the Frog gained four identification markings. The first and possibly the most important to identify an original Frog was a number stamped on the right hand footwell panel. No namby-pamby flimsily aluminium strip held on with two tiny screws here. This looks like the work of the Black Country John Thompson Motor Pressings. The number does approximate to the final chassis number, although for several reasons it will not be the actual chassis number. From this first marking to the finished car, we now acquired another three



identifications somewhere between Wolverhampton and Abingdon. There is a plate on the left hand door pillar (not a number that means anything), a similar plate on the right hand door pillar (carried a body number) and a chassis (or VIN) plate on the left hand side of the engine compartment. You have to remember that some of the markings were for internal use and using body numbers and chassis numbers didn't make much sense when making your first monocoque sports car. Another important

point to realise is that it would be some way through the production process before the car was destined to become LHD or RHD or a kit (CKD) to be assembled in Australia or Italy.

It is possible to draw an approximate graph of chassis numbers / dates. On average 450 cars were made each week. If the footwell stamping can be read then a rough guide (can I emphasise a rough guide) can be found of when the car was made.

Martin Sidebotham

Small World Isn't It

See Hampshire report on Le Mans: Ed



I was prepping the above story and thought I recognised Lyn and Alf's green Frogeye (Met Green Frogeye with a portaloo on the back, no dent?). YES, I did, it was June 1992, Thursday before the race and our convoy was running through France en route to our first overnight. Pretty much off the boat Alf and Lyn tie up with us and we ran in convoy for most of the early morning.

About 10.30/11am we halt the convoy for a comfort stop and to our surprise Alf and Lyn stop with us! Obviously we walked over to admire the side bonnet clips and the excellent paint finish and to commend them on taking their own toilet to the campsite. If you've been you'll know why!! In turn Alf was kind enough

to comment on my screen top mirror as a way to clear a packed rack. In the photo you can see Ed (2nd from right) talking to Alf and asking if they are also going to LeMans? "Why yes, we are" Alf replies. Ed says "So why are you following us, we're not going there, we're off to our Hotel?"

Slightly bemused, Alf says, "Just thought you knew a better

route"!! We parted with a wave. We were to see Alf and Lyn on and off for the next 3/4 yrs either getting on/off the boat or early on the Thursday morning cruising through the French countryside heading south from Caen. I remember seeing them the following year with a screen top mounted mirror. Imitation is the sincerest means of flattery. Alf has now taken that idea to new heights, see report.

So 'small world', at the time I wasn't even a member of MASC, who would have thought our paths would cross all these years later.

Ed

NB: Have you got a **small world** Spridget story? Letters and photos to Ed please.



Wheeling and Body Panel Course at Leeds College

On 18th July 2005 I attended Leeds College (www.lct.ac.uk) to participate in a week long course on Wheeling and body panel making.

This came about through an exchange of emails with Mike Coman a lecturer at the College and contributor to Practical Performance Car Magazine. I was wanting to expand on my knowledge and skills developed on a Classic Car Restoration Course some years ago so e-mailed Mike to see if he knew of such a course in my locality as I had failed to find one via the web. Mike, who is modifying a Midget and soon to fit a K-series engine, suggested a week's summer course at Leeds College.

The college also run courses in GRP and spraying.

The course was over a full five days with but a half hour for lunch. Terry, our tutor, had learnt his skills making buses before turning to teaching. There were eight pupils on this course two of whom had flown over from Belfast especially. All were car enthusiasts bar one.

The course taught panel beating using wooden formers and leather sandbags and "bucks". Hollowing, raising and planishing of metal using various hammers, mallets and hardened "dollies". Wiring of panel edges was taught.

There was no classroom learning as it was all 'hands on' from the start. First off a bonnet power bulge was beaten out and then a wheeling machine was introduced to smooth the metal before a flanged edge was added. All the panels made throughout the week started off as flat sheet metal. Next was the forming of a motor cycle mudguard and the first signs of blistered and cut hands.

A trailer wheel arch followed formed of two pieces of sheet steel welded together. A crash course in oxyacetylene welding was given to those with no prior experience. The edges of the assembled panel were then wired using hammer and dolly. The last task was to make an E-type Jaguar rear nearside lower wing section from two pieces of steel.

With little time to spare and at the request of one of our group, aluminium welding was also taught.

Hammering metal all day was tiring but I found the energy, on the Wednesday night, to attend a meeting of the Yorks group of MASC at Darnley on Tees where I had a most enjoyable evening.

Alan

Ed says: Evening classes? Obviously a great way to gain new skills. Thanks for the insight Alan.

Letters

Blue Ball Thank you

Just thought I'd write a few lines to thank those members at the Blue Ball, Tadworth last month for their welcome. I drove my green Frogeye up from Eastbourne to meet everyone there and to find kindred spirits. I used to be a member of the club, but being a social person and living as I do near the south coast, I was a bit disappointed to find that monthly club meetings too far away to be practical. There's a nice pub opposite a pond in Lindfield Sussex, called the White Horse. If there are any owners living in the south that fancy a pint please give me a call, perhaps we can arrange a regular monthly get together!! In the meantime I will return to the fold and re-join!

John Hendrusson (01323) 845830

Ed says: Sounds like a nice place to meet, so give John a ring!





Black Horse Chesham 14.8.05

Hew Hertfordshire Area?

Could this be the start of something big? Two MASC reps at the Black Horse PH in Chesham Vale, Bucks, for a Sunday pub lunch. They are Mark (who came with his co-pilot, Jen) and Steve who was let out alone. There should have been three Spridgets, but I had a flat battery (came in the tin top). There should have been four Spridgets but Gary was partying elsewhere. There should have been five Spridgets, but Mick

sold his super-duper special and was trying to collect his new Frogeye (he's got it now!). So, who are these Guys? We all live in Herts or Bucks (apart from Gary who is a Londoner and Steve who comes from Pinner) and are trying to start some club movement in this area. At the moment Sunday lunch is the proposed time with the involvement of some light driving activity included. We hope to meet once a month or so. If this sounds interesting to you drop an e-mail to either Mark Hall; MarkDHall@aol.com or to Chris Jackson; chrispat@holwell8.freemove.co.uk

Chris Jackson

IOW Frogeye comeback

I'm not sure why but I just typed Healey Frogeye into Google and found your site. I too have an Island car, which I bought from Keith in 1990, one of the reasons for buying it was its no rust worries quality. This has proved beneficial as it was rested for a number of years under an apple tree – and is none the worse. I had planned to get it back on the road for this summer but had problems getting a new clutch plate (Keith modified the chassis so that a Toyota 5 speed box would fit) having ordered a new plate at the beginning of April, it finally arrived the other week. I have therefore taken the opportunity to tidy it up again and tackle a number of mods that have waited some time. So I will have to wait a little longer before enjoying it once more.

Mike Bennett

Ed says: Nice to have another back on the road, well done Mike.

Seen Abroad

The US trip was not a complete failure after the performance that the F1 boys failed to produce. But I met some of the best race pundits in the world who were moaning about driving 2 hours to watch this, until they caught my best Kentish accent and immediately felt a little more pleased with their lot.

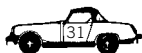
Still I did find this nice Midget that belongs to George Moore, who lives in Indianapolis. He and his father have owned it since new. The car is unrestored and was proudly on display at the downtown concours. The car was rubbing shoulders with some very exotic motors ... Indianapolis does put on a brilliant race weekend and the monument square, smack in the middle of town is closed for the concours. There were also several police escorted parades for car clubs such as Ferrari and Jaguar It was good to meet George and chat about his car



The museum out at the circuit was worth a visit, it is full of race cars from all ages and apparently there are many more in the family private car collection. I do like the look of those big stock cars, maybe one day I will go back and watch some proper racing, as I was advised by the ex F1 fans over a Fosters to drown our sorrows. Apparently open wheel racing is not for proper men (I think that is the most PC I can make it).

Martin Bird

*Ed says: Thanks for remembering the little supported **Seen Abroad** feature. Fancy meeting a Midget owner at Indianapolis! As it appears that you're the only MASC member that travels abroad with a camera I suppose that's it for another year for this feature... goad goad*



Propeller Shaft Installation

June's edition of *Mascot* carried a useful article by John Davies on how to install the propeller shaft on pre-GAN6 spridgets. As an owner of a GAN3 MK II Midget (1964), which is currently undergoing the latter stages of a well over due rebuild, I am familiar with the potential difficulty in trying to mate the shaft with the gearbox in an enclosed tunnel. Reading John's article, I felt quite pleased with myself for already having identified the "original" method of installation from an official manual. However, when it came to mating the two, I decided there may be another way around the problem which I thought might be worth sharing with you. Initially I assessed the aperture of the lubricating hole in the tunnel, the difficulty in getting a clear view of the front joint, working the screwdriver into position, rotating the shaft until it was in a position to manoeuvre it onto the third motion shaft. I could tell this was going to be a fiddly exercise and it was at this point that I devised what I thought was a cunning plan. The handbrake lever and cable had not yet been installed leaving a fairly large opening behind the lubricating hole. Having already fed the shaft into and along the tunnel from below, I used my right hand in the handbrake opening to move the shaft further forward and then inserted my hand, and approximately half my forearm, up inside the tunnel to locate the front of the shaft very positively on the third motion shaft, all of this took about 2 minutes. Now, I was working with a body shell ready for fitting up so the cockpit was completely empty and so, access was quite straightforward. Not being a particularly big chap was an advantage in this case but I would have thought pretty much anyone should be able to have a go at this method if they find it difficult to execute the recognised procedure. Hope this will be of use to someone out there.

Philip Sellen

Market Place – September

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Retyped by hand due to error which did NOT occur at Budleigh end!

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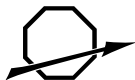
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