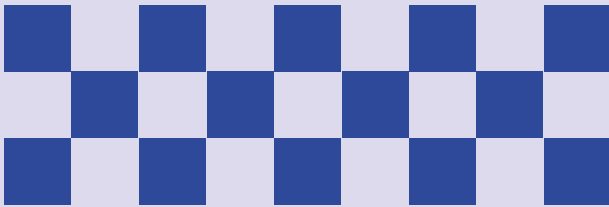


Mascot



**The Magazine
of the
Midget & Sprite
Club**



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

COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSON	Bill Mohan , Tel: 0121 353 7211 or mobile 0798 461 6371 email: bill.mohan@btinternet.com
GENERAL SECRETARY	Terry Horler , 63 Littledean, Yate, Bristol, BS37 8UQ. Tel: 01454 881770
TREASURER	Anita Lachowicz , 5 Park Grove, Knaresborough, Yorks. HG5 9ET. Tel: 01423 862738 Mobile: 07720 725429
MEMBERSHIP	John Platt , 2 Pear Tree Gardens, Bearley Road, Aston Cantlow, Henley-in-Arden, Warks. B95 6HT Tel: 01789 488321 email: john@platt2085.freereserve.co.uk
MAGAZINE EDITOR	Barry Lowe , email: editor@midgetandsspriteclub.co.uk Tel: 01943 608900 10am to 9pm, UK time
WEBMASTER	Toby Anscombe , 46 Carolina Close, Stratford, London, E15 1JR email: tobyanscombe@taratec.co.uk
GENERAL MEMBER	Martin Ellis , 22 Dartmouth Mews, Morley, Leeds. LS27 0UA. Tel: 0113 2049126 email: halimart@hotmail.com
GENERAL MEMBER	Gary Lazarus , 40B Hungerford Road, London, N7 9LP. Tel: 0207700 5696 email: garylazarus@blueyonder.co.uk
GENERAL MEMBER	Alan Lo , 23 Charnell Road, Staple Hill, Bristol, BS16 5NE. Tel: 01179 572 617 email: alan@mobuzzing.net
GENERAL MEMBER	Tim Saunders , Tel: 07968 261990 email: mothysaunders@hotmail.com

OFFICERS

CLUB ARCHIVIST	Terry Horler , 63 Littledean, Yate, Bristol, BS37 8UQ. Tel: 01454 881770
TECHNICAL ADVISER	Vacant
EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR	Vacant
MEMBERS ADVERTISING	Alan Lo , Tel: 0117 9572617 Mob: 0775 3867806 email: alan@mobuzzing.net
MUTUAL ASSISTANCE	David Hill , Llyserfan, Beulah, Newcastle Emlyn, Ceredigion. SA38 9QB. Tel: 01239 811307
CO-ORDINATOR	Tel: 01239 811423 email: david@hillnet.clara.net
DATA HANDLING	Dave Symes , email: spritelydave@ntlworld.com
TRADE ADVERTISING	Ian Rider , Tel: 01793 695351. Email: ianrider@ntlworld.com
Trade Advertising Rates	Full page one issue £30. Half page one issue £15. Full page whole year £300. Half page whole year £150.

AREA REPRESENTATIVES

BRISTOL	Alan Lo , Tel: 0117 9572617 Mob: 0775 3867806 email: alan@mobuzzing.net
CAMBRIDGESHIRE	David Dixon , Tel: 01733 222810 email: e-dave@ntlworld.com
DEVON	Vacant
DORSET	Pete Downton , Tel: 01202 515544
HAMPSHIRE	Bryan Fox , Tel: 01202 683842 home, 01202 674017 work email: sueandbry@x877.wanadoo.co.uk
HOME COUNTIES	Terry Langridge , Tel: 01252 626063
NORTH WEST	Chris Jackson , Tel: 01707 261567 chrispat@holwell8.freereserve.co.uk
KENT	or Mark Hall , Tel: 01296 660103 markdhall@aol.com
LINCOLNSHIRE	Alan Anstead , Tel: 01322 384050 email: alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
LONDON	Brian Sumner , Tel: 01507 328128 email: brians@redimps.com
SOUTH STAFFS &	Gary Lazarus , Tel: 020 7700 5696 email: garylazarus@blueyonder.co.uk
NORTH BIRMINGHAM	Bill Mohan , Tel: 0121 353 7211 or mobile: 0798 461 6371 email: bill.mohan@btinternet.com
CENTRAL SCOTLAND	Carson Thomson , Tel: 0141 245 6327 day or 013606 22334 evening email: carsonthomson@btinternet.com
NORTH WEST	Les & Diane Robinson , Tel: 01772 432138 email: lesrobinson@blueyonder.co.uk
NORTHERN IRELAND	Barry Stange , Tel: 02890 401726 or mobile 07769 705497 or email barrystange@aol.com
NOTTS/DERBY	Ian Cooke , Tel: 0115 938 3838 email: ilc@bgs.ac.uk
SOMERSET	Dave Bearne , Tel: 01823 412004 email: dave@quintins.freereserve.co.uk
SURREY	David Wright , Tel: 0208 642 4789 email: dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk
WARWICKSHIRE	Alan Couch , Tel: 01564 773302
WILTSHIRE	Chris Yates , Tel: 01608 665066 email: chrishe@tiscali.co.uk
YORKSHIRE	Ian Rider , Tel: 01793 695351 email: ianrider@ntlworld.com
	Anita Lachowicz , Tel: 01423 862738 or mobile: 07720 725429 email: spridget.girl@ntlworld.com

Also see the Club Nights section on page 3 for new areas and contacts.

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

Wheelnut

So that was the first edition over with me at the helm. Hope you liked it and its subtle changes. Many thanks to all those people who sent articles for that issue on time and also for all your many kind words of support and encouragement. Onwards and upwards with the second one!

This month, along with the usual amount of Area Reports, you'll be able to complete your reading of 410 EAO, by Sebring expert and regular MASCOT contributor, Jonathan Whitehouse-Bird and thanks to Matt Wrigglesworth you'll now also be able to fit Metro 4-pot calipers to improve your car's braking ability! For those of you who didn't get to see the article in *Classic & Sports Car* on the famous Ecurie Ecosse Sprite, I have managed to get it reprinted in total for you. This is a very interesting and well written piece which I'm sure you'll enjoy reading. Big Thank You to *Classic & Sports Car*. There is important information on the Sprite 50th Anniversary in 2008, a great article on The Conker Run, plus Matt's V8 in What's in My Garage. So something for everyone, I hope ... if you feel left out, then there's a simple answer to that – just get your fingers working on the keyboard and send me an article on something Spridgety ... size is of no consequence, but actual content is; and if it's supported by some good photos then it's more chance of making it into these pages. Apologies to all those Members whose write-ups have been missed out in this month's bumper edition – they may still appear later. I am here to serve ... so tell me what you'd like to see and if you can back that up by producing some of your own work then all the better!

You'll be reading this after the AGM and if I get my way at that meeting, you'll be getting 12 issues of MASCOT rather than the 11 we had become accustomed to. So you should have something to look forward to by the end of the first week in January! BUT in order to do that I AM GOING TO NEED YOUR HELP!

I realise that November and December are quiet months, so this is the time to get busy on the computer and send me your Spridgety articles of interest. Raid your old magazines ... pull out original articles, road tests, adverts ... all the things you would like to see in YOUR magazine. Let me have your write-ups on those Winter Re-Build projects you've been promising yourselves. In saying that, I'm going to need your help ALL the time ... just keep the articles and photographs coming!

Next month I expect to include a report on the NEC Classic Car Show and also something from a bit further afield, Auto Moto d'Epoca in Italy!

Ciao

Barry



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.

Front cover picture: A fine example of a 1963 Innocenti 'S' Spider, complete with Minilites. Owned by Giorgio Ferrari, Milan.

Club Nights

- 1st Monday **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.
- 1st Wednesday **South Staffs & Birmingham** – Meet at the **The Green Man**, Middleton Village, 8.30-8.45pm
- 1st Thursday **Lincashire Area** – Meet at **The White Hart**, Lissington, nr. Wragby. 8pm. Contact Brian Sumner on 01507 328128 brians@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** – November 2nd, Venue to be decided, please contact Anita for details. Meetings from 7.30 pm onwards, food available. Call Anita on 01423 862738 or 07720 725429 email spridget.girl@ntlworld.com
- 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 Kilton**, turn off M6 at Jct 20 onto A50 towards Macclesfield. Pub 4 miles on left. Please note new venue.
- 2nd Wednesday **Bristol Area** will meet at **The Star**, Pucklechurch at 8pm. All Bristol, Bath and surrounding areas members welcome. Contact Alan Lo on 01179 572617 email: alan@mobuzzing.net
- 2nd Thursday **Cambridgeshire** – Meet at **The Mad Cat** pub in Pidley Village, midway between Huntingdon and Chatteris, 8pm
- 3rd Monday **Dorset** – Meet at **St. Peter's Finger**, Lytchett Minster, Poole 7.30pm
- 3rd Tuesday **Central Scotland** – Meet at **The Garfield Hotel**, Stepps, East Dunbartonshire. 7:30pm in the Lounge. Check first with Carson on 0141-245-6327 day or 013606-22334 evening.
- 3rd Tuesday **Surrey** – Meet at **The Blue Ball**, Walton-on-the-Hill, 7.45pm onwards. Contact Alan Anstead, Tel: 01322 384050. alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
- 3rd Thursday **Northern Ireland** – Venue to be decided. Please contact Barry Stange on 02890 401726 or mobile 07769 705497 or email barrystange@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
- Occasional Meetings **Home Counties North West** for members in Herts, Bucks, Berks, N. London or anyone interested! Please contact Chris Jackson Tel: 01707 261567 or Mark Hall, Tel: 01296 660103
- Occasional Meetings **Kent Area**. Please contact Alan for the next meeting details. Contact Alan Anstead, Tel: 01322 384050.

2006 Ballot Result

Firstly, a big thank you to the 178 members returning their ballot forms for this year's election of committee members. A good number by our usual returning figure. A big thank you also to all those putting their name forward for a committee position. Sadly, as one position, that of Membership Secretary, was contested by two nominees, we lose the member with the lower number of votes. We say sadly as in this case, it is one of the club's co-founders, Nigel Williams who has held this position since the inception of the club way back in 1983. We owe a very big thank you to Nigel for all the hard work he has put in over the last 23 years, not only as Membership Secretary, but many other supporting roles that he has tackled, particularly with the club's exhibition stand.

The results are -

Position	Nominee	For	Against
Chairperson	Bill Mohan	159	0
General Secretary	Terry Horler	158	2
Membership Secretary	Nigel Williams	97	41
Membership Secretary	John Platt	153	13
Treasurer	Anita Lachowicz	161	1
Mascot Editor	Barry Lowe	156	3
Webmaster	Toby Anscombe	155	1
General Committee	Alan Lo	148	5
General Committee	Martin Ellis	147	5
General Committee	Gary Lazarus	151	2
General Committee	Tim Saunders	155	2

We now have a committee of 10 persons to hold office. They have all volunteered to serve the club so please give them your support. Also, please note the relevant committee member(s) to contact should you have any enquiries or ideas.

Finally, thank you to our independent Ballot adjudicator, Mr Mike Helbrow for collating and verifying the above results.

And A Big Thank You

To our retiring Committee members and club Officers for their services to the club. These are -

Committee

Mike North – Mascot Editor
Nigel Williams – Membership Secretary
Pauline Walters – Treasurer
Brendan Joyce – Deputy Treasurer

Club Officers

Chris Nevard – Webmaster

Area Organiser

Ian Swinden – Dorset

All the above have been long term post holders for the club. They have demonstrated skill and dedication to help make the club what it is today. We all owe a very big thank you to them for their services, not just for the past year, but many years previous. Replacing the skills and experience of long term post holders can never be easy, the above represent a frightening number of years and a tank full of experience, we hope the inevitable jolt will not be too severe in the running of the club.

Club Website

Members Only pages for November
User name: spridget Password: heaven

Events

From David Hill and Webmaster Toby Anscombe

Events organised for 2006

December

- Sunday 10th Cambridgeshire Area Christmas Lunch will be held at the George and Dragon at Elsworth, 12:30pm Details from Dave Dixon on 01733 222810.
- Wednesday 13th Warwickshire Area's Christmas Dinner at The Green Dragon. details from Chris and Sheila Yates, Tel: 01608 665066.
- Monday 18th Dorset Area's Christmas Dinner at St. Peter's Finger, Lytchett Minster, Poole at 7.30pm. Contact Bryan Fox, Tel: 01202 683842 or Email: sueandbry@x877.wanadoo.co.uk
- Tuesday 19th Surrey Area's Christmas Dinner. Details from David Wright, Tel: 0208 642 4789 or email: dandcwright@ukonline.co.uk

Events organised so far for 2007

May

- Sunday 27th Dorset Area are going to MGs at Kingston Lacey, near Wimborne. Details from Bryan Fox, 01202 683842 or email: sueandbry@x877.wanadoo.co.uk

Area Reps please let David Hill (email: david@hillnet.clara.net) have confirmed dates for new events asap.

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

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

Mutual Assistance Directory

Last month, I said, Oh no, summer is nearly over. Well, rain-wise it certainly is over here in Wales although it is still warm for October. My Midget will have a new home from the end of October as we are moving house. No longer will it have a commodious garage but a small normal size one! Still, it will be warm and dry and will be waiting for nice dry days in the winter and spring.

I do hope that you have had a great summer with your Spridget and are looking forward to

the winter break to do things to your pride and joy.

Don't forget, 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

Midget & Sprite Club Members

WANTED

Genuine Midget & Sprite Club member wanted for low cost tailor-made insurance. Enjoys long drives in the town or country, immediate cover and unique personal service.

Call 0845 1303400



0845 1303400

QuoteLine Hours: Mon to Fri 9.00am - 7.00pm Sat 9.00am - 4.00pm
email: quotes@adrianflux.co.uk | www.adrianflux.co.uk
Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Services Authority



ADRIAN FLUX
modern approach. traditional values

Letters to the Editor

Midget and Sprite Parts Auction

Hi Barry

The auction is being held at **Nether Whitacre village hall, near Coleshill on Sunday 12th November**. Selling should start around 10:00. (Dependant on the amount of stuff that turns up on the day) If you have items to sell you can either enter them yourself on the day by turning up at 09:00 or contact me and I will try to arrange something for you. Heavy items can be left at the auction organiser's home prior to the auction strictly by prior arrangement please.

Please ensure that you put a reserve on any sales items you 'value' and do not just want to get rid of. I will be reminding you all again about this event at the November meeting (assuming that I am fully awake by then). Please ring/Email me if there are any questions:
supersprite@tesco.net

Dave

Webmaster Change

Hi Barry

Just for info, Toby Ancombe is the new webmaster now: tobyanscombe@taratec.co.uk Barry, top on you for taking on the chore of 'Ed'!!! Toby is now in charge of the website, I still keep getting quite a few web-related emails.

Chris (Ex Webmeister)

D J Grove **Restoration**

Phone/fax:
01256 768678

Hampshire
based,
worldwide
customers



For friendly expert advice from an ex F1 engineer and Sprite and Midget specialist, with a longstanding reputation in concours, race preparation (i.e. Goodwood Revival), complete restorations, servicing, chassis rebuilding, and obscure parts traced.

Frogeye, special body, Speedwell and Sebring Guru

STOP PRESS!

In the workshop,
2 Frogeye chassis
rebuids, original
Speedwell rebuild,
modified race Sebring
construction
Car supplied for Ch4
TV filming

It's a Fine and Fancy Ramble

How busy has this month been then? Not only have I been out and about but I have also been sorting out some ideas from other members for the AGM agenda, which by the time you read this will be old news. I will bring you up to date next time around. The AGM promises to be a bumper affair with some new faces on the committee and missing a few old faces too, time to adapt for us all I think.

At the same time we celebrate the new look, fresh as a daisy MASCOT from Barry, a very fine first copy (save it, first editions fetch a fortune these days). With its larger picture area the cover is a bright fresh young thing. I love it, it has a nicely balanced slightly retro feel to it. Keep up the great work Barry thanks.

Don't forget that Barry can only produce a mag with whatever we send him. Some area

reps may need to condense their copy a little to ensure that we get a reasonable overview of club activities. Barry had to omit a few items last time around, which attracted some unfair brickbats.

Warwickshire will have been manning the Classic car Show at the NEC, I have been looking forward to visiting them there, they are planning a wonderful show. My notes about that next month (I will write up my visit as soon as I get home Barry!) ... *and I'll write up about Auto Moto d'Epoca in Italy Bill!* Editor

I notice that we are still attracting new members galore; can you all make it a warm welcome to them at local area meetings? I will email all those I get with email addresses telling them of local groups and area meetings.

Chairman Bill

Secretarial Scriblings

I seem to be off to a poor start with our new editor. Barry was counting on some TH input for his first edition but received zilch from yours truly. Was this some devious ploy to let the new boy struggle? Was TH far too busy to put finger to key board? Had TH reached capacity with nothing new or useful to say? Well yeah, it could be any of these, but truthfully Barry – I just couldn't be bothered! And I was quite right not to be, the first edition from BL (argh 'BL', remember the last time those letters were involved with our cars?) was an absolute block buster. Loads of good stuff to kick off the new regime but wait – where was the club logo?? The bright new cover couldn't fail to be noticed, but where was the club logo? So wos fink then? Should we haul the new boy across the moors, ignoring his cries of Innocenti, or should we demand the return of our octaganated arrow? Your comments please.

By now, the AGM will have happened, not that I will have experienced first hand the ongoing. My letter of apologies to Chairperson Bill is next on my agenda. I am indeed sorry

not to be at Gee & Co to meet everyone and trust that all will go well. With 10 members now on the committee with some new ideas and enthusiasm, we look well set for the future. As good as this is, we should not forget our departing committee members and the many years of experience and service to the club that they afforded. None more so than Nigel, co-founder of the club and Membership Secretary from the very start. The changes in key committee members all at the same time could have some impact as the new members get up to speed. Please bear with us should we suddenly fall onto 3 cylinders!

Good news on the way, 50 years of the Sprite in 2008. OK, you all knew that anyway, but did you know that this will also be 25 years of the Midget and Sprite Club? A double celebration, but which is the most important? Well, our Spridgley things were produced for 21 years, and MASC will be 25 years old, the debate starts here!

There you are Barry, will that do?

Terry Horler

Small, unrefined
Healey Sprite "Healey"
race car 1961, owned by
1961's Mansell of
Ford's 1961.



SCOTLAND

The unique Ecurie Ecosse Healey Sprite suffered a disastrous debut at Le Mans in 1961,

PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY BARR



THE BRAVE

but it could have been a contender. So reckons **Richard Heseltine** after an exclusive drive

It was one of those phone calls you dread having to make. How do you broach the subject? It was a big accident, after all. Le Mans 1961 ended his competition career, and almost his life. So he might be less than keen to share his memories. Not a bit of it. "Oh, the Ecosse Sprite," laughs a commendably unfazed Bill MacKay. "Yes, that was an incredibly quick little car. We were racing well before I lost it at White Horse, which is where all the dummies go off. To tell you the truth, I have no memory of what actually happened, which is perhaps just as well. But, having raced D-types and other powerful cars, it was pretty galling that I had 'the big one' in a Healey Sprite."

Pretty galling. An impression felt by the Ecurie Ecosse faithful when news first filtered down that the Scottish squad was planning to run something as humble as an Austin-Healey Sprite in the great race. This was, after all, the same team that had twice triumphed in the endurance classic during the previous decade. Nobody, not least MacKay and co-driver (and '66 winner in the Ecurie Ecosse D-type) Nialan Sanderson, seemed at all keen on the idea and the decision proved a contributing factor in chief mechanic Stan Sproson's departure from the outfit: there didn't seem much point in staying. Such hostility towards the little car, allied to its prominence—and painful—exit from competition and consequent disappearance from view for much of the past few decades, has led to being largely enshrined from Ecurie Ecosse lore. Until now, that is. Wellcome back in from the cold by such Ecurie Ecosse fan Dick Skipworth, and resurrected with love by Lytis, it's back.

Sitting in Skipworth's minor house, flanked by some of the team's more exalted hardware—C- and D-types, Cooper Monaco (the Sprite's sister entry in '61) and a 'Tojoro-Jaguar—the Healey appears a little out of place, the poor relation in a family of over-achievers. Which begs the question: why did Ecurie Ecosse principal David Murray bother with a small-displacement production sports car in the first place?

Answer: the Index of Thermal Efficiency. Much was made of the Index Energetique award at home, the patience-trying regulations being predominantly based on fuel efficiency using a formula relating to distance covered over the 24 hours, the amount of fuel used and the weight of the vehicle. A Sprite apparently created with the singular intention of ensuring that the locals won something, anything, in the Grand Prix d'Endurance, regardless of where they finished on the road. And Ecurie Ecosse at least had a French name in its arsenal.

The Sprite was originally prepared at the Donald Healey Motor Company's Warwick facility for an attack on the March '61 Solring four-hour endurance race, with standard 'Frogeye' front-end. Driven by future Ford GT40 staple and Indy 500 irregular Walt Hansgen, it bounced its way around the bumpy airfield circuit to finish third behind a brace of factory Alfas. From there, the Sprite returned to the UK where it was sold to Murray for a tilt at Le Mans and given a streamlined nose in an effort to raise top speed down the Mulsanne Straight.

Drafted in alongside the experienced Sanderson, MacKay was very much the new boy. A skilled yachtsman, the Glasgow-born up-and-comer hadn't contemplated becoming a driver until a Healey 100S was taken in part exchange at the garage where he was employed. Only weeks after passing his driving test, he was persuaded to sprint the car and this led to drives

in an Aston Martin DBRS and Murray's D-type. Having made a positive impression in national-level clubbies, he was new to endurance events.

"Driving the Sprite was a bit of a come-down," recalls MacKay. "It wasn't a bad car at all, and was very easy to drive, but nobody had a good word to say about it purely because Ecurie Ecosse was known for racing big cars." The car didn't get off to a flying start when provisioned delivery dates came and went: the reworked Healey was finally delivered to the team at Le Mans. Productably, there were problems: scrutineering for the 24 Hours back then tended to be something of a lottery. As was typical for an English entrant at Le Sarthe, both the Healey and the team's Cooper didn't exactly sail through: the Sprite should have had its engine number engraved on to the block rather than on a plate attached to it. Naturally. With this trifling—and others—sorted, the car overcame all.

'Fitting' the Cooper took altogether more time. By the end of the weekend, Murray and his crew must have wished that they hadn't bothered. Bruce Halford crashed the Cooper on his 32nd lap, breaking his leg in the process. Worse was to come: just eight hours later when, after taking over from Sanderson, MacKay lost control of the Sprite at Maison Blanche and rolled it. The car was reduced to rubble and the 23-year-old was pinned underneath with one of his arms crushed. "I broke my neck and was in a bit of a bad way," says MacKay, his tone playing down the horror. Fortunately MacKay's father was an eminent surgeon, who flew out to France to supervise life-saving operations before his son was transported to Glasgow. Remarkably, a year of recuperation—and 15 procedures—later, MacKay made a full recovery to become one of



ECURIE ECOSSE SPRITE

Construction: steel monocoque with aluminum barrel and roof

Engine: six-cylinder 940cc A-series four-cylinder, lightened and balanced, lightly ported head

Two 50 carburetors, 1:90:1

Max power: 55bhp @ 5000rpm (est)

Max torque: 108lb ft @ 3200rpm (est)

Transmission: close-ratio four-speed manual

Suspension: front: independent, coil spring; rear: live axle, quarter-elliptic leaf spring

Steering: rack and pinion

Brakes: disc front, drum rear

Weight: 1300lb (1200kg)

Top speed: 100mph (est)

Price new: £10,000



Below: despite its pedigree, 120-hp Sprite is well behaved on the road. Right: original 600cc A-series engine from late '61 series





Moved pretty one-off bodywork fashioned by Huxley Motor Company. Left and right slipper nose helped little sports keep with the big boys on the Mulanai Straight



Scotland's most successful skippers, although his endogenous motor racing career was over: "When anyone asks me about my driving days, I always say I used to race... badly!"

After Le Mans the remains of the crumpled Sprite were sent back to the Huxley factory, where it languished unloved until future hill-climbing Roy Lane spotted it under a dumpster. Geoff Huxley agreed to sell the car with enough spares to make it race-worthy, along with a track close-ratio gearbox, but the special nose stayed behind. With a self-built A-series from an Austin A49 in place, Lane began racing the car in late 1963 with some success before replacing it with a Lotus Eleven. Subsequent owner Richard Grewes campaigned it sporadically until 1970, when the car was sold on. Fast-forward to 1989 and the Sprite was found in Essex in a decrepit state by Trevor Jarrett, who in turn sold it to Ron Seama in Chicago. Seama set about tracking down the original Le Mans engine and the Solring spares that were left in the US after the 1961 race. Unable to tackle the restoration himself, Seama sold the car to Skipworth in the

late '90s. "It arrived as a pile of bits in a packing case," Skipworth recalls.

Then followed the hard bit. The chassis and engine – or at least the block – are the Le Mans originals, but the distinctive bonnet had to be recreated analogously with the aid of scaled-up photographs. Skipworth was at pains to restore the Sprite to '61 spec and has thus far stopped short of having it race prepared: "People have tried to persuade me to fit a 1.5-litre A-series, close-cut gears and all that sort of stuff, but I don't plan to race it seriously." The car runs an original (ish) 948cc four-banger, sporting twin SU's, plus "a gas-blowed head and a few minor tuning mods".

Mindful of one Eddie Ecosse insider's ever so slightly chilling payoff about this being "a very sticky car" (imagine Private Fraser's somber delivery in *Dad's Army*), it's with a mild degree of trepidation that you approach the Sprite. Especially because the restoration took the best part of five years to complete. Don't want a repeat now, do we? Oh look, a black cat called Lucky Heather walking under a ladder. It's a sign...

Having made it into the cabin – pull back the



sliding window, reach in to open the door, bump your noggin on the headtop, swear, then ease yourself in while still cursing – and it's exactly as you remember a Sprite to be, if a bit more claustrophobic. You still need to adopt a bare-arms, elbows-constrained driving position, but then this is a very small car.

The flipside is that the key controls lend back a sense of precision. The steering is light and lurches up with the gearchange has a delicious sticking action – it's impossible to grab onto your crotch-strap in one of these – and, despite the leaf-spring rear offering relatively low levels of grip, breakaway is easy to catch. That said, with a limited-slip diff it takes provocation to amuse the tail: this is that rarest of things, a Sprite that understeers. If there's a criticism it's that the disc/drum braking arrangement is a little lacking, with not much feel at the top of the pedal, though the new pads had yet to bed-in.

In its current state of tune, the A-series has little torque below 4500rpm. It splutters and hiccups before coming on cam and then utters that familiar scream spiced with slight transmission



Left: Sprite D-type of Blackbart Sanderson on way to '56 Le Mans victory. Right: cramped cabin



ECURIE ECOSSE: RACING FOR SCOTLAND

Following its race debut – and first win – at Croft in April 1952, Ecurie Ecossaise swiftly grew into one of the most successful teams in the international stage, taking 58 victories over the next 10 seasons, founded by pub-serving accountant David Finlay. Grand Prix racecarer David Murray, the team began life with Gordini backing and three privately owned Jaguar XK120s. By the end of the decade it had won Le Mans twice (1956 and '57 with D-types) and formed a wealth of machinery including Cooper and Connaught single-seaters. It had also served its intention of putting Scotland on the motor sport map, the roll call of drivers including Ian Stewart, Ron Fulkerson, Desmond Titterton and the decidedly non-Scottish Martin Gregory.

The 1960s wouldn't be so kind, the workshops in Merchiston Works, Edinburgh being less active once the money ran out. Murray continued to juggle his outside businesses (which also included a Jaguar concession) with attempts to keep the

precious team afloat, but the clouds came in 1966 when he was served with a summons to appear before the Inland Revenue. He fled to the Canary Islands and died in hospital there some years later. In his absence Harry Baldwin assumed the role of part-time manager, helming Bubbins and a March Formula 2, but the impressive team folded in 1971.

But not for good: the most recent of team members resuscitated under Nigel MacKay a decade later, picking up results from 1987-'91 in the World Sports Car Championship (winning the 1990 C2 category) and the 1988 Touring Car Championship with last driver David Leslie starting in Italy. More recently, historic racer and classic car dealer Ginger Baker has attempted to revive the name, with third class in the '02 Mclaren 24 Hours in a BMW M3 and retirement in the '03 Daytona 24 Hours in a Porsche 911. And it's not inconceivable that the Silver Wolf once again return to its spiritual home of Le Mans.

white. For a 1-litre car with a cast-iron front anchor up front, the Sprite feels disarmingly fast, quick enough to beat up six cars of half its age and twice the displacement. You can just imagine it down the Mulsanne, getting a row from one of the 5-litre sports-cockers.

And imagining is all there's time for. Sadly, playtime is over all too soon because the road becomes covered in water thanks to a passing truck spewer. Somehow rural Oxford doesn't make for a convincing Le Mans substitute.

For a car with such a virid and calorific past, it's almost a pity that the Ecurie Ecossaise team's given a chance to rewrite history at this year's Le Mans Classic, to finally record a finish-45 years on from its last outing. "You know, I think we stood a good chance of doing well in 1961," says Bill MacKay, "we were fast enough." So no lingering hard feelings towards the Sprite then? Remarkably not: "I'd love to see the car again, really I would, because it has been a very long time." Pause. "Actually, I wouldn't mind having a go at driving it again. But race? No, I don't think that would be a good idea." ■

Home Counties North West Report

**September 24th
The TRING TRIP**

The phone rang at 8.45 am. Mark – It's p.. It's raining very hard here, water shooting over the gutters, thunder and lightning. Decision time, postpone for a bit!! This was not in the plan. The plan was that The Hatfield Group (THG) should meet at Tesco's at 9.30 and proceed to meet The Tring Group (TTG) at Tesco's at 10.30. (We are negotiating a discount of some sort with Tesco because we mention them in dispatches so often). THG (The Hatfield Group) was to consist of five cars but five became 4, became three, became 2, so only one hold it call had to be made. The loudest protests of disappointment came from the ladies, Lily and Pat. 9.45, call from Mark, It's high summer here. Action stations, reverse orders and away. The Hatfield Group (THG) met and beetled (Spr(i)n)ted) off to meet TTG (the others).

Duly assembled and armed with a written copy of the route (no tulip diagrams here, we have all had to learn to read for this event) we set forth on roads recently awash and still very damp. Taking to the Buckinghamshire lanes we soon found ourselves driving up waterfalls and through an impromptu ford and then climbing up through a misty haze to incredible views of rolling countryside and far hills. Despite the late start it was decided that the planned coffee stop should be kept in the schedule so stop we did at the Tring Reservoirs café. We probably drained only one reservoir dry since we were only ten. The Tring Group (THG) consisted of Mark and Jen in their Frogeye, Mike and Sue, A40 mounted and Dave and Jenny in their Mk IV, these two cars being scalps we won at Knebworth. Places of interest were marked on the notes, one being the health spa that was frequented by Frank Bruno. He was also often seen in Tesco's (there it is again) stocking up on banned victuals. We also drove down Aston



Clinton Hill. Lionel Martin chose to celebrate his success on this hill climb by naming his new car after it. Hence Aston Martin.

Our journey finished, appropriately, at The Travellers' Rest (TTR) where we made merry with a comprehensive menu. It was noted en route, that every so often a signpost, pointing to the right, said Cheddington 1 mile. Examination of the map, denied to us for the journey, showed that we had, in fact, circled all round Cheddington. Now Cheddington is where Jen and Mark and their Frogeye Sprite reside. What was the meaning of this? Probably that if the heavens opened again while we were on the road they could have turned sharp right and been home and dry in ten minutes. S** the rest of us. It was categorically denied that Mark was ASBO tagged and unable to travel far. It was a great day out and we were so lucky with the weather which, ultimately, could not have been better. Thank you Jen and Mark for a great day.

We plan to get out and about again on October 22nd, AGM day I know, so we will stop for a suitable celebration of the occasion. I know that this is late information but I am trying. Also a trip on November 12th to give Tracy and Steve a chance to join in. They will be in the Galapagos Islands for our October do, poor souls.

Thank you Barry for a fine October issue of MASCOT.

Chris

The Conker Run 2006, 8th October



Starting line-up in Thirsk market square

Yorkshire area MASC had another great turn out at the second Conker Run, with 14 cars in total gracing the market square at Thirsk on Sunday morning. Regulars Mark and Anita were there in Anita's basilica blue Mk IV Sprite Kevin; Matt and Lizzie were present in their newly revamped bronze yellow RWA, complete with disc brake conversion as per Matt's 2 part article in this fine magazine, SW5 cam and noisy exhaust; Carlo and Arianna in Eglentine, their gorgeous green Mk I Midget; John and Janet in their red Mk II Sprite which had just re-recovered from its broken clutch problems originally sustained on the Roses Run in April; Robin and Jill in their BRG RWA; Ian and Claire in their blaze RWA and Roger and Caroline in their red Mk IV Sprite. We also welcomed Rob Higgs and his son in their bronze yellow RWA, Ken Gill and his wife in their canary yellow 1500, Phil Bennett and friend in his cherry red frogeye, Jeff and son in their blaze RWA; and Phil and Tracey Harrison making a guest appearance in their Sunbeam Alpine, which needed one or two little pushes over the course of the day! Finally Guy Weller made it all the over from Kendal in Cumbria in his teal blue Austin Sprite, although dynamo issues made it a tricky day for him. The weather was glorious and sunny.

Sarah and I had hoped to have our newly acquired 1965 Williams and Pritchard Sebring II bodied Mk II midget ready in time for the run (more about this next month), but in the end Holly, our ardent red Mk III ex-racer got a final run for the year, despite a leaky rocker cover, and was probably better suited to some of the more strenuous hills anyway!

The morning started with a light stretch of the legs around the windy lanes of the Vale of

York skirting the Cleveland Hills, then up along the eastern fringes of the North York Moors, along drover's tracks, up muddy country lanes, through forests and across beautiful moorland covered with sheep, game birds, and all sorts of country types astride horses, or curiously waving ski-poles around.

Great Arden Moor in particular was very beautiful, with golden ferns and browning heather, waterfalls, and rowan trees covered in bright red berries. Everyone successfully coped with the two mile 1:4 of Sneck Yate Bank and made it safely up into Cleveland, without killing any wildlife or being attacked by irate walkers or country pursuits enthusiasts with shotguns (it being shooting season). In fact we received a very positive welcome from the general populous, who hadn't seen anything so exciting or noisy as a stream of brightly coloured Spridgets since a vintage tractor run in the area back in August. Despite Matt's paranoia about his new exhaust volume (no louder than ours), noisiest car of the day, without a doubt, was Anita's Sprite, with its original (holey?) mild steel exhaust.

The route then took us from the pretty (if somewhat small) mountain of Roseberry Topping up to the North East coast at Saltburn. This is a slightly down-at-heel but formerly genteel seaside town with a great beach and beautifully restored Victorian pier and water-powered funicular railway. Most ate at the Ship Inn at the Smugglers Heritage Centre, apart from the more intrepid explorers,



Waiving Spridgets through Boltby Forest

who found a rather good caff with al fresco eating near the old train station on the cliffs. Outdoor lunch in a t-shirt in October – you can't beat the North East!

The afternoon route saw a much faster, and less contorted drive back south, exploring some of the countryside around Stokesley, and then across the North York Moors down through Commondale, Kildale and Bilsdale, via Rievaulx Abbey and Helmsley. Guy's Sprite had terminal battery failure in the middle of the moors due to his dynamo finally giving up the ghost, but he was rescued by a battery swap with Anita, her fully charged one seeing him back to York that night, where Mark was able to produce a spare dynamo from his box of tricks. Our car also suffered a failed brake light switch somewhere along the way, misleading some into thinking I have some particularly advanced driving skills, in getting around corners without braking – which alas is not the case. Unfortunately we had all



taken such a long time savouring the route and exploring, that by the time we arrived at the Abbey Inn at Byland Abbey, the end point, the pub had shut for the day after its 3pm curfew! However, it did mean that we had the car park to ourselves for a final photo opportunity in the beautiful grounds.

Thank you to everyone for coming along, and we look forward to seeing you on our next area run in the spring.

Tim Saunders and Sarah Bower
Yorks Area

Bristol Area Report

I've been to Blooper land. You don't need a Sat-Nav to find the way, it's the getting back (to normal) that just takes the time. I didn't want to go, I even saw the WARNING sign – on the bonnet slam panel of a certain Clipper Blue Mk1 Midget. Yes, guardian of this lost place was none other than Alan Lo. My engine is ever so slightly fluffy, please take a look Terry. Thinking that the WARNING triangle might refer to hot bits, twirly bits, negative earthy bits or hot water in face bits, it really signified that this was indeed, the way to Blooper land. In attempting to find out why the Midget's engine was ever so slightly fluffy, Alan had replaced everything under the bonnet, however, he did notice that one SU piston was rising more slowly than the other. Suspecting that there may still be a particle of molten plastic tooth brush stuck in there somewhere, the TH box of SU spares was raided to find a better match. Despite replacing various bits, the Midget still fluffed – and there was nothing else to replace. Still, to cut a growing longer story back to something more meaningful, Alan eventually discovered that a new condenser was to blame. I was aware that there was a dodgy batch of rotor arms being supplied but perhaps condensers may now be added to

this. We all assume that new components will do the job that they are designed to do, but maybe not. This makes fault diagnosis more of a problem than usual, I know I wasted time when I assumed that a new coil would be the last thing to suspect when diagnosing an ignition fault. After changing points, condenser, HT leads, dissy cap, rotor arm and spark plugs – it was the new coil at fault.

On the Bristol scene, we continue to meet at the Star at Pucklechurch on the second Wednesday of each month. However, we are considering trying another pub in Pucklechurch and maybe another day. Our numbers have not really grown this year despite a goodly number of local members turning up for the Classic Car Action Day at Castle Coombe. We know that there are members in the region, so perhaps it is our timing or placing that is preventing more than our usual 4 or 5 turning up. Your views would be appreciated on this as we would like to do more as a group.

Please contact Alan Lo or Terry Horler for a natter about Bristol Area happenings.



Spridget 50th Anniversary Party, 2008

The 20th May 2008 marks the Golden Anniversary of the press launch of the Austin Healey Sprite at Monte Carlo – 50 years since the introduction of the car that, in its various AH and MG incarnations, unites us all.

I've been acutely aware of this impending anniversary for some time – like our favourite little car, I too was launched to an unsuspecting (and, save for a few close relatives, largely indifferent) public in 1958. So I've always regarded myself as the same age as the Frogeye – and as my fiftieth approached, hoped that my plans (as yet unspecified) to celebrate would coincide with a big party for the Spridget. I say big party – my gut feeling was along the lines of a big

get-together similar to the very impressive MASC Brooklands 2000 event – only with 3 or 4 times as many cars!

Over on t'interweb MG Bulletin Board a few weeks ago, I tentatively kick-started some discussion about how the Spridget community should celebrate. The responses so far have been unanimously positive, and while away from a PC in August, on holiday in France, it seems as though a few web-friends interpreted my decision to open the debate as nothing short of volunteering to organise the event. Despite the fact that you're reading this in the mighty organ that is MASCOT, I, and others, have firmly believed from the start that any event should be open to all, regardless of any (or no) club allegiance.

The great news is that I have now received very enthusiastic responses, and formal statements of support from the MG Owner's Club, the MG Car Club, The Austin Healey Club, and L'Amicale Spridget – in France! Thankfully, there seem to be no clashing plans, although the Austin Healey Club are organising an event at Goodwood in August '08.

The idea which seems to have received most support from fellow MASC'ers as well as friends on the web Bulletin Board – is to have a great gathering on a day in May 2008. Monaco would be nice, but perhaps a little restrictive for some. With the support of Chairman Bill



Donald Healey pictured in the first production Sprite near Monte Carlo – photo courtesy of "More Healeys" Haynes, 1990



and others, **I have now made a provisional booking for the Heritage Motor Centre at Gaydon, ('twixt Banbury and Stratford, and 5 minutes from the M40) – for Sunday 18 May, 2008.**

Gaydon has a great deal of experience in organising these types of rallies – there's generally something happening there every weekend, and they can cater for up to 1000 cars, mostly parked on the events arena (or car park, as it's known during the week). Then there's the added attraction of free admission tickets to the museum for a percentage of participants (and a 25% discount for all others), listings on the museum's website and annual events leaflet, and trade stand space during the event. As well as the superb museum (the world's largest collection of historic British cars), there's an excellent Land Rover off-road experience, go kart track, café and gift shop. They offer basic camping facilities, and there are a host of excellent B&Bs and hotels in the surrounding area. There has been additional

discussion on road events – including ambitious plans for a John O'Groats to Land's End run, calling in at Gaydon for the Sunday, VISPs (Very Important Spridget People) attending – as well as the possibility of some very rare prototypes and works and race cars. All exciting stuff!

By the time you read this, the event will have been discussed in some depth at the MASC AGM, and I hope to have come away with a mandate to get cracking on some detailed planning and promotion – to the other clubs and the wider Classic Car fraternity.

Meanwhile, I have started a register to record details of those that may wish to attend – obviously no obligation at the moment. But those registered will be kept informed of all developments between now and the event – and will be offered firm booking opportunities ahead of the general publicity. 120 have already done so! I invite you to let me have your name, contact details such as a phone number or email address, along with details of your Spridget or Spridget-related machine – year/make and model /registration (if you're willing) and any interesting notes.

You can register by email to spridget2008@hotmail.co.uk or telephone me on 023 8067 1413 at home, or 023 8030 5626 at work.

So please start spreading the word that there's going to be a bit of a do to celebrate 50 years of the Midget and Sprite! More next month.

Steve Clark, Southampton



On the Healey Test Route. 29 Spridgley things squeeze into the car park of the White Horse at Ettington, May 1998.

Fun for all in SS&NB October '06

This month we have had several different trips amongst us. Geoff and Sue were off to Hope Cove in sunny Devon for the Spridgetting weekend at the Sun Bay Hotel. Now an annual event it sounds as if they and Les and Diane (of the N.W. area) had a great time.

Gwyn and I went to the Advertised in MASCOT Turweston Classic Aircraft and Cars weekend. We expected to see the contingent from Home Counties N&W but found one solitary Sprite in the car park! Nice to meet you. I actually met two members (Sorry but I missed writing down names, a MAJOR fault of mine, I get carried away with chatting!) Saw lots of nice cars, the Rover P6 club use the event as their AGM. A fun, enjoyable bit for me as well as the aircraft were the display of stationary engines puffing away, marvellous smoke rings from one steam engine. Three Chipmunk aircraft, two of which were in a pristine 1960's colour scheme reminded me of my days in the ATC. Pure nostalgia!

Gavin, Dawn, Gwyn and I went last weekend to the Top Hat races at Mallory Park. Seeing the A35s and A40s battling away and in one case outgunning the Jaguars was fantastic, there were two Spridgets racing too.

I recommend this series of races to anyone uninitiated who may like a day out.

And to round off a quite busy Midgetting month for us Geoff, John and I took a ride up the M6 to visit North West Area at the Kilton. We were made very welcome even though we interrupted their photographic evening. Diane took a minute or so to recognise Geoff from the Sun Bay (Told him not to wear the dark glasses) Great fun all round when she did. We had a great run back in the drying air (We missed almost every drop of rain, luckily as Geoff and I went topless) with a bright moon illuminating the motorway. I was home just after midnight.

We have appointed an events manager for the branch. Bob has taken on John's mantle and will help organise next year's trips and visits. Though we are open to suggestions for joint area events too.

Our area members will be able to take a small membership pack with them if they wish as they visit events in their cars next year, so we can help build up membership. They can collect the pack from me when we meet at the Green Man the previous month.

Bill Mohan 1067

Scotland Report – Talla Ho!

Our Celtic branch has one main aim and that is to drive our wee cars as much as possible. And who can blame us, with the many roads of paradise en Ecosse. Though we enjoy our natters, we don't really do that socialising stuff and zooming around the same bit of tarmac on a track day is as weird to us as Morris Dancing or even dancing around a Morris! As for concours, that is a deviance too far for us lovers of speed, dents and dirt.

So it was we met up on the brink of October at Bothwell services, stuffed



our faces with bacon rolls to fuel the body and with cheap petrol (84.9p a quarter gallon – whoo hoo!!) to fuel the cars...all 8 of them, including Douglas' imposing ZT, which dwarfed the assemblage of spitmignites. The silly boy had forsaken his real MG at the last minute thinking it was going to rain! He is new and does not yet know all our runs are blessed with the rays of Ra.

Our mission was to execute another run designed by the legendary Jim McGuinness of La Carrera fame. We only had to see the word Meggets and Talla (gorgeous Borders lochs with sublime lochside roads for those of you who have not had the pleasure), to smile and lick our bacon fat rimed lips in anticipation.

The first stage through the Clyde Valley warmed up the engines nicely and as houses gave way to hills and crossings to cows (coos), newlywed but not yet oppressed Dougie took us along at a nice clip through Lanark, Biggar and Stobo. Not quick enough though as nobody got lost – not even Carson!!

The leisurely drink at Peebles set us up for the bam bam through the empty roads around Traquhair Castle. Empty that is except for one surreal encounter when on a desolate single track road high above Meggets Loch we encountered a crocodile of 12 ancient Massey Ferguson tractors coming the other way, smiles all round as we held a competition for noisiest engines.

It did mean we got a bit split up and thankfully Rikki and Keith got lost – thereby reinstating an honourable tradition. Late lunch sitting outside – yes outside- in Scotland in October, rounded off a magnificent end to a truly memorable season. Viva global warming, viva plate tectonics which blessed us with such topography and viva the A series engine and the hours of fun it provides fixing , tweaking and waiting in trepidation for it to fail. Names to Betty for the Christmas scoffathon at the Popinjay please!

Bob Miller, Carson's mate

NW Area Report

At September club night we had the local run that was postponed from August. We met at 7:15pm in readiness for a 7:30pm start. I was actually early for the first time ever so off we went more or less on time.

There were eight cars altogether including new member Steve (apologies if your name is wrong but my memory is hopeless). Steve, as he will be called from now on, has a beautiful Frogeye, old English white, no bumpers, minilites and aero screens – looks fantastic. Andrew had very kindly planned a route, and even produced laminated directions – obviously a quiet time at school! It was an excellent run, although to be honest I've no idea where we went. I do however recall going through Great Budworth where Andrew, or so he says, had arranged for the church bells to ring as we passed through. All very enjoyable.

On the 15th / 16th August Diane and I joined the Staffs and North Birmingham lot for their weekend in Devon, organised by Geoff Mears. Unlike previous years the turn

out was rather disappointing. Only three couples consisting of us, Geoff and Sue, and Rob and Bubs. Despite this it was a brilliant weekend and we really enjoyed it.

It was a quite trek down to Devon from Leyland, taking 7 hours to cover the 300 miles. Most of the journey was on the motorway. A 5th gear would definitely have been handy – job for the winter perhaps, I already have a gearbox sat on a shelf. The



drive didn't seem like 7 hours and the time passed quickly and thankfully there were no traffic problems at all, either going or coming back. We stayed at the Sun Bay hotel at Hope Cove which is run by Johnnie and Jane. After arriving on the Friday we took it easy, had a lovely meal and then retired to the bar. Johnnie is quite a character and how he stayed sober is beyond me!

On Saturday there was a leisurely drive taking in local sights of Salcombe, Kingsbridge and Dartmouth. We were in our Sprite and Geoff in his Midget. Rob has a Westfield but unfortunately wasn't able to take it. But all was not lost; Johnnie has an MGB roadster which he very kindly lent to Rob. For the drive Johnnie led us in his E-Type Coupe and his friend (can't remember his name) came along in his AC Cobra replica. We stopped at Dartmouth for lunch at a rather posh hotel, in fact so posh they don't even sell crisps at the bar. We didn't feel too hungry so just had a snack, just as well, can you believe 15 quid for a bowl of soup and a butty!

Interestingly the butty came with crisps, now where did they come from? It was all very nice though, eating lunch overlooking the harbour. In the car park was a Ferrari roadster with reg number LEO – poseur! Also an Aston Martin DB5 turned up, this was on New Zealand plates and the reg was AM DB5 – no idea how he wangled that one. Oh and of course there was a very nice Sprite and Midget parked amid all the exotica. At Salcombe we stopped at the Winking Prawn beach café for a drink and snack, I had a massive piece of treacle tart, not very healthy but very nice. Saturday evening has traditionally been a disco night with local DJ Smiley Mike running the proceedings. But due to the lack of numbers there was a quiz instead. This was organised by Johnnie's mate with the AC Cobra. It was open to all hotel residents and who ever else were around at the time. All the questions were car / motor sport related.

There were half a dozen or so teams and I can proudly announce that we won. Sunday was time to set off home however the weather had been glorious all weekend so Diane and I decided to stay another night to make the most of the weekend, especially as we had travelled so far. So after bidding farewell to



Geoff, Sue, Rob and Bubs we went for a drive to explore more of the countryside. We stopped off at the winking Prawn again were I had another piece of that gorgeous treacle tart. That evening the sky was clear and while eating our meal in the restaurant we could see the sun setting across the bay – absolutely wonderful.

On Monday it was definitely time for home. Once again the sun was shining so rather than rushing home we went over to Burgh Island first for a wonder round. From the top of the hill there are terrific views of the coves and fantastic beaches. Come late morning we reluctantly set off for home arriving back at tea time. The whole weekend was wonderful and I would like to thank Geoff, Sue, Rob and Bubs for making us welcome.

The deadline for submitting this report falls before we have our October meeting so I can't give any feedback. However the plan was to have a photo night where everyone takes along any interesting photos. Andrew should be taking his laptop for the more technically minded, hopefully he won't have forgotten the CD this time! Could be good or could be a disaster, all will be revealed next month.

For November meeting (Wednesday 8th) we are hopefully having a quiz of some sort, more details next moth.

Finally, Christmas lunch will provisionally be on Sunday 10th December, probably somewhere near to the Kilten but don't know where yet. Let me know if you are interested.

Well that's it for now.

London Calling – We Get Lonely

A London report I hear you all shout. Rarer than an original set of Frogeye rubber mats, or so it seems. Yes I must confess to being a bit negligent in my duties as London scribe but I have a valid excuse.

All year at every given opportunity, I have been driving my Frogeye. From the first frosty drive, the “Sprites & Midges across the Bridges” run, held every second of January, to the Christmas drive, wherever it may take place this year, you will find me out in the Spridgety thing – whenever time allows, and I’m not alone. Various members of the London group have visited Le Mans, Silverstone, Kent, Essex, Warwickshire and Surrey. We’ve participated in track days, speed shootouts, classic car shows and gymkhanas.

We’ve had a presence at every Ace Café Classic Car night and regularly dodged traffic wardens outside our monthly meeting place at the Mulberry Bush pub adjacent to the London Eye. So what I’m trying to say is that as a (small) group, we tend to use our cars regularly.

So it was with some surprise that at our most recent monthly gathering, we didn’t have a single Spridget there between us. Nick came straight from work so had no time to collect his Frogeye from the wild depths of South London. Rachel and Toby’s Midget is languishing on their driveway with an unfinished fibreglass front end awaiting electrification. Bob T’s fuel injected Midget is currently pistonless in Croydon and my Frogeye’s prop-shaft is looking very pretty in the hallway minus its universal joints.

Without our cars present to look at, crawl over, prod and laugh at, we actually sat down in the pub, ate some food and talked to each

other. Freed from the responsibility of watching out for marauding hoards of parking wardens, jobs and winos, we were able to get on with just having a nice evening, chatting away. Two major things were decided.

1. Were all going to Le Mans again next year and
2. We’ve just got to find a better venue to meet than the Mulberry Bush pub.

So we intend to up camp from Southwark on the first Monday of each month and head South East to the relative calm of Greenwich. Compared to Central London, It’s cleaner, easier to park and furthermore, it’s simpler to find for visiting Surrey, Essex and Kent groups. What could be easier?

Grab a map, find the Prime Meridian line and where it meets the International Date Line is Greenwich. Obviously not up on the hill at the observatory (although wouldn’t that be fun) but a nice normal pub with a nice normal car park, like other places seem to have.

All we need to do now is choose one, ask permission of the Landlord to deposit our oil gushing, carbon breathing cars there once a month, and let the rest of the Spridget world know its name so that they can drive vast collections of Sprites and Midgets there to meet us. I promise that we’ll be welcoming and hospitable.

Bob has volunteered to hunt out this illusive watering hole and by the time you read this, we will have probably already had our first get together in it.

Our intention (for I have just decided while writing this) is to have a date sometime early next year when we can invite other groups, especially our nearest neighbours Kent, Essex and Surrey, over to our neck of the woods for a springtime jolly. I will inform everyone of the date when we’ve decided it.

Until then, we send greetings from the “Smoke” as we approach another Christmas (well November anyway).

Gary Lazarus, London Area



Surrey Area Report

Since the August season this year, my Sprite has been running roughly, and as all electrics were performing as required, it had to be the carbs. It's been 14 years since we re-furbished them, so in fairness, I thought maybe the time has come, and Alan has been extolling the virtues of rolling roads recently!

So, whilst the Kent rolling roads were an option, I found myself drawn to Southern Carburettors, in South Wimbledon, mainly as they were in walking distance of work. Booked, in, I drove over at the end of August, with the promise that the first hour was diagnostic, and the second would probably sort it! When I picked her up, I received a very thorough de-brief – after a fair amount of uneven running, loose nuts and one with a stripped thread were diagnosed on the inlet manifold, and once these were tightened and replaced as necessary, more diagnostics followed.

A new H6 needle was supplied in one carb, and the need to re-furbish and balance recommended in a year or so. No rolling road was either necessary or recommended.

I drove away in what really felt like a fully rejuvenated motor, and I have to recommend Southern Carburettor's professional and helpful service. Now while Chris and I were exploring Peru by train in September, the Blue Ball goes on as usual! Chris Burgess drove up all the way from Newhaven in his white Mk IV Sprite, and the usual suspects were reported to be there! Christmas is coming, or so they say, and we'll be off to the Kingswood Arms again, so anyone keen to partake of seasonal cheer, will hopefully have handed over a fiver deposit by now!

Keep on Spridgeting. All for now, but do keep in touch.

David

Cambridgeshire Report

The Cambridgeshire group all started from very humble beginnings in December 2000 with our first pub night with just two Spridgets in attendance (one of them being mine) but one is better than none and we all have to start somewhere. I must admit having read some of the early reports again, I did talk things up a little at the start but it did the trick, we started to grow and grow. It is especially great that with the exception of a couple of spies from the committee of the MG club who came to our first meeting to take a look at this new upstart group (Cambridgeshire is the home of the MGOC) all of those who attended the early meetings went on to become stalwarts and cornerstones of our group and with the exception of Chris (who sadly sold his Midget a year or so back) still regularly support our group activities (well done guys).

Through the pages of MASCOT we made ourselves known to other groups and individual members who have been tempted out to join us on some of our events (and been rewarded by a

mention and possibly a photo in MASCOT). I also like to think that the reports of our activities in building up our area have encouraged and inspired others to start up new groups which have contributed to the growth in active MASC areas. Now we don't mean to take credit for this, this was all done through the magic of MASCOT, but I would like to think we lent a hand. All this brings me to our retiring Editor Mike who deserves a massive vote of thanks not only for his work on MASCOT but also for the help and support he has given the Cambridgeshire group over the years. It was great to meet up with Mike



Wimpole Hall



at our Little Gransden event last month and also to see Chris from the Home Counties mob. We frequently get individual members (often from areas without active groups) attending our events and this is all through the existence of MASCOT. If you think about it, MASCOT is the only connection most MASC members have to this brilliant little club, and they will only get to know us through reading about what we do.

To an area representative MASCOT is a brilliant tool to advertise the areas' activities and keep in touch with the membership. Active areas are the lifeblood of our club. MASCOT will never be a mainstream classic car magazine and while it's interesting to see a sprinkling of items borrowed from other publications, race reports and technical articles MASCOT is what it says on the cover

"The Magazine of the Midget and Sprite Club" and as such needs to be filled with reports of the activities of it's members.

Having stressed the importance of MASCOT to the success and well being of the club and shown appreciation for the outgoing Editor, Cambridgeshire would like to give a vote of thanks to Barry Lowe for stepping forward to take over one of the most demanding roles in MASC. Volunteers are very special people without whom MASC would not exist (well done) especially ones who are prepared to move things forward.

We grafted in an extra last minute unadvertised (sorry no time) trip to Wimpole hall this month. In true Cambridgeshire MASC style despite threatening clouds in the morning the day turned out to be hot and sunny. The event ended up being just a car show rather than the larger fate type event that had been advertised, but a brilliant event in a fabulous setting nevertheless.

The Christmas meal is booked for Sunday the 10th of December at 12-30 pm at the George and Dragon in Elsworth please let me know ASAP if you would like to come.

Dave Dixon

Yorkshire Report

October Meeting

Apologies to all for the very late arrangements for the October meeting. This was partially due to computer problems. I arrived first. Not difficult, as The Bay Horse in Goldsborough is only a few miles from home and Arthur is away on holiday. Mark H and his dad Ken were only a few minutes behind me. They have just fitted a replacement exhaust manifold to Mark's Midget. One thing led to another (as it often does in Spridget-World) and before long their house was full of the smell of petrol as they stripped down the carbs for an overhaul whilst Mrs H was at work. The result is 40mpg so they are very pleased with their efforts. Martin and Gail are just back from holiday so not much progress has been made on the Frogeye restoration recently. Josie arrived straight from work as she has been catching up after a two-week holiday. She and Nick are off to do a rally in the Mini at the

weekend. Nick arrived a bit later with tales of the hours spent helping Simon get his Sprite ready for the Classic Marathon. Matt and Lizzie brought Andy B and his dad Jeff with them. Andy and Jeff are getting on really well with the Frogeye and I think it won't be too long before it is ready for painting. In the meantime Andy is on the lookout for retro tuning parts like Speedwell. Matt's Midget has just passed its MOT and he is now running-in his rebuilt engine. The foundations are in for



Seeing red at Donington

the deluxe garage that is going to house the V8 project Midget. Sarah couldn't make it but Tim did and brought their photos from the Croft Track Day and the Dales Run for us to look through. Mike N was the last to turn up on the eve of his Elvington skid session. Not as many of us as usual but at least we managed four Midgets in the car park despite the showery evening. Lots of positive comments on the new look MASCOT. Well done Barry! Everyone approves of the bigger picture on the front cover.

Other Matters

Jim has been doing more development work on his road-going sprint/hillclimb Midget. He was pleased with its performance at Harewood but couldn't quite catch a heavily modified Midget. Andrew H and I had the chance to do a track session at Donington the day before the big VSCC See Red race weekend in September. It absolutely poured down all afternoon making the track very slippery throughout the 3-hour open pitlane. The VSCC had an instructor available to take us out and show us the driving lines. Donington is a very interesting circuit and I found it quite difficult to perfect any of the corners. Andrew's Frogeye had a little spin early on but behaved better after he altered the tyre pressures. Mark had the chance to refresh his memory of the track prior to racing as part of an MG team in the 2-hour relay race on the Saturday. I was lucky enough to be passenger to Barrie Williams for a few laps in a modern car. I think he was

disappointed that I didn't scream when he demonstrated how using the handbrake can 'help' you turn some of the corners. I was only worried when he couldn't find the right control to demist the windscreen. Nick and Josie ended up doing the Border Reivers Economy Trial in the Midget as the Mini developed a problem with the head gasket shortly after setting off for Fife. The event included 8 laps of Knockhill, 8 driving tests and 130 miles of navigation. They won their class and came 4th overall. Simon is at the time of writing in the middle of this year's Classic Marathon. His Sprite needed some hood frame repairs and a new clutch master cylinder to pass scrutineering. Then he and Trevor went for a drive to run in the engine. Check out how they did at

<http://www.classically.org.uk/classicmarathon2006/news.html> Gary was on the lookout for a Midget to run whilst he works on the Sprite nearly-finished project he bought over a year ago. He has found a smart RWA Midget with new bodyshell, hardtop, recon engine and box, new clutch and a full MOT. Looking forward to seeing it soon. He has now decided to sell the Sprite so if you are interested contact me and I'll pass your details on.

A huge thanks to Tim and Sarah for organising the Conker Run held on 8th October. I had a great day out with a fantastic group of Spridgeteers. Good to see some familiar faces again and to meet some new folk.

Anita

Warwickshire's October Report

New editor, new deadline, reports now start instead of ending with news from the meeting.

This month's gathering was made memorable by the late appearance of Mo and Phil, who proudly announced that they had got married; strange after all this time and two children!! Seeing the Pensioners in the room gasping in horror, they qualified the statement by explaining that they had renewed their marriage vows just prior to the meeting. Fortunately, this will not be obligatory to the rest of us. Phil had lost his wedding ring, so an exact copy to match Mo's was ordered, and blessed at the renewal ceremony, which

took place in their garden. Not a common occurrence, although there were mutterings about it being cheaper to join the National Trust.

At this month's meeting we discussed the forthcoming AGM on the 22nd October and the election of the officials, which we anticipate will herald a newly formed Committee to shape the Clubs future. The Classic Car Show at the NEC is on Friday to Sunday, 27th – 29th October. John Platt is organising the club stand, where we are looking forward to having a Sebring Sprite plus Stuart's car and the sectioned display Midget from the Patrick Collection.

September is usually a quiet month, but Alan and Rosemary thought that this needed to change, especially as the weather seemed to be holding, so they organised a trip to Hay-on-Wye (the Town of Books) taking in the Golden Valley and the Black Mountains. The route itself was 119 miles, but with the journey to and from the meeting and end, we clocked up 220 miles, which is not bad in a day. Eight cars met at the little Chef following a torrential down pour, which had ceased less than an hour previously, so we set off with wet roads. We travelled through Piddle, not a loo stop, but marked by the solitary donkey standing by a Piddle Lake! We continued through Pershore to Little Malvern, where we met Sue and Roger but had to wait for Mo and Phil who lived nearby, but managed to find themselves held up by the Malvern Show traffic. It was a day full of events as we also became mixed up with a cycle race; part of a triathlon around Malvern and at Eskelide there was a Sheep Dog Show on one side of the road and a Ploughing Contest on the other. We continued through Hereford, along the Golden Valley arriving at Hay-on-Wye at about

one o'clock, with only two hours to have lunch and look around the time flew and we were soon back on the road.

Setting off for the return journey, we took a road, which runs along the edge of the Black Mountains. It is a single-track road, with sheep as well as oncoming vehicles to negotiate, with the drivers of the approaching vehicles being far more accommodating than the sheep, as they usually pulled over to let all of us through. The black clouds that had threatened us all day, but had given way to the sunshine previously, appeared to take their revenge and we had an umbrella moment for a few minutes. We finished at Ledbury for a drink and the final farewell.

As mentioned last month, the Warwickshire Section visited the Ace Café for the Classics night, and just to prove it, there is a picture in the October edition of *Classic Cars Magazine* taken of Alan, with the bonnet of his Lotus Elan open, talking to an attentive Roy, whose I.O.W. Frogeye can be seen in the background.

Chris and Sheila

SEATS



1 2 3 4 5

FRIENDLY ADVICE. DELIVERY ANYWHERE.



MGF Change from Cloth
to Luxury Leather £495

Any MG, MGB GT, Roadster, MGA, MGC, Midgets, MGF, MG TF etc.

Rebuilt Original Seats Exchange. Delivered to your Door.

Vinyl Seats (Pr) FR £199. Leather Seats (Pr) Fr £299

Black Seats available with or without colour pipings such as Red, Green, White, Powder Blue, Pageant Blue, Yellow Etc.
Colour seats available such as Magnolia, Red, Nimbus Grey etc.
MGB GT Rear seats exchange rebuilt to match £115. Console armrest in leather £22.75

Fast Mailorder; Tel order with Visa, Mastercard and Switch etc.

Tel: (01752) 227789 Day or Evening - Mike Jasper

"CLASSIC BRITISH SPORTSCAR TRIM"



CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

SEBRING SPRITE - 410 EAO



EAO, right, holds off a G.S.M. Delta at Cadwell Park.

Part 7: In for Repair

By Jonathan Whitehouse-Bird
England

Following my second visit with Andrew Hedges, I made arrangements for Tom Cralitiani and myself to visit Don Moore who, although retired, was once regarded as one of the greatest engine preparation and tuning specialists in the country. Don was responsible for producing many race winning engines, fitted in numerous types of car, but was more widely recognised for his work on the B.M.C. A-series unit, especially when it had a Mini attached. EAO benefitted from two of his engines during 1961. The first surviving up until September 1961, before being replaced by the second which was fitted in preparation for the 1000 km event at Montlhéry, near Paris.

On arrival at Don's house we were greeted by his charming wife Barbara, or 'Babs' as she preferred. Introductions made, we soon found ourselves engrossed in conversation about all things mechanical. Don mentioned that he still had the build sheets for EAO's engines somewhere around, but as yet, hadn't found them. He then went on to describe the sort of modifications that were carried out in line with the Sebring homologation, this involved in part, increasing the bore size of the standard Sprite engine block, to 95cc, enlarging the valve sizes and gas flowing the head. It is



Outside Don Moore's workshop, employee Peter West poses with EAO, following preparation work for the 1000km event at Montlhéry in October, 1961.

almost certain however, that no W&P alloy coupe had an XSP (eXperimental Special Production) unit fitted during their initial 1961 season. Don also explained that in addition to any modification work, Andrew had insisted on a new steel 'Red' crankshaft being fitted to his engine, prior to each race meeting. Needless to say, all other necessary parts were balanced and polished, and the

whole unit meticulously assembled.

Don also built the engines for two other W&P alloy coupes – WJB 707 and D 20 – and stated that all his units were externally distinguishable by their turquoise blue, rather than B.M.C. green, coloured paint. I mentioned that I had come across one or two engine components in this colour, added to which was the smooth-case, close ratio gearbox. I had thought nothing of this whilst stripping down the car, thinking that these parts, particularly the gearbox, had been painted by a subsequent owner. Now things took on a different meaning! Although EAO's Formula Junior engine had long since disappeared, certain items had been removed from this and bolted back onto the replacement engine – a standard 948 cc block. This said, the only major items to have survived were the aforementioned gearbox, C40 high output dynamo, engine backplate and the original, much lightened, flywheel. This had an eight bolt crankshaft fixing instead of the usual four – according to Don, a necessary modification to cope with the higher rev's unleashed on a race engine.

To my great surprise, Don produced a couple of photographs of EAO, one of which was a close-up of the engine compartment. This was a real find, as I had been struggling to find details of this area of the car. In addition, Don also said that he had a large amount of cine film, some of which would undoubtedly feature EAO. This was in the process of being transferred onto video tape and would be ready in about a week. If anything turned up on the tape Don said he would give me a call. Don said how much he had enjoyed our visit and looked forward enthusiastically to once again seeing the car when finished. Sadly, this was not to be, as Don Moore died some twelve months after our meeting, in June 1996, following a short illness. I considered it a great honour to have met Don, whose engineering brilliance had accounted for many successes both on and off the track.

The research that Tom and I had undertaken for the *Sebring Sprite Story* was now coming to an end, and with increasing pressure from John Sprinzel to publish his part of the book, everything finally had to go to print. The end result of four years 'fun' is there for all to see and read, in 'The Story of the Sebring Sprite' featured in *Spiritely Feet* by John Sprinzel and Tom Craftland. Anyone with the slightest interest in Sprites (and Midgets), particularly concerning their early development and participation in motorsport, should seriously consider adding this book to their collection – and no, I'm not on commission!

September 1995

saw work begin on the restoration of EAO's bodywork, nearly five years after purchasing the car. Following a six month search, taking in most of the leading Austin Healey restoration specialists, I finally chose Phil Kennedy of *Renaissance Restorations*, near Hednesford in Staffordshire. Phil was as keen as myself to get the detail of EAO's bodywork correct, and I was particularly impressed by his professionalism and workshop facilities. To assist with the rebuild, I had acquired a wide range of genuine B.M.C. panels over many years, some of which were specifically for the Mk. 1 Sprite. From the outset I was fairly insistent that no reproduction or Heritage panels were to be used. Ultimately, Heritage did come to the rescue, by specially producing one or two smaller unlisted items for the floorpan that were otherwise impossible to locate.

The almost non-existent floor panel of EAO was replaced using a genuine one piece B.L. item made for the 1500 Midget. This

panel, although generally similar to the 'Bugeye' floorpan, differed slightly in that it was designed for half elliptic – rather than quarter elliptic – springs, and featured a 5-inch square inspection hole below the gearbox, a larger reinforcement underneath the rear of the prop-shaft tunnel, and also lacked one or two smaller detail items. Heritage came to the rescue by providing the correct size prop-shaft tunnel reinforcement, two footwell drain channels and four threaded 'studs' for the rear corners of the floor (all features to be found on a genuine 'bugeye' floorpan). The purpose of these



Don Moore holds the Autospot Championship Trophy, won by John Whitmore. To his right, in the Don Moore-engined Mini, Ray Simpson of Control Oils is also pictured.



EAO at the 'T' car, sitting alongside John Whitmore's FJ single seater and eventual championship winning Mini, photographed by Don Moore at Brands Hatch in 1961.



Left: The fully restored original W&P alloy rear. Right: The EAO starts to take shape and awaits the fitting of the new alloy roof.

latter items is a bit of a mystery, as they serve no real function, but with accuracy at the top of the agenda, they were correctly reinstated. With an invisible repair making good the gearbox inspection hole, the larger prop-shaft tunnel reinforcement replaced, the four studs fitted; footwell drain holes and channels added and new original floor spring plates reinstated, the whole floorpan was then spot welded into place. All other replacement panels were again spot welded, in line with standard B.M.C. production methods.

As work on the EAO's steel monocoque progressed, there still remained one specific detail that still needed clarification. This concerned the all alloy doors (stamped out on the original tooling), fitted to the car when discovered. Was EAO constructed using these as part of its Williams and Pritchard conversion? Unfortunately, Andrew Hedges could not remember!

The other two surviving W&P coupes still utilised the glass fibre shell/alloy skin type of door, which featured the smaller style internal cut-out shape. A chance remark made by Brian Archer, of Archer's Garage in Birmingham, upon trying to fit newly created replica W&P doors - moulded from WJB - to his demonstrator car, led to further close scrutiny of EAO.

Brian had mentioned that his replica glass fibre door shells were causing him fitment problems, as they were slightly shorter along their length than the standard steel doors. This wasn't the result of some remanufacturing blunder, as the W&P 'originals' were also shorter! It transpired that when building the alloy coupes, Williams and Pritchard had purposely made the glass fibre door shells smaller. This compensated

for the extra thickness of metal created by the alloy rear, where its flange wrapped around the 'B'-posts and over the remnants of the removed original steel rear wings. In addition, five millimetre thick steel spacer blocks were fitted behind the 'B'-post door catches to compensate, and thus align them with the new glass fibre doors and latch assemblies. Both WJB and S 221 still retained these steel spacers. On checking the 'B'-posts of EAO, I discovered that these spacer blocks were still in position - interesting! I then turned my attention to the trim panels found fitted to EAO's all alloy doors. These panels copied exactly, the unusual internal cut-out shape of the glass fibre door shell.

Applying logic, combined with a hunch, I reached the conclusion that EAO - in line with the other W&P alloy coupes - had started life with the glass fibre/alloy combination type doors, and at some point had had these replaced with the all alloy versions. Added to this was the fact that whoever made the trim panels, must have copied the glass fibre door shells in order to have obtained their unique shape.

A pair of glass fibre door frames - along with a Sebring glass fibre bonnet - were duly ordered from Archer's Garage. The corresponding alloy door skins were purchased from Wheeler and Davis Ltd. It seemed a pity not to use the all alloy doors considering their rarity, but, although still without positive proof, I felt I had made the correct decision to use the glass fibre/alloy style doors! Once all the necessary welding and repair work to the steel monocoque was complete, attention was then turned towards EAO's original rear alloy panelling. Although Len Pritchard had recreated a new

alloy rear as a standby, I was insistent on using the original example. This required a small amount of repair work around the wheel arches and lower parts of the wings, where aluminium oxide had taken its toll. One or two splits also needed careful attention prior to the whole thing receiving major finishing and reshaping.

Meanwhile, in the garage at home, I made some necessary alterations to Brian Archer's reproduction Sebring bonnet. This involved reducing the size of the grille aperture flange, adding the holes for the grille studs (although EAO didn't have a grille, the holes were there as 'standard'), and again reducing the size of all flanges on the peripherals of the bonnet. This took some time, but resulted in a totally accurate representation of the W&P product. The radiator ducting, which on the reproduction bonnet is made of glass fibre and supplied in-situ, was on this occasion, provided separately. This enabled remanufacture in aluminium, as was the case with the original item, and was then bonded into place. The new glass fibre door frames also needed some tidying, and required further alterations, in order to make them fit, but finally a very satisfactory result was achieved.

Halfway through the bodywork restoration, I made one final attempt to track down Les Arnold, EAO's second owner, following the discovery of a magazine article, a copy of which was sent to me by Austin Healey Club U.K. member David Gauld. The article in question was a track test report on the *Shovelcraft* Lotus Elan of Harry Wood, one of two identical cars campaigned during 1964 as one half of 'Team Surlston Motors.' The other *Shovelcraft* Elan in the team was driven by none other than the

elusive Mr. Les Arnold. During the course of my research into EAO's history, I had come across one or two references to Les driving the Elan, so this piece of information came as no surprise. Over a period of about four years, I had explored many ways of making contact with Les—magazine articles, phone calls to every L. Arnold in and around the London area, speaking to contemporary drivers, even an appeal on national radio – all without success. However, it was the name Barry Wood that was now giving me a new lead! For some inexplicable reason one point of inquiry I hadn't tried, was the Lotus Owner's Club.

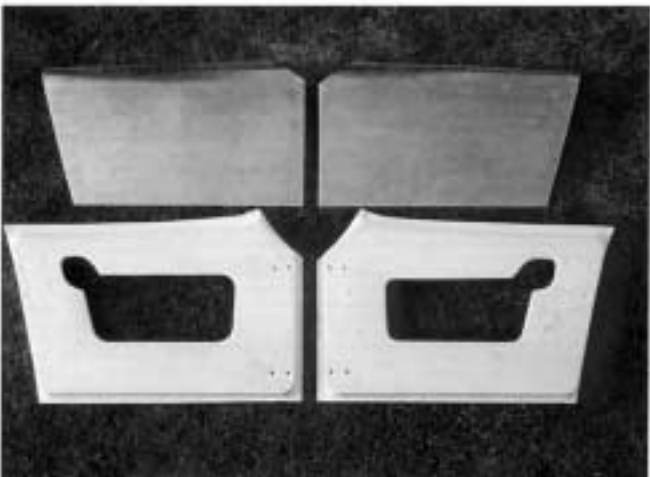
Whilst looking through *Clarion* and *Sportscar* magazine for a contact phone number, I came across a 'classified advert' for the 1995 Championship winning Lotus Elan. As it was early evening, and out of Lotus Owner's Club office hours, I telephoned the person selling the car hoping he would know of Barry Wood. He had heard of the name, but suggested I make contact with two other club members who owned Shapcraff Elans. Telephone numbers were frantically scribbled down and subsequently dialed. The first number put me in touch with Don Hands, vice-president of the B.S.C.C. (Historic Sports Car Club). Within minutes of talking to Don, I had acquired Barry Wood's telephone number and was calling him up. Barry answered, and I explained my reason for telephoning.

"Oh yes, I remember Les, we did a season together," replied Barry. "Do you know of his current whereabouts?" I asked. "Haven't seen him in thirty years!" came the response. Another dead end! Not to be dissuaded I rang the other Shapcraff Elan owner — Tony Thompson. By complete coincidence the car in his possession had been Les Arnold's actual car. Unfortunately, Tony couldn't help with a contact address or telephone number, but mentioned that he had heard that Les was still operating as a licensed cab driver in London and suggested that I write to the Licensed Carriage Office. Andrew Hedges had told me three years previously, that Les had been a taxi driver/operator, and so I had tried looking through a number of London phone books for taxi companies using the name Arnold – but to no avail.

Following Tony Thompson's suggestion, I wrote to the Licensed Carriage Office in London, giving details and outlining my reason for wishing to get in touch with Les. A couple of days later they telephoned my office to say they had managed to locate Mr. Les Arnold but, because the office was run by the Metropolitan Police, they could not



EAO's turquoise blue painted F.A. engine is 1961, 1.5" S.U. carburetor 'standard'.



The new glass fibre reproduction W&P Sebring doors with corresponding alloy skins.

divulge any information over the phone. However, my letter would be forwarded. I heard nothing for over a week, and my initial excitement, at finally locating Les, turned into frustration, as I convinced myself that he probably wasn't interested and wouldn't get in touch. Then one evening, I returned home to find a message on the answering phone,

"Hello, this is Leslie George Arnold, received your letter concerning 410 EAO, please give me a call on the following number..."

At last! Four years of searching had finally come to an end. 📞

More next time...

ORIGINAL SPRITE & MIDGET

オースティン・ヒーレー・スプライト&MGミジェット 1958~1979

テリー・ホーラー著 小川文夫訳



MG Midget

© The Great British Sports Car

CG
CAR GRAPHIC

This is a reproduction of the book
original published by Car Graphic
Publishing Co. Ltd., 1979. All
rights reserved. No part of this
book may be reproduced without
the prior written permission of
Car Graphic Publishing Co. Ltd.

From the Editor's library

Converting to ventilated front disks with 4 pot calipers – Part two

A small addendum to last month's advice on calipers and hoses

The calipers were originally designed to have standard male unions taking copper pipe into them, so the surfaces on which the new banjos will seal are of a rough finish. You must sand them smooth to enable a proper seal. Check that there is enough thread depth in the holes to allow the banjo bolts to make the seal without bottoming out. The ones I bought were marginal, and I had to add a couple of extra copper washers to allow room for compression. If the bolt bottoms out it won't make a seal no matter how tight you nip it up. Of course, if you run copper pipes to the calipers with male unions the above doesn't apply. The calipers are dual circuit and as such have 3 bleed nipples each: 2 for the lower pistons and 1 for the upper pistons. The calipers must be mounted so that the single nipple is at the top – obvious really due to the nature of rising air – but something to bear in mind when putting it all together. Bleeding is fairly straightforward: do the bottom ones first, then the tops. Official Rover advice is that the bottom 2 nipples be both open at the same time during bleeding, no idea why.

Machining and Modification

This is the tricky bit. I managed to use a set of engineering drawings from a contact through the BBS but can't really pass them on without his permission but I'm sure he won't mind me mentioning the main dimensions. The central hole in the disk needs to be enlarged to 64mm to accept the hub, this will just break into the original 4 Metro retaining holes but don't worry, you'll be drilling new ones. The overall depth of the disk and boss needs reducing to 60mm by machining some metal off the boss – this needs to be done perfectly to avoid creating runout. Then put a small 45° chamfer on the inside edge of the boss 2mm deep. Finally, 4 new holes must be drilled and tapped in the disk 3/8 UNF at 80.9mm PCD with 15mm of thread depth. You MUST use a pillar drill to get them perfectly perpendicular. You can use the hub as a template but make sure it is perfectly centred relative to the disk; otherwise you could have real vibration problems. As the caliper is so big the hub flange needs reducing, *note the profile on the pictures*. Take the outer edge down to 130mm diameter, and the inner edge

to 116mm diameter. The inner edge just clears the end of the wheel studs.

This is the maximum the hub can be reduced to keep it safe, so you still have to grind a

little off the edge of the caliper as it will likely make contact with the hub. Grind a small bit at a time and keep checking so as to avoid taking too much off. The mounting holes for the caliper are a little further apart than the Spridget ones so need ovalising, by approx 3mm inwards. A round hand file here is useful to make sure you don't take it too far, possible if using a power tool. Rather than offsetting them along a straight line between the two holes, take them diagonally inwards from the pistons, so the caliper will mount further away from the edge of the disk. You still may have to relieve the inside of the caliper if it contacts with the edge of the disk (I used an electric finger file). Additionally a spacer or washer is needed between the caliper and stub axle to get the disk correctly centred in the caliper (I used the lock tabs/plates from the old caliper). If you have a Frontline suspension kit, the disk might catch on the top arm on full lock; judicious use here of the grinder is called for.

Well, that's about it. It sounds complicated but if you are a competent DIYer it can be a satisfying project, and it looks neat too. If you are worried about the safety or quality of your work, you should ask a professional to take a look before/during/after to put your mind at rest.

A final word, I know it's boring but tough: this conversion is done on race cars, and if done properly it is safe. My disclaimer is that the above is a guide only; you carry out any modifications at your own risk. I am not an engineer, my conversion was done slowly and carefully with no compromises – these are your brakes we are talking about after all. If you would like to see further pictures of my own conversion, you can see them on my website www.V8midget.com



Matt Wrigglesworth, Yorkshire

What's in My Garage



The block is a fully prepared drag racing version built by Martin Cowell (who drag raced V8 Midgets), with an Isky TR8 works cam and SD1 standard heads (for now). It is set up with twin SUs on a RV8 manifold, but as the tops of the dashpots protrude through the bonnet I think I'll be going Megasquirt EFI and mappable ignition. An LT77 gearbox sits on the end.

The rear end is a narrowed TR8 axle with telescopic shocks, the front suspension is Frontline with big brakes (thankfully!).

No sooner have we met Stuart Gunn's 4WD V8 does another one come along!

My most recent purchase is a 1972 Midget with a Rover 3500cc V8 in it. The bulk of the work was carried out about 5 years ago, a change of circumstances led to it being sold to a contact on the BBS, his family demands have increased so now it's mine!

The car will be a sleeper, the only telltale signs of the V8 will be the twin tailpipes, oh and the raucous growl as it sweeps past unsuspecting chavs. You can see progress on www.V8midget.com, but first I have to build my own garage to get it out of the outlaws!

Matt Wrigglesworth, West Yorkshire

Market Place

Adverts to Alan Lo

23 Charnell Road, Staple Hill, Bristol, BS16 5NE

email: alan@mobuzzing.net Tel: 0117 9572617

For Sale

Midget 1973 RWA. Tax and 12 mths MOT. British Racing Green with new Autumn Leaf interior, aside from seats. Reconditioned engine: very reliable and used regularly. New Goodyear GT2 tyres and Rostyles in last 12 mths. Recon. dashboard. New wiring loom. New disks, calipers, braided hoses and master cylinders. New king-pins, bushes etc. Recon. front suspension units, K&N filter, new front wings. respray with photos. other items

renewed in the last 12 mths include: starter motor, alternator, matrix, exhaust system, front wheel bearings, coil, leads and battery. A much-loved car for sale due to domestic circumstances! £3,200 (O.N.A) (Cheshire) Tel: 01928-711423.

Wanted

HAYNES manual for 1959 Frogeye Sprite.
Contact: Maurice (01442 842509)

MIDGET & SPRITE CLUB REGALIA

Be recognised as a Midget & Sprite Club Member with any of our exclusive designer range of regalia items.

Sweatshirts- (In Blue, Red, Bottle Green & Black With embroidered Club Logo) - Please state size and colour required. Each @ £17.00 + £1.75 p&p

T-Shirts- (In Blue, Black, Green, Red & White with screen printed Club Logo) Please state size and colour required. Each @ £10.50 + £1.25 p&p

Grille Badge- £20.00 inc p&p

Cloth Badge- £2.75 inc p&p

Windscreen sticker with Club Logo, in Black, Red & Silver. £1.00 inc p&p

Leather key fob with club logo, in Black, Red & White. £2.25 inc p&p

Midget & Sprite Club **"Buyers Guide"** £4.50 inc p&p

Sprite 40th Anniversary windscreen stickers. £1.25 inc p&p

Poloshirts (Red, Royal Blue, Bottle Green: Embossed Logo)

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL. Please state size and colour. Each @ £12.00 + £1.25 p&p

Fleece Jackets (Black and Bottle Green: Embossed Logo)

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL. Please state size and colour. Each @ £25.00 + £2.25 p&p

Baseball Style Caps (Black brushed cotton with a Red Suede Peak, Embossed Logo) Each @ £7.50 inc p&p



PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to the

Midget & Sprite Club

SEND YOUR ORDERS WITH CHEQUE OR POSTAL ORDER TO:-

REGALIA OFFICER

Mike Grout

55 Park Road, Spixworth

Norwich NR10 3PJ

Tel: 01603 890211

Email: mike@motorparts.freeserve.co.uk

HARDY ENGINEERING

**COMPLETE RANGE OF GEAR BOXES & DIFFERENTIAL UNITS
FOR ALL SPRITE & MIDGETS FROM FROGEYE TO
RUBBER BUMPER HELD IN STOCK.
EXCHANGE OR OVERHAUL YOUR UNIT.
NEW AND USED PARTS FROM STOCK.**



**Working with cars like these since the '60s
actively involved in Club Motorsport at all levels.**

SPECIAL SERVICES

Competition gearboxes built. Limited slip differential units.

Competition crownwheel & pinion

3.7, 3.9, 4.22, 4.875

**HARDY ENGINEERING, 268 Kingston Road,
Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 7QA**

Tel: 01372 378927 Fax: 01372 376794

Visit our Website at: www.hardyengineering.com

Ask for Bill or Neil, Club discount given