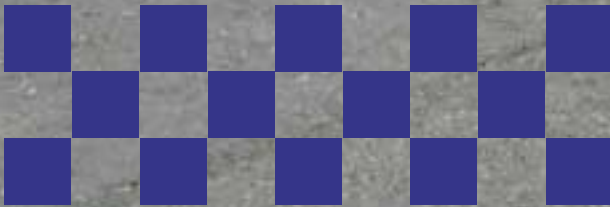


August 2007

£2 No. 281

Mascot



The Magazine
of the
Midget & Sprite
Club

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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 email: spridget.girl@ntlworld.com
MEMBERSHIP	John Platt , 2 Pear Tree Gardens, Bearley Road, Aston Cantlow, Henley-in-Arden, Warks. B95 6HT. Tel: 01789 488321 email: john@platt2085.freemove.co.uk
MAGAZINE EDITOR	Barry Lowe , email: editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk Tel: 01943 608900 10am to 9pm, UK time
WEBMASTER	Toby Ancombe , 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

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 email: david@hillnet.clara.net
CO-ORDINATOR	Dave Symes , email: spiritelydave@ntlworld.com
DATA HANDLING	Mike Grout , Tel: 01603 890211 email: mike@motorparts.freemove.co.uk
REGALIA OFFICER	Gary Lazarus , 40B Hungerford Road, London, N7 9LP. Tel: 020 7700 5696. email: garylazarus@blueyonder.co.uk
TRADE ADVERTISING	

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	Ian Beaver , Tel: 01722 326840 email: ian.beaver@btinternet.com
	Bryan Fox , Tel: 01202 683842 home, 01202 674017 work email: sueandbry@x877.wanadoo.co.uk
ESSEX	Lee Reed , Tel: 01255 424112 email: lnreed@aol.com
HAMPSHIRE	Terry Langridge , Tel: 01252 626063 email: Hampshire.spridget@ntlworld.com
HOME COUNTIES	Chris Jackson , Tel: 01707 261567 chrispat@holwell8.freemove.co.uk
NORTH WEST	or Mark Hall , Tel: 01296 660103 markdhall@aol.com
KENT	Alan Anstead , Tel: 01322 384050 email: alan.anstead@bopenworld.com
LINCOLNSHIRE	Brian Jeffery , Tel: 01522 531425 or mobile: 07952 969514 email: brianlincs@btinternet.com
LONDON	Gary Lazarus , Tel: 020 7700 5696 email: garylazarus@blueyonder.co.uk
SOUTH STAFFS &	Bill Mohan , Tel: 0121 353 7211 or mobile: 0798 461 6371 email: bill.mohan@btinternet.com
NORTH BIRMINGHAM	
CENTRAL SCOTLAND	Carson Thomson , Tel: 0141 245 6327 day or 013606 22334 evening email: carsonthomson@btinternet.com
	Les & Diane Robinson , Tel: 01772 432138 email: lesrobinson@blueyonder.co.uk
NORTH WEST	Barry Stannage , Tel: 02890 401726 or mobile 07769 705497 or email barrystannage@aol.com
NORTHERN IRELAND	Ian Cooke , Tel: 0115 938 3838 email: ilc@bgs.ac.uk
NOTTS/DERBY	Dave Bearne , Tel: 01823 412004 email: david.bearne@lloydstsb.co.uk
SOMERSET	Alan Anstead , Tel: 01322 384050 email: alan.anstead@bopenworld.com
SURREY	Alan Couch , Tel: 01564 773302
WARWICKSHIRE	Chris Yates , Tel: 01608 665066 email: chrishe@tiscali.co.uk
	Vacant
WILTSHIRE	Anita Lachowicz , Tel: 01423 862738 or mobile: 07720 725429 email: spridget.girl@ntlworld.com
YORKSHIRE	

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

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Wheelnut August '07

GREAT! Fantastic! Superb! Thanks!these were just some of the words many of you used to describe the bumper July issue. AND NOW YET ANOTHER FIRST! ... not being content with just having the BIGGEST issue of *MASCOT* so far last month, the next step in the continual development of YOUR magazine just couldn't happen quick enough – and here it is, the FIRST FULL COLOUR front cover! We do aim to please! And if size is everything, we've gone and broken last month's record of 44 pages, by yet another FOUR pages ... 48 in total. That's 50% more content than *MASCOT* had just back in May, when it was only 32 pages.

We do hope you like our initial forray into the production of an even more professional-looking magazine. Hopefully, in the months to come we will be able to introduce even more colour pages within this prestigious publication. In the meantime though, there's plenty of great black and white material inside.

I particularly wish to draw to your attention a superb article penned EXCLUSIVELY for *MASCOT* by John Sprinzel, entitled "Sprites – the Early Days". I'm sure you'll all want to join me in thanking John for putting this together just for *MASCOT*. This sort of item is another indication of the kind of level *MASCOT* has reached over the last year and we are now operating in a much higher profile arena. (In the September issue there will be the second part of the Pirelli Sprinzel interviews from 1962, in which the techniques of Rally Driving are examined).

Also this month we have Alan Anstead's in-depth follow-up to the 5-Speed article from *Practical Classics* published in the July issue. Alan has also provided a comprehensive piece on the "Bridge Too Far" trip organised by him to Arnhem. Other submissions this month include an article on Restoring a Frogeye bonnet from Neil Thomas of Tenby; a report on Le Mans from *MASCOT* regular, Gary Lazarus; and even though Jill and I were at the Classic and Sportscar Day at Castle Combe, Terry kindly offered to do the write-up if I supplied the photos. There's also another fascinating and detailed submission from John Davies again, this time on "The Importance of a Dab of Black Paint"; where does he manage to get so much interesting material from? Again we had numerous Area Reports, including one from Scotland this time. Great to see one from them again, as they had not been with us since March.

Please let me draw to your attention the final call for photographs for the 2008 OFFICIAL MASC CALENDAR; we still need one or two additional shots of Members' cars to make this a fantastic collector's item. See reminder page inside. If your photos don't actually make it into the Calendar, then there's still a good chance they'll make it onto the new colour front cover at some point. Truly exceptional shots, will be considered for both the Calendar AND the front cover!



Please keep the articles and photos coming – they're the lifeblood of *MASCOT*. Thanks once more to all contributors this month.

PLEASE NOTE: Deadline for SEPTEMBER issue is Midday SUNDAY 12 AUGUST.

Barry, Editor, Membership No: 1150
editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

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 splendid shot of a very nice modified '63 Sprite MkII at Castle Combe. It was brought into the UK from Australia, by Craig Grosvenor (Membership No: 3723) who lives in Salisbury. It has an uprated 1275 with single Weber and straight-cut gearbox. Runs on 6 x 13 Performance Minilites with 175/60 Yokohama A539 tyres. Suspension mods include 450 lb front springs and negative camber trunnions.

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Club Nights

- 1st Monday **London Area** (Congestion Zone) – NEW VENUE, Meet at The Plumbers Arms, 14 Belgrave Street, Belgravia, SW1W 0LN at 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 **Lincolnshire Area** – Meet at **The White Hart**, Lissington, nr. Wragby. 8pm. Contact Brian Jeffery, Tel: 01522 531425 or mobile, 07952 969514
- 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** – For details of the August meeting please contact Anita. Meeting from 7:30 pm onwards. Contact Anita 01423 862738 or 07720 725429 email spridget.girl@ntlworld.com
- 2nd Wednesday **Warwickshire** – Meet at **The Green Dragon**, The Green, Sambourne, Redditch, B96 6NU, at 8.30pm as usual.
- 2nd Wednesday **North West Area** – meet at **The Kilton**, turn off M6 at Jct 20 onto A50 towards Macclesfield. Pub 4 miles on left. Please note new venue.
- 2nd Wednesday **Bristol Area** will meet at **The Rose & Crown**, 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 berrystange@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.
- 4th Sunday **Kent Area** – Meet at **The Moat**, Wrotham Heath at 12:00 for lunch. Contact Alan Anstead, Tel: 01322 384050.
- 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

Club Website

Members Only pages for August
User name: Works Password: Replica



Events

From David Hill & Webmaster Toby Ancombe

Events organised so far for 2007

August

- Sunday 5th Cambridgeshire Area will be at the BMC Rally at Ferry Meadows, near Peterborough with the Club Stand. Details contact Dave Dixon, Tel: 01733 222810
- Sunday 5th Surrey Area's Wings and Things at Woodchurch. Details from Peter Gardiner. Email: pgardiner2@mail.dstl.gov.uk
- Saturday 11th Warwickshire's Mike and Benitas' Fun Day. Details from Michael Vann, Tel: 01455 292440
- Sunday 12th MGCC invites MASC to its South East Summer Gathering at Cobham Hall House and Gardens. There will be a road run from Godstone and concours, treasure hunt, refreshments, grass autotest, etc. The road run start point is the public car park by the pond at Godstone Green. Map Ref: TQ187 350515. Please arrive at 09:00 for the start at 10:00. A MGCC member will be there to sign you in and give you route instructions. More details: nick@fuzedown.plus.com
- Sunday 19th Cambridgeshire Area Treasure Hunt, starting from Cambridge services on A14. For further details please contact Nigel Wrenn on 01223 474798.
- Saturday 25th
Or Sunday 26th
Or Monday 27th North West Area will be at the Oulton Park Gold Cup Races. Not sure which day yet. Contact Les Robinson on 01772 432138
- Monday 27th Lincs Area Wolds Run to Lincs Aviation Heritage Centre, East Kirkby. Details from Brian Jeffery, Tel: 01522 531425 or 07952 969514.
- Friday 31st
To Sunday 2nd The Goodwood Revival.

September

- Sunday 2nd Coventry Motor Festival.
- Thursday 13th Surrey Area's trip to Circuit des Remparts, Angouleme, France. Book early! Details from Alan Anstead, Tel: 01322 384050

October

- Sunday 14th Severn Valley Railway Classic Bike and Car Day. Warwickshire Area are going. Details from John Platt, Tel: 01789 488321
- Sunday 28th North West Area's Halloween Run. Contact Les Robinson on 01772 432138

November

- Friday 9th
To Sunday 11th Classic Motor Show 2007 at the NEC, Birmingham. Club stand care of Warwicks Area. Details from John Platt, Tel: 01789 488321

December

- Wednesday 12th Warwickshire Area Christmas Dinner at The Green Dragon. Details from Sheila Yates, Tel: 01608 665066
- Wednesday 12th North West Area's Christmas Dinner. Contact Les Robinson on 01772 432138
- Tuesday 18th Surrey Area Christmas Meal. Venue to be decided.

2008

May

Saturday 24th Spridget 50 – The Big Party. To register an expression of interest and receive priority booking, please contact Steve Clark on 07963 433832 or email: organiser@spridget50.com

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.

Rambling in Company

What a great, bumper edition of *MASCOT* last month, bodes well for this month's edition. Better than ever, I thought, well done Barry! Thank you.

After what seemed a disappointing turnout for the EGM the results are in for the member's ballot and we have a resounding vote to go forwards as a Company/Club.

The process to begin the change over is now in hand and I hope to present you with a new revised constitution as the "Articles Of Association" for the new company. Details are still to be finalised but I intend that you will all get a copy of the new Articles with a future issue of *MASCOT*, as a separate booklet to keep in the drawer.

I read with pleasure Bill Cornwell's article on resurrecting his lovely Frogeye, but I think I must nip the bud of a bit of bad advice that

Bill's "source" passed on to him... Yes Frogeye chassis rails do have the upward curve as stated, but in fact ALL Sprites and Midgets have the same curve built in to their chassis. The curve sets the steering castor angle. I rather think a Spridget without the curve would be very dodgy to drive. At last year's visit to the Heritage factory I inspected the body jigs and could clearly see the blocks built into the front end of the jig to "Set" the correct curve in the rails.

(If you need a picture I can email one to you, too poor quality for *MASCOT* unfortunately.)

As the last few months of my chairmanship run down we are looking for a new person to take the reins, don't be shy. This club is a great place to be and I'm sure you'll enjoy steering it along into the future.

Bill Mohan

Secretarial Scribblings

With the club approaching 25 years of age, middle age spread is setting in I fear. By this, I refer to *MASCOT* which is definitely getting fatter. Should we diet, only accept low calorie articles perhaps? – No, let's be pigs! Not only are we getting more for our money, but there is a strong rumour that this edition is also going to be rather more colourful. Now this really is having our cake and eating it. Following the Classic Car Action Day at Castle Combe, the next big event for my Frogeye was its MOT. A pass was important as the very next day we had an entry for an off road Driving Test. The MOT test was successful, the Driving Test less so!

Perhaps a new MOT certificate is akin to washing my hair, afterwards, it's all over the place. Certainly, my driving style was hairy. To my shame, I was the only driver to go through a finishing gate sideways and demolish it.

With that weekend out of the way, it was off to find where I left my MkIV Sprite. OK, I did know where it was but both the key to the barn and the ignition keys did take some finding. Amazingly, it actually started without the customary application of jump leads. It even drove OK despite not being used for over 3 months. With the MkIV now in my garage at home, I have fitted the new fuel tank but not without a few niggles. Firstly, the fuel level

sender unit is secured to the new tank with 4mm screws rather than the original 8unc screws. Did I have any? No. I was foresighted enough to have purchased a new gasket prior to starting the job so I didn't feel a complete divvy. Well, not until after I purchased some 4mm screws and then found both a new gasket and a set of 4mm screws in the bottom of the box the tank came in. At least I had no problems in installing 5 litres of the unleaded stuff, excepting the fuel pump couldn't find it. It ticked away furiously but failed to deliver. In went another 5 litres from a can, perhaps being up on ramps was too great an angle for just one can full. No, the ticking continued despite the fuel gauge confirming that there was indeed a rise in the level. Disconnecting the pipe to the pump produced no sign of the two can fulls, nothing for it but to blow (definitely not suck!) into the pipe and listen for any clues from the tank. The moment I stopped blowing, I copped a mouth full. What ever it was, the fuel was now getting through but the pump had gone on strike. In disconnecting the pipe, I had pulled the spade connectors apart at the tank end. With that sorted, I fully expected one or more of the float chambers to flood. A common occurrence following any invasion of the fuel system pipe work. No surprise then, the front carb gave itself a thorough wash. Simple enough to remove the lid, push out the float pin and clear any debris. Not so simple when I then dropped the pin and couldn't find it. Thank

goodness for my many boxes of "comes in handy" spares for Spridgley things. Even more fortunate that I actually knew where the carb parts box was!

The MOT is now due on the MKIV (Tomorrow as I write this) so I thought I had better give it a few miles by using it for work and then onto the Bristol Area club night. The return home from work revealed a sticking front brake. With that freed off it was off to club night and an evening run from Pucklechurch to Norton. The return journey started off OK but then this funny little red light came on. As if by coincidence, the ammeter needle explored the further reaches of the left hand side of the instrument, the area marked minus. I reached home with about half an amp left in the battery, and the MOT a day away. Following an overnight battery charge, I checked the dynamo output voltage, which I thought might be zero, but was surprised that it was delivering a healthy 15v at idle. Nothing for it but to aimlessly fiddle with the voltage regulator, fuses and anything else that might look electrical, hey presto; all is well again – for the moment! Fingers crossed for the MOT tomorrow. (Please note, I am not deliberately trying to finish off this month with a cliff hanger, editor Barry has been on the phone again to remind me that I am on borrowed time already – His!)

Terry Horler

Mutual Assistance Directory

Haven't passed any Spridglets on the road this year in our neck of the woods.

Normally I do pass a few who I assume are on holiday. Hope they haven't all been driven overseas by the lousy weather we have been having lately! Our Midget hasn't been out lately as I hate to get it wet – I know I am a bit sad but that's how I am. It goes rusty fast enough without getting it wet! Must be something to do with the salty air here.

I have not heard from any of you telling me of the assistance that you have either received or rendered, to a fellow member. Maybe this scheme really is MAD!

Hope that you all are enjoying your pride and joy and forget not, this is the summer! It is not winter with summer only 6 months away – it is summer with the next one 12 months away! So get out and enjoy it.

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

The Future of MASC

Our thanks to the 175 members who returned their Ballot Papers concerning the future status of MASC. As you may recall, the committee have been concerned about the liability of the club and the implications to individual members should we do something really daft and find ourselves being threatened financially. Our current status offers no protection to individuals and hence, the committee's recommendation that we transfer our status to a Limited by guarantee Company. Many other clubs, similar to ourselves, have already taken this direction. As the committee cannot make this decision alone, a Ballot has been conducted and the result of this Ballot are as follows:

Number of votes received by the closing date of the 3rd of July	175
Number of void ballot forms as being incorrectly completed	2
Number of spoiled ballot forms	2
Number in favour of recommendation	170
Number not in favour	1

Results collated by independent adjudicator, Dr Pauline Bashforth.

The recommendation to form the club into a Limited by guarantee Company is therefore carried. The committee will now proceed to make the necessary applications and will keep you informed of progress.

The Club extend its thanks to Dr Pauline Bashforth for acting as the independent adjudicator for this Ballot.

Terry Horler
(On behalf of the Committee)

New Members

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

1287	Bernard Higginson	Greater Manchester	Sprite Mk 3
3857	Christopher Ireland	Cheshire	Sprite Mk 4
3858	Marc Adams	Lancashire	Midget Mk 3 RWA
3859	Mike & Sue Gahan	London	Austin A40 Farina Mk 11
3860	Neil Edwards	South Wales	Frogeye
3861	Victoria McAlister	Northern Ireland	none yet
3862	Neil Clarke	Cambridgeshire	Frogeye
3863	Graham & Kay Styche	West Midlands	Frogeye x 2
3864	Dan Sudduth	United States – TX	Midgets Mk1 and Mk 2
3865	David Cooper	West Sussex	Frogeye
3866	Lizzie Bartlett	Lincolnshire	Frogeye
3867	Mark Eccles	Yorkshire	Midget Mk 3
3868	Ray Barrett	Lincolnshire	Midget Mk 3 RWA
3869	Christopher Pilkington	Kent	Austin Sprite
3870	Jason Alexander & Sue Gibbs	East Sussex	Austin Sprite
3871	Robert Tippler	Essex	Frogeye

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Saving a Frogeye Bonnet



The bonnet brought back in the trailer

I thought you might be interested in hearing about how I recently restored the steel bonnet on my 1958 Frogeye. I would describe my skills at body restoration as competent but self learned from a number of restoration projects over the years on predominantly MGs. Whilst this Frogeye itself had received attention in the form of a very prolonged yet unfinished restoration by its previous owner, the bonnet had not been tackled and was in fact hanging upside down by rope in a car body workshop several miles away. The owner of the workshop had used this upturned bonnet as a shelf in which to store empty paint tins, car panels etc! Having got it down from the ceiling, together with a thick layer of dust, I put it in my trailer and



Rusty bonnet

took it home to assess how much work would be involved in restoring it.

It didn't take long to see that it was in a pretty poor state. At some time in the long distant past the arches had been flared rather poorly. The front lower valance was riddled with holes and rust and the front of the main shroud was also heavily rusted. Was this worth restoring I asked myself especially bearing in mind I had a fibreglass bonnet I could use? When I discovered that a new bonnet would cost in the region of £2000 plus the VAT I decided it was worth a go at a repair.

I started by purchasing two new wings, a lower valance and two lengths of beading for the joint between the shroud and the wings. This was almost £500 worth and so there was no going back then. My first assault on the bonnet involved cutting off the nearside wing and grinding the old T beading away from the flange of the main shroud and the lower valance to leave a clean edge. I then trial fitted the new wing by holding it in situ and clamping the lips of the wing in several places to the main shroud. I was impressed with the quality of the replacement wing as it fitted well. I then repeated this action with the nearside wing and then with the lower valance. At one stage the two wings and the lower valance were held in place with G clamps and self gripping pliers. Once I was happy that everything was lining up I then tackled the holes and rust in the main shroud. I cut out the rotten areas and replaced any poor edges of the shroud with new metal and welded them in with my mig welder.

My next stage was to trial fit the T beading. This was a very awkward job as there is a tremendous curve in a Frogeye bonnet from



Bonnet minus wings and front valance



Bonnet handle mechanism arrangement

front to rear and so I had to place a number of cuts in the beading to enable me to bend it enough to follow the curvature of the wing. Once I was happy with it I clamped it into position with the trusty G clamps. I wouldn't like to say how many times I separated the wings, beading and shroud before I was satisfied with the fit but it was a very time consuming part of the job. This procedure of course had to be repeated for the other wing and the lower valance. At last everything seemed to fit together. At this point I decided I would have the central shroud sandblasted to clean off all the surface rust. This was a very nervous time for me as a sandblasting machine in the wrong hands can lead to all kinds of distortion and additional holes to resemble a colander! Thankfully the shroud survived although the middle part of the bonnet was not blasted as this was most likely to be distorted by the pressure. I cleaned this off with a wire brush on a 4" angle grinder.

All the way through the process I had been thinking ahead as to how I was going to join the wings, valance and beading to the shroud. When the bonnets were made originally they were spot welded as attested to when I was grinding the old wings off. I haven't got a spot welder and whilst I could plug weld to give a similar result, the design of the Frogeye bonnet made it extremely difficult to get my mig welder nozzle into the right position. I spoke to a few local body shops and was given the idea of gluing the panels together. Nowadays Lotus's and Audis have panels that are glued on and bodyshops glue replacement panels on to cars. I contacted a company called U-Pol who make all types of automotive adhesives and they were very helpful. I explained the

application I was thinking of using it for and they recommended "U-Pol Stonghold 945". This was a very strong adhesive for metal and would give me up to 45 minutes working time before it set. It is a two pack adhesive whereby a mastic gun with twin pistons pushes out the resin and hardener through a nozzle which mixes both solutions. As well as forming a strong bond this would effectively seal the space between the lip of the wing with the T bead and the shroud and prevent water penetrating and causing the dreaded rust which always attacks the T beading.

To be safe I also decided to place some bolts through the lips of the wings, T bead and shroud. I lined up the panels and drilled the holes before applying the adhesive. I ran a bead of adhesive against each surface to be bonded, clamped the joins altogether, put in the bolts, repeating this procedure for both wings and the lower valance.

Where I had effected the repairs on the front of the shroud I leaded loaded the area as I believed this would give a better result than



Bonnet in primer





The whole car nearing completion

using filler. The radiator cowl was an awkward installation a well and I fabricated the strengthening panel that the bonnet handle attaches to.

Having left the bonnet to 'cure' for a few days I then trial fitted the bonnet to the car and was delighted with the result. It fitted really well. I subsequently prepared the bonnet for priming and it has now been sprayed in Old English White. I have to confess that I don't know what the long term result will be with the method I used and the purists wouldn't

necessarily agree with my methodology, but eh, I did it myself and so far so good.

Neil Thomas
(Tenby, Pembrokeshire)
Membership No 3617

PS This Frogeye was registered July 1958,
Chassis No 1991.



Bonnet painted and awaiting the grill

What's in a Name?

This year's visit to the Castle Combe Action Day in June – which had everything from A40s to GT40s taking to the track – reminded me of this small village close by. Lying a mile or so south of the circuit, whilst not anything that special to write home about in itself, it does have an unusual name; Tiddleywink with a grand total of 9 houses (I couldn't find any more).

The village straddles the B4089 for the magnificent distance of some 3 tenths of a mile! Although mundane in its appearance a smile passes your lips as you pass the village boundary sign. "Please drive carefully" it says; as soon as you've slowed down you're out the other side of the village!

Of course, it always reminds me of my childhood and that ever-young game played



throughout the generations. I sometimes wonder if the game was created here or if it was named after it?

Philip Sellen 1153

P.S. In anticipation of those eagle-eyed amongst you: I am aware the game is correctly spelt "Tiddlywinks" which I understand, originated in the 19th century.

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The Importance of a Dab of Black Paint

When I drove my tartan red *GAN2* out of its garage under its own power for the first time in twenty five years it looked good when viewed from the sides and from the rear.

The view from the front however, did not seem quite right. Initially, I was unable to pinpoint the source of the problem; it was only after examining earlier photographs of the car (taken in 1973 before its restoration) that the penny dropped; the large gaping circular aperture of the air intake for the heater and the black area of the radiator – both invisible behind the grille slats in 1973 – were now clearly on show, standing out like a sore thumbs! This effect – now often seen on restored cars – is most obvious on a white-painted early *HAN6* Sprite because the grille of these cars is more transparent than the slatted Midget grille (see Fig. 1): the effect is not, of course, obvious on a black painted car.



Fig 1

A close examination of my car's original front valance (not used in the restoration) revealed that the critical areas behind the grille – down to but not including the bottom of the tray supporting the horns – had been carefully painted matt black.

Further research has established that this paint was applied at the factory and that Abingdon began to do this either in late *GAN1/HAN6* production or (more likely) at the very beginning of *GAN2/HAN7* production. There is clear evidence for this in the contemporary road tests of these vehicles. For example, the white *HAN6* in 'The Motor' issue dated 12 July

1961 has no black paint (Fig 2a) but the paint is there on the white *HAN7* in the issue dated 5 December 1962 (Fig 2b).



Fig 2a



Fig 2b

Additional evidence is available from contemporary photographs of the factory production line. Fig 3a shows a white *GAN1* (identified by the Perspex blocks on the side screen panes in the low position) *without* black paint while Figure 3b shows a later Midget (identified by its disk brakes and side trim strips) *with* the paint. Note that on the later Midget the central support of the front valance is not black because it will be invisible



Fig 3a

behind the central badge plinth of the slatted MG grille. This strut *was* painted black for the Sprites – a small detail providing a fascinating insight into the levels of economy prevailing in the factory at that time. This observation also suggests that the black paint was applied at Abingdon, not in the paint shop at Cowley (because Abingdon drew painted shells for Sprite and Midget from the same stockpile at the factory).

This small dab of black paint behind the grille really does make an enormous cosmetic difference, particularly on the lighter coloured cars. Most people agree that the grilles look best against a totally black background. The need for the black paint is very obvious once one is aware and primed to look out for it but

very few restorations seem to include it, probably because the black paint is not well documented either in folklore or in books. So, if you are the owner of a **GAN2/HAN7** car or later (or if you own an even earlier car and are not obsessed with originality and concours points), why not whip off your grille and splash a dab of black paint on the crucial areas (if the paint is not already there)? Those who do so should prepare to be very happy with the result.

John Davies
jed2@cus.cam.ac.uk



Fig 3b

Letter to the Editor

Dear Barry

I have occasion to replace my choke cable as the cable end is getting a little frayed. So on looking around for a replacement I find that what is offered is a cable and knob with the letter “C” on it, which would seem to match the “H” of the heater control, or one with the more modern “fan” symbol. However my existing knob has the word “CHOKE” written on it.

I looked in Terry’s book (Original Sprite and Midget) but the pictures of the dashes are just too small to make out the motif on the choke handle. So I thought I’d seek the collective wisdom of club members to tell me which type is correct for KOW, my 1967 Mk IV Sprite? If it is the “CHOKE” type, where can I get one?

Thanks in anticipation,

Geraint Swann-Price, Memb. No: 1547

Notes on a 5-Speed Conversion

Halfway through doing a sixth 5-speed conversion my attention was drawn, by Martin Bird whose Frogeye I was converting, to an article in Practical Classics magazine showing a Ford Sierra 5 speed gearbox conversion as applied to a 1275cc M.G.Midget. *Practical Classics* were using a kit of parts supplied by Tim Fenna's Frontline Costello www.mgcars.org.uk/frontline/

The *Practical Classics* article states that complete kits, including a reconditioned Sierra 5 speed (Type 9) gearbox are available from £1000 but the conversion can be carried out for much, much, less especially if using a second hand gearbox (£30-£100).

I would agree with the four, out of five, spanner difficulty rating but I felt that the article missed and oversimplified some points. In my opinion four to five days would be a more realistic time for such a project or maybe I am slowing with age!

The bell housing has to have a drain hole drilled into its lower surface to allow any ingress of oil, or water, to escape.

The raised escarpment around the bell housing between 7 and 8 o'clock, as you look into the bell housing, is best ground level with the Clutch slave cylinder platform to ensure that the Clutch slave cylinder, when fitted, sits square.

The starter bendix cover needs transferring from the Midget gearbox and fitting either by drilling and tapping threads into the bell



Bolt location

housing and using bolts or drilling, only, and using self tapping screws.

The *Practical Classics* article suggests removing the engine having first removed the clutch slave cylinder. Removing the clutch slave cylinder is not an easy task when lying on your back with nose pressed against the underside of the car which is supported on axle stands. I would suggest disconnecting the clutch hydraulics and removing the clutch slave cylinder with the engine whilst attached to the gearbox. First undo the clutch master cylinder cap and lay a piece of plastic carrier bag across the filler hole. Replace the cap and this should hold a head of fluid minimising spillage/leakage whilst the hydraulic pipe is disconnected. The clutch hydraulic system will need 'bleeding' on re-assembly (and the piece of carrier bag removing). This is a fine time to consider fitting a remote bleeding system that I have mentioned, and has been displayed in photographs, in previous *MASCOT* articles (See Page 7, Issue 274, January 2007). Those that have bled Spridget clutch hydraulic systems will appreciate this modification.

With the engine out and separated from its original gearbox remove the bronze bush from the rear of the crankshaft. *Practical Classics* chose the hard way. Pump some grease into the rear of the crankshaft. Using the clutch alignment tool as a piston, tap it into the grease filled bush and, with luck, hydraulic pressure will force the bush out of the crankshaft toward you.

The new spigot bearing fits into the centre of the flywheel on a steel mounting disc. This can be a tight fit but some people have mentioned them coming loose so adopt a 'Belt and Braces' approach and apply some Loctite anyway.

Stuck for a clutch alignment tool? 9/16in and 1in, outside diameter washers on a long stud or bolt will suffice for the hybrid clutch plate supplied with the kit. Searching catalogues I have failed to find a suitable common car manufactures clutch plate for 948/1275 conversions so assume the kit suppliers have these especially made. However if converting 1098 / 1500 Spridgets (or 1500 Triumph

Spitfire) then a cheap source of a clutch plate is to use the Avenger 1250-1600cc (up to 1977) or Sunbeam 930, 1300, 1600 (1977-1981) clutch plate which can be found extremely cheaply (two for £5?). A Quinton Hazel clutch cover is required having a

necessarily larger hole than its Borg & Beck equivalent allowing the Ford Sierra primary shaft to pass through.

The Morris Minor (Birmingham) kit, for which parts are available separately, uses the much maligned carbon thrust bearing in which case remove the Ford Sierra gearbox input shaft shroud, with a hacksaw, up to the oil seal before fitting the new bell housing

The old gearbox mount/chassis cross member of your car (a portion 7in wide) has to be removed and a minimum of 8in of floor from the transmission tunnel floor to allow for entry of the longer Ford Sierra gearbox. The chassis is easily cut with an electric saw with a metal cutting blade. The car will need to be lifted as high as possible to allow you access underneath the car. Chalk may be beneficial for marking out, where cuts have to be made, used in conjunction with either an engineers or carpenters 'Square'.

Once the cross member is cut out of the chassis, tap the 'closing tubes' into the exposed chassis rail and 'dress', where cuts have been made, with an angle grinder to tidy up. If the conversion is to an earlier car, with a metal cover, over the original gearbox remote (as on Frogeyes) remove the raised surround. The remaining aperture will need a panel fashioned from steel plate once the conversion is complete. Whilst on the subject of cutting the transmission tunnel, if using the Ford Sierra speedometer drive cable, this will require a hole where it enters the cockpit and another hole, anyway, will be required to allow the prop shaft universal joint to be greased. Both holes can be cut with a 'Tank Cutter' mounted on a power drill. Consideration also needs to be given to forming a hole in the passenger footwell beneath the trim to facilitate filling the gearbox with oil otherwise this task has to be completed from under the car. The transmission tunnel will also have to be cut back 3in and across 3.5in from the original gearlever hole to allow for the Ford Sierra gearbox remote.

If using the Morris Minor (Birmingham) chassis strengthening plate then a 3/8in hole needs to be drilled in the chassis X-member 7/8in (and central) from the transmission tunnel on each side. The hole needs to be square to the chassis member and pass



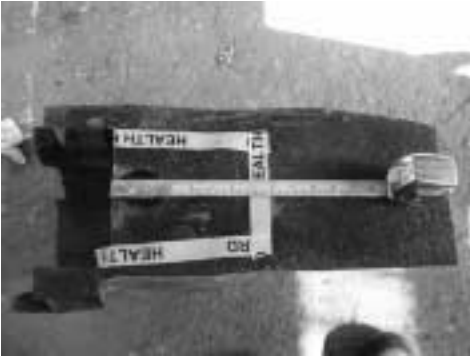
After removal of cross member



Closing panels and cross member 'dummed up'



Closing panels in situ



Cut out along outside of tape



Cut out within tape for gear lever

through the closing tubes. The method that I employ is to drill through the top of the X-member and 'spot' the closing tube beneath. Using a rod through the jacking point the closing tube is knocked out of the X member. Using a bench drill the 'spot' is turned into a 3/8in hole. Mark and drill through the underside of the of the closing tube. Re insert the closing tube into the chassis X-member and align the holes. Drill 3/8in hole all the way through the chassis X-member. Drop a 3/8in bolt through and give a final dressing to the chassis X-member where it was originally cut then apply seam sealer and paint.

Consideration may be given to welding the closing tubes in position. Please note that many power drills run too fast a speed to be able to successfully drill with a 3/8in drill bit.

Once the engine and Ford Sierra gearbox are fitted and aligned then the strengthening plate can be fitted to its gearbox mount with suitable nuts and bolts. Jack the plate up firm against

the vehicles undercarriage and 'Spot' for holes by drilling down through the 3/8in holes drilled already in the chassis X-members. Remove the plate and drill through where 'spotted'. If you want gearbox fitting / removal now, and in future, to be a one man job then weld a 3/8in Unf nut over each hole that has been drilled in the strengthening plate. Replace the plate and bolt up to the chassis.

1500 Midgets and Triumph Spitfires do not need a bell housing for this conversion but use an alloy spacer/ sandwich plate between original bell housing and Ford Sierra Gearbox. I have no experience of commercially available spacer plates having used only such an item, made by a gentleman in Wales, no longer available.

Speedy Cables www.speedycables.com can supply a right angle speedometer cable drive and cable (i.r.o. £80) that avoids drilling a hole in the transmission tunnel and also avoids having the very long Sierra cable trailing about the cockpit.

Speedometer recalibration is carried out, in Kent, by Vintage Restorations. The Old Bakery, Windmill St, Tunbridge Wells. TN2 4UU
Tel: 01892-525899

The transmission tunnel will require re-carpeting to suit the new gear lever position.

Parts from Morris Minor (Birmingham)

www.morrisminor.co.uk

Midget 5 spd bell housing:	£156
Lever bracket	£7.25
Midget/Sierra X member	£24
Closing tube (2 off)	£17.50 pair
Gearbox mount	£8.95
Sierra speedo cable	£11.50
Circlip for above	£0.30
Prop shaft to suit	£79
Gasket (bell housing)	£1.35
Crankshaft spigot	£11.95

The photographs supplied are of my long term restoration project. It is an Austin Sprite with V5 and chassis plate. As it is not progressing very fast I am open to offers as it stands.

Alan Anstead
Area Rep for Kent and Surrey
Tel: 01322-384050

Mail to: alan.anstead@btopenworld.com



Sprites – The Early Days

by John Sprinzel, June 2007

1958 ALPINE – MONT VENTOUX

When the little Austin Healey Sprite came out nearly fifty years ago, there were some outstanding results as the little sports car came virtually “out of the box”. Doug Wilson Spratt took his brand new car on a club rally and won it, probably scoring the very first victory on what was to become a very long list indeed, and which continues even today in Vintage events around the world. Around the same time, John Anstice-Brown bought a Speedwell engine conversion from our little North London Tuning shop, fitted it to his new Sprite by himself and rushed off to Ireland to win the Leinster Trophy race for GT Cars. Meanwhile, back at the ranch, Donald Healey’s Warwick works were busy tuning up a Sprite for Tommy Wisdom and Journalist Jack Hay to take on the prestigious Alpine Rally. (Jack’s daughter incidentally, was Richard Burton’s last wife.) Abingdon supported another Sprite for Ray Brooks to

drive and loaned another to me at Speedwell for a number of events including this French Classic. Tommy’s Warwick car had a cooling vent fitted between the headlights, as they had obviously found overheating to be a problem. The early cars did not have a proper duct around the radiator and permitted the air that entered the grille to funnel around the sides and not, as intended, through the radiator which caused serious overheating. At one stage of the event an under bonnet fire broke out due to the extreme temperature encouraged by the South of France’s summer climate, and we were lucky to put this out without further damage. Shortly after this event, the bonnet was modified and this problem cured, but my co-driver, Willy Cave and I found the only solution was to get a French Blacksmith to hack a hole between the headlights in order to lure the cooling air through the radiator. This small modification



relaxation after the day's hard driving. The rally sections were really tight with short, timed stages so that work on the cars was almost impossible. Almost all the classic mountain passes were used and the set times each year were based on the fastest time achieved in each class the previous year, so that "easy" sections were unheard of. While roads were not closed, there were gendarmes on every single junction and the event was well enough publicized so that one rarely met a non-competing car on the narrow and often unmade lanes. At the high altitudes, most passes were covered in snow and ice well into the early summer and road surfaces were rarely surfaced in time for the event. One occasionally slid around a shaded corner to find patches of black ice covering the road ahead which provided some exciting moments on normal tyres which we used in those days.

One of the organizer's clever tricks was to include ten lap races around the Monza race track, which in those days had none of the modern Mickey Mouse chicanes and was therefore extremely fast. This ensured that one was not able to fit a very low axle ratio which would have been ideal for the very steep Alps and Dolomites, some of which teetered up to around 9,000 feet with endless hairpin bends to test your ability to snatch the non-synchromesh first gear. One also had to stay within 10% of the fastest times in class set on the various speed tests; otherwise your Alpine Cup for a penalty-free run was lost.

allowed me to win the class ahead of the other two Sprites and to take the first International Rally awards for PMO 200 – which was the registration number on the car which Marcus Chambers had loaned to me.

The Alpine Rally was one of the oldest Classic events and possibly the nicest in that there were three tough sections of twenty four hours or so interrupted by a couple of 24 hour rest halts in delightful Alpine resorts. In the early days, Tommy Wisdom said he used to pack a fly fishing rod so that he could catch a trout or two on the rest days! Thomas Cook provided a package for the entrants that included smart hotels, with a taxi to ferry us to and from the parc ferme, obviously no work was allowed on the cars during the rests. The hotels all had decent restaurants and a swimming pool for total



Another great feature of this event was that most of us took the train from Boulogne to Lyons, in order to save road mileage on the cars. Complete with Wagon Lits sleepers and an excellent and typical French restaurant car the journeys in each direction became one long party with mechanics and drivers enjoying every minute of the trip.

A little later in the season, I was invited to enter the Autosport GT Championship final race at Snetterton, where I managed seventh place overall among some pretty hairy machinery, beating the Turner which eventually was the championship winner into the bargain. The following year, PMO was lucky enough to win the British Rally Championship and the BTRDA Gold Star Championship which resulted in Marcus giving me the little Sprite as a reward for our efforts. At the end of the year, PMO was fitted with a rather splendid body, designed by Frank Costin, and was on the centre display at the BRSCC Racing Car Show among all that season's award winners. When I left Speedwell to join the Donald Healey Motor

Company at the end of 1959 I swapped my faithful little Sprite for a new beige version, as obviously Speedwell wanted to keep their GT prototype, and in the changes that followed, the history of PMO the first seems to have been lost which was a shame for a car which had won so many awards and had competed in races and rallies across Europe and the British Isles. I did however; keep the registration number which continued to have some successes in its own right and became the prototype for my own Sebring Sprite, now faithfully and beautifully restored with most of the original bits by Paul Woolmer. Paul persuaded Sir Stirling Moss to be reunited at the Goodwood Revival Meeting with the car he had driven for me at Sebring 45 years earlier, shortly after his sister Pat had raced PMO at the Brands Hatch Boxing Day meeting.

In those Golden Years you could do things with a production car and a limited budget which would certainly not be possible in today's environment of Motor Sport.

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JACK BRABHAM'S M.G. MIDGET-CLIMAX

"...a really potent sports car with vast reserves of stamina..."



It is no secret that the new M.G. Midget is closely related to the Austin-Healey Sprite, and this article may, therefore, be applied to the latter car also. The original Sprite was a lively little ugly duckling, but it has been developed into the latest model, which is a good-looker, and the M.G. Midget, which is a really attractive small sports car.

In standard form, these machines have a lively performance which satisfies the average owner. Tiring equipment is available to augment the power output, but if the process is carried too far there may be noise, roughness and a lack of flexibility. If a bigger engine could be fitted, of a type designed initially for continuous high power production, the car would obviously be transformed. Unfortunately, the larger B.M.C. units cannot be used because their weight would ruin the handling characteristics. The replacement of the cast iron engine by a light alloy one of increased size is, therefore, the only answer.

This is precisely what Jack Brabham has done in producing his new Sprite-Climax and Midget-Climax. He has taken the famous 1,220 c.c. Coventry

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

The English M.G. Midget two-seater sports car fitted with Coventry Climax engine and disc brakes. Price of basic conversion £130.

Engine: Four cylinders 71.2 mm. x 66.6 mm. 11,220 c.c. Light alloy head and base. Four valve driven overhead camshaft. Compression ratio 14 to 1. 57 h.p. at 5,400 r.p.m. Two 500 carburetors. Laminated and deformed. Sidekick electric lift.

Transmission: 75 lb. single dry plate clutch, four-speed gearbox with central reverse control gear cone. Ratios 3.22, 2.726, 2.205 and 1.758 to 1. Close proximity shaft. Synchromesh balanced to handle full drive load. Automatic free drive ratios of 2.071, 1.65 and 1.3 to 1.

Chassis: Two-door, two-seater sports car of all-steel monocoque construction equipped with frame and floor. Rack and pinion steering. Front suspension independent with coil springs and wishbones. Rear: upper spring coil spring and shock absorber. Hydraulic shock absorbers front and rear. Diskon disc wheels front 5.25 x 12 in. steel.

Equipment: As standard M.G. Midget. Speedometer, oil pressure, water temperature and fuel gauges. Windproof windows and weather. Rayonette direction indicators.

Dimensions: Wheelbase, 6 ft. 6 in. Track front, 3 ft. 9 1/2 in.; rear, 5 ft. 10 in. Overall length, 11 ft. 5 1/2 in. Overall width, 4 ft. 8 in. Unladen weight, 1,140 lb.

Performance: Maximum speed, 107.1 m.p.h. Speeds in gear: 1st, 40 m.p.h.; 2nd, 57 m.p.h.; 3rd, 64 m.p.h. Standing quarter-mile, 15.4 sec. Acceleration: 0-50 m.p.h., 7.8 sec.; 0-70 m.p.h., 11.2 sec.; 0-100 m.p.h., 19 sec.; 0-130 m.p.h., 17.8 sec.

Fuel Consumption: 25-30 m.p.g.

Climax engine with a Stage 1 camshaft but with twin carburetors. This he has installed in the Midget, using all the know-how that has been accumulated from many Herald-Climax conversions. It is not an easy engine to mount flexibly, because it is so light for its considerable torque. Jack has developed a mounting which gives smooth running right through the revolution range, an achievement which some other firms have failed to emulate.

The engine fills the bonnet from the radiator to the bulkhead, but an electric fan, mounted ahead of the radiator block, leaves the under-bonnet space usually occupied by this component. The result of all this is that one gains 270 c.c. and an overhead camshaft while reducing the weight over the front wheels by some 40 lb. These figures speak for themselves.

A suitable clutch assembly has been developed and the standard gearbox is used. All the special gears, axle ratios and "chassis-tuning" components that are available for Sprites are applicable to this car if required. The test car had the optional disc brakes and anti-roll bar but these were no structural modifica-

tions. Jack Brabham disapproves of stiffening the suspension and I heartily agree with him. I have driven some "racing" Sprites which last like young men and could only be kept on the road by the skill of the driver. For a small car to hold the road well, relatively soft suspension is essential or every bump will cause a lack of adhesion.

When I took over the Midget I was at once impressed by the lateral location afforded by the proper bucket seats, and the correct relationship of all the controls. In passing, it amazes me that, after more than 70 years of motor manufacture, the majority of cars are still sold with dangerous pedals and seats that encourage the driver and passenger to slide uncontrollably into each other's laps. Ah well!

The engine starts at once, even when the car has stood all night in freezing weather. It idles steadily with no appreciable shake on its mountings, and the clutch permits a smooth start. The engine is more flexible than the unit which it replaces, and will propel the car at 15 m.p.h. in top gear without protest. As a shopping car, the Midget-Climax is even better than a standard Midget and the excellent steering lock renders parking particularly simple. The exhaust is well silenced, a virtue which I personally rate very highly.

If flexibility is one aspect of the Coventry Climax engine, an appetite for high revolutions is an even more pronounced characteristic. When hurrying, one normally changes up at 6,000 r.p.m. and at this speed the short-stroke unit is completely unstrained. Modern "cooking" engines, with their pushrods and rockers, can be developed to give an astonishing performance, but for turbine-like smoothness at high revolutions the "camshaft job" has it every time.



The Climax engine fills the available space on the Midget.

The cruising speed of the Midget-Climax is higher than the maximum of the standard car. On the motorway, 90 m.p.h. may be maintained with the throttle almost closed, and there is still lots of acceleration left. The test car had the hood and subframes erect when it was timed at 107.1 m.p.h., and the rev. counter was registering 6,400 r.p.m. at this time. With the smoother contours of a hard top, 110 m.p.h. could certainly be exceeded.

Even more impressive is the acceleration through the gears. The rear axle of the test car was much less inclined to tramp than is usually the case with Sprites, in spite of the vastly greater power available. This is apparently due to the improved weight distribution. At all events, full throttle can be used on bottom gear without excessive wheel-spin, though an early change to second is beneficial on wet roads. The box permits rapid changes, the clutch grips instantly and the result is a time for the standing quarter-mile of 16.4 sec. Very few cars indeed, irrespective of size or price, can better this splendid figure.

The machine never feels over-powered and the quick steering permits an immediate correction if one is glibly on an subcurve. I took a rather bumpy curve at just over 100 m.p.h. and found that, although the rear axle hopped on occasion, a flick of the wrist was sufficient to pin the little projectile down on its course. For the type of car, the ride is quite surprisingly comfortable at all speeds. Again, it must be a matter of weight distribution, and it is a far cry from the earlier Sprites, which took quite a bit of holding even on the straight at much lower speeds.

To me, the most impressive feature of the car is its acceleration in the 80-90 m.p.h. range. Factors in 34-litre devices with poised inertia like one sits pass, and the ease with which one glides over hill tops, still at 90 m.p.h., seems almost unnatural. The brakes cope easily with repeated high-speed stops, and the fuel consumption is always moderate. Fast driving consumes the stuff at the rate of 28 m.p.g. and 30 m.p.g. is easily attained under normal conditions.

Externally, nothing is visible of the changes that have been wrought within. So many "conversions" are unattractive because they have an air of being homemade. In the case of the Midget-Climax it is impossible to tell where B.M.C. ends and Brabham begins. Everything is properly finished, the controls work normally and there is no sign of improvisation. Engine heat does not penetrate to the cockpit and there are no bulges which try to hide that the machinery is larger than standard.

A high-performance sports car which has no other virtues may appeal to the young. A high-performance sports car which is quiet, flexible and comfortable has a far larger potential market and I predict that Jack will sell as many as he can make. At £260 for the whole job, which includes work on the brakes and fitting a rev. counter, this cannot be regarded as an expensive operation. A Midget or Sprite so treated becomes a really potent sports car that has vast reserves of stamina and will stand the hardest driving indefinitely. And, of course, if one were to tune the Climax . . . !





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News: Auto Express News

Austin Healey

Now Chinese fire up Healey relaunch It's not only MG that may be set to return to its historical home at Longbridge - it's Healey and Austin Healey, too!

By Dan Strong

20th June 2007

In a radical deal involving Chinese car maker Nanjing, IRT Automotive and Healey Automotive Consultants, plans have been drawn up to relaunch the Healey brand, further develop the MG marque and resurrect Austin Healey.

The move means the revival of the three famous British brands could be more significant than expected - as the huge resources of Nanjing are focused on creating a wider range of sports cars than originally announced. Crucially, Nanjing's ownership of the Austin badge means that the revival of Austin Healey is now possible.

There has been cynicism about Nanjing and MG's ability to run a successful car business, both in the UK and China, but it's worth remembering that Nanjing has delivered on the core of its plan. Not only is volume production of MG cars in China underway, but limited assembly of the TF roadster is progressing in the UK. Securing a part in the deal to return Healey to the road is Nanjing's latest coup. It should be noted that the last firm that bid - and failed - to secure the rights to the Healey nameplate was BMW...

Plans for the future of Austin Healey and Healey are still shrouded in secrecy, but it's understood that IRT Automotive has ditched earlier attempts to join forces with Swedish sports car maker, Jasec Car. Instead, the firm will focus on new engineering technology available via its partnership with Nanjing.

Auto Express understands that three cars are being evaluated. First is a small front-wheel-drive Austin Healey coupé, possibly badged 'GTE' and based on the MG ZR platform. A second Austin Healey model, derived from the TF and with a mid-mounted V6, is also planned, while an open-top Healey coupé based loosely on the front-engine, rear-drive chassis of the MG ZT V8 is also mooted. However, using anything from MG's SV supercar programme is thought to have been discounted. That's because its design is in the hands of MG Sport and Racing, which is believed to still be owned by MG Rover's previous owner, Phoenix Venture Holdings.



Sketch released last year by IRT Automotive gives clues to new Healey flagship.

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However, all parties involved in the deal have promised the move will not mean Healey simply putting its badge on existing MG sports cars. In a statement to Auto Express, the three parties said: "Neither Healey nor Austin Healey cars will be badge-engineered MGs. To offer customers value for money, there may be crossover parts. Plans for the design and development of the new cars are underway, but no launch dates have yet been set, as it is critical that products meet customer expectations."

Engineering for the three marques is likely to be shared by consultancy firm ARUP, which advised NAC on the acquisition and redevelopment of MG Rover's models. Much of the effort will be centred in China and the UK, but all firms were quick to point out that "no location for production has yet been decided".

Who are the people behind Healey?

Although the three parties behind the project will be well known to some industry experts, not everyone has heard of them before. Most widely recognised is Beijing Automobile Company, the Chinese firm that bought MG Rover's assets in 2005. HJ Automotive, run by engineer and Healey expert Tim Ferris, is the firm behind the 2006 relaunch of the brand, as reported in Auto Express, Issue 895. Healey Automobile Consultants is the custodian of the Healey trademarks, and has previously worked with HFT to help keep historic Healeys on the road. Its management team includes members of the Healey family.

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Battlefield Tour 7-10 June 07



**For the Midget and Sprite Club
this was almost, but not quite,
‘A Bridge Too Far’**

Even on the run up to this annual run (last year Ypres – next year D-Day beaches) there had been problems. Most had been overcome with the exception of John Clark. Having overcome health problems he had been unable to resolve a problem he was encountering with his braking system on his Frogeye. John is fitting twin cylinders, as on a Sebring, set up but into a Frogeye pedal box but something is amiss. Can it be that the pedals are such that the cylinder piston is not pushed in far enough?

So it was that we were reduced from eleven cars to ten.

The cast of “Arnhemers” comprised:

Hilary & Peter Stevens:

1275 O.E.W Frogeye

Larry Evans & Ray (Oz) Elen:

1500 (with overdrive) Dk blue Midget

Peter Gardiner:

1500 Dk Blue Midget

Nay & Col Carpenter:

1500 (5 spd) Mid Blue Midget ‘Phil’

Alex (Whirlybird) Bowers:

750 Green Austin Seven Sports

Mike Gorman & Simon Bishop:

1380 Dk Blue Austin (5 Spd) Sprite

Paul Coveney & Jane Pierce:

1275 Green Austin (4 spd) Sprite

Sue & Jim Judd:

1275 Red Austin Healey Sprite

Myself & John Clark:

1330 Speedwell blue Sebring (5spd) Rep

Geoff & Janet Hunter:

1380 Iris Blue (5spd) Frogeye.

Our adventure started at Dover Eastern Dock where we assembled in order to board the Speed ferry to Boulogne. I had picked up John Clark at Herne Bay on my way. A minor problem of no car was no deterrent to anyone attending. Those assembled before my arrival, and before I could make introductions, appeared to have introduced themselves and were in conversation. Those assembled for the tour seemed, to me, to interact very well for its total duration. Geoff and Janet Hunter were

absent having preceded us the day before. We would hook up on route at Jabbeke Services, Belgium. They would part from us on the Sunday morning as they were en-route to a Spridget festival in Germany.

Arriving at Boulogne after about an hour we reformed, synchronized watches and telephoned Geoff and Janet to find their whereabouts. All was going quite well. The convoy was holding but the weather was turning hot (26 degrees). We had to 'push on' as we were expected, in Arnhem, at the Campanile Hotel Zevenaer for an evening meal.

Then just before the John Kennedy Tunnel at Antwerp problems began. Heavies, slow moving rush hour traffic, and rising temperatures saw the needles on water temperature gauges begin to rise. A hastily fitted electric fan on Hilary and Peter's Frogeye was removed as it was apparently impeding airflow. Mike Gorman led half onward leaving Hilary and Peter, Nay and Col, Larry and Ray with John and me to follow once the offending fan had been removed. No sooner had we joined the traffic which was now at a snail's pace, Nay and Cols Midget overheated with an apparent air lock. Driving down the hard shoulder would not provide enough cold air to bring the temperature down. It needed more water and less air. Col found some water nearby. A waste outlet was the source. Waste from where? A nuclear power plant. Sewage works. It definitely was not drinking water but it sufficed. Their Midget is now required to carry an international HazChem warning sign. At least the waterways will not block up if the cylinder block, itself, isn't eaten away.

Onward and upward! Next port of call was a nearby service area. I had misinterpreted a coded mobile phone message from Peter Gardiner and thought the advance party had left two more behind but all was well. Realizing that our foursome, of cars, would not make the hotel in time to eat we took vitalage (?) in the service area.

We arrived at base camp to find Ray flying higher than Everest. Someone had bagged a room with twin beds leaving Ray and Larry a double bedded room. Ooh err! Ray, being ex Aussie

Special forces and "well ard" or so only Aussies will say (we Limeys know better) was soon bivouacked on the floor for the night leaving Larry a commodious bed. The problem was rectified the following day when Ray returned to earth.

Friday dawned. The car park looked like a Rally Stage halt. Col was taking out the thermostat to aid cooling when the gasket broke. First attempt with a piece of plastic failed. Second attempt with a beer mat for a gasket failed. Nay and Col went off to Quick Fit, not a few hundred yards away to borrow some sealant whilst I set up a mobile machine shop. A tip with alloy components, in this case Cols thermostat housing, to reface a flat alloy component move it in a figure eight across a cement paving slab whilst lubricating with water and maintaining even pressure. Col returned and this time there were no leaks. Meantime Mike's, non standard, heater tap had sprung a leak and I blanked it off with layered Gaffa Tape. Later a leak occurred in the opposite direction so the rubber supply pipe was blocked off with a spare wheel stud and jubilee clip. That fixed it. Improvisation at it best!

So as not to have too long a convoy into Oosterbeek we split into three groups each led by a car with Sat Nav. Three differing routes and three differing arrival times! Choose your Sat Nav wisely. Ray, as all who attended last years Ypres trip will know, is a knowledgeable Ex Aussie Special Forces navigator of some repute, or so Ray says, so upon his first



mention of this ability Nay and Col presented him with a Children's compass brought along especially for such occurrence. On arrival Mike Gormans car was attempting to simulate the 'Torrey Canyon' by dumping engine oil out through its crankshaft seal.

We all paid a visit to the Airborne Museum. First an 18 minute film of the Operation Market Garden and then each in their own time was able to view the artifacts on show following a route up through the building and then down to the basement to view dioramas. I am led, by an expert, to believe that the film a Bridge Too Far is very close to the actual events with only the character played by Elliott Gould the only Hollywood make believe.

Lunch was taken after a short walk into town. Then a walk to the Military Cemetery via various length. Distance of routes depended upon whether you followed me, road signs, or some interplanetary calling. As with all war grave sites the cemetery was immaculate. The sun shone, the birds sang, and it was a peaceful place to dwell. Time to go home. Well to the Hotel for a meal. Strange things Sat Navs. We came one way. We went back another. Again in smaller groups. My group became even smaller when we lost Larry and Ray. We had a sighting as they sought to find us but too far away for contact. That compass must have come into its own because they got back – well almost. The car conked out on the motorway egress within sight of the Hotel. Several ran to push / rescue. Yet another 1500 Midget with an air lock. Do these cars usually suffer such bad 'wind'? After the engine had cooled, and we had eaten the problem was dealt with.

Saturday and the opportunity for a photo shoot with cars driven across the Arnhem John Ford Bridge. This is a replica as the original bridge did not survive the war. Nor did most of Arnhem. Again small groups. But the last small group had a problem Sue and Jim Judd's car would not start. It was Jim's fault. It's always Jim's fault. Poor Jim. A push start just wore us out. A Harley enthusiast from Sweden in Arnhem for a Rolling Stones Concert the previous evening (now there is a man of good taste) offered a tow. A rope was soon hitched up but fell off at the first attempt. Peter had the task of being towed in Sue's car but was gone so long we thought he had been kidnapped. Eventually he, and his towver (?), returned. The engine had started. I asked Peter to drive the car down the road and clear the plugs which he did but as he turned the corner it 'conked out' yet again. Those left rescued it to parc ferme (the Hotel Car Park) where a 'jump start' with leads got it firing again. After all this we assembled at Arnhem by the bridge. Occupying two lanes we enabled Nay her photo shot. Chris Nevard look out! You have a rival, at Surrey Centre, for the Official Photographer position.

Lunch Time. We sat outside at a riverside Turkish restaurant watching long cruise boats spin about in a river not much wider than their length. Master and Commander we salute you.

After lunch we split into two groups. One group went off in search of Germany whilst the remainder explored Arnhem visiting a church, no longer commissioned, where a lift took those with a head for heights up past the bells to Where Only Eagles Dare to look down upon the bridge and our cars parked nearby. Hilary and Peter took in the Dali exhibition whilst the remainder, exhausted by the 500yd walk from the restaurant, took a well earned rest with tea in the cafeteria. A look around the shops availed a battery for John's camera and then it was time to return for our evening meal.

Paul and Jane had found a shop selling Healey accessories. The first purchase was of miniature pegs, similar to a clothes peg but much, much, smaller. Paul distributed these, unselfishly, to all to assist with keeping the choke out. Then he bought a rare Healey safety sump heater demonstrating that it cannot be knocked





experienced than the male at folding napkins, beat the aeronautically more educated male launching their origami – flies over a greater distance. Nay beat Hilary leaving the men ... well several men didn't enter so they had no real competition. Then off to bed.

Sunday morning and a quick getaway after breakfast! (Most bills had been paid the night before). No chance. Sue and Jim's car will not start. Push start – nothing. Check the coil – O.K. It has to be the electronic ignition.

There is a feeble spark but not much.

Everyone goes off for breakfast leaving John and I to cure the problem. Left but not forgotten as first our coffee arrives soon to be followed by rolls. Thank you Hilary!

Fortunately I carry a Dizzy set up with points, condenser, and cap for such eventualities but having cut Sue's ignition leads to fit I find the screws in the cap seized and bend Peter's screwdriver attempting to turn then.

Fortunately Mike Gorman has a spare cap. John sets to fitting the leads to the cap but they have to be reduced in diameter to fit. Whilst having fitted the dizzy I am awaiting John so Peter loans me Hilary's cap and leads to test all is well. We have a spark. John is finished. Hilary's leads and caps are replaced. All hands to. Sue's car is push started. Not quite there yet, Retard ignition. All hands again and it starts with a push. Peter Gardiner is handing out wet wipes. I must say that I was amazed at how our section pulled together donating parts, ideas, tools and making rolls and coffee. A great team effort!

Homeward bound we left Geoff and Janet at the Hotel from whence they were to depart for an experience of Germany.

The only trouble, I encountered, en route was my dynamo fan disintegrating but the car got me home. Alex Bowers – Austin Seven Special suffered a more severe failure but the car still got him home. His gearbox casing had split. As a result of the tour he has joined MASC.

For pictures from this trip as supplied by Nay please check:

<http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/1970wonyk/Arnhem?authkey=fEK7FNMJEGo>

Alan Anstead

over. All of this and a free shopping bag as well! This man really knows how to shop.

The last supper. I will generalize the menu by saying that there was available a buffet starter, main course, then buffet desert. There were a few options but that need not trouble us. We skip to the buffet dessert. The riot of laughter, as if no one had cause to laugh so far, it was one long laugh, was begun by Jim. He mistook the plastic grape display as real and was struggling for several minutes to pull the bunch apart before realization set in. After taking desert he wanted to make good his faux pas with some recitations and monologues. Sue realizing what he was about began to shout at him to stop but he retreated a safe distance and continued some assisting with the words others giving encouragement. I believe the words may be better known among the Rugby fraternity. It was all too much. Jim couldn't stop. Sue wouldn't stop. Several people were openly crying with laughter.

Follow that. A paper aero plane race. The ladies, probably because of being more



MASC goes to Le Mans 2007



Ok, I've noticed that some of my recent reports have had a tendency to ramble and go on a bit. So here are two versions of the Midget & Sprite Club Visit to Le Mans 2007.

Short version

We drove there in the Rain. Some arrived earlier in the week and others arrived later. Prior to the race it rained. During the race it rained. Audi won their class. Aston Martin won their class. After the race it rained particularly hard. We drove to the hotel in the rain. During a wonderful dinner it didn't rain. The next day it was a beautiful sunny day and I drove home with the roof down and got burnt. I can't wait till next year to do it all again.

Long version

Having thought about it I won't do a long version as the short version pretty much sums it up. What I will do however, is to try and explain why the Le Mans weekend draws so many people back year after year. It's all about camaraderie and enjoying our great little cars in the company of like minded people.

Most of us present, Bill and Bill 2 in the Green Midget, Bob T in the Fuel injected 1500 Midget, Steve and Paul In the BRG Frogeye, Nick and Doug in the Yellow MkII Sprite, Toby and Rachel in the support vehicle (a Ford van type thingy) and myself plus 15 litres of spare 20/50 in the Red Frogeye, had been planning and counting down the days to Le Mans 2007 almost as soon as Le Mans 2006 had ended.

You see the weekend itself is only a part of the addiction. It's the preceding twelve months of

chatting and the deciding what to do, the worry of when (if at all) the ACO will deem us worthy and deign to send us our full allocation of tickets.

The logistics involved and the workings of the French organisational brain decrees that the ferry journeys have to be bought and paid for before we even get to know if our tickets will be allocated to us and if they are, will we all be where we hoped we would be.

It's the anticipation which makes it so great. Also the fact that the trip always seems to live up to expectations. That's why some of us return year after year.

And I will give you one example of what it's all about. As we were getting ready to leave and with all of our Spridgets lined up for a photo-call, two chaps in an MG XPower SV pulled up to chat with us. The owner let us crawl all over £65,000 worth of MG Supercar, answered all of our questions then asked if he could join our photo line-up. He felt a bond with us for two reasons.



Firstly simply because some of us shared the same two letters "MG" on the front of our cars and secondly the camaraderie of the Le Mans weekend.

It turns out that the new owner of the MG Xpower SV had been left this magnificent car in the will of his very good but recently departed friend. There was however just one stipulation to accepting this gift. And that was that the new owner must undertake to make the pilgrimage and to drive it to Le Mans every year. It has that effect on you.

**Gary Lazarus
London**

SPRIDGET 50



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Spridget Treffen June 2007

Rellingen Germany

Following on from the success of the Midget & Sprite Club Inaugural Meeting in Germany 2006 and due to the fact that Rosemary and I won the cup, it was our duty to attend and defend the English position at the 2007 Midget & Sprite Club Germany Rally. Three brave souls agreed to take their cars and co pilots to Germany, that was Jim and Rose, Dave Parker and Alan Couch, and Geoff and Janet Hunter. All took different routes from the UK. Janet and Geoff from Dover to Calais, Dave and Alan from Harwich to Hook of Holland, and Jim and Rose from Harwich to Esbjerg in Denmark.

We met at the hotel Kruppender Park in Rellingen, Germany on the Thursday evening. Geoff and Janet came on Friday. The hotel accommodation was superb and the cuisine and hospitality second to none.

On the Friday morning, Jim and Rose, Dave and Alan took a trip to Hamburg to see the sights and we ended up going by train to Hamburg then on a boat, then on a sight seeing bus, taking in all of the sights and the delights of Hamburg City. As it was my birthday that day, Rosie, Dave and Alan surprised me with a full scale model of a Frogeye which they spied in a very exclusive outfitters in the posh part of the city! This will be a lovely reminder of this trip.

On Friday evening the whole of the rally team met up for a meal and some German hospitality which was well received. We retired late and tired.

With all cars marked and ready to go we then undertook the 200 km rally which was around Hamburg and surrounding districts with various stop off points for questions to be answered and our cards to be marked. The rally got off to a very shaky start with everyone getting lost in the first 5 minutes and it took us at least 1/2 hour to be back on track due to a small error in the instruction manual? We had a coffee stop and luncheon stop travelling over the River Elbe by ferry, lunch being at an old fort built in 1860 to defend the River Elbe near Hamburg. We had a guided tour of the

fort and then following this we made our way to the old Elbe tunnel, this tunnel was built in 1923 and is now not used for everyday traffic, and was opened specially for us on the Saturday afternoon. It was a marvellous experience going through the old tunnel, and hearing the roar of the cars. The tunnel is 465 metres long and you have to approach it via an elevator 2 cars per elevator and then at the other side you go up in a similar manner to the outside. The new Elbe tunnel, which is not far away, is about 4 lanes wide and much more suited to modern traffic.

We then made our way through the rain back to the hotel in time for drinks. There was a prize giving and a meal, together with the local Elvis impersonator (who happened to be Swedish) and after a good deal to eat and drink we retired to bed to look forward to the next days entertainment. The prizes alas were not taken home by the British, except the trophy for the person who travelled the furthest which went to Geoff and Janet Hunter, Congratulations to them.

The next day we were up bright and early and we did another 200 km tour all through the most beautiful country to the Luneberge Heath.

On route all cars came to a sudden halt (there was about 30 cars in convoy) as the lead car had run over a wild boar! As the police had been summoned we were asked to disappear as quickly as possible in order to avoid a fine for not being registered as a convoy!

We lunched at an old museum in typical German style with a beer to wash everything down and following this we then visited another collection of motor cars, which was just up the road. This was an extremely interesting collection of British sports cars with a few German ones in between. We spent too long looking at these lovely cars which made us late for the last venue which was a classic car, vintage tractor, lorries and aeroplane collection which was about 30 miles away.

Unfortunately David had a severe problem with his exhaust down pipe on his modified

Sprite, but with the help of an old farmer friend who was loading a vintage tractor onto a trailer, we managed to borrow his ramps find an empty bean can and strap up the exhaust pipe so that he could make his way back to the Hook of Holland in one piece! The chances of us finding ramps, a bean tin and some tin snips were about a 1,000,000-1! David was a happy man again. On Sunday evening everyone dispersed to their various homesteads with the exception of the English crew who stayed on for a further night with Geoff and Janet departing as they had a long journey back to Calais.

All in all the Spridget Treffen 2007 was a fantastic event extremely well organised and they were very pleased to see us. We have made many new friends with the Germans and the Dutch contingent, one of which was Arie deBest. We all hope to return next year but it is deep in the south of Germany and I am sure it would take my Frogeye 3 – 4 days to get there! Everyone got home safe and well and you can view any of the pictures on a fantastic website, which is www.flickr.com/photos/esobiam

You should come next time it is great fun!

Jim and Rosie Willis

Corps of Drums Centenary Celebration

This event was held at King Edward VI Grammar School, Chelmsford, Essex, on 23 June, to celebrate 100 years of a Cadet Corps at the school.

The school had invited MASC to provide a Classic Car display to further promote The Club, in Essex. Well, Ann and I turned up in our Frogeye; where were the rest of you? To be fair, the weather wasn't that good, but it did remain dry for most of the afternoon.

There was a good display of Classic Cars, (that's us next to the MG TF), and included a couple of Allards, two Bentleys, (one a Vintage Model), a large display of Triumph TRs 3 to 8, and many others. There was one MG Midget, sporting a MG Car Club Badge, and it was for sale!

The afternoon was pleasantly spent with frequent displays by the Drum Corps, excellent refreshments and the usual stalls and traditional games.

This event was well advertised, in *MASCOT*, so it was disappointing that I was the only MASC member there. However, I do have a vested interest; my daughter, Major Alison Brown, is a teacher at the school and has been running the Corps since 1995!

Pictures taken at the event are on the web at www.photobox.com/gordonscammell

**Chris Owen 3098
331 HKJ**



Classic and Sportscar Action Day

Castle Combe – Saturday 9 June

I must confess, I was a little worried that the initial uptake of members for this event was going to make our entry look embarrassingly small. Could I distribute all 12 of the free Paddock passes and sell the 6 half price Track passes that our club were offered? A second prompt in *MASCOT* did the trick with the result we had 16 Spridgley things booked for the club space and 12 Track passes purchased. Come the day, John Cave had to withdraw his IOW Frogeye due to a cracked cylinder head

but 2 other members brought their cars along. Also there but not on our stand were Denis and Heather Matthews with their Round arch Midget. Denis used to be club Treasurer and although still members, I have not seen Denis or Heather for many a long year. Their Midget still looking as good as it did in Original Sprite and Midget The Green Mallard one. Not the Mallard Green one – I've been told – sternly! (When challenged on Spridgley correctness – Duck!)



Colin Gale brought along his newly acquired competition Midget anxious to give it its first proper outing in his hands. Unfortunately, no amount of stuffing things up the exhaust pipe could bring the Midget's decibel readings to that stated in the regs. Although it is acceptable for circuit racing, Action Day noise levels are somewhat more restrictive. Also not getting out onto the circuit was Chris Jackson. His 1965 Sprite suddenly became ill on the way to Castle Combe and despite the combined MascTechs in attendance; no amount of fiddling could get it sorted. Eventually, Andy Cross emerged in shinning armour by guiding the sickly Sprite back to his surgery in Box (as of Brunel's long tunnel fame) and worked all night to tighten up something or other that was loose. Happily, Chris was able to rejoin the Home Counties Group tour the following day with a much healthier Sprite. More fortunately, the remainder of our gathering seemed to enjoy a trouble free day although we did have one errant mishap on our space. A passing Healey 3000 expired and took shelter in amongst our Spridgley things. With some Masc help with tools, the Healey eventually got going again but how the owner felt being marooned in with our lot we may never know!



In the non-recognisable as a Spridgley thing category, Barry and Jill had again brought their delightful Innocenti Spider all the way from Yorkshire. Non-Spridgley things on our space but being brought by members were Alan Couch's very nice Lotus Elan, David Lunson's Aston Martin DBS; David also brought an IOW Frogeye and an original Frogeye. We had



Spridgley things with K Series and Toyota engines but for the first time ever, no Don Francis with his Zetec engined Frogeye. Don has finally retired and I for one shall miss him from these events. An unexpected Sprite Mk11 appeared and joined us, the Australian owner, Craig Grosvenor had brought his Sprite with him from Australia and a very interesting car it is too, being prepared as a competition/road car and very nicely done. It appears on our first colour cover this month.

With the editor in attendance, I should have made a better job of writing a report for this highly enjoyable event. Truth is, I spent so much time chatting to fellow members and visitors to our space that I really didn't get to see much else. In general, all I can add is that this event is drawing an ever increasing number of participants, space in the paddock was at a premium (especially with a Healey 3000 stuck in the middle of our bit). As always, the weather was great and so was the company. One moan though, despite the noise checks in order not to upset the neighbours, some idiots saw fit to leave the paddock and onto the public highway as though they were on the circuit. None of our members I hasten to add, but really, the organisers if they really



wish to remain good neighbours, may need to consider the image that some Action Day participants give out when they leave. The ones I witnessed were all in the 1980/90s Hot hatch/GTI/RS/grey import type of "Classics". Certainly, a very enjoyable day and one we can look forward to next year.

Terry Horler



2008 OFFICIAL MASC CALENDAR



As you will no doubt all be aware by now,
to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the
introduction of
the Austin Healey Sprite,
the Midget & Sprite Club is planning a



2008 CALENDAR

We do still have a couple of slots available for you to feature
a high quality photo of YOUR car, either Midget or Sprite or derivative

These do need to be high resolution photographs of the actual cars themselves –
the type of quality we have featured on your first full-colour front cover this month

CLOSING DATE: Midday FRIDAY 31 AUGUST

**Come on! Get those cameras out and take some great shots of your
pride and joy, whilst the summer is still here(!)**

Let's make 2008 a year to remember!

SEND YOUR PHOTOS TO: editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk



From the Editor's Library



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SOLE CONCESSIONAIRES FOR HEALEY SPEED EQUIPMENT

Sebring Sprite

This fabulous high-performance version of the popular Austin-Healey Sprite is now in limited production. Fully homologated by the F.I.A.; specification includes disc brakes, wire wheels, anti-roll bar and choice of Touring (60 b.h.p.) or Competition (70 b.h.p.) engines, giving over 100 m.p.h. with outstanding roadholding.

Available only to special order.

TOURING MODEL

A six-tube model Sprite with wire wheels, disc brakes and anti-roll bar. A large valve head with high compression pistons giving a compression ratio of 9.5 : 1, together with sports camshaft, modified distributor and special valve springs makes this a most exciting vehicle. Twin 1½ S.U. carburettors feed the fuel and the exhaust gases are carried away by a special 3-branch manifold and twin tail silencer.

£2890 (including purchase tax)

COMPETITION MODEL

To the same specification as the Touring Model, this version is further refined, having the block bored out to 975 cc or 994 cc, fully machined and polished cylinder head giving either 9.8 : 1 or 10.4 : 1 compression ratio. A lightened and balanced flywheel and fully balanced competition crankshaft are a special feature whilst the camshaft bearings are bored and bushed. Power is transmitted by a 9-spring clutch, all fuel and brake pipes are carried inboard for added protection; and twin S.U. fuel pumps are incorporated in this system. Special competition shock absorbers and a full flow oil cooler are fitted and the vehicle comes complete with fibre glass hard top.

£1,665 (including purchase tax)

Seating, Instrumentation, Lights, Gear and Axle Ratios can be varied to suit individual requirements.

1960 INTERNATIONAL SUCCESSES

1st in class	SEBRING	4 hr. G.T. Race	Stirling Moss
*1st in class	SEBRING	12 hr. Sports Car Race	{ John Sprinzel John Lumsden
1st in class	AINTREE	G.T. Race	Paul Hawkins
*1st in class	LE MANS	24 hr. Race	{ John Dalton John Coigate
1st in class (2nd over all)	LIEGE-ROME-LIEGE	Rally	{ John Sprinzel John Patton
1st in class	HURBURGRING 300 Kilo	Race	{ Cyril Simson Paul Hawkins
1st in class (2nd over all)	R.A.C. RALLY		{ John Sprinzel Dick Benstead Smith

*Fitted with special coachwork to comply with F.I.A. regulations.



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Ardingly Show

We had a great time at this year's Ardingly Vintage and Classic Car Show, with a splendid turn out, 10 cars on Saturday, and 12 cars on Sunday, the ground we were supposed to go on was closed due to all the wet weather but they fitted us all into an indoor arena, which worked well as a shady cool retreat from the sunshine. Chris Harding had a busy time of it, he very kindly supplied the BBQ, stand tables, etc.. and also brought along his Frogeye shell to display as an 'on going' project. Thanks Chris for all your efforts! Thanks to every one who was able to come, especially Alan, Chris, Pete, Tom, Mike and Alex who came both days!

Chris and David made it, which was great as they are currently up to their eyes with house moving, and copious phone calls!

We had plenty to see with the various fellow club stands and many attractions, the beer tent seemed to be a main attraction that needed frequent visits to ensure it hadn't gone away (ask Mike G). Alan managed to gather a few new members, and also a few more recruits for his up coming continental trips, we think his past police training in interrogation helped and wore people down to submission ☺

The weather was very kind to us, it was a lovely weekend, hopefully we will be invited again next year, and we are sure that by that time they will have restocked the beer tent ready for another club member onslaught. (Although we think we came very much second in consumption to the traction engine brigade.)



Present on Saturday

Nay and Col – (Ford type 9 5 spd)
 Phil the 1500 Midget
 Alan Anstead – leaf green 948 frogeye
 Pete Gardiner – 1500 Midget
 Tom Tulip – white 1275 MT75 spd
 Trojan frogeye
 Nic Bowker – red 1275 Isle of Wight Frogeye
 Tim and Helen – iris blue 1098 Frogeye
 Dave and Chris Wright – red 1275 Midget
 Alex Bowers – A7 on another stand but looking for a suitable Spridget
 Sue Bryant (with mum; dad and Adrian) – red 948 Frogeye
 Mike Gorman – blue 1330 (Datsun 5 spd) Austin Sprite



Present on Sunday

Nay and Col – Phil the 1500 Midget
 Alan Anstead – Speedwell blue 1330 (Ford type 9 5 spd) Sebring rep coupe
 Pete Gardiner – 1500 Midget
 Tom Tulip – white 1275 Trojan Frogeye
 Alex Bowers A7 on another stand
 Mike and Pam Gorman – blue 1330 Austin Sprite
 Hills and Peter Stevens – white 1275 Frogeye
 Sue and Mummy Judd – red 1275 Austin Healey Sprite
 Chris, Laura and baby Theo Banton – leaf green concours 948 frogeye
 Paul Coveney and Jane Pierce – no car (Forgot the MOT had run out !!)
 Chris Harding – restoration frogeye shell
 Gary Lazarus – red 1275 (Datsun 5 spd) Frogeye
 Bob and Christine Tooke – orange EFi (5 spd Ford) 1500 Midget

ay and Col and hil the Mid et

Trojan at Ardingly

The Vintage and Classic Vehicle Show at Ardingly (7 & 8 July was fantastic – not only) did the sun shine for the first time in weeks, but also there was a great turn out of cars from the Midget & Sprite Club. Being situated in the Abergavenny Building meant the cars were under cover, and all the members had a relaxed and enjoyable time. It was Tom (membership No 3806A) Tulip's first meeting and he was delighted to meet so many people with their cars as well as displaying his own Trojan Healey. He's looking forward to attending more events and meetings in the future.



NW Area Report

Another wet month but it didn't stop us having a few runs. First of all we went to Mouldsworth motor museum on 17th June. The rain kept off and we all met there for a picnic followed by a walk around the museum. A truly fascinating place.

On 8th July we had a run to Powis castle. I drove down to the Stetton Fox where I met up with Andrew and Oliver, complete with helmet and sword in his quest to slay dragons, plus David and Heather. From here we drove down to Beeston to join up with Barry and Hazel. Then it was on to Whitchurch to rendezvous with Peter at the Little Chef. Here we had a brew and some toast before we set off in convoy for Powis castle. The weather was showery and I think in all we had three stops to put hoods up. The castle itself is a wonderful place and well worth a visit. In the car park was a white Midget. Barry managed

to speak to the owner who, it transpired, was a MASC member on a visit from Ross on Wye.

We went our separate ways around the castle and gardens and I set off for home at about 3:30pm. All told I did 210 miles on a complete tank of fuel, filling up before I set off and the fuel gauge showing completely empty on my return. If the gauge is correct then that equates to 35 mpg which I don't think is too bad for mixed driving conditions.

For August club night we have provisionally planned to have a local drive, starting at the Kilton. So far nothing has been arranged but if you are coming along then be prepared and arrive about 7:45pm. It's possible that we will do nothing but if the weather's good and we actually get round to planning it then it will happen. See you at the Kilton on 8th August.

Les

Home Counties North West

I apologise for the amount of personal content at the start of this report – as you read you will understand why.

HCNW at the Combe June 9th 2007 A tale from mythology

The first to rise at early dawn was the Red Sprite, a fairy-like creature given to bursts of temperament. She set out upon her way and, as the early mists gave way to morning sunshine, she met her elder sister and playfellow, the White Frog.

In joyous company they journeyed on to a rendezvous, amongst the trappings of merchants and dealers (a trading estate off the M40), with their fellow travellers – two Midges and a big blue Stag. Together they set off for a day of tournament and jousting at the Castle of Combe.

Sadly, approaching the ancient settlement of A-bing-don the Red Sprite became unwell and fell behind her companions, making slow progress in stits and farts. Bravely she persisted in her lonely troubles, her friends believing her to be lagging behind through

indolence (or awkward wotsits pushing in front of her).

Arriving at the great Castle of Combe gathering the Red Sprite was delighted to see around her a lot more creatures who looked just like her, a bit like her, not at all like her. As she stumbled to a halt her master was heard to cry: "Is there a doctor in the house?" Now this call produced an immediate reaction in the bystanders and many rushed forward to her as she raised her bonnet to them. (NHS please note) There were Doctors, Surgeons, Gynaecologists, Psychologists and Social Workers and others expert in this and that. And Lo, there was a wise man from the east mouthing words of wisdom and offering strange solutions...

Many thanks to all who gathered round and wished us well, but especial thanks to Terry and to Andy, who cannibalised his own car for parts and then took the Red Sprite home to his tree house and, during the night, made her well. (*The only possible answer to the problem was an air cleaner retaining bolt which had missed its hole – but how could that deactivate number two pot?*)

I can't report on the activities on the track for I saw them not, but I'm sure that Terry has given good account of the day. I do know that Mark, approaching one corner too enthusiastically, foreswore the safety of the greensward and tried to keep on the black stuff. He scared himself witless!

HCNW were making a holiday of this weekend and so we repaired to the Dog Inn in Old Sodbury (that's the sort of sentence that requires careful proof reading). Here we fed well, discussed much and slept in luxury.

In the morning, after breakfast, we were introduced to Mine Host's magnificent 1947 Hudson Commodore 8 drophead coupe, a Chevy and a 1957





Morris Oxford. Our cars looked well beside the Hudson, sort of Lancaster with attendant Spits and Hurries. Here Steve fell in love. Will he desert us for a Yankee Doll?

It is a matter of honour that each HCNW outing (especially the overnight ones) has to be organised and presented in a more lavish way than the previous one. Jen and Mark gave us a magnificent document describing the morning's run through the Cotswolds visiting Badminton, Malmsbury, Tetbury and many other charming villages to finish at yet another splendid pub, The Seven Tuns, Chedworth, for an excellent lunch.

After this the group split up, Mark and Jen, Steve and Ian took off for the east, home and work on the morrow. Pat and I went left a bit

and up, to Hay-on-Wye for a couple of days. Our Sunday evening run took us up the beautiful Golden Valley with a setting sun casting long shadows across our path. A great end to a lovely day, which drew a curtain over the previous day when The Red Sprite, or Scarlet Woman, was being considered for eBay.

Thank you Jen and Mark for all the hard work in planning. We hear that next year the fellas will be allowed their playtime on the track while the ladies depart to Bath for a little light shopping. Surely Health and Safety could prevent this? The shopping! Now that is a dangerous sport!!

Chris Jackson

South Staffs and a Waterlogged North Brum

Turned out damp again. But we still had a dry-ish evening. I put the hood up as I arrived at the Green Man mostly as a precaution against possible rain. I didn't really trust the Tonneau cover in the event of a torrent (I have damp trousered memories of the last AGM and a less than enjoyable drive home.) We managed to seat all eight of us around the table in a cosy place as far from the door as we can get. Bill2 gave us his photos from Le Mans, which he took as my official chronicler and photographer (and passenger) Bill says he will be coming to Le Mans in his own car next year and we have been discussing getting rid of the hub spline movement he is suffering at the moment. So at the table we had Geoff, Trevor, two Johns (1 and 2!) Steve brought Matt along with him and of course there were we two Bills.

We have asked Matt to give the details of our old area website to Trevor, who will re-enliven it and get us back into the Club website which is now back and seems to be fully functioning again. The MASC site has a new "local area" section and we want to become the second area to join in. Hampshire are already there with their nice website detailing their tales of "derring-do". A great top down run home closed a great evening meeting.

I took a ride down to The Ace Café last night and tonight I will be off to visit John Platt and Warwickshire. I pray for as good a ride to Sambourne as I had to "that London" Some of SS&NB will be at Silverstone later this month I hope we will have met up with many of you there.

Bill Mohan 1067

Cambridgeshire Report

Mad Cat night fell on the 14 June which is the latest date it can be in any month and I have to say a bit inconveniently for me since I was off to Frogeye cottage early on the Friday and still had the Volvo to pack with furniture, paint, brushes, a mower and other weapons of construction. I always try to attend the Mad Cat meetings, for one thing they are great fun and an endless source of *MASCOT* material (anything you do say at a Mad Cat meeting will be taken down and may be used in *MASCOT*) and on this occasion we had not one but two classic car magazine editors joining us for the evening, none other than our very own Barry Lowe and Richard Ladds the editor of *Enjoying MG*.

Sadly the weather on Mad Cat night was awful so no Spridgets in the car park and doubly disappointing no Innocentis either, now we have had every marque of Sprite and midget including a Sebring, a supercharged Arkley, a two litre Alpha powered Midget and even one of the few remaining Austin Sprites at our meetings and events but so far no Innocentis, ah well maybe another time. I do actually have a bit of a nostalgic soft spot for the Innocenti since my first ever brush with independent motorised transport was a Lambretta scooter when I was 16 and it had Innocenti written all over it, it also had a lot in common with the Spridget, for a start it had no roof and it made a great noise (not quite the same sound as the Sprite but nevertheless a great pop pop sound from that single cylinder engine). It is interesting that people seem to fall into groups, those who like Vespas or Lambrettas, red or brown sauce, join the AA or the RAC, vote this way or that way, think Smart cars are cool or not, go for Sprites or Midgets, like hard tops or not and so on. I am an open topped Lambretta riding Sprite driving Daddies Sauce man myself but I digress.

It was great to meet up with Barry and Richard and put a face to the emails, the whole thing was a very convivial affair with much food and drink and conversation and the inevitable fumble bag supplied by HTJ. I have to admit defeat with the bag since I think I only identified about one item (and that may be a slight exaggeration) and Nigel our champion

fumbler (I wouldn't put that on your C.V. though Nigel) only managed about half of the items, I think this may have been payback time for the head gasket incident. I think everyone had a pleasant evening at the Mad Cat as usual, I handed out tickets to some of the up and coming events and we discussed arrangements for the Ace visit, the meeting broke up about closing time with Pat and I heading home to stuff the Volvo with a weirder selection of items that HTJ's phantom fumble bag. We had a great time in France especially the naming ceremony and erection of the specially cast nameplate for the house thus transforming it from a great house with no name into Frogeye Cottage, obviously the ceremony involved copious quantities of red wine (as everything does in France).

On our return it was great to hear from one or two long lost Cambs MASC members (where are you Dominic?) and to hear of another new member in the area, welcome aboard Neil, hope you can make it to the Mad Cat on Thursday. Hot on the heels of our return, and hard up against the *MASCOT* deadline was the Ace Café run on the 10 July. We had arranged various meeting places along the A1 for Hubie, our ace navigator, to pick up his tail and lead our little convoy (six Spridgets in all) to the Ace. As normal despite a month of wet weather, the sun came out and it turned into a glorious summer's evening, we arrived at the Ace at about 7.30pm and after a quick look around sat down to eat (the food at the Ace is very reasonably priced and quite good) and as luck would have it we ended up sharing our table with another MASC member from the Home Counties who we had not met previously (Mr tin top, we should introduce him to HTJ). We spent a couple of very pleasant hours eating and drinking looking at the wonderful collection of cars and bikes and generally soaking up the brilliant atmosphere before heading for home to write this article, sadly my batteries let me down again so no photos of the Ace this month. I think Hubie deserves a vote of thanks though for organising this great little event and leading us through North London (not to mention Bedford and lots of other places).

Dave Dixon

Warwickshire Report

With the wettest June in history and flooding in Worcester, Roger and Sue managed to pick the only dry afternoon for the Jolly Roger Malvern Hills Run. We drove to the meeting place in the rain, where six Spridgets, an MGB and an MGF turned up for the run. It was dry when we met, so optimistically hoods were removed. The route took us along some of the lesser-known roads in the Malverns and included interesting details about the places we passed. We travelled through some beautiful countryside, finishing at the tranquil Mill Pond where Roger even provided us with the bread for the well-fed ducks. It was then back to his home where Sue was waiting with tea and a selection of her superb homemade cakes. By this time, not only was the sun shining, but also it was warm enough to sit in the garden for tea, which was followed by the garden games competition. Alan proved to be the best angler, with Steve winning the overall prize. The rain started again while we were enjoying dinner, but by then we really did not mind having to drive home in the wet. Our thanks go to Roger and Sue for another wonderful afternoon and the effort that they put into its organization. The event was also an opportunity for us to see the progress that



Roger has made with his Frogeye restoration, which will be absolutely perfect by the time he has finished, better than when it was new!!!

Six members of the Warwickshire area attended the Spriggetreffen event in Rellingen, near Hamburg on the 15th to 17th June, and our thanks go to Alan for this account. The three cars travelled to the events via different routes, through ports in Denmark, France and Holland. The event was organised by the German Midget and Sprite Register and attracted over forty cars, including several from Holland. As four members Rosie and Jim, Dave and Alan arrived a day before the event they were able to enjoy a day exploring the city of Hamburg, before being joined in the evening by Jeff and Janet. The first day of the event was a programmed route through the local countryside, which included a ferry trip across the River Elbe, a lunch stop at a fortress, and a return through a tunnel accessed by lifts under the Elbe. The second day consisted of a group tour of the area,

which was interrupted by the lead car hitting a wild pig. After lunch, there was an interesting visit to an 'old-timer' car and aircraft display.

The whole trip was very well organised and an extremely enjoyable experience with excellent hospitality from our German friends. Pictures from the event may be found on www.flickr.com/photos/esobian

The last event of the month was the Bulkington Fete. Our thanks got to David and Linda for organising the classic car section of the event and to Steve for the report via our web site. David and Linda made a

Cars ready to run



splendid effort in organising the first Classic car display at this small village fete. The weather was to say the least squally but we all managed to have a good time thanks to Linda's excellent skills in the mixing of the Pimms cocktails and loading the freshly baked scones with lashings of jam and fresh cream. We had five cars on display and were later joined by a young lady in an MGF who was looking for the dog display area and decided to park by us. The organisers have asked us to make a date in our diaries for next year's fete when they are hoping to attract a much bigger display. Dave thankfully brought with him in his Sprite ... wait for this: A 6 foot table, a 12 x 12 Gazebo, picnic chairs, cool box, picnic hamper, ice cubes, strawberries, cream, selection of cheeses, pimms jug



with all the trimmings, oh and themselves (Just about). Well done to you both. It sounds as though their green Frogeye will now be known as the tardis!!

Chris and Sheila

Scotland Report – Mid Summer '07

It may have been the worst summer since the last woolly Mammoth expired in the Highlands, but amidst the torrents we have had a heck of a good year between us. Back in the shoots of spring a hardy half dozen cars rendezvoused at the Fenwick Hotel for a zesty shakedown run through the misty Lowther Hills and the League of Gentlemen village at Wanlockhead.

This was training for the far more demanding run to the uncharted byeways of the Ardnamurchan peninsular and Carson's excellent concept of going to the most westerly

point in the British Isles. Sadly a bizarre set of mechanical and personal happenstances meant only three motors made it to the awesome lighthouse there – and none of them Midgets! What a truly spectacular run though, the B8043 after the Corran Ferry is glorious gem of a ribbon of tarmac along the edge of Loch Linnhe.

Then it was time for the Daddy of all the blats cross country...the magnificent Carrera Caledonia, 2 night, 3 day marathon from lowland to highland in a downpour that made us wish we were members of the Amphicar

Club. By us I mean Anita and the two other cars from the Yorks MASC club, who braved 1000 miles of motoring, putting my lone Scots car to shame. Mind you between us we flew the MG flag high in this Club Triumph event and the face off line up at the top of the Rest And Be Thankful pass with MGs on one side and Triumphs on the other was worth the soaking. As eternal winter finally gave way to a modicum



of warmth in June, Doug put on his first run for us, through to the Lathalmond Transport Extravaganza in Fife. On a scale of extravagance it was more Roman candle than Sydney Harbour firework display, but an enjoyable jaunt none the less. Equally as good a jolly, but far more calorific was the annual midsummer solstice pilgrimage to the restaurant at Culcreuch Castle. Happily coinciding with Betty's Birthday, the passengers of 6 cars ate till they popped and lit the way home with sparks from their now grounding exhausts! Alas the swallow chicks have fledged, Wimbledon is won and the nights are fair drawing in...but we still have many miles to go, with two Island hops (Arran and Bute) and Doug's second and far more ambitious Perthshire route to come.



If you are interested in another event worthy of note, towards the end of the season, then check out the highlandcarclub website and enter the Croftera Pandemonium rally on Saturday 15 September. It will put a smile on your face to last the winter!

**Bob Miller
Ecosse**

Bristol Area Report

Oh what has happened to the weather? We are now on the downside of the long evenings and the weather is not being Spridgley thing friendly. After yours truly (TH) copped out at the June meeting by arriving in something with a non detachable lid, when everyone else did, I just couldn't risk the humiliation for the July meeting whatever the weather. My Sprite MkIV needed the exercise and joined in the 5-car convoy from Pucklechurch to Norton. John from Stroud was the only non Spridgley thing member with us but made up for it by being the only member with a camera to record our departure from the Rose and Crown. John left his car at Pucklechurch and caught a ride with Andy Cross in his Sprite MkII. Also in the line up was the OMITV (Oldest Midget in the village) conducted by Alan Any Time Any Place Fairweather Lo, Phil Sellen and more recent visitors to our gatherings, Steve and Julie in their Midget MkII. Despite a very grey and overcast evening, the rain stayed off and we even braved an outside table at the Vine Tree until we made our various ways home. I gave John a lift back to Pucklechurch to regain his non Spridgley thing whilst our chances of actually getting there were challenged by a glowing ignition warning lamp on my Sprite.

I took in some local shows at the beginning of July, this was not really planned so the rest of the group had more sense and stayed dry. Due to the wet and muddy conditions, I actually went to three venues on the 1st of July in an attempt to find one that the car wouldn't sink up to its axles in. The first was at nearby Coalpit Heath, if the rain didn't get you, the mud would. The sky looked a little better to the North so it was across the Severn Bridge to Tintern for the monthly gathering there. Here, the field was waterlogged and only one other car could be found. The owner informed me that there was a show at nearby Caldicot Castle so that became venue number three. At last, lots of cars and rather better conditions. It turned out that this was organised by the Gwent MGOC and a very good display it was too. MASC member Roger Chittock was there prior to a move from South Wales to Nottingham, looking for better weather perhaps? Well, did some miles, saw some places, got wet, got muddy but enjoyed the day. Should I mention that it was another non-Spridgley thing day for Terry, sorry, it was a Ford Anglia this time.

For August, another evening run from the Rose and Crown at Pucklechurch, please give Alan a ring for details nearer the second Wednesday of the month.

Terry Horler

Linc'slot

The first Thursday of July at the White Hart saw a full complement of regular attendees at our meeting. Only one Spridget though. Honours go to the Sprite of Tim and Jill. Pete and Mary turned up in what I would describe as an ex-racing Mini. Trouble had been experienced trying to get it through the M.O.T. test as it was fitted with full harness seat belts in the front, which were mounted to the rear seat belt mounting points. Therefore no rear seat belts were fitted. An instant failure. The solution was simple. Remove the offending rear seats and, "Hey-presto", M.O.T. certificate issued.

Lizzie was present, minus her fully refurbished Old English White Frogeye. Are we ever going to see it? I'll keep you in suspense for one more minute. As for my RWA Midget, Gemima. I got it through its M.O.T. test at the second attempt, after two years off the road, having her nearside rebuilt due to a rotten sill. Well, I left it on the road after the test. Primed and ready for the long awaited drive to the meeting. Guess what! The heavens opened, and as the hood no longer reaches the windscreen, due to door fitting, body stretching type work, common sense got the better of me and we decided to keep the interior dry for the Wolds Run to Cadwell Park on Sunday. So we turned up in the pesky Sierra again!

Sunday was a beautiful day. The whole gang turned up at Wragy Market Place. There was my Midget. Hooray! Tim and Jill's Sprite, Pete and Mary's 1500 Midget, and, yes, Lizzie's

lovely Frogeye. You should have seen the crowd gathering round that beautiful little thing. The car got some attention as well. No, but seriously though, many age related local people stood and ogled the immaculately turned out Sprite. We all agreed that Lizzie, who, by the way, must be the clubs newest fully signed up member, had done a marvellous job of rebuilding the car. Well done to her.

She buzzed off to a school fund raising event, whilst the rest of us set off on a great run devised by Three Pom Pom Pete. It took us to Cadwell Park via the beautiful roads of the Lincolnshire Wolds. The amount of gravel on some hills was an indication of the rain that had fallen in this area recently, turning roads into rivers.

At the circuit a very pleasant afternoon was enjoyed by all. Lazily we picnicked and watched the racing. It was about this time that Tim blurted out that he had once been a marshal at Cadwell Park, many years ago at a motor cycle meeting. Not his most enjoyable experience, holding on to a fire extinguisher in freezing weather. A stroll to the paddock and pits area for the lads was next, where we bumped into Anita from the Yorkshire area. She came for a chat with the girls before setting off early for the long trek home. After a fascinating race of the Midgets we set off for home in a shower of rain. Oh well! You can't have everything, can you?

Brian Jeffery

Surrey and Kent Meets

Surrey Meet June 2007

The sun shone as I set forth, in my Frogeye, with hood stowed and tonneau in place, to the June meeting at The Blue Ball, Walton on the Hill, Surrey.

Twenty five people gathered but the 'early birds' brought a warning of rain. No chance! The sun is shining. Well it was when last I cast a glance out of the window. Then with a flash of lightening and a roar of thunder the

deluge struck. Two inches of rain according to this morning's report. I think that is about correct according to what I have just bailed out of the car – the tonneau would not hold the rain back. Luckily this morning the sun again shines and the carpets hang out to dry on the clothes line. Tim and Helen Ward turned up, in Frogeye, without a hood but were dressed for the weather. New member Alex Bowers, with Jess Smale, turned up in his other Austin Seven (originally his Grandfather's by all

account) without a top. Alex's other Austin Seven broke its gearbox casing on our recent Arnhem Tour.

Everyone else must have paid attention to weather reports. Peter Gardiner, as ever, arrived in his Midget. John and Julie Harle found a compromise between tin top and sports arriving in an MGBGT.

The evening saw a good take up for our trip to the Circuit des Remparts, at Angouleme, in September – tales of the Arnhem trip obviously spurring people on. Thank you to those that provided me with CDs of photos of that trip. Also there were takers for our LeMans Classic 2008 Tour so much so that we can accommodate no more.

Manufacturer of many things Spridget, and otherwise, Ashley Hinton arrived with a new item to go in his 'catalogue' namely a CNC machined grill for rubber bumper Midgets and MGBs either in black painted steel or stainless steel. Col swiftly bagged one of the two pre-release items.

Kent Meet June 2007

Rain, the Goodwood Festival of Speed, Bromley Festival of Motoring, holidays all conspired to reduce our number (4) for the June meeting.

Following my Surrey Meet experience I was not going to have the carpets out twice in one week so went in the tin top. Peter Gardiner as always arrived in his rubber bumper Midget which is soon to receive a Kenlowe fan and oil cooler.

Peter has a draught excluder screen fitted to his car. This impedes the fitting of the tonneau. I have suggested that he may be able to fit it so that it is possible to raise and lower it by using two bonnet / boot stays suitably cut down. If this is successful I shall hope that he provides our magazine with an article and pictures. Mel and Barb Collins came in their restoration fresh rubber bumper Midget – the car looking very red indeed.

A question for the 'Fiddlers and Fettleers' amongst our membership. The 948 Sprite/Midget have a 6.25 spring clutch. If converting to a ribbed case box then a 7.5 spring clutch with 1098 flywheel and backplate is used. Has anyone converted a 948 with smooth case gearbox to a 6.5 (1275) diaphragm clutch and if so, How?

Alan Anstead

Area Representative Kent & Surrey Sections

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