

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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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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December's Editorial

As I sit here typing the editorial for December's *MASCOT*, I can look back on another very successful year for the club. I'm happy to say that I've generally enjoyed putting the magazine together each month. At the end of my first full year (although it's my seventeenth issue in total) as editor and with the occasional very late night as the deadline loomed, it has been pretty good fun.

Reading the articles and reports has allowed me to learn more about our cars as well as the people who rebuild and drive them and I've also enjoyed visiting a few of our different areas throughout the year. When occasion has demanded it or I just felt like it, I have also penned the odd (sometimes quite odd) article myself and, while I don't profess to be a writer or proper editor and more by luck than ability, I seem to have got through the year free from major criticism or publishing crisis. Even with the best efforts of the Royal Mail's industrial relations department to hold back the delivery of *MASCOT*, it still manages to arrive on your doorsteps within the first couple of days of each month.

This is where I'd like to thank the Area Reps (and associated scribes) firstly, for sending in their reports but also for getting them in before the deadline. I'd also like to thank the regular and irregular contributors of articles as well as complete strangers who have received emails and telephone calls from me, completely out of the blue, asking for permission to use their photos in a magazine they have never heard about.

But my biggest thanks goes to Jane Gundry at our printers Quorum Print Services, who has without fail put together a quality layout each and every month, sometimes in a ridiculously short period of time (due to me getting the copy in so late). All praise and recommendations of pay rises should be directed to her.

This year has seen the club change to limited company status, which has given the membership far more legal and financial protection. In a time when most other classic car clubs are losing members, we are, mainly due to the efforts of the Warwickshire area at the recent Classic Cars show at the NEC, finishing the year with an increased number.

What will 2010 bring? I, for one, will be driving "Gaps" to both the Le Mans Classic and the 24 Hours, participating in a couple of high speed trackdays as well as competing in a few more sprints and autosolos. I might even try a couple of hillclimbs if I can (a) learn to drive properly and (b) afford the cost of the new MSA approved crash helmet.

I'll try to get out to a few more of the club areas as well as revisiting some of the ones that I managed to visit this year.

What will you be doing? Perhaps you might like to tell the rest of us, via the medium of *MASCOT*, before, during and/or after you've done it.

Have a great Christmas and a happy, healthy and safe New Year.

Gary & "Gaps"

editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
020 7700 5696



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

Front cover picture: The Ex-John Sprinzel Sebring Sprite, photograph courtesy of Paul Woolmer

Club Nights

- 1st Tuesday **Essex Area** – Now meet at **The Bell**, Beckenham Road, Tolleshunt Major, CM9 8LL. For further details contact Jane Gates Tel: 01255830 509 or email: jgjanegates257@googlemail.com
- 2nd Tuesday **London Area** (Congestion Zone) – Meet at **The Ace Cafe** at 7:30pm. together with the Classic Cars Magazine night. Details: Gary Lazarus on 020 7700 5696 garylazarus@blueyonder.co.uk
- 1st Wednesday **South Staffs & Birmingham** – Meet at the **The Green Man**, Middleton Village, 8.30-8.45pm Contact Bill Mohan on 0121 353 7211 or bill.mohan@sky.com
- 1st Wednesday **NEW! Oxford Area.** Meet at the **Blackhorse Pub**, Gozards Ford, Nr Abingdon. 7pm for those eating or 8pm for those not. Contact Grahame Gibbins at gibbins@hotmail.com or grahame_gibbins@unipart.co.uk
- 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** – See below
- 1st Saturday **Yorkshire Area** – Contact me, Anita 01423 862738 or 07720 725429 email spridget.girl@ntlworld.com for details of the December meeting. From May to September, meetings are held 1st Thursday of the month in the evening.
- 1st Sunday **Lincolnshire Area** – NOTE CHANGE. Lunch time meetings at various locations. Please email; brianlincs1ot@yahoo.co.uk or 01522 531425 for next month's details.
- 2nd Wednesday **Warwickshire** – Meet at **The Green Dragon**, The Green, Sambourne, Redditch, B96 6NU, at 8.30pm as usual.
- 2nd Wednesday **North West Area** meet at **The Kilton**, turn off M6 at Jct 20 onto A50 towards Macclesfield. Pub 4 miles on left. Please note new venue.
- 2nd Wednesday **Bristol Area** will meet at **The Rose and Crown**, Pucklechurch at 8pm. All Bristol, Bath and surrounding areas members welcome. Contact Terry Horler on 01454 881770
- 2nd Thursday **Cambridgeshire** – Now called **East Anglian Area**. 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, BH16 6JE 7.30pm
- 3rd Tuesday **Scotland** Meet at **The Garfield Hotel**, Stepps, East Dunbartonshire. 7:30pm in the Lounge. Contact Carson on 013606-22334.
- 3rd Tuesday **Surrey** – Meet at **The Blue Ball**, Walton-on-the-Hill, 7.00pm onwards. Contact Alan Anstead, Tel: 01322 384050. alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
- 4th Thursday **Sussex** – Meet at **The Red Lion**, Handcross, RH17 6BP from 19:00. Contact David Southcott at dsouthcott@ukonline.co.uk
- 4th Thursday **Hampshire** – New Venue! Now meeting at **The Fox and Goose**, Greywell, RG291BY. 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. alan.anstead@btopenworld.com

- Last Monday **Wiltshire** – Meet at **The Barge Inn**, Seend, Nr. Devizes, about 7pm except on Bank Holiday Mondays when it will be the Bell Inn at Yatton Keynell near Castle Combe, 6.30pm. Contact Andy Cross on 01225 743554 or e-mail andy@cross743.freerve.co.uk
- Last Wednesday **Home Counties North West** for members in Herts, Beds, Bucks, Berks, N. London or anyone interested! Meet at the **Chequers Inn**, Redbourn, AL3 7AD from 6:30pm. Please contact Chris Jackson Tel: 01707 261567 or Mark Hall, Tel: 01296 660103
- Last Thursday **Somerset** – Meet at **The Lord Nelson**, Norton-sub-Hamdon. 8.00pm
- Last Thursday **South West Wales** – Meet at the **Fox and Hounds**, Bancyfelin, Carmarthen, SA33 5ND. Contact David Hill, Tel: 01239 811307 or email david@hill.be
- Northern Ireland Point of contact is Robert Holmes, tel: 02892 689274 or email: robertholmes25@hotmail.com. If enough interest, will arrange a meeting.

Club Website

Members Only pages for December,
User name: Micro Password: Blister

Events

From David Hill and Webmaster Toby Ancombe

Events organised so far

December

- Wednesday 9th Warwickshire Area's Christmas Dinner at the Green Dragon. Details from Sheila Yates, Tel: 01608 665066 email: chrishe@tiscali.co.uk
- Friday 11th Essex Area are having a Christmas dinner at the Bell Tolleshunt Major. Please contact Jane Gates jgjanegates257@googlemail.com or 01255 830509. If interested could you let me know by 1ST December meet. By the way WAGS are invited!!!!
- Sunday 13th East Anglia's Christmas Dinner (Actually lunch) at The Cat. For details please contact David Dixon on 01733 222810
- Tuesday 15th South East Area's Christmas Party. Details from Alan Anstead, alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
- Sunday 20th Dorset Area Lunchtime Christmas Meal at Bulbury Woods Golf Club. Details from Bryan Fox on 01202 683842.

2010

February

- Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th The Footman James Great Western Autojumble at The Royal Bath and West Showground, Shepton Mallet. Dorset Area will be going Details from Ian Beaver on 01722 326840 or Bryan Fox on 01202 683842

April

- Sunday 4th Chatham Festival of Steam and Transport at Chatham, Kent. www.thedockyard.co.uk Kent and Surrey will be there with a Club Stand. Details from Alan Anstead at alan.anstead@btopenworld.com or Tel: 01322-384050

May

Saturday 1st &
Sunday 2nd

Dorset Area will be at the 31st Bristol Classic Car Show at the Royal Bath and West Showground, Shepton Mallet. Details from Ian Beaver on 01722 326840 or Bryan Fox on 01202 683842

June

Sunday 13th

Dorset Area are going to Classics at Kingston Lacy. Details from Ian Beaver on 01722 326840 or Bryan Fox on 01202 683842

July

Monday 5th
to Friday 16th

South East Area are going to the Le Mans Classic 2010. Yes really! These events take advanced planning to secure accommodation. There is a provisional list and I will be seeking non refundable deposits from around May 2009.

August

Sunday 15th

Cranleigh Car Show. South East Area are going with the Club Stand. Details from Alan Anstead at alan.anstead@btopenworld.com or Tel: 01322-384050

September

Sunday 18th

Church Knowle 2010 Classic Car Show. Near Corfe Castle, Dorset. Dorset Area will be there. Details from Ian Beaver on 01722 326840 or Bryan Fox on 01202 683842

Sunday 26th

The September Kent meet will be at the Bearsted Classic Car Show. Details from Alan Anstead at alan.anstead@btopenworld.com or Tel: 01322-384050

December

Tuesday 21st

South East Area's Christmas Meal and December meet. Details from Alan Anstead at alan.anstead@btopenworld.com or Tel: 01322-384050

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

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

Mutual Assistance Directory

'Tis not the season for being out and about in your Spridget, methinks! We have had some horrendous weather here but not as bad as Cumbria, thank goodness. Best to sit in a nice comfy chair in front of the fire with a glass of something warming, dreaming of next summer. It is going to be wonderful, isn't it?

Last month's appeal for more MAD members to sign up didn't result in a deluge of members applying but maybe it takes a while to filter through to everyone. We are short of MAD members in many areas of the UK,

so please have a look at the Directory on the website and if you are willing to give me your details, please send them to me at david@hill.be

Don't forget, if you don't carry your copy of the Mutual Assistance Directory and 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. Just ask!

Enjoy your pride and joy.

David Hill

Then and Now

The photos of the two frogeyes span a period of about 35 years. The orange car was purchased in 1972 for £125; its original colour was pale blue. I am sat in it with my wife to be.

It took us all over the place, we live in Bolton, and once went over the Pennines to see "The Straws" play at Hull University where a friend was studying.



It was the middle of winter and we stopped at Bishop Burton near Beverley. I remember parking up by the side of the frozen village pond watching people skating and listening to "Tubular Bells".

We went to Keswick in the Lake District at Easter, camping, with ice on the tent window in the morning. These various trips went without a hitch. The car never let us down until the day the boot floor decided to part company with the rear body, on the main Bolton ring road, resulting in the petrol tank scraping under the car!

After the repairs I decided to keep the car off the road a little longer, de-seamed the car (I know sacrilege!) and changed the colour to Orange, well it was the 70s!!

Not long after the Frog made way for a Ford Capri but I did sell the car for £100 more than I paid for it.

Having enjoyed our first Frogeye so much we decided 2½ years ago to buy the black one. This car came from California and I still have the original number plate.

The heritage certificate says it was exported in 1958 and was pale yellow in colour. It was brought back to this country about 6 years ago as a wreck but bodily sound, the only metalwork needing replacing were the footwell floors. This had already been done when I bought the car.

Since then the engine and carbs have been re-built, along with the radiator dampers and other various mechanical bits and pieces.

We could not make it to Spridget 50 as the engine was still out of the car. There are still a few things left to do over the winter, but as you all know it's a labour of love and there is always something to do!



We have used the car on several rallies, The Lancashire auto club Manchester to Blackpool run and also the Bolton Hospice run to Ribchester an annual event well worth supporting, just to name two.

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Bridges Run 2010

The annual New Year's Bridges run will take place on the 1st Sunday in January so that will be 3rd of January 2010 (at the time of writing this is still to be confirmed).

Contact Darren Tyre
Email: darren.tyre@ntlworld.com
Tel: 07774 128295

A brief reminder of the run in 2009

On New Year's Eve Roger went down to the barn, dusted off the Arkley Sprite and brought it back to the house. This was in preparation for the traditional New Year's Day lunchtime meet at Barrington, organised by the local VSCC, and a new event for us, the Midget and Sprite Club Bridges Run on Sunday 4th January.

Sunday, as New Year's Day, was freezing, but we set off for London at 7:45, and eventually found Lucky Motors, in the railway arches south of Tower Bridge by 9:20. There were about 6 cars there already, and over the next half hour or so another 20 odd joined us.

There were all sorts of Sprites and Midgets, an AC Ace, a Morris Minor, and a couple of other marques. A lot of really brave souls removed their hoods, but we decided against, mainly on the grounds that we were not sure that we would be able to refit it in the cold before setting off to Cambridge on the way home. Route notes were distributed, and we all set off.

The idea of the run is to cross the 18 road bridges of central London, so we went North over Tower Bridge, south over London Bridge, north over Southwark Bridge and so on. The tourists on Tower Bridge all seemed to find us photo worthy, and on Whitehall, we were the subject of many more tourist photos. However we were getting separated by the multitude of traffic lights, and when we reached the re-grouping stop on Chelsea Embankment it took some time for the last cars to arrive – time enough to break out the flask of soup we took with us. At this point the organisers suggested a pit stop at McDonald's in



Wandsworth, three bridges further on, and as we had not seen a loo since we left home we thought this a great idea! Luckily this restaurant has a large car park, and we all squeezed in. In the restaurant it was warm and more conducive to socialising than the previous stop, and it tested the organisers skill to get us all back on the road again. Only 6 Bridges to the finish!

The traffic was really building up now as people went out to lunch or the shops, but we followed the route (most of the landmarks mentioned being breweries, pubs, and garages!!) through Putney, Chiswick, Kew and Twickenham to the finish at the Rose of York pub near Richmond. This large pub with river views had a good sized car park, and extensive eating possibilities, but after some coffee and chatting to the other participants we decided to set off for home whilst there was still some light left.

Our thanks to Darren Tyre and the MASC for a well organised event.

Roger and Maggi



Strutting your Stuff Spridget Style

Following in line of succession on from the Frogeye 'Spridgets', be they of either the M.G. Midget or Austin / Austin Healey Sprite, have a bonnet that is supported in the open position by either a rod or a mechanical lift to open / lift to close slider. Which ever means of support was originally fitted, or now survives, the side of the bonnet opposite this fitting will invariably dip when the bonnet is in the open position. Paul Coveney had such a situation on his Austin Sprite but wanted a bonnet that did not dip. Paul wanted a set up that felt and looked secure.



Bonnet supported by struts

Telescopic gas struts provide the answer. Suitable struts with necessary fittings for an MGB are available from MGB Hive (Cambs) at £37. Supplied in the MGB Hive kit are two 'lower' brackets identifiable by having three holes, two 'upper' brackets for fitting on to the bonnet, two telescopic struts, and nuts with bolts. It was such a kit that we fitted to Paul's Sprite.

The lower brackets were fitted underneath the rainwater gully on either side of the engine bay. The holes for the rubbers were used as Paul's car had none fitted but had they been the rubbers could have easily been moved to another location. One hole needed "easing" to align with that of the bracket. The holes correspond to 14 and 16 inches from the bulkhead rain gully.

The upper brackets, for fitting to the bonnet, were fitted by different means on either side due to the bonnet's construction however for both fittings the brackets were reformed



Bonnet upper mount

from right angular to flat. The centre of the upper bracket was fitted in from the rear of the bonnet at a point 27 3/16. On the drivers side this corresponded with an unused bracket affixed to the bonnet – probably for an alternative prop. The kit bracket was attached to this with a 4mm screw and locknut. The nearside bracket was attached by drilling two holes, again for 4mm screws and locknuts but because of bonnet design also with a 1/4in plastic packing piece from my "odds and sods" box. At each stage the bonnet was raised and lowered to ensure nothing would foul. All that was left was to push the telescopic arms onto the ball sockets after priming as stated in the original instructions. Pictures should clarify the fitment and supports in use.

Alan Anstead

Area Rep Kent & Surrey

Tel: 01322-384050

Mail to alan.anstead@btopenworld.com



Strut wing bracket

New Members

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members

4186	William Young	United States – MO	Midget Mk 3 RWA
4187	John Dunicliff	Devon	Midget 1500
4188	George Devenish	Kent	Frogeye
4189	anon	Cleveland	Frogeye
4190	John Andrews	Oxfordshire	Sprite Mk 4
4191	David Seels	Gwent	tba
4192	Colin Bosch	United States – AZ	Sprite Mk 3
4193	Alan Rutledge	Norfolk	Sprite Mk 4



*Tim Hicking, his
Frog and a dog*



From last month, Gail & Richard Mumford's Frogeye



Bill Young in his Midget from Kansas, USA



Martin Devenish
(George's dad)



John Andrews'
Mk4 Sprite



Bill's V6 engined
Midget

A Rare Item Indeed – Part 3

The Mk1 Sprite Boot Locking Partition

Continuing our look at rare parts for Spridgets. This month's rare part comes courtesy of Eric Harkins in Stokesley, via mark Boldry and is far more useful than the dangerous child's seat featured in last month's *MASCOT*.

Originally featured in *Safety Fast* in 1961, the C.E.P. Sprite boot partition is described as follows:

"One of the welcome improvements incorporated in the Sprite MkII (and one assumes also the Midget Mk1) is a lockable boot lid, for with the original Sprite the unenclosed luggage compartment left the spare wheel, tools and luggage unprotected against theft.

Now Mk1 owners need have no further worries, for the C.E.P. boot locking partition

has been designed completely to enclose the luggage compartment. It fits neatly into the opening behind the seats, and although access is naturally restricted a little, the lockable hinged partition opens downwards providing a 2 ft. 2 ins. By 10 ins. Opening which is sufficiently large to accommodate the spare wheel and the largest stock-sized suitcase. Ample space is left for the hood and frame to be stowed in the conventional position behind the seats.

The partition is very strongly made from ½-inch resin-glued plywood covered with leathercloth in the standard Sprite upholstery colours, red, black, green or blue. The exterior hinge rod and fittings are chromium plated and polished.

Fitting the partition is a simple job: two brackets clamp the top behind the

security
for every *SPRITE* owner!

Price Retail £5.5.0 Tax Free

- security with

The 'CEP' Boot-locking Partition for the Austin Healey 'Sprite'

The 'CEP' BOOT-LOCKING PARTITION has been expressly designed to provide all 'Sprite' owners with a securely locked Stowage Compartment, large enough to accommodate the largest stock-size suit-case, as well as the usual hood, spare wheel, etc.

Strongly made from ½" thick Birch plywood, resin-glued to specification to reduce possibility of warping or de-laminating, and covered with Leather-cloth.

All fittings (Polished and Chromium plated exterior, and Rust-proofed interior) are secured inside the compartment, and are tamper-proof when partition is closed and locked, thus providing absolute security.

The 'CEP' Unit is quickly assembled by the following simple Fitting Instructions.

FITTING INSTRUCTIONS

The 'CEP' Unit comprises:

- Panel and Flap assembly, complete with lock and two keys.
- Two top clamps, with back plates and lock nuts.
- Two side fixing brackets with two wood screws each, six facing to the rear face of the partition, and two self-tapping screws each, for fixing the brackets.
- Top forward clamp completely, the hood frame completely.

Offer the 'CEP' Unit its best entry, tilting the top forward sufficiently to go under and behind the strengthening ribs (Ref. 'A').

Lift the unit up and back tightly to the rear of 'A', at the same time pushing the bottom edge of the unit forward as far as possible.

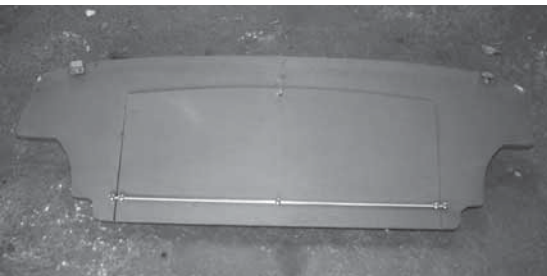
Note: Make certain the unit is level across the front surface, and is being squared (Ref. 'B').

- (Ref. 'C') Assemble the top straps from the front, by passing the threaded stems through the two holes drilled either side near the top edge. Fix the back plate with the two 2BA lock nuts.
- Assemble bottom fixing brackets to unit, and push unit well forward.
- Mark position of holes for self-tapping screws, through the holes in the brackets. Drill 1/8" dia. holes with No. 22 drill and fit self-tapping screws, provided (Ref. 'D').

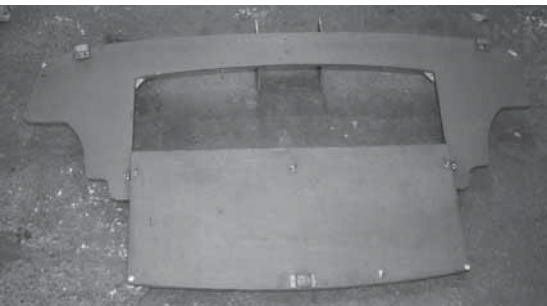
Union Lane
Cambridge
ENGLAND

Telephone
Cambridge 36497

Original Brochure and fitting instructions



Erick's boot partition



strengthening rib running beneath the rear deck: two more brackets secure the bottom of the partition to the inside of the wheel arches. All fittings are secured from inside the compartment and are thus tamper proof when the partition is locked.

In addition to providing complete security, the partition keeps the luggage compartment free from dust, and also serves to silence the rear-end drumming within the boot.

Priced at 5 Guineas, carriage free and including twin keys and fittings, the partition is a worthwhile investment. In the U.K. it is available from the manufacturers Messrs. C.E.P. Products. Union Lane, Cambridge. In the U.S.A. the price is \$39.95 and orders should be sent to Engine Imports, Broadway Pier, San Diego, California".

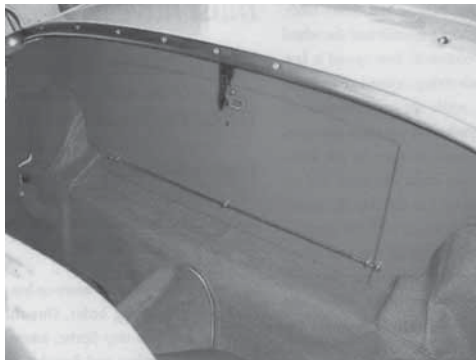
After running a feature on this rare part in "Marque One" magazine in 2006. Editor and Mk1 Sprite historian Ray English, received a letter from Mike MacLean in California saying that he had managed to obtain one of these sought after period accessories via eBay for about \$150 from a man who originally had 50 of them, bought back in the early 1970's. But his mother had thrown out 40 of them about ten years before while cleaning the house! He bought one for his Frogeye (Bugeye) in the original red vinyl.

Mike went on to say that it is a great period piece and quite practical, and in his opinion looks like something that should have been done at the factory.

Mike also points out that although the instructions state that the unit was "Made in England" there is a serial number on the C.E.P. logo plate which is stamped with the serial number and "U.S.A." which means that this unit must have been intended for the US market. His opinion on it being a security device is that like a lot of locking devices these days, it will only keep the honest people honest. Mike is very pleased with the vinyl, saying it is near, if not exact as the original texture and colour that was used during the car's production.

MASCOT would love to know of any Sprites within the club which are fitted with this accessory as well as any other unusual and rare Spridget items.

My thanks to Erick Harkins and Mark Boldry for the images, Mike MacLean for the additional information and photos and also to Ray English and "Marque One" magazine.



Mike's partition fitted in his Sprite



Meet the Committee

New MASC Committee Member and Area Rep's Delegate **Geoff Hunter**



Until I retired almost four years ago I was a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the proprietor of a small company employing five people engaged in all aspects of the business though with a bias towards commercial and professional work throughout the West Midlands and mainly in the industrial Black Country

I have held an interest in various forms of motor sport since the early 1960s which was when I first entered a muddy hill climb in a Morris 1000. Subsequently I joined my home town car club and enjoyed club rallying in the Welsh hills, sprints at Curborough, mostly in Minis and an Ogle SX 1000 and saloon car racing as a spectator at Mallory Park, my nearest circuit.

Family and business took over in the 70s and 80s until the earlier 90s when my interest in classic cars was aroused. In 1997 I went to Olympia and bought another Ogle from the Duncan Rabagliatti collection. This I rebuilt in time for the Mini 40th celebrations in 1999. In 2000 I found a 970 Mini Cooper S in bits

and the remnants of a Frogeye Sprite. I had admired Frogeyes from when they were first produced but at that time when having just passed the driving test and being employed as a trainee auctioneer/surveyor on a salary of £2 per week I had to make do with a moped then a 6 year old Austin A30. So some 42 years later I acquired a genuine basket case which I cloned into a Californian rust free shell and joined the Club.

The car is now a hybrid using a 1275 cc motor with a fast road cam, a three branch manifold, a single HIF carburettor, ribbed case gearbox and a 3.7 diff. It goes very well except in heavy rain when it dies.

I volunteered to serve the club because I and my wife Janet (aka Sug and who has put up with for 43 years and going for gold) have enjoyed innumerable events in the company of delightful folk from Warwickshire/Worcestershire and elsewhere and it is time to put something back. If I disappoint be sure to let me know.

Geoff Hunter

Where are They Now? A Result

In April 2009 (No 301 page 13) edition of MASCOT Magazine there appeared a picture of a Frogeye (PEE173) that I once owned, and saved from the recycling yard, with the heading "Where is it now?"

MASCOT Editor found the answer to the question, several months later, when he found my old car advertised for sale, by a car dealer, in Paignton, Devon. I have contacted the dealer and asked him to forward my details to any purchaser. Should its new owner make contact I shall try to encourage them into MASC.

Alan Anstead



As it is today



On the right as it was back then"



Another Request to MASCOT Readers

Once before you tracked down a Sprite that a friend had previously and he was very pleased to find out it was still around following your e-mail. I now have another work colleague who has approached me asking if I could find out if his Sprite is still around. The details of his Sprite are as follows:

**Make: Austin Healey Sprite Mk 3
(with square rear wheel arches)
Registration: WNO 547F
Registered: 1967**

Colour: Old English White (wire wheels)

I would really appreciate it if you could check to see if it is now owned by one of our MASC members.

Cheers for now

Mike Blake

MASC Member (NWHC local section)

mike.blake@ntlworld.com

If you know of this car, please contact the editor.

From Oval to Round



Over time linkages on brake and clutch systems tend to wear. A recent check on my Frogeye's clutch system revealed wear at the pivot, where the clutch pedal connects to the master cylinder pushrod, and also in the pushrod that links the clutch yoke to the clutch slave cylinder. Both parts had holes worn oval over the many years that I had owned, and the thousands of miles that I had driven, my car. I couldn't complain after forty years of ownership.

Some people at this point might reach for the Mig, Tig, or gas welder and fill the hole with weld and then re-drill the hole restoring it to its original size. Instead of this route I rummaged through my drawers and found an 'oilite' bearing, as originally used as a

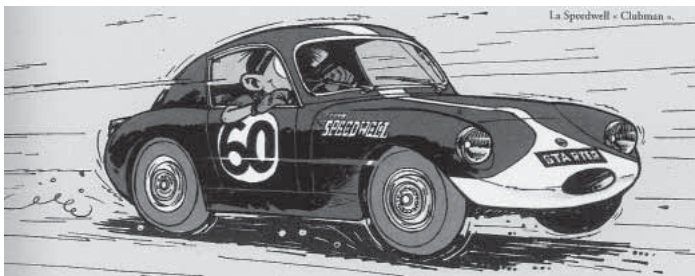
pivot on the clutch yoke. Measuring 0.3125 (5/16in) inside diameter and 0.4375 (7/16in.) outside diameter all that had to be done was to drill the oval hole carefully out to 7/16in in order to fit the bush. It is best to drill the original hole in increments using ever increasing drill sizes as the resultant hole needs to be precise and a good fit for the bush. Once fitted the bush needs trimming to width. Some suggest soaking 'oilite' bushes overnight in oil prior to use. Don't forget to fit a new clevis pin as the old one is probably worn too!

Alan Anstead

Area Rep Kent & Surrey

Tel: 01322-384050

Mail to alan.anstead@btopenworld.com



Found on the web, this cartoon of a Speedwell Sprite is from a series called STARTER. I think it's French but I can't find any more about it.

Spridgets I have owned – part the third, the comeback tour continues

So there I was, a hundred and ten in third, nothing on the clock but the makers name, cut inside him at clearways and slipped her into top – what, er sorry, daydreaming again. Welcome back, the saga continues, Beowulf 's got nothing on this.

Busy month – found a Midget, well, it found me – was offered as a straight swap for a Series III Land Rover I was selling (would not have been a good deal). Meant to take pictures of this car (1972 MkIII in white) as I've never seen a car with the best part of a year's MOT with quite that much rust. Front of sills completely eaten away and A panel holes I could put my hand through. These were covered in gaffer tape to appease the MOT inspector (must find out where he went). Took it for a drive – not too bad although not everything was working! Vendor worried that washer pump wasn't functioning which seemed slightly surreal on a car that Fred Flintstone would be familiar with.

Entertained thoughts of running it for the duration of the MOT and then using it as a donor for a Sebring. Also found a one family from new '67 Midget (pricey). Need advice. Rang Gary L to discuss – the doctor was in. After much discussion of matters Spritely (I think Gary has a secret hard-top fetish) he told me not to bother and pointed me in the direction of a heavily (and I mean heavily) modded Sprite.

Given my previous comments regarding 'quirky' bonnets (see last month's *MASCOT*) what's not to like. Anyone out there recognise the manufacturer?

And a shorrock supercharger, cor blimey gunvor, I'll see your 1380 and 5 speed box off with my royal flush. Fell instantly in love and tried to ring the auctioneers to place a bid (not quite as simple as it could be). Mind you, scuttle needs welding and you don't want to get that wrong! The trouble with auctions is having to pay the buyer's premium as well as the purchase price which gets costly (always struck me as cheeky that). Gary then sent me a magazine article on the car to really whet my appetite – bit of a drag that the auction is 186 miles away (thank you AA routefinder)



Editor thinks it might be a modified Peamarsh bonnet Shorrock supercharger



and on a day when I can't get out of teaching (so 'phone bid it is then)

Here is what the Auctioneers said about it:

"According to the DVLA's online vehicle enquiry service, this particular example was first registered on 22nd April 1960 and last taxed for road use on 31st October 1987. During the intervening twenty-seven years, the 'Baby Healey' underwent extensive modification. Made from fibreglass, its bonnet sports a Shorrock Supercharged badge, NACA-style duct and Perspex headlight covers and when lifted reveals a

1275cc A-series engine, SU carburettor-fed Shorrock supercharger, Mobelec electronic ignition module and dual cooling fans. While the interior plays host to a crowded dashboard (eight gauges plus a clock), wood-rim steering wheel and bucket seats. Laid-up for decades, the vendor informs us that at the very least '650 FTX' requires "some scuttle panel welding, rewiring and the reconnection/overhaul of its radiator, clutch and brakes" (though, doubtless more issues would surface as restoration progressed). The subject of an article in the Austin-Healey Owners Club magazine during 1969, the Sprite is accompanied by "a hood, hood frame and sidescreens" as well as numerous spares: "rear diff, clutch, exhaust, propshaft, luggage grid, steering rack, kingpins, bumperettes, brake shoes etc". Riding on widened steel wheels (hence its rear wheelarch extensions), '650 FTX' has the makings of fascinating and rewarding project.



A crowded dashboard (eight gauges plus a clock), wood-rim steering wheel and bucket seats

Also rang vendor of the Frogeye that some other lucky blighter got last month just to check that the deal was all completed (well, anything can happen).

Went to the Sandown Park auction to support a chum's birthday – early spot of lunch at my place (lasagne, garlic bread and salad, all from my fair hands -renaissance man or what) then all go and ogle lovely cars – top blokes day out. One of the chaps runs a pink '57 Chevy Nomad, another turned up with an early 3-bearing B.

Anyroadup, the real reason for going was to have a shufti at a Frog they were selling – genuine 37,000 (it says here) never been



Chevy Nomad

raced or rallied, late property district nurse and only used to take her cat to church on Sundays and all that. Actually, it was a wee bit moth eaten around the edges and sadly more than the family housekeeping would run to. It was marked up for more than an MGA (admittedly a coupe) which is a sign of the times, but the A made over £9k whereas the Frog managed a provisional sale at £7100 – frankly a generous price given the amount of touch-up paint, bubbling and little holes starting to appear – fine if you only ever drive on hot sunny days; one British winter would kill it.



Oh and I found my copy of Modified Motoring – thank goodness, have you seen the prices it fetches these days?

So, time moves on and I'm still looking for a car! Notwithstanding the tantalising red herrings of later Spridgets, I think it has to be car with sidescreens. There, a decision!

Andy Duff

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Spridgets on the Big (and little) Screen

Part 5 – Some musically inclined Spridgets

After last month's offering of Midgets and Sprites seen on the screen helping to save us from enemy Secret agents, I thought this month should be an altogether more gentle experience.

Fast cars and pop music have always gone together. These days it's Rappers with "pimped-up" Bentleys and Mercedes as well as Rockers in Ferraris and Lamborghinis. But let me take you back to a more psychedelic and mellow (yellow) time when our cars were still relatively new, radio stations were floating out at sea and Twiggy didn't do ads for M & S.

The 1960's is perhaps where some of us find ourselves drifting back to when we're driving our Spridgets and, in Pop music terms, the United Kingdom was the centre of the world.

Two of our most famous musical exports The Beatles and Donovan were both early exponents of putting Music to film. The Beatles with their feature length films such as "A Hard Day's Night", "Help" and "Yellow Submarine", none of which contained Spridgets as far as I can see, also produced "Magical Mystery Tour" in 1967, which did contain a Spridget, if only very briefly.

Magical Mystery Tour was the Beatles first film since "Help" and was largely Paul McCartney's project. The story follows a coach load of eccentric characters on a magic journey through the English countryside which becomes a series of psychedelic clips promoting various songs including "The Fool on the Hill" (my favourite



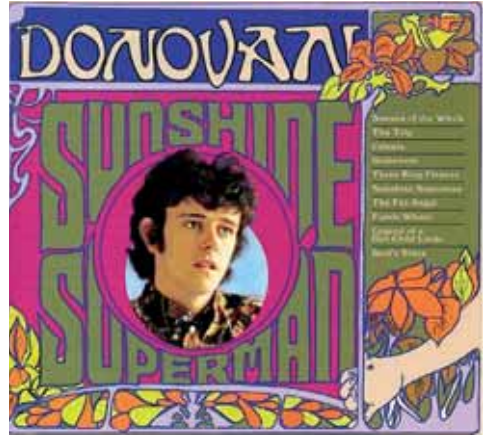
Beatles track of all time), "Blue Jay Way," "Your Mother Should Know," "I Am the Walrus" and "Magical Mystery Tour".

Here we see the briefest glimpse of a red Frogeye as it passes the famous coach.

By contrast the film which accompanied Donovan's 1966 hit "Sunshine Superman" was a much more modest affair. Filmed in black and white and made for the small screen rather than the big screen, it did however feature a Spridget as one of its stars. Here we see Donovan sitting in the passenger seat of a Midget, strumming away, while his driver concentrates (or not) on the road ahead. Then again he could be in a drug induced stupor. The next series of shots show that they are actually perched on top of a car transporter, with what looks like an MGB on the deck below them. These days would the Health and Safety departments of a major record company allow their stars to take such risks on the public highway? I think not.

My thanks to Geoff Mears who spent hours trawling through videos of his 1960's pop programs to find me the Donovan material, and for suggesting it in the first place. Geoff has worked out that the registration number of the Midget is DLH 940C. If anyone knows of its whereabouts I would be delighted to hear.





Finally, going back to last month's article I've been contacted by Tim Hicking who wrote to MASCOT saying "When reading – Spridgets on the Big (and little) Screen Part 4 and in particular "The Avengers" item, I recalled that many years ago when I contracted "Frogeye deficit syndrome" I had the opportunity to view a Frogeye "917 GPP". It was in a very sorry state and reputed to have formally been owned by the Blackman family – yes as in Honor Blackman and if not hers then her parents car. Indeed I was shown a log book bearing that surname though I couldn't vouch for it being the same Blackman. Where is it now and what would Honor (or Steed) say!



Because of the response that I've received to "Spridgets on the Big (and little) Screen" I have decided to write one additional article next month. This will feature some of the numerous celluloid Spridgets which haven't made it into MASCOT so far.

Gary

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MASC at the Classic Motor Show 2009

The Warwickshire Group again organised the MASC stand at the NEC for the 2009 Classic Motor Show this November. This year's first challenge was a 1 metre square concrete roof column right in the centre of our space. Dave Parker offered to clad these 4 faces with a montage of pictures and a route map from Alan Anstead's recent Miglia Tour '09, which created a lot of interest.

The 7 cars shown were by Roger and Sue Orgill – Frogeye Sprite / Andy Smith – Sprite Mk 2 / Barrie and Margaret Smithson – Midget Mk2 / Alan and Linda Pritchett – Midget 1500 / Roger and Maggi Byford – Arkley Sprite / Kate Andrews – Tifosi Rana and my own "Barn Find" Austin Sprite, which illustrate the diversity of cars within MASC.

The choice of the Austin Sprite caused me much anguish before the show, as I did not know quite how it would be received. I had found this abandoned restoration project car some 4 years previously in a barn just 500 yards from my home, where it had hibernated for the previous 20 years. Dave Parker encouraged me to show it and moved it for me on the Tuesday before the show.

I need not have been so concerned as it proved a real crowd puller and at one time on Saturday was completely surrounded by people 2 deep. Not many spotted the plastic rat amongst the straw but someone did find the skeleton of a mouse in the boot. I had also decided to sell the car and was taking offers during the show. The Sprite has now found a home with new member Steve Roberts whose arm has already been twisted to let me have the restored car for a future show, no pressure then!

Again as with previous years we have tried to involve members from other areas of the country with display cars and personal, we were very pleased to have some 28 members sharing the manning over the 3 days, something we will encourage again. It is very good to have such enthusiastic support from members who put themselves out with time and money to help.

We had perhaps our busiest and best ever show with some 38 new members recruited and 150 membership forms given out. Gary



The Rat hiding in the
Sprite's engine bay



The MASC stand during a quiet moment



Roger and Sue Orgill's Frogeye
Kate Andrews' Tifosi Rana



Andy Smith's Sprite Mk 2
The now ex John Platt Austin Sprite



had to raid the press office copier at one point when it looked like we may have been running out of forms. The future for MASC and Spridgets in general looks good despite the economic downturn. Good to have Mike Grout with us this year and all visiting MASC members will have been "encouraged" to buy some regalia. Again the free card Frogeye Kits supplied by Dave Colclough proved very popular with "children of all ages" and we gave away the remaining copies of our 2008 calendar.

Good to meet up with so many members during the 3 days, some visiting from as far away as Northern Ireland and Scotland, including a lot of our area reps, also to put faces to various contributors from the BBS, all to talk about our favourite cars. Thank you for bringing your advance online ticket stubs which will benefit the club £1 each. Those who used the park and train ride option agreed that it had been a good idea especially on Sunday morning when the M42 was closed for some time due to traffic jams coming off the motorway.

MASC had a full page club profile in the event programme following an appeal from the organisers to each exhibiting club.

Special thanks to Gary Lazarus who reacted immediately with a prepared piece which was accepted by them and must have done us a lot of good over the 3 days, I cannot imagine what it would have cost had we paid.

Thanks go to the Display Car owners for some interesting Spridgets, Warwickshire members for support setting up, Alan Couch for transporting our kit, Ann Platt and Janet Hunter for Cakes, Dave Parker for transporting the barn find, Stuart Gunn for the new logo flags, Peggy and Alan Corbett for accommodation, Gary Lazarus for personal badges and all the Guys and Gals from Warwickshire and other areas who gave up their time to man the stand – A big thank you all very much.

We have already started planning next year's show, having made an application for an 8 car stand. We shall have to wait and see what size we are allocated before we can consider the line up. Put the date in your diary now 12/13/14 November 2009. Looking even further ahead, we have already provisionally reserved 3 cars for the following year's show to coincide with the Midget 50 celebrations in 2011.

John Platt



MkIII Midget Poster

MASCOT has been contacted by Robert Rose regarding a poster which he recently purchased. Robert writes that he has discovered a note from the seller of the MG Midget MkIII Poster and writes "It was somewhat worn and already pasted to a plastic backboard prior to my purchase. However despite its condition it was an interesting piece of Spridget automobilia hence my purchase.

It was only after the sale that the poster became more interesting. The seller (Mr David Greaves) informed me that he is the individual exiting the plane on

the poster! It was taken at Kidlington Airfield near Oxford, when Mr. Greaves was a BMC Export Service Engineer. His artistic pose did not go unrewarded, as he was paid the princely sum of Three pounds and 10 shillings! [£3.50] The lady in the MG Midget was a secretary to one of the managers in the service dept".

Robert hopes this may be of interest to other Spridgeteers, he says as an avid reader, I have never come across this info before. My thanks to Robert for supplying the information and image.

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Horses v the Midget



Saturday the 10th October was a beautiful autumnal morning, the Midget needed to have her batteries charged, so should we drive to the New Forest or to the Purbecks? As we tend to go east for more reasons than can be explained, and the holiday season well over we decided to go to the Purbecks.

I packed what we call our 'MUNGY BAG' and off we went. One of our favourite routes is to turn off at Ridge and go the back doubles to Corfe Castle crossing Arne Heath. We also have a special spot where we have a coffee break and a quiet read of the papers, and wallow in the sheer peace and beauty of a landscape right on our doorstep.

I got out of the Midget opened the boot to make the coffee and out of the corner of my eye I noticed quite close by some horses. But they seem to be minding their own business grazing on the wet dewy grass, not interested me or so I thought, until I opened the Pastry Box and made the coffee. They had other ideas, what I had in the Pastry Box was far more interesting than what Arne Heath could provide for them. They were very insistent,

and kept putting their noses in to the car to see if Colin had something to offer them.

In the meantime I got the camera out of the boot closed it down hiding the Pastry Box away from them and took some photographs, but in my haste I had left a steaming hot mug of coffee on the rear bumper, and to my utter amazement one of the horses had put its tongue in the coffee, but its tongue came out quicker than it went in and licked the cold wet dewy grass to cool it off. That will teach him to come uninvited for coffee. Now you would think he would have learnt a lesson and moved on with the other horses, oh no! He wanted revenge for a burnt tongue, so he decided to lick the boot of the car and tried to take a bite out of the cover of the hood.

We had had enough by then so we decided to move on whilst we still had the Midget in one piece to do what we had set out to do, which was to have that cup of coffee and pastry. Needless to say we eventually did, spending the rest of the day motoring around the Purbecks, in the Autumn Sunshine.

Vi. Morris
DAMASK



Appeal for Articles for *MASCOT*



MASCOT Magazine really is the lynchpin of the Midget and Sprite Club for without it the club, nationally, would probably implode. Gary, who stepped in only as a stop gap when former editor Barry Lowe quit, has for some time now been producing a superb Magazine sometimes not only having to edit but, when short of articles, write some himself which really is not within the editor's remit.

Now close your eyes for a moment and let your imagination go. A darkened room. A tired figure stoops over a desk pawing through paperwork littered thereon. An old Olivetti typewriter is to one side – a sheet of Basildon Bond held between the rollers awaiting the author's inspiration. A green shaded table lamp casts out the only light. Our figure wears a white shirt his cuffs held up with arm bands. Upon his now balding head he wears a green peek to shade his eyes. A marking pencil balances precariously upon his ear. An expired 'Gauloise Blonde', half cigarette – half ash, hangs from the corner of his mouth. Through the misty darkness a clock on the wall shows 3am. Casting around the gloom the glass in the door is etched Editor.

Zoom in a little and identify the figure. It's Gary Lazarus our *MASCOT* Magazine Editor. Gary in our dream, and as in real life, is struggling to produce a monthly *MASCOT* magazine for you.

Back to reality! Having just spoken to Gary he is expecting to work till 3am, tonight, in order to get next month's magazine before the printers. He is short on articles and short on time. I immediately hit my computer keyboard to help out.

Praise is good but I am sure assistance would be better! I believe Gary would like a break, but being aware of the implications to the Club, as a whole, should there be no magazine, through loyalty, and a reluctance on the part of anybody to step forward and have a go at being Editor, he remains, for the present, in role.

It is not right that someone should be asked to do everything for everyone. So now that the dark nights are upon us and its too cold to venture into the garage and there is, as ever, nothing much worthwhile watching on the television don't just consider but do write an article upon some aspect of Spridgeteering.

Iron out some of those old photos that you have lying in the bottom of the kitchen draw, or grab the camera and take some afresh, and forward them.

In the same vein of 'someone should not be expected to do everything for everyone' what about helping your area rep and offering to organise an event next year.

It is your club but it desperately needs your contribution!

Alan Anstead

Bristol Area Report

Happily, our area meeting for November occurred before MASCOT deadline date so by allowing me the luxury of writing this report based on actual events. (Unlike last month where by I was forced by our editor to write the report prior to the meeting, a meeting to which I didn't actually attend anyway). Luckily, due to the predictable nature of the Bristol Area meetings, I was subsequently informed by my fellow members that I was pretty well spot on with my report anyway. And so to our November meeting held on Wednesday the 11th to which I did attend and took copious notes. The Transcript being as follows.

Member	Arrival Time	Spridgley Thing	Food
John Beatty	7.58	Still in wheelbarrow	Soup
Andy Cross	7.58	No (Peugeot 406)	Steak and Stilton
Andy Grimm	7.59	No (Lotus Elise)	No
Jim White	8.04	No (Its raining)	No
Terry Horler	8.05	No (Pseudo Elise)	No
Philip Sellen	8.07	No (Box on wheels)	No
Alan Lo	8.10	Must be joking	No

(How is that for a concise bit of reportage then? – I know, a tinge boring perhaps?)

Omitting the usual pleasantries and back chat, I will confine my report to subjects that provided in excess of 10 minutes worth of our attention span.

Andy Cross had a piece of red hot information regarding the revival of a famous name in motor manufacture to which he has privileged inside knowledge. Unfortunately, he also said he would have to kill us if he revealed this. Should any of the above disappear in mysterious circumstances between now and the next meeting, may I suggest that the police begin their inquiries with Andy. Despite Andy's considerable knowledge in under bonnet matters, he is perplexed as to why his Peugeot can knock out the ceramic centres of its spark plugs. Ruling out that an evil fairy has not turned into a diesel without his noticing, Andy may be looking for a long overdue replacement for his 406. Also in the market for a change of motor is Alan Lo. The oldest Midget in the village is on the transfer list. Alan was being very secretive about a possible new custodian but without mentioning any names, we figured it out to be Richard Hammond. Obviously the impressive performance of Jeremy Clarkson's Sprite Mk1V has so impressed Richard that he too must go the Spridgley thing way. Alan then flew off at a tangent and somehow turned the conversation into Health and Safety in relation to working at heights. Evidently, Alan found being strapped into a safety harness a 'very special experience' Hmm – I do remember him having a silly smile on his face when we strapped him to the kiddies swing back in the summer. Is there something more to this I fear? With the imminent departure of Alan's world famous Midget, Alan was closely quizzed on a possible replacement. For certain, this will not be a steel bodied car we learned. After further interrogation, we deduced that Alan would gain the greatest pleasure from an inflatable car. Oh-er, nothing like that on ebay or Classic Car Weekly. We did suggest the top shelf of a seedy newsagent, that was when the penny dropped, reference Alan's earlier tangent and safety at heights!

John Beatty has now produced a list of jobs to do on his Frogeye which surprised us by how short this was. It read simply – 'Restore Sprite'. Jim White awoke briefly to inform us that Humpty Dumpty was a large cannon and that Super Glue was developed to glue skin together in field hospitals in the Korean War. Who needs Wikipedia?

Finally, the subject of Mrs Cross's Jugs got onto the agenda, yes; really, a photo may or may not appear around here.

And that's the honest truth.

Terry Horler

Kent Meet at Moat PH Wrotham Heath, Kent

25th October 2009



The sun shone brightly through my window today (with apologies to Donovan) which bode well for today's Kent meet. Twenty people turned up in an assortment of marks of Spridget. New members Sharon and Ian Stansfield came in their, fairly recently, acquired Mk4 Sprite topped by a very nice new mohair hood. South East Area Regalia Officer Chris Harding, with Sue, came in his Ashley Sprite bringing regalia for sale.

Paul Coveney, easily led it seems, bought wife Jane a nice MASC emblazoned Tee Shirt. I was only joking when I said, in order to boost sales, that the men present might like to buy their ladies Club Clothing as an alternative to saucepans for Christmas.

Ralph Whitmarsh had invited along Martin Devenish. Martin is keen to join us. He has owned the Frogeye, now "on paper" his son's, 42 years beating my own Frogeyes ownership by two years. Ron Edwards came without his car but brought good news in that his Sprite, having sustained damage when "rear ended" on the recent Miglia Tour is being rebuilt and will return to use some time in the,

hopefully, not too distant future. Meanwhile Ron's restoration of a Frogeye has caused him to strip the 948 engine which appears may be a period Alexander Engineering build. An ongoing investigation! Ron also brought an ancient magazine article for me to see about Spridget pickups (or Utes as the Australians call them) once run by John Britten, of race and Arkley fame. Much interest was showing, in the car park, amongst the assembled Spridgets, to the telescopic bonnet conversion completed the day before on Paul and Jane's Austin Sprite. It is now a race to see who will have such a conversion fitted before the article on it appears in *MASCOT Magazine*. My money is on Mel and Barb with their ex rubber bumper Midget. James Ker brought his nice looking BMC mini as his Midget has succumbed to gearbox maladies.

Editor Gary paid us a visit in "Gaps". To the others present thank you for attending but who walked away with my treasured pen?

Alan Anstead





NW Area Report

*Ainsdale Beach, taking
in the sea breeze*

Since last club night we have had one event, our Halloween run on 31st October. We had 6 cars taking part; there was myself and Diane, Bernie and Lynne, David and Heather, Neil and Shelly, Mike and Karen plus Janet and Rob.

We all met up at the BP garage at Wrightington, just off junction 27 of the M6. The weather first thing was horrendous, heavy rain and high wind. Fortunately the rain ceased as we got ready to set off with just the occasional shower, however the wind stayed with us all day. We set off from the garage driving through Parbold and Burscough then towards Ainsdale, along Plex Moss lane – sorry Bernie! Here we came to a halt as a tree had fallen across the road, but with a bit of brute force we cleared a way past.

Then it was on through Ainsdale and towards Southport driving along the coast road. Here we pulled onto the beach to take in the sea breeze. Now to say it was windy is an understatement, at one point Rob was leaning at 45° to avoid getting blown over. So not spending too much time on the beach, we carried on along Marine Drive through Southport then on towards Rufford. From here we drove through the pretty village of Croston then towards Eccleston. At this point we came across our second obstacle of the day, this time a flooded road. To be fair it wasn't as bad as it first appeared but deep enough to wash all the sand and sea salt from underneath the cars.

Going through Eccleston we headed towards Charnock Richard and Chorley finally ending up at the Boat Yard at Hoghton, a pleasant pub situated alongside the Leeds-Liverpool canal. Here we had some lunch as the rain



*Fallen tree
stops play*



Mike's IOW Frogeye

lashed down and winds blew. Despite the weather, I think we all had a good day.

Please note; there will not be a club night in December, we are having our Christmas do that night although we don't know where just yet – some things never change! Next club night will be on 13th January at the Kilten. So, hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and hope to see you in the New Year.

Les

Valuations and Re-Registrations

I have been asked to remind you that the club can provide the above services plus provide confirmation of date of build for Spridgley things on the threshold of the HISTORIC VEHICLE zero VED taxation class. (No, that is not to suggest that this is a dating agency).

Valuation

The club can provide a written vehicle valuation assessment for your Spridgley thing. You may require this for insurance purposes when applying for agreed value insurance cover. Many insurance companies may accept your own valuation especially if your own assessment is within their own estimations. However, for vehicles exceeding the insurance company guidelines, you will almost certainly be asked for an independent valuation. Spridgley things of historic significance, modified examples or just very expensive restorations may require club help. I would add here that a full profession restoration of a Spridgley thing can easily exceed its marketable value so don't be too upset if a club valuation may be less than the pile of invoices and receipts that fill your spare bedroom. The fee for a valuation assessment is £7.50 for members and £20 for non-members of the Midget and Sprite Club.

The Valuation Assessment Forms will soon be downloadable from the club's website but for those without internet access, they can be obtained as a hard copy via the contact details at the bottom of the page.

Re-Registrations



The club has been authorised by DVLA to process applications to have original registration numbers re-issued to Spridgley things that do not have a current V5C vehicle registration document. Long lost restoration vehicles and loss of original

documentation can be re-issued with a new V5C whilst retaining the original registration number. I must point out that not every such application can be processed as the vetting process must meet the strict criteria set out by DVLA. However, for those applications that the club has been able to forward to DVLA, we have a very high success rate. For those Spridgley things not meeting the criteria, expect an AGE RELATED registration number to be issued. You may require the following service if an age related registration number is to be issued. The fees are £8 for members and £15 for non-members.

Verification of Date of Build

We offered this service when the 'Free Road Tax' (HISTORIC VEHICLE) taxation class was introduced some years ago. Initially this was on a rolling 25 year old basis but now reads as vehicles built before the 1st of January 1973. The important point

here is 'BUILT' – not first registered. Your V5C will state when your Spridgley thing was first registered but not when it was built. So, are you paying Road Tax for your early registered 1973 Midget when unbeknown to you, it was built in late 1972? Put it simply, if the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) is prior to GAN5-129951, you should not be paying road tax. The club can provide a written statement acceptable to DVLA to have your taxation class changed to Historic Vehicle if your VIN is prior to the above. Should you require a written statement of date of build for any other purpose then please ask. We can usually place a Spridgley thing within a month of the year of build, sometimes even more accurately. The fee for this service is £5 per letter.

For further information on any of the above or to make an application, please contact – **Terry Horler, 63 Littledean, Yate, Bristol BS37 8UQ. 01454 881770 (after 6.00pm)**



HCNW do the Kop Hill Climb

25th and 26th September



windscreens we queued eagerly to attack Kop Hill. A pitiful BHP made hard work of the gradient; still we raised many a cheer from the spectators in the grandstands and neighbouring fields. When the start flag hit the ground, my right foot hit the floor, where it stayed for the next 60 seconds at least until the chequered flag at the summit, where I was enveloped by strange smells and gurgling noises.

Kop Hill, near Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, was used as a speed hill climb between 1910 and 1925. This test climb is just over 1 km long and rises approx. 100 metres with its steepest gradient near the top of 1 in 4.

It was a major event in the hill climbing calendar in those days, and attracted names such as, Malcolm Campbell (Talbot) Raymond Mays (Bugatti) and Archie Frazer Nash (GN) as well as many others. On the weekend of September 26th/27th 2009 this motor sport spectacle was recreated for only the second time in 84 years.

On the Saturday morning our HCNW area reps, Mark and Chris met at my house, in Princes Risborough for coffee at 9am, after which we set off on the arduous ½ mile journey to the paddock at the base of Kop Hill. The participants filtered steadily through the entrance gate in many forms, from old Bentley's to Bugatti's (including a Veyron), and Ferrari's to Frazer's, with the oldest entrant being a 1903 Humberette. 70% of the cars entered were pre-war and vehicles, including motorcycles, pre 1973 were eligible to join in the fun.

Even our local rock star resident, Jay Kay from Jamiroquai, famous for his classic car collection, was also in attendance, with a small sample of his fleet on show. With our informal briefings complete, our wristbands affixed and our race numbers posted in our

My poor Midget – but what fun!! We got to run twice on Saturday, with Mark and myself returning on Sunday for a repeat performance.

The weekend was a complete success, expertly organised and stewarded and much money was raised for local charities. There are already plans afoot to make this a regular event, with next year being the centenary. Thanks to all other MASC members who attended.

Steve Plester

Our October run made it in to last months MASCOT, so not much to report this month. Our normal last Wednesday pub night was a little quieter than normal, but we did have a good evening discussing the merits of changing noisy rear diffs and the acceptable amount of play in a rear wheel bearing, just like a proper car club!

The Frog is due an MOT this weekend, but the weather is keeping it stuck in the garage. Maybe I can combine the MOT day with a trip to our November pub night? See you in Redbourn on the last Wednesday? I hope so...

If you have the time I recommend you check out Kop Hill pictures on the internet. There are some great videos on You Tube too. Have you ever wondered what a hill climb in a 1957 Ferrari Pontoon 250 Testarossa is like? Well watch and enjoy.

Mark Hall

Hampshire Happenings

Mike's Lament

As we approach another new year I will be wishing my blue Midge a less incidentful 12 months, but hopefully more "event"-ful...!

I took advantage of the Christmas 2008 break by getting the cracked windscreen replaced (a crack in the lower left corner wasn't an MOT issue, but obviously detracts from the car's "show standard") – most of you will know this is a slightly harder job than the average saloon car, old or new. So the windscreen company wanted the car for a day – just in case! I think that turned out to be about 6 hours! 7 months later, driving home from work along a recently re-gritted road (and oddly with no vehicles in front of me or anywhere near) there was a noise like a "crack" and then a couple of cracks formed in the glass right in front of me.

It was a couple of months before I arranged the replacement; this time the screen company were prepared to tackle the job on a Saturday morning, and it was done in about 4 hours. I drove home, put car in the garage. I then used blue Midge again the following Tuesday. While putting hood up – for warmth – it didn't take long to notice the screen was cracked again – this time a vertical crack from top to bottom about 12 inches from the left pillar! Back to the company – no problem, just bring it back! So the following Saturday I had another opportunity to shop in Southampton without paying for parking! This one took about 3 hours – they were certainly improving with practice!

Have I got space to include the silencer mounting stud coming out of the boot floor – thanks for the help Pete; the Goodwood track day; (see website for details) the conversion to a single HIF44 carburettor – that actually took 2 attempts because the first one had a



The single HIF44

fuel inlet pipe missing; the alternator mounting lug that broke during the rolling road tune-up; the exhaust manifold weld-crack; the wobbly distributor shaft that caused 2 breakdowns in about 30 hours – thanks for the help Barry; or the nearside front wheel that departed the hub at about 20 mph? Not in any detail here and now...! Always happy to talk about them over a beer though! I've also got a few snaps of the incidents or faulty bits, although the windscreen cracks were difficult to photograph effectively. As I said at the beginning, I hope I will be at more events in the coming year to offer tips from my lessons learned!

Mike Sleath

Grub Up!

Mike offered to organise a Sunday Lunch in Romsey so that those living in the south of our region could attend an event closer to home. So on Sunday 8th November we met at The Bear and Ragged Staff for a good feed; an event we may well repeat again next year.

Christmas Meal

Our December meeting will be on the 3rd Thursday as the 4th Thursday falls on Christmas Eve and it was thought that most folk would be too excited about the imminent arrival of Santa to attend a club meeting! This will also be our Christmas Meal. The Fox and Goose have a two or three course Xmas Set Menu; details on the website www.midgetandsprite-hampshire.info so if you would like to join us please let us have your selection ASAP, because although the deadline is the 1st of December, we appreciate that Mascot may not arrive until after that date.

Barry Green



Spot the wheel,
not where it
landed though!

Autumn Magic with SS&NB

Such a busy period this October and November has been. From early October when my car's clutch release expired in Cambridgeshire, through to a very business-like AGM in Coventry's Transport Museum. Via another great day out at Mallory Park celebrating the MGCC's Midget Challenge race. And the Classic Cars Show this November. This gave us, in SS&NB lots to do and be involved in and by golly we did.

Mallory Park

Because Lara, my Midget, was hors de combat I was entertained en route to Mallory Park by a ride in Stuart Gunn's marvellous V8 4WD Midget, oh boy, would I love to own that car... Sheer magic. Thanks for the ride Stu, I'll never forget it. Several SS&NBers attended on a windy dampy weekend, but it was great fun again.

The AGM

And for the same reason (Dead Midget's Syndrome) I was casting around for a way of getting to Coventry for the AGM when Bill McKenzie, our own Bill2, stepped into the breach and offered me a chauffeured approach to the Museum and the dedicated Spridget parking on the museum's plaza. Another very nice ride, I cannot thank you enough Bill. Cheers

If you didn't go to the AGM, and visit the marvellous museum you missed a treat. Do you (the more mature of us I would say) remember the pair of Dinky Racing cars we boys always had back in our youth, the blue Ferrari with the yellow nose cone and the red Maserati? Both seemed to be in every one of my mate's toy boxes, or in my case, under the settee.

Coventry Transport Museum HAS THE MASERATI! The real 1950's red racer and it is beautiful, gorgeous. A really great museum, I suspect SS&NB may return in the spring.

The AGM dealt, at long, detailed length with the nitty gritty of rules for running the club as a company, important, no doubt but so long winded, the meeting ran out of time before other non-company stuff could get discussed. However we, the club are now a protected species at last. I bought up the topic of **Midget 50**, which event will happen in 2011 and was permitted to represent the club in the organising group...

Any suggestions for this would be welcomed, do we want a carbon copy clone of Spridget 50 or would some other approach be wanted.

Any thoughts on this would be gracefully received, the team do want guidance on this, how do you want to see the event celebrated?

And finally, last weekend.

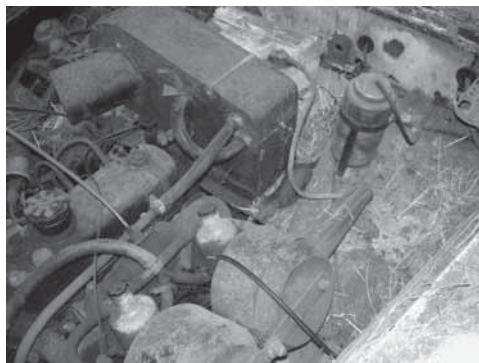
The Classic Car Show at the NEC

Some commentators in various interweb based car forums spent ages bemoaning the price of this and the size of that... Timewasters the lot of them.

John Platt and the Warwick's stalwarts again put on a display to wipe the floor with the rest. John had been worried because our stand had a blimmin big concrete pillar in the middle, no worries. They made the pillar a functional part of the display, which worked so well I wouldn't mind seeing us



Spridgets at the AGM



Barn find engine bay

get the same plot again. All around it were placards displaying the Alan Anstead hosted tour round France and Italy which was well described in *MASCOT*, this month. And smack dab in front was the piece de resistance, the Barn Find Sprite. Still clad in the residual straw and dirt of its years of incarceration in a neighbour's barn, John had it displayed centre front as an example of "what we have to start with" before the cars we eventually

end up with sit proudly on the stand. The car was a people magnet. Everyone, his mate and their wives gathered round staring and wondering. And all were enthralled, what a good exhibit John, I'd be very surprised if it didn't make its way onto the pages of one or more Classic car magazines, truly evocative. A darned nice car too A very rare Austin Sprite, yes ... no Healey in its name. One of the very last Sprites ever made.

Also on show were the lovely Tifosi Rana with its 1300 Spitfire engine that is as fast as a really fast thing and a gorgeous red Arkley (yes folks I liked it, really) along with the other cars. John, the show was great. I spent ages there chatting to club members and potential members.

It's been a great month or two, for Autumn...

And my car is back on the road now, albeit with a noisy gearbox. Looking for a budget type 9 again... Ho hum.

Soon be Christmas and maybe a Tunnels Run in February.

Bill Mohan

Surrey Meeting at the Blue Ball PH,

Walton on the Hill, Surrey, KT20 7UE, October 09

The year slowly draws to its close bringing with it the cold, dark, evenings. Not the most attractive picture when you have to make the decision whether, or not, to take the Spridget, or the tin top, to the monthly meet. For my own part I took the latter course but two fine chaps braved the dark, and the cold, to attend in their Frogeyes. Both Alex Bowers and Nigel Saynor arrived with hoods furled. Even though several members, nursing coughs and colds, stayed away for the time of the year I think it was a goodly turn out. Including myself seventeen members were present.

New member Ian Dodson came along to introduce himself. He is apparently new to Spridgets but for the past six months, or thereabouts, he has been the owner of a Frogeye with 1098 engine. We hope to have him out and about, in his Frogeye, with us at the earliest opportunity. Nearly new member Andrew Duff is looking to buy a Frogeye to

add to his stable of motor cars and motor cycles.

Sussex Rep – David Southcott, with Linda, brought along a lap top computer and gave us a slide show of their pictures from the recent Miglia Tour. From that same tour I was able to pass around a picture taken by Sue Judd (at home with a cold) brought along by Jim, of the cars and entrants lined up before the restored pits of the old Reims Grand Prix circuit. The picture will be framed and an addition to my garage wall. That same picture may have graced the cover of last months *MASCOT*.

Two members offered to organise events next year so that our traditional May run may be safe although run in a different format from usual.

Alan Anstead
Area Rep Kent & Surrey
Tel: 01322-384050

Mail to alan.anstead@btopenworld.com

Federation of British Historic Vehicles Clubs Ltd



AGM Saturday 17th October 2009

The FBHVC is a grouping of almost 500 Clubs and Museums together with some 1500 Trade and Individual Supporters. The aim of the Federation is to uphold the freedom to use old vehicles on the roads without any undue restriction and to support its member organisations in whatever way it can.

The Midget & Sprite Club became a member of FBHVC earlier this year.

The FBHVC AGM was held this year at Hunt House, Paulerspury. The home of the Royce Foundation and base of the Rolls Royce Enthusiasts Club. Hunt House houses artefacts relating to the life and times of Sir Henry Royce. It also houses the Rolls Royce Archive. It was very interesting, during the lunch break, to wander around the original house and later extensions looking at artefacts relating to the late Mr Royce and in the extension cut away engines, blue prints, and tools etc relative to Rolls Royce auto and aero development over the years.

The actual AGM started promptly at 1100hrs after delegates had signed in and received identification badges. The committee presented an air of professionalism, being 'booted and suited', and the Chairman conducted the meeting swiftly and efficiently calling, and introducing, various committee members to make their reports so that the

meeting came to an end on time at 1300hr for lunch.

After lunch various speakers, including one from restoration company Beaufort Engineering and another from Morris Minor Owners Club stood at the lectern speaking on the loss of skills and its effect now, and in future, on our hobby. After each lecture questions were invited from the delegates a microphone being passed around so that all could hear. As 'tis said 'All good things must come to an end' and so it was at 1600 that matters concluded and I pointed my tin top in the direction of Coventry for the MASC AGM on the morrow.

The FBHVC well known for promoting 'Drive it Day', which next year falls on Sunday 25th April, they are now keen to promote 'Heritage Day' .and to this end a pilot exercise was tried out this September with cars displayed in the forecourt at Baddesley Clinton, a National Trust property in Warwickshire. The Federation has, apparently, for sometime been keen to link heritage vehicles with historic houses and gardens as this arrangement has been very successful in other countries, particularly France where it is seen to be of benefit in promoting both the vehicle movement and heritage properties.

Alan Anstead



USA Austin Healey Sprite Mk11 circa 1964

East Anglian MASC Report



The line-up for Fred's treasure hunt

We were in France at the time of Fred's brilliant Treasure hunt and unfortunately several of the other regular hunters were also unavailable which is a real shame since these things take considerable effort to set up, all that Spriting around in the sunshine and testing out inns on route to find the best places to eat and checking out the beer however the end result is always worth it and takes the participants to all sorts of interesting places off the beaten track (well done Fred). In my absence Fred has compiled an excellent report below.

East Anglian Autumn Treasure Hunt

We awoke this autumn morning to find a slight mist lying over the Fens. We left home to go to Ely, the starting point of the Treasure Hunt. The sun had burnt through the early mist and with clear blue skies the cars started to arrive. By 10.00am we had four entrants for the Treasure Hunt – unfortunately some of the local members were either on late vacations or moving house. Graham and Maggie decided to join us as the weather was so calm and Graham would not get very far on his sailing boat!

We passed the envelopes out and in an unrushed manner they departed the Little Chef visiting five local villages searching out the answers to the questions we had set. En route they also had to find and collect a few treasure items.

The finish point was arranged to be at the Lazy Otter public house which has a lovely setting beside the Great Ouse River. After about 3 hours the first of the entrants arrived followed closely by another. Within 15 minutes all four of the starters had arrived. With a sly Part B question paper handed out



Graham receives the award

to each taxing their memories a little further they then all relaxed with a drink while we marked the papers. It was a close run result with only the time penalties deciding the outcome. The winners were Graham and Maggie with second place going to Nigel and Diane. Also joining us for the day were Malcolm and Linda along with Mick and Tricia. After a short presentation to the winners, we all sat down to a good Sunday roast dinner. See the photos of the cars with their owners, and the presentation to Graham and Maggie.

Here and Now

Getting back to the here and now it's December already and our next event is the Christmas lunch, this year by popular demand at the Mad Cat again. Very much the same format as last year, Sunday at 1400 on the thirteenth, if we all turn up we will more or less fill the dinning room so if you haven't confirmed you are coming please let me know urgently. It should also be noted that the Christmas lunch, as normal replaces the previous Thursday's (10/12/2009) usual Mad Cat club meeting night.

See you all at the Mad Cat and beyond.

Dave Dixon

Yorkshire Area Report



Turned out nice again

On 1st November we held the Damp Squib Run (aka the Bonfire Run). A very well attended event with guests from London, Edinburgh, Durham and Cumbria – that fell victim to the elements!

MASCOT editor Gary came up from London in Gaps to experience the fine seasonal Yorkshire weather, and Craig and Jane travelled down in their de-bumpered 1500 from Edinburgh for the weekend. Given the fantastic weather the day before, we took a daft gamble on it being sunny and had not fitted the hardtop to Sabrina, our midget, so imagine our delight when dawn broke to cloudbursts of epic proportions. Accordingly Buntyn the Downton 1300 came out of hibernation to go for a swim with her Froggy and Midget friends.

What should have been a crispy autumnal morning run from Otley Chevin to Thirsk was completely washed out by a huge deluge the night before that had flooded many B and side roads. Guy made the long journey from Kendal to join us, and Carol and John came down from the Durham Dales in their hastily assembled Sprite that had been in pieces the night before – a truly valiant effort.

Most of us got completely soaked to the skin in the storm that was blowing at the start point at Surprise View (Dave Wrigley quipping that the surprise about the view was there was no longer a view). Several people experienced wet electrics and lighting problems before we'd even started, including Gaps who had developed a nasty smoking habit (or did Gary have a sly cigar in his smoking cabin?). The 1300 came in useful with its rear seats as an office come public shelter against the elements, while the rest of the group assembled, Anita and Mark, John and Jeanette and Frank joined us.

So already drenched and with half the cars struggling, when we hit the first impassable flood about a mile in to the route, it was an easy decision to declare "force majeure" and abandon the run. We retired to Sarah's office in Harrogate for coffee and to dry off, before heading on to a substantial and warming lunch at the Watermill using A roads (and even these were flooded). Ironically, after lunch, the storm subsided and the sun came out. Typical!



Not dusk but 11.00am!

December Meeting – Sunday 6th December, meet in Masham market square from 3pm for a Christmas lights drive to a festive Christmas Curry at Zolsha in Knaresborough. Contact Anita Lachowicz if you are coming (spridget.girl@ntlworld.com 07720 725429) to reserve your place at Zolsha.

January Meeting – Saturday 9th January 2010, meet from 12pm at The Crosby, Thornton-le-Beans DL6 3SP. You need to pre-book for the special menu. Contact Sarah & Tim Saunders for more details (mothysaunders@hotmail.com 07968 261990).

Sarah & Tim Saunders



Early Mk11 Sprites and (LHD) Mk1 Midgets on the production line at Abingdon
Photo supplied with kind permission of Ashley Hinton

Market Place

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

For sale: Two ribbed case gearboxes for disposal due to workshop clearance. I understand that they are returned items under guarantee but have no idea of the defects. I have used two from the same source previously having had them repaired at very modest cost. Offers invited to clear. Also one fully reconned 4.2 diff.
Please call Geoff. 01562 851544, Worcs.

For sale: 100AYSV-1 spec (yellow) Aldon Distributor . A vacuum distributor, to suit most tuned A series (Spridget) engines, using camshafts such as Piper 270/285, Kent 266/276 and 286.but with side entry cap for Spridgets. Fitted with Aldon Ignitor electronic

ignition but supplied with spare base plate mounted with points and condensor. Spare parts include 2nd side entry distributor cap; Bosch rotor arm. To buy new this kit, without spares, is in excess £193, offers?

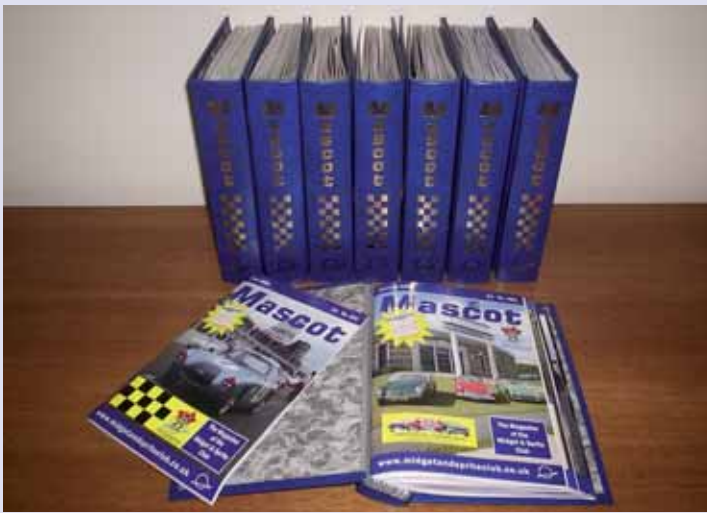
Alan / alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
Tel: 01322-384050

HELP! Very OAP has a '75 Midget badly in need of respray. Can anyone help anywhere, anytime at very OAP budget cost?

Willett (Glasgow), 01355 233248

Wanted: A set of Weller 8 spokes wheels to fit MG Midget.

Please contact Paul 01642 724062



The **MASCOT** Binder

A fantastic stocking filler for the Spridget owner who has everything
(If that's possible)

As another year draws to its end, your loved ones find themselves, yet again, with the annual struggle of what present to get the Spridget Owner in their life.

You, who have diligently kept all of this year's copies of *MASCOT* in pristine condition, only touching them with cotton gloves and pressing them with an iron after each page has been read, have the problem of how to store the twelve issues which have been collected throughout the year. You still want to be able to access all of the articles but don't want to have to rummage around in a box to find them.

The people at "Regalia Mansions" (Mike Grout), has the answer to these two problems.

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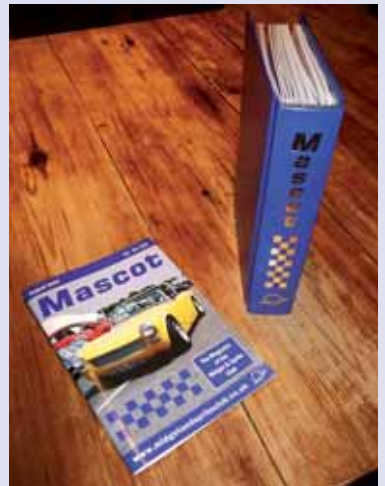
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