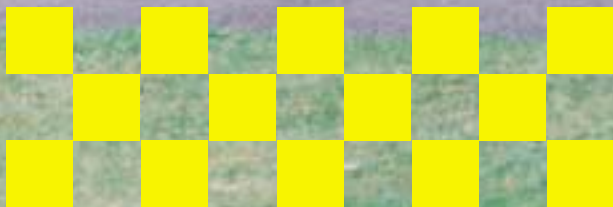


September 2007

£2 No. 282

# Mascot



The Magazine  
of the  
Midget & Sprite  
Club

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

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<b>YORKSHIRE</b>	

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 September '07

Let me start by thanking everyone who got in touch about the new look *MASCOT*! I'm glad you all agree that the use of colour is taking our magazine onto a new level. I was particularly pleased to receive the following comments from Mike North, my predecessor in this job ... *"as a previous editor, I wanted to congratulate you on raising MASCOT, and the club by default, to new heights ... I am excited by the latest developments, the extra content and finally, colour for the cover .... I am assured that Mascot is in safe hands and will continue to flourish ...."* Mike, more than anyone else, understands fully the constraints we have to work with, here at Mascot Towers.

AND NOW, FOR YOUR SEPTEMBER '07 issue.....EVEN MORE! I'm very excited this month to not only to continue with the full-colour cover and 48-page theme, but also to be able to offer you, for the first time, a total of 8 colour pages INSIDE *MASCOT*.

Also inside this month ... the second part of the Pirelli-Sprinzel interviews from 1962, in which the techniques of Rally Driving are discussed; some very interesting Frogeye modifications from Bill Cornwell; a follow-up from the Secretary to John Davies' Black Paint article; a piece from Mascot friend, Tony Bennetto, recalling his adventure with his purchase of an Innocenti Spider in California and its shipping to his home in Australia; Alan Anstead has penned a tribute to David Wright for all his hard work with the Surrey Area Group; the latest visit to BMH; some recent developments with Spridget50; Silverstone Classic; exciting news on a new TV programme featuring a MASC member's car; plus all the usual Area Reports.

Another BUMPER EDITION this month, then ... all due to the many and varied articles sent in by *MASCOT* contributors. A BIG thanks to all of you – I couldn't put together this magazine without all your help and support.

Please keep on sending in your photos for the front cover – remember: PORTRAIT format (turn the camera on its side) and position the car in the centre of the shot. Please use this month's front cover for guidance.

Finally a MASSIVE thanks for all who sent in photographs for the 2008 OFFICIAL MASC CALENDAR – the quality was exceptional and it was a very difficult choice. The A3 full-colour calendars are currently being produced in a limited run and will be available at the beginning of October, priced at £8.99 inc UK p & p. If you want to make certain you get hold of one (or 2, or however many you may want) then please email me to include your name on the preliminary order list.

Thanks once more to all contributors this month.

**PLEASE NOTE: Deadline for OCTOBER issue is mid-day SUNDAY 9 September.**

**Barry  
Editor**

**Membership No: 1150  
editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk**



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**The statements and opinions expressed in each and every issue of the *MASCOT* are not necessarily the considered views of the Midget and Sprite Club. The views expressed by the editorial contributors, letter writers and advertisers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Club. The Midget and Sprite Club accepts no responsibility for the results of following contributor's advice, nor does it necessarily endorse the services or products offered by advertisers.**

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Front cover picture: Martin Ingall's Sebring Sprite 946 JJO cornering at Crystal Palace, 1998

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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 September 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, Reddich, B96 6NU, at 8.30pm as usual.
- 2nd Wednesday **North West Area** – meet at **The Kilton**, turn off M6 at Jct 20 onto A50 towards Macclesfield. Pub 4 miles on left. Please note new venue.
- 2nd Wednesday **Bristol Area** will meet at **The 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 barrystange@aol.com
- 4th Thursday **Hampshire** – Meet at **The Poacher**, South Warnborough. Note Change of Venue. Please ring Terry or Harriet Langridge on 01252 626063 for details.
- 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 September  
Username: Works Password: Replica

## Events


From David Hill & Webmaster Toby Ancombe

### Events organised so far for 2007

#### September

- Sunday 2nd Coventry Motor Festival.
- Sunday 2nd MGCC invites MASC members to their September Road Run from The Steam Railway Centre, Toddington, Gloucestershire, to the National Trust property of Coughton Court, near Alcester. Details from Dennis Wharf, 01296 714232.
- Thursday 13th Surrey Area's trip to Circuit des Remparts, Angouleme, France. Book early! Details from Alan Anstead, Tel: 01322 384050
- Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th Cambridge Area will be attending SeeRed at Donnington Park for vintage and classic car racing. Details from Hubie Albany on Tel: 01733 265548.

#### October

- Tuesday 9th "Wreck Rescue" begins on  at 10pm. Series will be featuring the restoration of Lizzie Bartlett's Frogeye.
- Sunday 14th Severn Valley Railway Classic Bike and Car Day. Warwickshire Area. REGRET NOW CANCELLED.
- Sunday 14th Warwickshire Area are now going to the Autumn Steam and Vintage Rally at the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway at Toddington. 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 but probably Kingswood Arms. Details from David Wright, davidandchrisw@btinternet.com

#### 2008

##### May

- Saturday 3rd To Tuesday 6th Surrey Area Annual Tour. Details from Sue Judd, suej001@btinternet.com or Chris Harding, harding.c@btconnect.com

Friday 16th  
To Sunday 18th

International Healey Weekend at Goodwood.

Saturday 24th

Spridget 50 at Gaydon – 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](mailto:organiser@spridget50.com)

## June

Thursday 12th  
To Sunday 15th

Surrey Area's D Day Beaches Tour.

## July

Tuesday 8th  
To Tuesday 15th

Surrey Area's Le Mans Tour.

## December

Tuesday 16th

Surrey Area's Christmas Meal.

Area Reps please let David Hill (email: [david@hillnet.clara.net](mailto: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.

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# Rambling towards an Indian Summer – I hope

A few momentous events to report, good news all! First we get the first of our regular colour issues of *MASCOT* and what a corker it is, hearty congratulations to the EDITOR! Next at last we have binders for *MASCOT* for £6.50 including the post and packing, contact Mike for supplies. A lovely blue with *MASCOT* lettering, I'm in for some of those straight away.

John Platt has arranged for Club Logo-ed tax disc holders to be available in Club Regalia too. I'm hoping for some changes in the stocks of the above too, as I have been asked if we can have some new colours for some items. I am looking into it and will keep you all advised. You will see that there have been changes to the regalia list as although some prices have gone up some others have come

down. The current prices are unlikely to need revision again for quite a while. I hope ☺

And when I was at Silverstone I was approached by someone who wants to breathe life into the sleeping Devon area, more after we sort out some details on that.

The new club's company format is being processed too, we will be entering a brave new world as a company soon. Thank you to all that voted, "fors" and "against" together we make a stronger club.

Soon I will be handing the ceremonial chair over to a new – "person", but I'd like to thank all of you that have been so supportive over my two years in situ, it has been a privilege to serve the club. Thank you for voting for me.

**Chairman Bill**

## Secretarial Scriblings

I think age is catching up with me. It's taking me longer to read *MASCOT* these days. Even picking it up is more of a strain on the old fingers. The covers seem further apart than I ever remember – Oh, they are, phew, it's not me then, *MASCOT* really is bigger. Well, that's the good news, the fact that everything else is taking me longer and feels more of a strain, well, I think age is catching up with me.

I hardly need to comment on the weather so far this "summer", if you live in the UK, then you know it's been very YUK indeed.

However, I have managed a bit of out and abouting and on 2 of the drier occasions, bumped into other branches of our club.

Firstly, the "Classics at the Castle" at Shelbourne Castle near Yeovil where MASC Somerset had a fine display of our favourite cars. Somerset is an area that we do not read much about in these pages, not it seems through lack of activity, quite the opposite, these guys are too busy enjoying their cars. Great to meet you and I note your request for an Official Banner. More recently, the "Kemble Steam and Vintage" brought forth 5 Spridgley things from our Hampshire group. Another

lively group that do far more than we read about. Kemble, being the large and lively show that it is, not surprisingly has many attractions to draw people away from their cars. It was therefore fortunate that I just happened to catch Terry and Harriet Langridge on a brief return to their well travelled Frogeye. Yes, we will try and meet up again in the not too distant future. Shame to admit, both these events I attended in a Ford Anglia.

Last month's Scriblings ended the day before the MOT test was booked for my 1967 Sprite. A complete electrical charging failure a couple of days before had me worried.

I disconnected the dynamo, yes; it still has one, and connected the field and brush terminals to a voltmeter and fired up on the freshly charged battery. Idle speed produced a healthy 15.5volts so that wasn't the problem. A general wiggling of the wiring and voltage regulator, yes, it still has one of those too, and normal service was resumed on the ammeter. No doubt the Sprite's lack of use is manifesting itself but I now keep a spare voltage regulator on board just in case the

unsolvable should resurface when I least expect it. With a healthy production of amps, the MOT passed without incident followed by a de-cobwebbing run to Hereford and back. The sun was shining, the drive through the Wye Valley superb, Yes – this is worth all the effort. High days short lived however; the clutch is playing up now. No hydraulic leaks but the system loses pressure during a manoeuvre. I think the main seal in the master cylinder is past it and allowing fluid to leak back into the reservoir. There, I should have something to scribble about next month.

The Frogeye is also getting some use but has been suffering a bout of hiccups. It has never run particularly smoothly with its modified 1300 engine but this was defiantly on the bad side of poor. All the usual checks and adjustments failed to make much difference and reaffirmed that the SU needles are incorrect. In obtaining a decent mixture at idle, part throttle seemed weak with resulting hesitancy. The jets and needles had covered only a small mileage so general wear and tear could be ruled out. I had previously replaced the standard AN needles with GY needles (standard for the 70bhp MG1300 fwd) but these need to be changed for ??? For now, I have richened up the mixture which slowed the idle speed but has cured the hesitancy at part throttle. So. That's something else to write about in the future, probably a long time in the future!

Our annual elections for committee are currently in the process of being, er,

processed. A ballot paper will be yours to use as you best see fit. At the moment, we are doing everything as per our current Constitution but as we transform into becoming a Limited Company, then a revised Constitution will be presented for your approval. Also, we shall need to appoint a Board of Directors to fulfil our legal obligations. This is not as frightening as your worst fears may suggest, in fact, its all fairly straight forward stuff that many clubs, similar to ours have already done. We need to establish the way in which the Board will be appointed and whether Board members have to be committee members or not. The terms of office for Board members are different to our usual one year term of office for committee members so this we need to clearly define. Timescale wise, then we expect to be Midget and Sprite Club Co Ltd and properly re-Constituted this year.

Let us hope that the back end of the summer will provide the roof off weather that we enjoy. I am expecting a week in Cornwall with one of my Sprites at the end of August. Not sure which one yet, probably the one with the least number of faults, this can change on a day to day basis so fingers are crossed on both hands. It was 1991 that I last drove a Sprite to Cornwall, a round trip of 440 miles all in 1 day, the highest mileage that I have ever driven in 1 day. I am really looking forward to some of those wonderful Cornish coastal roads, whether either of my Sprites are, I will relate next time!

**Terry Horler**

## Mutual Assistance Directory

**A**s I write this, it is chucking it down – again. I know West Wales is wetter than most of the rest of the country but this is really ridiculous! Roll on winter! Can't be worse, can it? Last month I had this paragraph in this spot.

*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!*

So is the scheme really MAD? Does it do any good? Is it worth continuing? Has anyone benefited from it? Please let me know.

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**

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## New Members

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

2789	Gordon and Angela Elwell	Nottinghamshire	Frogeye x 3
3872	Patrick and Caroline Watson	Warwickshire	Midget Mk 3 RWA
3873	Peter Manley	Dorset	Sprite Mk 4
3874	Jeremy Gillan	Northern Ireland	Midget 1500
3875	Thomas Schlingemann	Wiltshire	Sprite Mk 4
3876	Paul Danson	Kent	Midget with Frogeye body
3877	Jill Kirk and Dennis Beadman	North Yorkshire	Frogeye
3878	Richard Spigai	United States – NJ	Midget 1500
3879	Tony and Helen Barrett	Cheshire	Austin Sprite
3880	James Walker	Wiltshire	Sprite Mk 3
3881	Dave Laycock	Lancashire	Sprite Mk 4
3882	Piers Colver	Buckinghamshire	Austin Sprite
3883	Joanna and Simon Tennant	Devon	Frogeye
3884	John and Carol Oulton	Co Durham	Sprite Mk 4
3885	Eleanor Betton	Cheshire	Frogeye
3886	David White	Cumbria	Frogeye
3887	Thomas McGee	United States – CA	
3888	Morris Smith	Powys	Sprite Mk 2
3889	Mark Manston	Middlesex	Midget Mk 3 RWA
3990	Ian Whitchurch	Derbyshire	Midget Mk 3
3991	Chris Lawson	Buckinghamshire	Sprite Mk 4

# Frogeye Mods

Hello again. As promised I'm back with more rambling about my Frog, namely the rev counter, tachometer if you're posh and the windscreen washer.

If you have decided to stay completely original and stay with the dynamo and mechanical rev counter that's admirable and I hope you car wins many concours medals. If you have opted for a few sensible upgrades, fitting an alternator is at the top of the list. Your battery will last much longer and will charge more efficiently even on tick over. You will do away with that troublesome regulator box and your wiring will be far simpler – but ... you will not be able to use your mechanical rev counter and you will have to convert your car electrics to negative earth.

There is much talk about electronic rev counters including how to wire them up and how to convert them from positive earth to negative earth. If you can drop your hands on an early Spridget rev counter chances are that it will be positive earth (it will say so on the face). Let me say this straight away, no matter what you may have heard, it is very difficult (I was going to say nigh on impossible but there will always be someone who has done it and prove me wrong) – to convert these to negative earth. You could change the PNP transistors to NPN transistors and reverse the zener diode or ... isolate all the internal circuitry from the metal case ... or even totally isolate the rev counter case from the metal dash but I think you see where I'm going here. If you happen to drop on an early negative earth version, it will probably be an inductance type with a little transformer in the back, the primary winding of which is circuit (series) with the ignition coil. Follow the diagrams and it will work but you can appreciate it is an antiquated system compared to modern day rev counters.

**My solution:** First you need to pop down to your local scrapyard and find yourself a Ford or a Rover etc with a rev counter. I recommend the Rover 200 series, (e.g. 214) there are always plenty of these beasts available. Take out the instrument cowl by undoing about four screws and releasing the speedo cable. Inside the rev counter section

there is a small circuit board usually held in by three screws, carefully remove it and cut the two wires that go to the rev counter coil. It's up to you what you do now as it will easily hide in your pocket but I was honest and was only charged two quid for it.



Secondly you need to pull your own rev counter apart. Locate the red and black wire that go to the coil of the gauge and disconnect them entirely from the circuit board. Then extend these wires using a length of twin core flex and reassemble the rev counter. You should be left with a rev counter with a tail of wire attached to it.

Thirdly you will need a small plastic box (Maplin) to house your acquired circuit board and then figure out a good place to mount it behind the dash.

You could of course fit the circuit board can't inside the rev counter. If you take out the old circuit board there will be plenty of room but take care to isolate the board from the metal case.

Fourthly it's a matter of wiring it up and it couldn't be simpler. Most of these circuit boards have no more than three connections plus the two that obviously go to the coil of the rev counter. The three connections are: Earth, -12 volts and CB (CB on coil). The circuit board will even include an adjustment (variable resistor) to set the scale exactly right.

Incidentally, if the needle goes backwards you've got the wires to the coil reversed.

A neat little addition – put an on/off switch on your small hidden plastic box, connect the switch terminals to 'CB' and 'earth' so that when it's on you have a Thatcham 2(ish) immobiliser!!!

Now onwards to the windscreen washer.

Originally this was an optional extra as in the late fifties it wasn't considered hazardous to have a dirty windscreen. Then suddenly the law changed, no 'ifs and buts' – it became compulsory to fit a screen washer system! There were two types you could fit; the Tudor or the Trafalgar system. Both types as you know are pretty crude involving a push pump on the dash. This pump can be mounted just about anywhere where there is space and results in completely destroying the simplistic neatness of the original dash. Compounding the issue, a new replacement dash pump is now ridiculously expensive – there had to be another way.

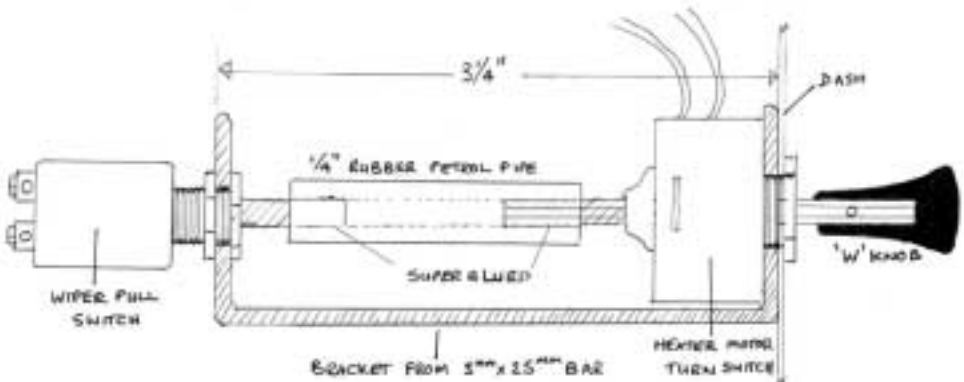
**My solution:** Firstly I needed an electric washer pump, a new MGB one for just over a tenner did nicely. As it was reasonably compact, I mounted it on the bulk head behind the dash near to the jets. The next bit I required was a switch to operate it – I didn't want an extra hole in the dash, so it was inventing time.



I had in my box of bits, a heater motor turn switch (part of the heater control) without the control cable – this had naturally disintegrated as things do. The switches are easy to refurbish as they are made to come apart. I always use a minute dab of petroleum jelly (Vaseline) on the electrical parts; the jelly stops the contacts corroding but doesn't inhibit the current through the contacts. I fabricated a 'u' shaped bracket out of  $\frac{1}{8}$ " X 1" (3mm x 25mm) bar, found a short length of rubber petrol pipe and then I put the bits together as per diagram below:

The result is a 'W' knob on the dashboard that you pull to operate the wipers in the normal way and twist clockwise to operate the washer pump. It works like a dream; the rubber pipe even makes the knob 'spring' back (anti-clockwise) which I hadn't planned for!

**Bill Cornwell 3570**



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# M.G. Car Club 'Summer Gathering'

## Cobham Hall, Kent

12th August 2007



This venue being so close to where I live it would have been impolite not to have attended especially as Gavin Rowles, whom unfortunately after his labours was unable to attend, had obtained for Midget and Sprite the privilege of being an 'invited club'.

Thus it was that several of us were able to join a large selection of M.G.s assembled in the grounds of what is a School for young ladies aged 11-18.

The school is in what was a stately home and on this rare occasion tours of the house were on offer. The inside of the house was nice to see but I did feel as if I were being treated as a schoolboy by the 'Jolly Miss Hockey Sticks' who was our tour guide. The tour became so much that I thought of forming an escape committee with Martin Bird and John Larrington.

In the free world outside Darren Tyre (watched by Tracey Neil), Gary Lazarus and Bob Tooke were attacking the auto test with vigour. Nick Rowlatt, in an MGCC membership role, was marshalling the event whilst his daughters used his MK2 Sprite around the course. Melvyn and Barbara Collins had entered "Pride of Ownership". Jason Alexander and Sue Gibbs came all the way from Peacehaven in E. Sussex bringing with them prospective members Tim and Elaine Thorndale.

The forecast rain held off just long enough not to spoil the day.

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

**Mail to: [alan.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com)**

# More on the Blackout

## Plus Other Matters

John Davies has narrowed down the previously undocumented feature of black paint being applied to the air intake immediately behind the radiator grille of early Spridgley things. I can confirm that my 1967 (HAN9) Sprite in British Racing Green also has black paint in this area. Being a darker shade, then this practice may not be limited to just the lighter shades. In the same article from John, he states that Abingdon drew painted bodies for a common Sprite/Midget stock. This I question as the differences in badging and exterior trim hole positions were produced prior to painting. Furthermore, the body number (left hand door hinge pillar) was painted over in body colour and identified if the body was intended for a Sprite or Midget. Prefixed ABL for a Sprite or GBE for a Midget.

On the subject of un-documented features, then I have 2 more to keep the Spridglet detectives busy.

1. When the face lift versions were introduced in October 1969 (HAN10 and GAN5). The rear quarter bumpers did not have any gusset brackets between the boot floor and rear panel. At an unspecified point, 4 brackets were introduced to strengthen the bumper mountings between these 2 panels. The brackets being similar to the ones used on all versions prior to HAN10 and GAN5. So at

what point were these brackets fitted? Owners of these early versions please rush to open your boot lids and report back.

2. The Midget 1500 (GAN6) required a modified floor pan to allow access to the prop shaft flange on the rear of the gearbox. Hence, a square aperture is provided immediately below this drive flange and its securing bolts. Also, the rear of the floor pan had a greater angle to the fillet piece. This is the small panel under the propshaft. The propshaft forms a greater angle to the horizontal as the body rides higher than on earlier versions. Hence, this modification allows greater clearance for the propshaft. Although these modifications are applicable to the 1500, I believe that late 1275cc Round arch Midgets also had these floor pans. Incidentally, all BMH body shells use this later floor pan. My question is, at what point was the modified floor pan introduced on the Round Arch Midget? Owners of late examples – rush to your jacks and have a look.

There, that's something to keep you wondering. Oh – John, the answer is not in Original Sprite and Midget, even beyond page 73. (That's why I am asking!)

**Terry Horler**

# Letters to the Editor

Dear Barry

I have just received August's *MASCOT*. What an excellent edition it is. Well done! I particularly liked the article by John Sprinzel. Could he be persuaded to write an occasional column reminiscing on former sporting glories of our little Spridgely things, I wonder? Also the article about Jack Brabham's Midget-Climax was astonishing. Are there any left? Has anyone in the club got one, and can I have one too?

Read Brother Geraint's plea. My 1967 Midget Mk III definitely has "CHOKE" on the choke

cable knob. Could the replacement cable be altered to take the existing knob, if that is all that is available? You know the form – glue, string, rubber bands, etc. Somebody out there must know!

**Howard Ellis Memb. No: 1845**

\* \* \*

Dear Barry

Just a quick note to congratulate you on the presentation of this issue. It looks really professional.

**Geoff Mears Memb. No: 1200**

# An Innocent(i) Abroad

## (or Shipping a Rare Italian Car from the US to Australia)

It is not widely known that a version of the Austin Healey Sprite was made in Italy from 1961 until 1970. The mechanicals of the English Sprite were mated to an entirely new body made in Italy by Ghia (and designed by an American, Tom Tjaarda) to create an upmarket model which was first marketed as the “Innocenti 950 Sport” and later as the “Innocenti S”.

The “950Sport” was initially based on the Bugeye Sprite drivetrain/platform, but included a separate lockable boot, longer doors, wind-up windows, external door handles, roomier cockpit, lockable glovebox and a true convertible soft-top which folded neatly behind the seats amongst its features. As such it was light years ahead of the British original.

Later versions got an Italian designed ??? elliptical spring and tubular shock absorber rear suspension to go with the Sprite 1098cc engine, ribcase transmission and disc brakes. It was only made as a left-hand drive car and marketed in Italy, Europe and America. Although possibly a much better car, it never threatened the stronger sales of the better known Austin Healey Sprite and MG midget on which it was based.

I became aware of this version of the Sprite over 30 years ago, when I came across a small reference to it in a copy of the 1962 P. Olyslager book “Handbook for the Austin Healey Sprite”, but further information was non-existent until a small chapter on the Innocenti appeared in Terry Horler’s excellent 1994 book “Original Sprite and Midget”, and much more recently in Bill Emerson’s “The Healey Book”.

I acquired an Innocenti S sales brochure at a swap meeting somewhere, and then, a couple of years ago my good Sprite friend from

*On the  
Pacific Coast  
Highway*



America, Steve Bell, phoned me about a strange car called an Innocenti he’d found on eBay. I gave him a brief outline (all I knew then) and encouraged him to buy it, which Steve did. His restoration continues on this car as does his questions about the Innocentis, but these days he knows more about them than I do.

This year Steve Bell found an Innocenti S that was available for sale in California, and gently coerced me into considering acquiring it. I visited the car and its owner, Jim Hill, and had a 200 metre test drive during a trip to the USA in May, and struck a deal with Jim some months later.

I asked Jim to register the car as I wanted to drive it down the Pacific Coast Highway from Jim’s home in the San Jose area to Los Angeles in order to ship the car to Australia. Jim must have been bemused at such strange requests from crazy Australians (why didn’t I just take the easy option and truck it to LA?) but he did what I asked, and also generously arranged insurance on his own policy! From my point of view, this was the easy part.

Next, I had to convince Kerry (wife) that buying an Innocenti from abroad was a good idea. I worked up a line about us holidaying in California, and travelling down the coast in an exotic Italian Sportscar, with sun on faces and

wind in hair. As with all good marketing ploys, she bought the sizzle, rather than the substance and agreed to my scheme.

So it was, that Kerry and I arrived at Jim's place on a mid-September day to pick up the Innocenti. We sorted out the paperwork, squeezed our luggage into this tiny car and waved goodbye to Jim, thankful to be on the road by early afternoon and thus avoiding peak-hour commuters.

By the end of Jim's street I realised that the front callipers were frozen, which alarmed Kerry somewhat; but I pressed on deciding not to tell her about the perished 40 year old crossply tyres or the worn out front shockers. To me, these were mere minor details, as the car was otherwise purring perfectly as it cruised south on the El Camino Real from San Francisco. I kept a wary eye on water and oil gauges but these registered normal readings. The road south changed to two lanes near Monterey (great aquarium, sea otters and whale watching) and we hit the coast again at Carmel on our way to Big Sur. Here the road really resembles our own great Ocean Road, but higher and with less Armco, and the squealing of the aged crossplys alerted Kerry to the deficiencies in our tyre department.

At a roadside stop a stranger asked if this car was an MG Midget which felt like an insult to us new Innocenti owners.

We continued on beneath the Redwood forests of Big Sur village and enjoyed the sweeping views of the coastline from the serpentine road between Lucia and Ragged Point, all the while the Innocenti proving unstoppable (not only because the engine and gearbox was so good, but also because the brakes were so bad!)

We found a hotel for the night at tiny San Simeon, and the next morning put ??? litre of engine oil in the engine and pumped up the tyres.

The coastal scenery south was less dramatic this day, but we made good time and were soon heading inland from Morro Bay through San Luis Obispo and through Wine Country back to the coast west of Santa Barbara: Roadworks on the Freeway through Santa Barbara caused long delays, but the temperature on the Veglia gauge in the Innocenti gave no cause for alarm and we

were eventually rolling along on our way to Ventura and Oxnard where we avoided the start of the Los Angeles area freeways and stuck to the two lane coast road, heading for Malibu. Here we stopped at an exceptionally average motel, the misnamed Malibu Riviera where the rooms seemed not to have been updated since 1956, although the tariff had definitely moved on.

The following morning I briefed Kerry on the final part of our journey, the trip through Los Angeles to the container terminal that would ship our Innocenti to Australia. I used



LA-speak for the route "At Santa Monica hit the 10 to 405 South, then 105 east to 710 south and east on Alondra" and this was sufficient to get us the 100kms to our destination.

As we removed our luggage from the Innocenti at the container terminal I was pleased to note that we'd travelled exactly 400 miles from Jim hill's home to LA in 2 easy days.

The Innocenti had impressed us with its Italian looks, roomy cockpit and relaxed cruising. In driving it, you tend to forget that it is essentially just a Sprite, as it feels much more exotic, and it seems that you sit higher in the car, peering over a dashboard binnacle full of Veglia instruments. Performance is still much the same as a Sprite, so it's no Ferrari, but definitely rarer!

We can't wait to get it home!

**Tony Bennetto, Australia**

# David Wright – Member 1122



When I joined the Midget & Sprite Club, in 1994, there wasn't a Kent Section. The nearest Section to where I lived, in Kent, was Surrey Section. Surrey was organised by David Wright, assisted by his wife Christine Wright. I was immediately welcomed by David and Chris who introduced me to the membership. I have been with Surrey Section ever since.

David and Chris over the intervening years have welcomed many new members and contributed greatly to make Surrey Section the warm and friendly club that it is today.

This year was to become a major change in their lifestyle as David retired from his work. Years ago David had trained as a social worker

and subsequently worked in Social Services Departments latterly as a Policy Officer working on new projects and developments in Services for children in need.

David and Chris were, also, to move from their long term home in Sutton, Surrey to new pastures at Storrington in Sussex.

Retirement will give David an opportunity to tinker with his 1969 Tartan Red Spridget – Sue. SOU420G was completely stripped and rebuilt in 1992/1993 after seven years of non-use. The rebuild was undertaken jointly with co-member, and long term near neighbour John Page, after which they went on to rebuild John's RWA Midget. David's Spridget was featured in March 1998 issue of *Classic and Sports Car* magazine.

David and Chris also have a Jensen to enjoy whilst Chris is a keen gardener having won the Best Front Garden in London at least twice and the garden in Sutton was in the National Garden Scheme Yellow Book.

With all these major lifestyle changes David thought it time to throttle back a little with regard to Midget & Sprite Club whilst not giving up the club altogether. David stood down as Surrey area Organiser at last year's Surrey Christmas meal.

In appreciation of the hard work he, and Chris, had put into the Club over the years they were presented, by Surrey Section members, with a sundial. Having now moved and retired the sundial has at last been mounted on a plinth in their new garden.

On behalf of the Surrey membership may I, again, say thank you and well done.

**Alan Anstead**

## Essex Sprint

Harrow Car Club Sprint at North Weald Airfield, Essex on  
Sunday 23 September 2007.

All Competitors and Marshals welcome.

For more details contact Keith:

mrkwarner@hotmail.com Tel: 01923 672917 Mobile: 07800 875835

## Member's Frogeye on



**Discovery Realtime** is scheduling a new series  
on classic car restoration

### **WRECK RESCUE**

Hosted by the experienced and knowledgeable Mark Evans  
The series begins at 10.00pm on Tuesday 9 October 2007

AND, great news for us, for the first programme  
it's the Frogeye owned by MASC Member, Lizzie Bartlett!

She restored this over a period of just 10 months from  
June '06 – April '07

Full report in *MASCOT* soon!



# BMH Revisited



**T**uesday the 14th of August was yet another Spridgley unfriendly weather day. No doubt all of the 11 members arriving at British Motor Heritage (BMH) at Witney would have preferred to have done so in their Spridgley things. As was, only John Platt braved the elements to arrive in his round arch Midget – shame on the rest of us!

This is at least the 4th visit the club has made to BMH, the first 2 being to their old facilities at Faringdon and last year to their new facility in Witney. Before I get into what we saw this time, a brief history of BMH. Originally set up in 1975 by British Leyland as the commercial arm of British Motor Industry Heritage Trust, BMH donated its trading income to BMIHT, the museum and archives of B-L. Just over 20 years ago, BMH added complete new bodyshells to their portfolio of replacement body panels. Initially, this was for the MGB but Midget bodyshells soon followed. It is thanks to the foresight of the leadership at this time that many of the body press tools and assembly jigs were searched out and saved from the sprawling B-L combine. BMH were also instrumental in reviving the name of MG by producing the MG RV8 bodyshells at Faringdon. It was at this time the club made its first visit. Early production of MGB and Midget bodyshells were available as basic 'tubs' whereby the owner could then add their own wings, doors, bonnet and boot lids. Not surprisingly, problems were encountered when

trying to fit panels of dubious history and source to a new body shell, hence BMH later supplied only complete bodyshells where everything fitted nicely.

B-L became Rover, became BMW, became broke and finally, became broken up. Ford bought up various bits including the new BMIHT Gaydon museum but not BMH. A management takeover ensured that BMH could now steer its own course free of the troubles and politics of belonging to someone else. The move to Witney marked a new start and just one large roof to work under rather than 4 or 5 separate industrial units that they previously occupied at Faringdon. The move has resulted in the loss of the body presses that we saw previously. Large panels such as wings and bonnet and boot lids were, at that time, still being squashed out at Swindon but BMH did have capability to do smaller items in house. Now, a company in the North East of England supply panels to BMH for assembly. This has made room to store many more stock items than before. Because pressings are only economic in batches, then BMH has to carefully estimate the stock that it needs to carry before a new batch is produced. As we all know, companies do not like to have money tied up in stock on shelves gathering dust but such is the nature of this business, that a certain amount is inevitable. Indeed, their Witney stores area is vast. The most expensive items they supply are of course their bodyshells, these are produced in batches to order, all bodyshells produced have a customer to go to. This keeps the cash flowing but should a customer place an order just as a batch is completed, then be prepared for a wait. So what bodyshells are available now?



MGB, both roadster and GT. BMH recognise 18 distinct versions of the MGB and can provide an answer for most applications. 1275cc Spridgley things are catered for in square and round arch form plus the Midget 1500. It is not possible to produce earlier versions. Mini in Mk1V and MkV guise plus Mini Clubman make up a very large slice of their bodyshell business now. BMH also produce all the panels for the TR6 but do not supply an assembled body due to vagaries of customers separate chassis. Added to this, BMH have a vast catalogue of individual panels to offer the restorer.

BMH will now sell direct to the public and as such, can supply bodies finished sprayed to the customer's choice of colour. A new venture is to provide a more responsive service to customer's individual requirements. A part of this is a K series engined MGB. Nothing new for us Spridgley thing owners but apparently nowhere near as easy (relatively speaking) on the MGB. Quite simply, if you have a project in mind that is not quite your average MGB/Spridget/Mini, then talk to BMH.

So what of our visit this time? We were greeted by Chris Gardner, their Sales and Marketing manager, and enjoyed tea, coffee and biscuits in the boardroom whilst Chris brought us up to speed on their current operation. Chris then showed around the archives held at Witney, their offices and stores and then handed us over to Steve Cowley for the tour of the production areas. Here, we saw the tail end of the production batch of 15 Midget bodysells. The next batch is not planned as yet but is likely to be around mid 2008. The semi assembled body was not being worked on during our visit; no doubt their staff unable to get anywhere near it as we inspected every nook and cranny. Anything that could be photographed, was, BMH certainly understand the strange way of enthusiasts – they are enthusiasts themselves! The steel pressings are now zinc coated unlike the original production body shells. When complete, they are electrophoretically primed whereby by the paint is effectively plated onto the body. This should ensure that BMH body shells do not corrode at anything like the rate that the originals did! Although 3 distinct Spridget type body shells are produced, you do not need to employ Sherlock Holmes to discover the differences between an original shell and a BMH shell. These are of a minor nature but



any clued up concours judge could just mark you down on originality points if that is your scene. Our examination of the body also confirmed that the front chassis legs are indeed swept upwards on all versions and not just on Frogeyes as previously suggested in these pages. Further on, we saw the assembly of Midget front wings, 3 operators worked together on assembly, welding and finishing which was a revelation to watch. Due to the complexity of the shape, the wing is made of several parts; however, did you know that the portion below the headlight to the 10 o'clock position in the wheel arch is a separate piece? The way these chaps do it, you couldn't be blamed for never noticing. The amount of work that goes into a Midget wing is far more than most will ever appreciate before a visit to BMH. Not only this, the display of skills is also something to admire, it is good to know that BMH currently have 2 apprentices among their staff of 35 to learn these skills for the future. Modern car body production has moved on and away from the need to use these types of skills and techniques, it is good to see that it is being kept alive just as we try to keep our Spridgley things alive!

The Witney facility continues on a mezzanine level, here we saw MGB front wing assembly. An operator demonstrated the assembly process using 4 jigs and spot welders. Again, a skilful task which impressed us all. Next to this, the assembly jigs for the Mini sub frames. BMH have brought these in from the sub contactor who supplied Rover with sub frames prior to the aforementioned coming and goings, well, just goings then. BMH are very aware of what they have to do for the future

support of vehicles like ours and we should feel very secure that our particular cars are so well catered for already. Our final part of the tour took us into their Special developments area. Here we saw the K series MGB project and a Hill Climb/Sprint Midget built on a new body by Dave Savage, their I.T. member of staff. The Midget has had only one outing so far but keep an eye out for this dark blue example, it should be very quick.

Our tour finished back in the boardroom for more tea/coffee and biscuits with a questions and answers session. Essentially, the Midget bodyshell will continue to be made to order in batches, this seems to be around every 12 months or so but all depends on the state of the market and fitting this in with other production requirements. There are no plans to offer body shells for pre 1275cc versions although BMH would like to produce a full Mk1 Mini body in the future. Indeed, Mini business is very good at the moment it seems. Sadly, our 2 and a half hour visit was over all too quickly, we thanked Chris and his colleagues for showing us around (at least 4 BMH staff were involved in keeping us in order!) and didn't blink when we asked to arrange a further visit. The remaining question to answer, is a BMH Spridgley thing body shell good value? For £3800 inc VAT, then the



answer has to be yes. There is no doubting the quality or the care and skill that goes into producing each shell. The fact that BMH are happy to supply a finish sprayed shell is testament to the fact that they are confident that you will have no problems in bolting everything into place.

Many thanks to George Harrison for arranging the visit, George had around 30 members wanting to visit but parties are limited to 12, hence, further visits by the club seem inevitable. Hopefully, we can prevail upon George to let us know when next BMH will have a batch of Spridgley things to visit.

**Terry Horler, Photos – Alan Lo**

## **Bill Longstaf's Rubber Bumper Conversion**

**Update from MASCOT April '06 article**





# SPRIDGET 50



## THE BIG PARTY

All friends of the AH Sprite and MG Midget invite you to

**The Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon, Warwickshire**  
**Saturday 24 May, 2008**

Come along to the official party to celebrate 50 years since the launch of the Austin Healey "Frogeye" Sprite and all subsequent Sprites, MG Midgets and derivatives. Let's make this the largest collection of Spridgets ever seen!

To register an early no obligation expression of interest, and to receive priority booking information, please contact us with your name, Spridget age and details:

organiser@spridget50.com  
tel 07963 433832



[www.spridget50.com](http://www.spridget50.com)

# SPRIDGET 50 – onwards and upwards

Spridget 50 is moving forward apace. The first development to tell you about is a change at the helm. Steve Clark, from whom the original impetus to organise a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Sprite came and who had been chairing the organising committee, has had to reduce his involvement. A promotion at work and an imminent restoration project (bricks and mortar rather than steel) have meant something had to go and Spridget 50, not unreasonably, was it. Without Steve's drive and enthusiasm we would not have the firm foundations of a very successful event and I would like to thank Steve for all his efforts so far. On a personal note I shall also miss our shared journeys up to the meetings. We took a wrong turn on more than one occasion because we were too busy talking and the boring motorway thrash from Hampshire to Cambridge used to fly by.

When no-one volunteered to take over the chairmanship it dropped in my lap by default, I hope I can meet the standard Steve had set. For those who don't know me my name is Jeremy Cogman and I have a mildly modified Mk2 Sprite which I've done well over 150,000 miles in during my 20 years of ownership. If anyone has any questions about or ideas for the event ('the only silly question is the one not asked') please do call me on 01730 893662 or email me at [jeremy@cogman.co.uk](mailto:jeremy@cogman.co.uk).

So to the event. The foundations are laid, with finances in order and the bargain entry fee soon to be announced. Now we need to start thinking about the detail of the event and what will be happening on the day. So far we have a very knowledgeable commentator booked and hopefully some Spridget 'names' in attendance. There should be some historic cars on display (though as Gary Lazarus likes to say, "everyone's Spridget is historic to them"), some race cars and some trade stands. We are also arranging some Q&A sessions and some demonstrations. Everyone attending will get a rally plaque and some other goodies. If there is anything you'd like to see or even better if you think you have anything to offer that will add to the day please

do get in touch. All thoughts and ideas are welcome.

Booking should be opening for the event very soon, once we have sorted some final details. Don't forget the event is a Saturday so now is the time to book time off work if you need it and tell the family you won't be going shopping that day.

Finally I'd like to appeal to anyone who feels they can spare a few hours a month to help organise the event. We don't need you to come to committee meetings but we'd appreciate a few more hands to delegate some of the organising and phoning around to. Your help would be very much appreciated and you'd be part of one of the most important events in Spridget history.

## Back Number MASCOTs to Give Away

We are now giving away back number MASCOTs for the price of postage and packing as I cannot bring myself to take them to the tip. Your last chance to snap up some valuable archive material on Spridgets – Variants, Models, Technical tips etc.

Remember no January issues until this year

2002 – Apl, June, July, Nov, Dec

2003 – Feb, Mar, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec

2004 – Feb, Mar, Apl, May, July, Aug, Nov, Dec

2005 – Feb, Mar, Apl, May, June, July, Aug, Nov, Dec

2006 – Feb, Mar, Apr, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec

2007 – Jan, Feb, Mar, Apl, May, June, July

Can be collected from near Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire.

Please contact John Platt (Membership Sec) details inside MASCOT

# Trojan Healey Registration X1 AHS



In 1966 I bought a new MG Mark II Midget (Old English White with black interior) and had the car for 8 years. It never let me down and was the best fun car I've ever had – and I have always regretted selling it. So in 2001 when I saw this Trojan Healey at a local show – only a few months old with less than a 700 miles on the clock, I knew I had to have it! At that time, I had two immaculate Matra Bagheeras (limited editions), which I had owned for over 20 years. However, I then felt that I had 'been there and done that' since I had won prizes, been published in magazines and shown the cars at different shows including the Classic Car Show at Birmingham and even winning the Matra celebration of 30 years of manufacturing Councours Cup in France in 1997; and as you know it is hard

work maintaining two classic cars in perfect condition so I sold them to two individual enthusiasts in the Matra Club. So the thought of a Sprite was extremely tempting – small, easy to maintain, fun to run and I could relive my past. Now, I've been to my first MASC meeting at Ardingly, met a few more enthusiastic members and enjoyed seeing their cars, I want to tell you more about mine.

The car was built with all new parts by Adam Bevan of the Healey Sprite Motor Company, Maidenhead, Berks. First registered December 2000 as a new car with an X registration. It has a Ford 5 speed gear box, disc brakes on the front, 1275 engine, old English white with red interior and spax shock absorbers with coil springs all round, with alloy wheels and putting the battery and the washer bottle in the boot, which makes the engine compartment look really tidy. I have a letter addressed to Adam Bevan from Brian Healey wishing all the success in building these cars and it has all the correct Austin Healey badges, but to get round the technicality it is registered as a Trojan Healey. Since the company is no longer in business and I can't get much more information, I would be pleased to hear from anyone who has more details on these cars. My car does, however have an Isle of Wight (Frogeye) plate on the chassis.

**Tom Tulip 3806A**  
**Lindfield, West Sussex, 07811 213727**



# The Neil Thomas Collection



I am mad about Spridgets! I still have my very first Midget, a 1970 Mk111 bought in 1980 and still used regularly. I took it to Silverstone a couple of weeks ago for the MGCC International and entered the Gymkhana with my son Alex and won 1st in Class for the Midgets!

I am also currently converting a 1964 Mk11 Midget to 1.8 K series power and of course I am now really loving the Frogeye now it's finished (see full feature in the August issue). This is an early car. It was registered in July 1958, and has chassis no. 1991.

It should have a 9 stud but when I bought it, it had the two stud screen instead. I do keep an eye out for a 9 stud but to be



honest I don't plan to enter it into any concours competition and people ask such ridiculous prices for 9 studs that I'm not prepared to pay silly money. In any case the two stud is more waterproof (ho ho ho!) and was often exchanged at the time, I understand, for the nine stud for that very reason. My Frog also has the triangular reinforcing pieces on the rear wheel arches in the boot as opposed to the later ones with the box section. Also it has the closing off plates in the engine bay between the triangular section and the chassis rails. And the triangular pieces are also just a single skin as opposed to the later double skin. It also has the original early rear quarter elliptic brackets. Not many this age about I don't think.

The car was registered, I believe, on the Isle of Wight, hence DL. I haven't applied for a heritage certificate yet but will do so at some stage which should confirm this. In fact I am taking it to the Isle of Wight for a weekend in September with the MGOC. A sort of reunion! I am also booked in for the Spridget 50th next May.



I have attached three photos, two of the Frogeye (me driving) and one of our win at Silverstone.

**Neil Thomas**  
**Membership no: 3617**

# Is It Just Me?

I have mentioned the problems, before, of the attempts I made to obtain side screens for my Sebring Sprite Coupe. I had a Vaudeville double act fobbing me off with either person unlucky enough to receive my telephone call telling me the other would do it next week.

Then the engine builder, M.E.D. of Leicester, ([www.med-engineering.co.uk](http://www.med-engineering.co.uk)) to whom I entrusted two engines one 1330 and one 948.

After expressing a particular camshaft type (88G229) for the 948 my request was ignored and they supplied what they decided without consulting me. Allegedly my 948 block was picked up, by mistake, by a German customer, collecting parts for a 1275 engine, and taken to Germany or so the cause for the continued delay was described. The 948 engine would not run without detonation. Two rolling road sessions, at two different tuners, failed to get it running well.

I have subsequently had the 948 engine rebuilt by Ian Hargreaves at Avonbar Racing ([www.avonbar.com](http://www.avonbar.com)) whom I have used before.

The 1330 unit was supplied without dizzy drive. When informed of the omission I was sent the drive, in dirty state, to fit myself. Fortunately the 1330 runs well.

As Mk1 Sprite 'Frogeye' owners will well know the Dynamo, which I believe was originally rated at 19 amps, cannot cope if the wipers / heater demist / lights are all on at once. An alternator would be a good idea but the Frogeye dynamo is also the drive for the revcounter so that changing to an alternator requires a change, also, to a tachometer. Racemettle ([www.racemettleltd.co.uk](http://www.racemettleltd.co.uk)) advertise a 'Dynamite'. This is an alternator concealed within a dynamo skin. It is praised for its output and lightness. I ordered a Dyalite (in 2006) and was told that it would arrive by Christmas (without specifying what year). Christmas came, my birthday (Capricorn) passed, and the delay was, allegedly, with shipment of a back plate from

India. March arrived and John Larrington and I approached Steve ([steve@racemettleltd.co.uk](mailto:steve@racemettleltd.co.uk)) from Racemettle at the International Motor Sport Show at Stoneleigh. He was now, allegedly, having trouble with finding a manufacturer for the back plates. What happened to the ship bringing back plates from India? Did the bell at Lloyds ring?

I suggested that to speed the process I could possibly supply a back plate. Sorted! Find a back plate and my Dyalite would be delivered. I got a back plate from, Kent member, John Clark whose Frogeye, at the time was off the road, and forwarded it. And I waited. And I waited. I then received an e-mail to be informed that, to fulfil three new orders, my / John's back plate had been sent to be used to make a pattern. And I waited. And I waited. Then I cancelled the order. My money was refunded but to date (26th June 2007) the back plate has not been returned.

I was, until today, waiting on delivery ([www.scparts.co.uk](http://www.scparts.co.uk)) of an Autec car lift from SC Parts of Crawley, West Sussex. Two delivery dates have been missed. And I waited. And I waited. Perhaps there was an indication when the Frogeye parts catalogue, that they sent me, was found to be in printed in German. Having stretched my patience to the limit I cancelled the order.

## Is it just me?

\* \* \*

## Moss Dynamo

Part Number AEJ 49 (exchange reconditioned units AEJ49R are No Longer Available)

Made in India these units are rated at 22 amp output.

The holes in the bosses that attach the dynamo to the engine are about 0.250 inch out of line.

In order to align the unit I had to extend the rear engine / dynamo mounting bracket, by mig welding on new metal and re-drilling.

**Alan Anstead**

## The Midget and Sprite Club will be present at



Join your friends and enjoy these event highlights:

- 1 The event showcases the cream of Pre-war motor racing, such as Edwardian racing cars, and Pre-World War Two Grand Prix and Sports-Cars, alongside other popular historic racing attractions like the wonderful 1980s Group C/IMSA Endurance Racers, 1950s Sports Racing cars, Lansdowne Series 50s and 60s Motor Cycles, Formula Junior and the 50s and 60s Grand Prix cars of the Historic Grand Prix Car Association (HGPCA)
- 2 Demonstrations from the 'silver arrows' (Mercedes WR12 and auto union) (to be confirmed)
- 3 Exciting air displays, Trade village, Free parking, Indoor themed displays
- 4 2 for 1 entry to the Donington Grand Prix Collection with any SeeRed ticket over the weekend, plus free shuttle bus transfer
- 5 Free infield parking area for Car Clubs, all members purchasing tickets in advance will receive a free infield car parking pass
- 6 View the day's racing action from the comfort of your car with your club friends: why not have a picnic or BBQ?

Advanced tickets are now on sale, ticket prices for members of The Midget and Sprite Club start from £12

	In Advance via Web/Post/Phone	On the Gate
<b>SATURDAY</b>		
VSCC Members / Registered Car Clubs	£12.00	£20.00
Public	£15.00	£20.00
<b>SUNDAY</b>		
VSCC Members / Registered Car Clubs	£15.00	£25.00
Public	£20.00	£25.00
<b>WEEKEND TICKET</b> £27 in advance, available to VSCC members/registered car clubs only		

Book your Tickets via [www.see-red.uk.com](http://www.see-red.uk.com) / [www.vsccl.co.uk](http://www.vsccl.co.uk)

call the 24 hour ticket hotline: 01608 644999 Advanced tickets and quote your club discounts code which is MSC1

Tickets are available until Tuesday 11 September. Under 16s are free. Donington Grand Prix Collection Admission: 2 for 1\* admission to the Donington Grand Prix Collection with your race day ticket

### EVENT TIMES (APPROXIMATE)

#### SATURDAY

Gates Open: 08.30  
Practice Commences: 09.00  
Lunch Break: 12.40  
Races Commence: 13.30

#### SUNDAY

Gates Open: 08.30  
Practice Commences: 09.00  
Lunch Break: 12.20  
Races Commence: 13.30



## Silverstone Classic Meeting 2007

Well, we got there in the end. It was a rather bumpy passage getting things in the right place but the end result

seemed to be satisfactory. Three fine days, good attendance, fine action to watch, good company and not too much mud.



Those attending on Friday had a parking problem since the grass area was out of bounds. Add to that the presence of a strange tent (VSCC) on our plot, but even the identification of the plot was not straight forward since I didn't receive the location map until I got home that evening! Negotiations with the Ferrari club, to use their marked out asphalt for our few cars, were interesting.

Saturday and Sunday were less fraught, with parking on the grass, above tide level- but I suspect that there may be a few more f.w.d Spridgents in the future.

Distributing the passes was multi banjaxed. Silverstone gave me wrong information, I was not sufficiently observant, and some club members, when booking their tickets, did not give the club code letters. This meant that Silverstone did not record the transaction and insufficient passes were sent out. Thank you

to all who returned the incorrect passes so promptly. One minor success. A pass, ordered on the Friday, was delivered into the applicant's hand at the gate on Sunday. This should not be considered a precedent!

Next year this event will be under new management. Hubie Albany, of the Cambridge group, will be in charge. He will be in touch early in the new year. Treat him kindly.

**Chris Jackson**



## Le Mans Classic 2008

### Le Mans Classic Motor Race July 11-13 2008

This tour starts on Tuesday 8 July 2008 when we meet at Dover for a Speedferries crossing to Boulogne. [www.speedferries.com](http://www.speedferries.com). We shall then drive to Parces Les Pins (298 miles) which is situated some 45 minutes south of Le Mans and an easy drive to the circuit. This is a good location for exploring the Loire Valley with its many Chateaux and places of interest whilst, also, being able to visit the LeMans Classic motor race over the weekend (Historic cars. This is not the annual 24hr motor race for modern machinery). We shall return via Speedferries from Boulogne to Dover on Tuesday 15 July 2008.

**Due to the enthusiasm for this Tour Two further and final places are to be made available.**

So far there are 17 Club members for this Tour: Sue and Jim Judd; Peter and Hilary Stevens; Nay and Col Carpenter; John Larrington; Peter Gardiner; John Clark; Alex Bowers and Jess; Paul Coveney and Jane Pierce; Chris Harding; Colin Aldridge and Jude; Alan Anstead.

*As is the norm on these runs I shall have tools and overalls and be available to effect minor repairs should the need arise.*

Alan Anstead

Mail to: [alan.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com) Tel: 01322-384050 (answer phone)

Cheques for non refundable deposits (£50 per person) 37, Maritime Close, Greenhithe, Kent. DA99QW

## Real Cars, Real People, Real Insurance

Here at Classicline we have never forgotten our roots. We have not forgotten what it feels like to own and run a classic car and importantly what is required when searching for an insurance policy. We have fiercely rejected the call centre approach taken by many specialist brokers out there, and whilst our business has grown significantly over the last 20 years we have always strived to make sure that our staff can function with or without a computer. We feel the personal, more human touch works best for classic car clients who want to talk about their pride and joy and make sure that it is fully covered should a claim occur. We also offer breakdown cover, including homestart, for UK and EU which can be added to the insurance policy for as little as £19.95 per annum (less for multiple vehicles). Again an example of us thinking ahead and what is actually required for members! Also remember we offer the further 10% premium discount for members!

We work very closely with car clubs and listen to what they, and their members, require for their vehicles. For example, we were recently

approached by the Midget and Sprite Club who were horrified to find out that there are certain policies out there, through specialists, that do not cover the vehicle for theft or attempted theft should the hood not be in the upright position. We were able to advise the Club that our policies through KGM do indeed offer this cover. Before we place an advert in a club publication or magazine we make sure our policies are suitable for the marques in that magazine.

We live in a world where call centres and huge commercial concerns are unavoidable. That said you do have a choice when it comes to insuring your classic car. Whilst price is important, and we will always strive to be the most competitive we can be, it should not be the paramount concern. Make sure you check the cover offered as the policy can differ massively, even between specialists! Also, take time to get a feel for the broker concerned. Are they interested in you as a client? Are they listening to what you want and finding the best specific deal for your vehicle? Are they offering you the human touch ... or are you just another phone call??

## Road Test Report

### JOHN SPRINZEL TALKS ABOUT THE TECHNIQUE OF RALLY DRIVING

What advice would you give to a driver taking part in a rally for the first time?

(JS) "The first thing is that he will be driving for much much longer periods of time than he has ever driven before - the minimum of the average sort of rally is 12 hours non-stop driving, so he's got to be as comfortable as he can get. His arms have got to be in a natural position, preferably almost outstretched, so that any emergency can be very rapidly countered, and so that there's never the tendency to use the steering wheel to hold on to. Let the seat hold you. Also you want to be able to see your instruments at the slightest glance, so that you don't get eye fatigue from having to peer down over your steering wheel rim to see whether the oil pressure is right. That's the first thing then - a comfortable driving position from which you can see everything".

"The second thing is to bear in mind that you are on public roads and someone might very possibly be coming the other way. Therefore you must always treat a corner as though it's sharper than it looks and as if there is somebody coming the other way. In view of this, you want to be in the lowest possible gear for every corner, which is the opposite of a racing technique where you want to be in the right gear. In a rally you want to be in a slightly lower gear than seems necessary, so that if you suddenly have to face an emergency you have plenty of power at your disposal".

"Next, braking. Your brakes have got to last a long time - they've got to endure hard use right through the night; and this is another reason why you should corner in a slightly lower gear than you would choose normally, for it means that you don't have to rely all the time on your brakes. You can slow the car by just taking your foot off the accelerator. It's a good idea in general not to jam your brakes hard on, but to brake in dabs as it were, because this does give them a chance to cool down. The biggest enemy of braking is heat, and efficient brakes work far better when they are kept cool - so give them a rest as often as you can."

"A big problem in rally driving is overtaking a slower competitor, and being overtaken yourself. The person being overtaken has a duty to get out of the way, a sporting duty. Sometimes it's necessary to flash your lights or hoot, because the other chap may well be so busily concentrating that he doesn't know you are coming. Try never to put your wheels into the grass verge in passing, because the chances are that your car will slide into the ditch. It's happened to more than one aspiring rally driver.

"Then cornering technique. Well, you can't draw an ideal line round a corner as you can on a race track, because the corners come in their thousands instead of in their tens, and you have to take them as they come. The secret is always slow in and fast out. Don't rely on there being a wide bit of road to let you slide out of the corner after having gone in too fast; always assume the road narrows at the exit of the corner, therefore take your corner late, go in fairly deep, and cut the apex on the way out. In this way you won't slide far out, and if the road suddenly becomes narrower you are ready for it. Whereas if you take your corner apex early you'll need a lot of room to come out and you'll go straight into the grass."

"Gear lever. Well, you will use your gears a great deal so you must get the heel and toe business sorted out. In other words, you do your braking with the ball of the right foot, and your dabs on the accelerator, while you are changing gear, with the heel or the outside of the shoe. You want to make sure the pedals are arranged correctly for this beforehand, because you'll find that in an emergency you have to brake and change gear at the same time; so heel and toe-ing is absolutely vital in rally driving."

"Going down hills. There's a lot of this in rallying, especially in Wales where the hills are very steep. Stay in a low gear on the way down, because if you have to rely on your brakes you'll find when you get to the bottom of the hill you haven't got any. If you are on loose gravel, or on ice or on a muddy, slippery surface coming down hill, and you feel you are getting a bit out of control, stuff it into the highest gear you can as quickly as possible; then you won't - by use of the throttle - spin the rear wheels and turn a small slide into a disaster. If I find my car is starting to slip around on an icy or muddy road I put it into top gear, even if I'm going downhill, and if this doesn't work, I declutch. I think this is the best way of getting out of trouble".

#### THE PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

Is there anything to be said about the right mental attitude to adopt in a rally?

(JS) "Yes, two things. Firstly, you are not out to beat anybody else; you are only out to achieve the organiser's set times, so that if you start losing minutes, don't get disheartened, everybody else is probably losing them too. And if you find three or four people overtaking you, don't let this dishearten you, because the chances are that they will be taking the wrong turning very shortly, and will lose as much time as you have. Then, they may have missed controls out, because they're already so late. The main thing on a rally is never to get disheartened, because the rally isn't over till you cross the finish line. That I would say is the whole essence: whereas in a race you can see what is happening, in a rally you can't. You only know what you are doing."

"The problem of tiredness? If you are doing well, you never really feel sleepy. If you have got interesting roads, bags to do, you never get tired. I find an open window occasionally helps, not all the time, for if one is cold one gets tired quicker. You can get the doctor to give you a mild keep-awake tablet, but I wouldn't risk them unless your doctor knows you are having them. Plenty to eat beforehand is a good thing too.

I personally never have any trouble with tiredness. In an event like the liege, you have to do 4 days and 4 nights non-stop. And I reckon on two hours of sleep a day. This seems to be quite enough; but as I say, when you are really with it you don't get tired; it's only when the rally is dull, and you are riding last but one, that you start getting fed up and feel tired. And then it's time to change drivers".



Pirelli Press Pack 1962 – this is Part II (Part I appeared in the July issue) reproduced by kind permission of Pirelli and John Sprinzel.



## From the Editor's Library



# Geneva Motor Show 1959 Photos

from the collection of Gary Lazarus



## Bristol Area Report

Fortunately, the second Wednesday of the month fell on the 8th day of August, time to get this report in before the editorial axe falls and cuts off any vital texticals.

Again, our limited party of 4 Spridgley things set out from the Rose and Crown at Pucklechurch for a pleasant evening run to the Vine Tree at Norton. Here, we met John from Stroud who has had a whole month to restore his Frogeye, but hasn't. We shall look forward to seeing it next time John. The Wise Man from the East (Someone else's opinion) has finally used up the original 6 gallons of BMC leaded petrol that was fitted in 1961.

Discovering this at Norton, which we all know is the furthest point in England to find fuel on a Wednesday evening, reduced the poor fellow to tears when the realisation of having to install something that does not come in a BMC/Unipart box, sunk in. In true MASC spirit, some fuel was obtained but has sadly ruined what was otherwise a totally original Midget. Eventwise, it's been a rather barren August for Masc-Bristol. It really shouldn't be, TH managed to meet up with 2 other branches of Masc at events but these were by chance meetings rather than planned. So we

need to plan, communicate and generally get on with it.

The Castle Combe Classic and Sportscar Action Day in July will now qualify as my most embarrassing day of the year (Well, so far that is). Not finding the real reason why Chris Jackson's Sprite spluttered into the paddock – I find hard to live with. Initial check showed a black plug in No 3 cylinder. A compression check showed that all cylinders were healthy. So it must be ignition then. After swapping bits from other assembled Spridgley things, the sickly Sprite was now dead on No2 cylinder. Removal of the Sprite from Castle Combe to Andy Cross's garage at Box, the mid-night oil was lit as Andy delved more deeply. Oh the shame of it. If only we had removed the standard air filter boxes earlier in the day, we would have found a mounting bolt displaced and stuck in the carb air intake. Sorry Chris, it ruined your day but who would have expected such a thing from the symptoms? Obviously, none of us!

**Terry Horler**

## Cambridgeshire Report

Mad Cat Night (not to be confused with Mad Cap night) fell hard on the heels of the Ace Café visit and understandably a few of the guys had asked if the Ace was instead of the Mad Cat Meeting, which I think is what we did last year. Faced with this I had to make an executive decision (Oh the pressures of command), everyone thinks it is all carefully considered after consulting head office, but really I just make it up as I go along, so I said yes the Mad Cat night would go ahead, and am I glad I did it was brilliant. For starters it was a lovely sunny evening which meant nearly everyone came in the correct vehicles (didn't it Nigel)

and our newest recruit Derek delighted us all by arriving (dressed as Biggles) in a 1930s replica Ferrari (great fun). My decision was vindicated since a number of people who did not make it to the Ace turned up, some needing tickets for Kimbolton.

Having been humiliated the previous month by HTJ's fumble bag I decided to put together a fiendish bag of tricks myself, and much to my surprise it defeated almost everyone (didn't it John) and created a great deal of amusement (especially for me). I am quite lucky that the Cambridgeshire mob are such good sports and take all this in the spirit it is intended (or at least I hope they do!).



Moving swiftly on, the next thing on the agenda was the Kimbolton classic at Kimbolton castle, an excellent event at a wonderful venue, with something for everyone. A good all round day out, not just about cars, although there were plenty of those to look at and ride in, but more of a country show with all manner of stalls and sideshows. Despite the negative vibrations from the doubting Thomas's amongst us and the two-months of almost incessant monsoon (apart from Ace night and Mad Cat night that is) I had ordered up our usual sunshine, which made the whole thing even more glorious. Unfortunately I had not yet managed to ward off the dreaded camera curse that has prevented me from getting photos of the last few events, however teamwork came to the rescue (thanks Chris) which was great since we had a good turn out. The only slight damper on the occasion (although some seemed to revel in it) was a slight shower at about 4 O'clock which made our stand look more like an attempt to break the world record for the maximum number of people under a gazebo, than a MASC stand. Despite numerous jibes and negative rumblings from our resident hooligan (I think Arc building may have been alluded to) it was not enough to justify the indignity of a hood for the ride home.

Next in this incredibly busy MASC month came the fabulous Silverstone weekend (sadly I could only make it on the Saturday) and as always I awoke to a clear blue sky (are you spotting a trend yet) and rolled the Sprite out ready to do battle with the dark satanic forces



that influenced the signposting of Northampton. By some strange fluke we sailed through the satanic signposting without a hitch and arrived at the back of the queue for the circuit in good time. We were shepherded through to our allotted infield area (thanks a lot for organising the passes Chris you're a star) and bravely drove through a boggy area to reach the last remaining bit of high ground on the MASC stand. There must have been thirty assorted Sprites and Midgets from various areas on our stand, not to mention countless others on the Austin Healey and other club stands, and an entire car park of Ferraris (personally I would have banned the unred they spoil the effect somewhat).

This event is just unbelievable with hundreds if not thousands of incredible icons of British motor sport all collected together in one place, you can't turn around without falling over one fabulous machine after another. The Pits is another world with bay after bay of fabulous racing machines of every type and era (some straight out of the wacky races) you can walk among these priceless cars, stepping over the friendly mechanics working on them, and then they take them out onto the circuit and race them. There is just so much to see and do, of such high quality that the amazing starts to get swamped by the even more amazing and almost becomes commonplace, and all this in an atmosphere of Britishness and sportsmanship and brilliant sunshine. What a day!

See you all at the Mad Cat

**Dave Dixon**



# A Dutch Report

This month the report is about rebuilding the pale primrose '71 GAN 5 Midget which I told of in the May issue. The car is not even close to the finish that was planned in the first weekend of September, of course it is a bit ambitious to shout that the car is ready to roll in August, but at last yesterday it finally stood on its own wheels, the first time for 15 years, quite precise actually, because the newspaper that protected the door windows against scratching revealed the date of July 22 1992, and even more stunning, the Daily Telegraph to protect the wiper mechanism showed a date of August 17 1987. It is all a bit weird. When I started to rebuild the car I knew it would be hard to put all the parts in and on their proper places, but it's even harder if you miss several pieces which you are certain you've just seen them last week. On top of all this I found out that I had lost the car's docking papers and its American licence papers. These were some stressful days to convince the local authorities that I've bought the car properly from a man who found out that when the car would be finished, he would not fit in himself anymore, the car was just a container filler. Well what

do you think, a Midget person isn't two metre as well, is it? Resuming, I got the green light from the Dutch MOT authorities to declare for licence papers and maybe I still make it for the first weekend of September. In the meantime I've organised two Saturdays to show how to maintain an MG and our two ladies with their off-white/green striped Midget got home with a smooth running and more powerful car. The electronic ignition which they fitted properly themselves worked as well but I couldn't find the real cause of the not loading dynamo. At last the car stopped, in front of its home garage, ladies' luck I guess. Jeanette has been a good pupil during the lessons in maintenance and repair, so she found a broken wire from the dynamo to the electric voltage box. It was part of the job but the just a few thousand miles ago replaced dynamo was the real cause. That's always the first year after a rebuild car, one has to get through it but then the real fun begins, luckily for me it will be the big birthday year of the Spridgets. The Dutch group seems to get bigger every month. See you in Gaydon!

**Alex**

# Home Counties North West

So, at last the Silverstone Classic arrived. Chris Jackson had been planning for months. As usual booking the tickets was complicated. Phone up and book with a club reference number, but apply to Chris for your car pass quoting the number the ticket agency gave you, buy a ticket but get one free, actually that just means your ticket admits two people in one car. How confusing. Chris has written a separate report of Friday and I think he will have mentioned that he will be handing the organisers role to someone else for next year.

However the one thing that was worrying me the most was the dreadful weather leading up to the event. In the Home Counties we have had nothing as bad as some of you have, but it has not really been Spridgeting weather. No fear this weekend though; all three days were good, in fact it was just like the summer!

MASC had a particularly good turnout, Friday saw 7 cars, Saturday had 27 or 28 (some members, Arie and a couple of others whose names I am afraid I don't remember, took part in the Retro Run covering approx. 70 miles and taking in the Aston Factory at Newport Pagnell – a great addition to the weekend apparently) and around 20 cars on Sunday. We decided that the £9.99 HCNW gazebo from last year should stay at home in disgrace. The number 1 gazebo stood resplendent surrounded by the cars and Midget and Sprite club banners.

The racing as always was varied and exciting. To my mind nothing beats the sight of '50s and '60s sports cars drifting around Priory or the sound of an old GP car going full tilt. It brought back memories of our trip around Castle Combe earlier in the year!!

The effect of weather has quietened down other HCNW events in the last month or so. We are planning a trip to the bank holiday weekend show at Knebworth (which will have passed by the time you read this) and also another road trip with Chris on the 1st September. We have a road run around the Hertfordshire countryside planned for mid

September so get in contact if you fancy a trip out. We know there are a few new members in our area; sorry if we haven't got in contact yet, but if you fancy a trip out in your car it would be good to meet up with you. Mine and Chris' details are in the area reps section and we would be happy to hear from you.

**Mark**

## Linc'slot

The August meeting of our ever expanding little group was very exciting. Not only were we visited by Peter and his lovely wife Alex, but we were able to muster five beautiful little cars of the Midget and Sprite type. Peter and Alex brought their lovingly restored Old English White Frogeye Sprite. Very, very nice! Technical details were discussed briefly and I for one hope that we can delve into more deeply next month. I agree with Peter that once a car has been restored to its former glory, it would be a shame to leave it in the garage. Better to get it out and use it. And what better way to use it than to take a twenty mile spin to your local meeting, and get it thoroughly admired by a bunch of likeminded, drooling, enthusiasts to boot.

As if one Old English White Frogeye wasn't enough, Lizzie also turned up in hers. Honestly, my eyes were bulging with all this beautiful machinery.

Tim and Jill were keeping the pub warm when Sue and I arrived. They had at last come to a meeting in a Spridget and not in one of their many other classics. Yes their Austin Healey Sprite is still as lovely as ever. Leaving early

because of work commitments will totally not be held against them, and I will never mention it again.

Pete and Mary were late, but as it was the first time, and they had a good excuse, this will not be held against them either. Their lovely 1500 Midget and our 1275 Midget made up the total of five whole Spridgets in attendance. As we happen to sit looking out onto the car park, it was a sight to behold. And when other customers are seen admiring the little cars then the cockles of the heart are truly warmed.

Amongst other things we discussed our forthcoming visit to East Kirkby, Aviation Heritage Centre on August Bank Holiday, Monday the 27th. I take this opportunity to tell you that you can see this venue if you watch Antiques Roadshow on Remembrance Sunday, 11 November 2007. I believe it's on BBC 1.

As I write, I haven't received my August copy of the *MASCOT*. Pesky post. But I am reliably informed that the coloured front cover is brilliant. Well done Barry.

**Brian Jeffery**

## London Report

At last, a London pub meeting worth mentioning. Yes indeedly, the August monthly meeting at the Plumbers Arms in upmarket Belgravia finally had the makings of a get together worthy of MASCness.

Lots of cars by our standards. Six Spridgets turned up. Three Sprites and three Midgets. We are ever so PC and very into equality here in the capital. With the addition of three others on foot, that made a grand total of nine

humans all as sad as each other, eating and drinking at the same place, on purpose.

We are honoured to have Mark and his red Midget (attending his second month) who join the ranks of MASC that very day via the internet, as our newest London member. We also welcomed Rob S and Richard Amos to the London meeting both having moved up to the Metropolis from down South. So Sam, Steve, Toby, Nick, Bob T, Myself and the

aforementioned Mark, Rob S and Mark had a wonderful evening outside the pub, basking in the late evening sunshine, eating drinking and talking cars and Le Mans.

In fact so euphoric and filled with Spritely desire was I. That I rushed home determined to build a website to glorify the occasion. It really is easy. And the beginnings of the Official Unprofessional London Area Midget & Sprite Club Web Site (OULAMASCWS, see how easily it rolls off the tongue) can be viewed at; [www.londonmasc.bravehost.com](http://www.londonmasc.bravehost.com)

Hurrah! and all that. Let's face it, your area really can make its own website too, I promise. It's free and it's easy and if you can change a plug, you can build a web site.

By the way, how many of you have looked at the National MASC web site recently. [www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk](http://www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk) It really is good.

I'm off to create more rubbish to clutter up the internet, so see you next month

**Gary Lazarus**

## South Staffs and North Brum Report

It has been fairly busy here in the Midlands even allowing for the inherent dampness from the terrible floods. (In Warwickshire I heard from John Platt the membership guru that he sat watching floodwater rising up his drive towards his Midget. Luckily it didn't make it but a very close call there, John!)

Geoff and I took our cars to Silverstone on the Sunday of the three-day event and enjoyed a great atmosphere even though the ground squished as we walked or drove over it. The club was based in the same spot as last year and we can look forwards to making it a regular event for our members. I'd like more of us to get there next time around. Soon after Geoff and I parked up Bob came across the field in his Highway Yellow Mk II Sprite and joined us. Three of us from SS&NB, so not bad huh? It was nice to meet up with members from so far afield too, soon after our lining up we were joined by Arie De Best from our far flung outpost in The Netherlands. With



*Lara with friends*

members from north and south this is really a great area for a club event and the racing was a smashing extra

I had spent the preceding Saturday fitting new coil-over shockers to my car, hoping to give her a better ride than the tired cart springs were giving. Oh boy that gave me an interesting ride to the racetrack, not a notable success and I have now fitted adjustable rear shockers to give a better result.

At the Green Man we had a fair turnout including Paul from Stone with his mate Simon in the blue Sprite. They visited us a while back and it was nice to have them back. It would be good if they make it a regular trip, that Sprite is gorgeous. (Gas assisted bonnet risers even!)

After looking in the club website we have decided to revive the Area website and Matt has handed the files over now to Trevor, who is now our official (Wot? Official? Us?☺) webmaster, watch that space!



*Bpb's Sprite*

We have also decided that on Sunday October 21st we will be meeting up and driving to the RAF Museum at Cosford. They have just opened The Cold War Warriors display in a new hangar/display hall and from all accounts it is spectacular and well worth a visit. We will meet up in the morning and take a leisurely [:)] drive through the Birmingham ring road "Tunnels" and then depart the city via the A38M, the M6 and the M54 to junction 3 for the Cosford museum. We will spend the afternoon there before dispersing. The museum does have a decent restaurant too.

We will welcome any of our friends from other areas that might like to drift gently along with us. The last Tunnels Run was very well subscribed and we hope this one will be as popular, no "Civic" function to this one though. There will be plenty to enjoy even without it!



*Geoff's Midget*

The terrible two (Geoff and I) took one of our rides to meet up with Warwicks again last week and had a fine drive home with roofs down, as we do. You can't beat a spot of Spridgeting can you?

**Bill Mohan 1067**

## Surrey and Kent Reports

Quite a busy month club wise! The Ardingly Show took place over the weekend 7 – 8 July. Both days some 10/12 cars were displayed on our stand. I believe this event may be reported elsewhere in Mascot so just a Thank You to Nay and Col Carpenter for organising the club presence and providing the Bar-B-Q, Chris Harding for doing the 'running around' and those members that made the effort to attend and help.

Sunday 15 July 2007 was the date of the annual Bar-B-Q chez Chris and Laura Banton at Outwood, Surrey. As if Laura hasn't enough to do with work commitments, and the arrival of baby Theo. This event went ahead as normal. Again Chris Harding was 'running around' with Range Rover and a selection of trailers seemingly one for every / any purpose. With 12 Spridgets and a Healey boat parked, amongst the flower beds, on the lawn and with good hosts, good company, good location, good weather what more can one ask for. Oh haven't I mentioned Laura's Banoffee Pie before.

Tuesday 17 July 2007 being the third Tuesday of the month means Surrey Section club night at Blue Ball, Walton on the Hill, Surrey. Twenty five people attended despite a

severe weather warning being put about by the weather forecasters. Those that took heed of the forecast were left disappointed, at not attending in their sports cars, as it remained fine and sunny all evening.

Martin Bird drove his Frogeye, with freshly fitted Ford 5 speed conversion, from Walderslade in Kent whilst Hilary and Peter Stevens drove in their Frogeye from Ash in Hants. Who drove the farthest? Did anyone travel further? Ex-member and ex-UK resident John Bentall came further, although not in a Spridget. John paid us a visit whilst holidaying in England having travelled from his native South Africa.

Hilary and Peter were experiencing electrical problems with the car's direction indicators even though a new relay had been fitted. Andrew Rees arrived in his Frogeye complaining of the same fault. Could this be indicative, (Ooooh!), of a faulty batch of relays?

Yet another Frogeye with a five speed conversion was Julie and John Harle's. Fitted by Motobuild it apparently has a remote, fitted to the Ford remote, in order to move the gearlever forward to where the original was

located. Julie, John – can we have some more detail and photos please?

Sue Judd and Chris Harding came forward to arrange next years 'May Run'. Colin Aldridge has offered, also, to lend a hand. I may have to stand and be corrected, but I believe the run returns to its usual slot on the calendar at the first May Bank Holiday thus leaving people free to pick and choose which of the Spridget 50 celebrations to attend later that month (MASC supported Spridget 50 at Gaydon on Saturday 24 May 2008 or Healey International at Goodwood on 16 – 18 May 2008).

Ashley Hinton, our resident manufacturer of Spridget panels, and more, came up with an excellent idea to spread the word re 'Spridget 50' that being to place a 'Spridget 50' flyer in every Spridget package that his factory dispatches. I was busy collecting deposits for the Le Mans Classic Tour 8-15 July 2008 for which we have 17 members signed so far.

Whilst mentioning dates, next year's Battlefield Tour will be 12 – 15 June 2008, when we attack the D-Day Beaches. It looks like being busy next year whilst there are still plenty of reasons, this year, to be out and about in a Spridget.

Sunday 22 July 2007 Kent Section met at the Moat, Wrotham Heath, where 3 Frogeyes and a rubber bumper Midget graced the car park. Eight members dined in the pub garden whilst taking in the sunshine. New member Paul Danson came from Dover. With tape measure and digital camera he was busy measuring and photographing my Frogeye in order to assist with a Spridget he is currently building / converting with a fibreglass Frogeye rear. Gavin Rowles had pictures, on his laptop, of his recent attendance at a Track Day session. John Larrington and Peter Gardiner were testing water and oil cooling theories. Ralph Whitmarsh, Paul Coveney and Jane Pierce completed our number.

## Notices

**Classic Car Valuations** by Classic Cars of Kent. [www.classiccarsofkent.co.uk](http://www.classiccarsofkent.co.uk) is prepared to value Sprites and Midgets for insurance purposes for a small fee. (This is something that they currently do for two or three other motor clubs). This can then be used to tie in

your insurer to an agreed value, which they would have to pay in the event of a total loss. This may save a lot of haggling with your insurer as it will reflect the cost of replacement and not necessarily the market value. Anyone wishing to take up this offer, or discuss it further, should contact Sean of CCK on 01825-733060

## Surrey Section May Run to Shropshire

Pictures supplied by Chris Nevard of this year's fabulous event.  
<http://nevardmedia3.fotopic.net/c1278921.html>

**Battlefield Tour to Arnhem** Pictures supplied by Nay of this amazing event  
<http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/1970wonly/Arnhem?authkey=fEK7FNMJEGo>

## Free downloads of various Spridget related booklets

[http://www.1978mgmidget.com/manuals\\_and\\_booklets.html](http://www.1978mgmidget.com/manuals_and_booklets.html)

**Running in Please Pass?** For up to date ideas on running in new engines see:  
[http://www.mototoneusa.com:80/break\\_in\\_secrets.htm](http://www.mototoneusa.com:80/break_in_secrets.htm)

**Kent Section Member:** Martin Ingall's website Dedicated to Sebring Sprites.  
[www.sebringsprite.com](http://www.sebringsprite.com)

**Free Catalogues.** Moss, the Spridget Parts Suppliers, have two new parts catalogues covering Spridgets. The catalogues are a handy alternative to a workshop manual as they show the construction of components. The catalogues also show the prices of parts (new) which can be helpful not only when sourcing new parts but also when haggling over the purchase of second hand parts at autojumble. Tel: 0208-867-2020.

**Volunteers / Suggestions.** Would you like to run an event for the club? Perhaps you are shy or nervous? Don't be afraid to ask or make suggestions. Perhaps it may be possible for you to organise an event together with another club member. Do you attend interesting events unknown to the rest of us? What about sharing that information?

**Alan Anstead**  
**Tel: 01322-384050 or**  
**Mail to: [alan.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com)**

# Warwickshire Report



*Warwickshire at Silverstone*

The other event was the Silverstone Classic, which Chris Jackson organises for the club. I am sure there will be many reports about it as it was well attended by club members from all areas. Warwickshire had 13 cars on the Saturday with three people having weekend tickets. We met at the Warwick Services and went to the site in convoy and without incident, although one member, who shall be nameless left his tickets at home, so Chris cadged spare tickets from club drivers, (any club that is!!!) with only themselves in the car and so likely to have a spare ticket.

It was not the busiest of months for the Warwickshire Group, which was just as well, considering the vast amounts of water, which descended upon the County and dispatched Chris's Honda to the scrap heap. However, on Sunday 22nd July, just two days after the worst storm, five cars attended the Fly to the Past Event at Blenheim Palace. Dave and Linda, unfortunately, had problems with their Frogeye, so had to travel in their Jaguar and Steve and Carol used their MGTF. The event centres around an air display of historic craft, from World War I up to the present day and was a most entertaining event which included Lesser White-Fronted geese following a microlight, the Falcon's Parachute Team, the Blades Aerobatic Team, A Battle of Britain Display and finished with the incredible Eurofighter displaying its power and speed. On the ground, the theme was around the 1940s with many people in costume, Nick and Moe were in RAF uniform and Steve and Carol in Land Army attire. There were some colourful characters around with Winston Churchill and Dad's Army spotted, complete with their support vehicle. There was a stage with live entertainment and you could even learn to "Lindy Hop". Not only did it stop raining, but also the sun shone enough to burn the unprotected and for a picnic to be a pleasurable experience. If you have never been it is worth a visit and if you take your pre 1967 car, you only have to pay the entry fee for the passenger, so there was also a good collection of classic cars to view.

Two were found and everyone arrived at the club site, to find that some of it was still severely waterlogged. On the Friday, club members had been allowed to share the Ferrari's hard standing, but were turned away on the Saturday, due to increased numbers, theirs or ours we are not sure!! The weather was good and very hot if you could find a spot to shelter from the wind, which seems to be a feature of Silverstone. This is another good day for car enthusiasts and a chance to meet with fellow members, so well worth repeating.

**Chris and Sheila**



*Moe, Nick and Midget in uniform*

# Where is She Now?

Imagine the scene, it's early 1958 and BMC are due to launch their new baby sports car, The Austin Healey Sprite. All they need is a picturesque scene to capture the sleek lines of their newest product. What could be more evocative than a wonderful English river bank.

The only thing missing would be a beautiful young lady to sit demurely in the little car. Folklaw has it that in these circumstances, the BMC publicity department would trawl their office typing pools in search of a suitable young lady.

Approaching the 50th Anniversary of the Mk1 Sprite and with the arrival back on these shores from Australia of **PBL 75** the very car used as the publicity vehicle, the organisers of the **Spridget 50** Birthday party are searching for information and hopefully the whereabouts of the young lady featured all those years ago in so many of the early publicity shots.



Do you know who she is? Do you know where she is? We would love to reunite both of them at the 50th Birthday Party to be held at The Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon, Warwickshire on Saturday 24th of May 2008. Further details available at [www.Spridget50.com](http://www.Spridget50.com)

If you have any information please contact the organisers at [Organiser@Spridget50.com](mailto:Organiser@Spridget50.com) or call Gary Lazarus on 020 7700 5696.

## BODY PARTS



### Monza Bonnet for Sprites and Midgets

The Speedwell Monza Fibreglass Bonnet is one of the most popular conversion bonnets on the market. Maximum speed is increased by 3 to 4 mph without any other modifications. The effectiveness of this design was convincingly demonstrated in 1960 when Graham Hill, driving the Speedwell Streamliner, was timed at 132 mph over the flying kilometer. The Monza Bonnet is suitable for all Sprites and Midgets Mark 1, 2 and 3. Besides reducing frontal area, engine accessibility is greatly improved by hinging the unit at the front. Two additional cooling slots are provided either side of the central radiator intake for the mounting of oil coolers or cold air ducts to the carburettors. The Monza Bonnet will accept the original lighting equipment or alternatively one can fit Mini headlamp assemblies which incorporate a parking light in the main reflector unit. The Monza Bonnet is supplied complete with front hinge assembly and integral radiator ducting. Available in Primer only.

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Mk. I and Mk. II. 60 b.h.p. at 6000 r.p.m.			
1100 Mk. II. 68 b.h.p. at 6000 r.p.m.	71	0	0
<b>SEBRING KIT :</b> As Sprint Kit but with gas flowed Cylinder Head, including large Valves, special Springs, Flare Pipes to Carburettors and polished Alloy Rocker Cover.			
Up to 78 b.h.p.	115	0	0
<b>ENGINE :</b>			
¾ race Camshaft. Additional 3 b.h.p. with above and distributor fitting	11	10	0
High Efficiency Exhaust System	12	10	0
Oil Cooler	12	10	0
Polished Alloy Rocker Cover with quick action filler cap	4	0	0
Cylinder Head with enlarged and polished ports	15	0	0
Sebring gas flowed Cylinder Head with Valves	52	0	0
2 1½" S.U. H.4 Carburettors for use with existing manifold	20	0	0
<b>SUSPENSION AND BRAKES :</b>			
Anti-roll Bar	5	17	6
Heavy Duty Damper Valves (per set of 4)	3	0	0
Heavy Duty Front Springs	3	5	0
Heavy Duty Rear Springs	4	10	0
Disc Brake and Wire Wheel Kit (not suitable 1100 Mk. II)	85	0	0
	12	0	0
<b>COACHWORK :</b>			
Healey Fibreglass Detachable Hardtop	45	0	0
Lightweight Fibreglass Seats	8	8	0
Child's Occasional Seat	5	5	0
Donald Healey autographed Wooden Trimmed Steering Wheel	7	7	0
Quick Action Filler Cap	2	4	0
Badge Bar	3	10	0
Luggage Rack (no body drilling required)	8	0	0
Fitted Carpets	10	0	0

For Austin Healey 3000 Mk. II see reverse side.

# Choked

In the August edition, the question of the correct choke knob for an early Sprite MkIV was raised. A clear photograph of this does not appear in Original Sprite and Midget. The correct type has the word CHOKE on the face and is of the same type carried over from the Sprite MkIII and Midget MkII. The photo at the top of page 80 shows this knob but not very

clearly. To the best of my knowledge, this particular type of knob is no longer available. My own 1967 Sprite MkIV has lost its original choke knob so no doubt we shall clash at the Autojumbles!

**Terry Horler**

# Market Place

Adverts to Alan Lo

23 Charnell Road, Staple Hill, Bristol, BS16 5NE  
email: alan@mobuzzing.net Tel: 0117 9572617

## For Sale

**Austin Healey Sprite** 1966 MK3 1500cc, Tartan Red. One year MOT, tax. Ashley GT Fastback hardtop included. Soft top tonneau like new. Moto-Lita steering wheel, period radio; mechanically sound. £1950 ono.  
**Contact Mr. Quinland 01628 624518.**

**All for refurbishing** from 1966 MK 3 Sprite – Gearbox @ £35.00. Rear wire wheel axle c/w diff, brakes and splines, front hub assembly c/w callipers, discs, wishbone and splines and 5 wire wheels @ £140.00. Windscreen @ £10.00. Prop shaft @ £10.00. Steering column @ £10.00. Steering rack @ £20.00. Front and rear bumpers for rechroming @ £10.00 – must clear.

**Tel John Platt 01789 488321**  
**(near Stratford-Upon-Avon)**

**1972 RWA Midget**, not been used for 10 years but dry stored, hood and hardtop plus various other spare bits. Ran well when last used but needs rebuild, have neither time nor space to do the job properly. Prefer to sell to somebody who will keep the car's identity. Offers around £450. Trevor Tasker 01449 721383 (Suffolk) or trevor.tmtasker@virgin.net

## Frogeye for sale for restoration.

Mrs Marshall, who lives in Headley, Surrey, and tel : **01372 377774**, has a 1959 Frogeye that she wants to sell. She and her husband used it for some years, and her husband began restoring it, but then died 2½ years ago. He had had the engine reconditioned, at a cost of £700, so it's as

new – unused. The body tub has been sitting on the driveway, under cover, and the steel bonnet and doors and the rest has been in the garage. It is all original, with steel wheels and chrome hub caps, 3 digit, 3 number reg, original log book, etc. Offers.

Mrs Marshall also has for sale a white 1969 MGB (ex Metropolitan Police) automatic for sale at £5500.

**Chris Harding** wishes to reduce his blossoming collection of unfinished, restoration projects in order to concentrate on just one. He has a Mk3 Chrome Bumper, 1275, Midget for sale. Offers invited.

Chris Harding also has for sale an r/b Black MGBGT, with unleaded conversion. O.i.r.o £800

**Mail to: harding.c@btconnect.com**

**Car Batteries** Chris Harding can obtain Vauxhall maintenance free car batteries suitable for Spridgets for £25. The batteries have an integral handle for carrying.

**Mail to: harding.c@btconnect.com**

**Frogeye Part** for Sale. I have been asked, by a non member, to enquire whether or not anyone is interested in purchasing the side cappings for a frogeye cockpit (two doors and one rear). O.i.r.o £25. I am holding the parts.

**Mail to: alan.anstead@btoopenworld.com**

**Mk1 Midget** Non-MASC member Robert Dean is getting married in July and has regrettably to part with a Mark 1 Midget he was restoring. The shell is perfect and is fully painted – Iris blue. Many of the parts are also restored and powder coated. It has 948

engine and masses of spares – more or less ready to assemble. o.i.r.o. £4500. More info from [martin.ingall@btinternet.com](mailto:martin.ingall@btinternet.com)

**New RWA Midget parts** – 7 Gallon fuel tank/sender unit/ locking ring/ seal £70. Copper fuel line £9, copper brake pipe kit GAC5032 £20, door hinges set 4 £65. Rear cockpit moulding £5. Door seals (black) pair £10. Wiper wheelbox, nut and spacers pair £40. Inner rack RTC 202A and Ferrule 37H3694 £6. Pair brake drums (rear) £30.

**Tel. George 01457 864536 (home) 07913 341926 (mobile) Derbyshire**

**1961 MK2 O.E.W. Sprite** for restoration with Ashley Hardtop i.r.o £800

**Contact John Baggott Tel: 01892-862656 for details of vendor and car.**

**MG Midget 1976** 1500cc with overdrive. Long MOT and Tax. Colour black in very good condition. £2,500 o.n.o. Terry (Hants) 0118 9816723

For sale from Mr Wilkinson (Bristol) 01275 832224

**Austin Healey MK1** AN5/26322, 2/11/59. YLT 378 in need of total restoration. Steel bonnet and heritage certificate, £850

**Austin Healey MK1** AN5/ 44885 7/12/60 721 KYA, Rebuilt body shell. Steel bonnet needs shaping painting and rebuilding £1750

**Austin Healey** HAN8/64682 1/07/67 wire wheels, car stripped work started £500

**Austin Healey** HAN10/86777 7/04/71 complete car needs rebuilding, blue Healey chassis finished at 86802 £750

More spare parts available –  
**Bristol 01275 832224**

**Immaculate 1968 MG Midget** for sale – Tartan Red. Full restoration on new heritage shell 5 years ago. MOT and full service in March 2007. Complete photographic and documentation history. Always garaged, and dry weather use only. A real gem! £5900

**Please call Alison Blundy 01825 724617 or 07870 589383**

**1971 Austin Healey Sprite** HAN10 one of the last, Orange, Very good condition and maintained, 47,000 miles, New hood, MOT until end June 2008, original tool kit and handbook. 2 owners from new, Very reluctant sale. £3500.00 ono. tel Mike Nash (ex member) 0121 708 1402 (Birmingham)

## Wanted

**3.7 Diff.** for Austin Sprite  
Contact **Mike Gorman 01737 552256**

## Battlefields Tour 2008

### June 12 – 15

**F**or next year's tour we travel by Speedferries ([www.speedferries.com](http://www.speedferries.com)) from Dover to Boulogne. We shall meet at Dover Western Harbour at (TBA) Hrs, on Thursday, for a fifty minute channel crossing to Boulogne. We drive to, and stay at, Campanile Honfleur ([www.louvrehotels.fr](http://www.louvrehotels.fr)). On Friday we shall tour the D-Day beaches and coastal area. Saturday will be free to roam or there may be a visit to Bayeaux to see the world famous tapestry. On Sunday we return home once more via Speedferries from Boulogne at (TBA) Hrs.

This will be an easy tour for anyone who has not driven in Europe before. I will carry spanners and overalls and be on hand for minor breakdowns.

I have been pressed for a date for this tour by an enthusiastic member who obviously enjoyed this year's Arnhem Trip and has to arrange work schedules far in advance. Expressions of interest welcome.

**Alan Anstead**

**Mail to: [alan.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com) Tel: 01322-384050 (answer phone)**

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