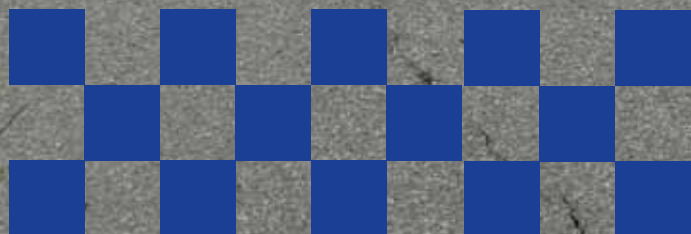


February 2010

£2 No. 311

# Mascot



The Magazine  
of the  
Midget & Sprite  
Club

[www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk](http://www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk)





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

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	<b>Sarah &amp; Tim Saunders</b> , Mobile: 07968 261990 email: yorkshiresasc@googlemail.com

Also see the Club Nights section on page 3 for new areas and contacts.  
Compiled by David Hill. Please advise me of any changes, errors etc.

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: IF YOU EXPERIENCE 'MASCOT' PROBLEMS UPON RENEWAL, PLEASE CONTACT THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY OR THE TREASURER STRAIGHT AWAY. The Committee**

© Midget & Sprite Club

# February's Editorial

How many of you have had your cars out over the last month? It certainly hasn't been text book Spridgeting weather. Even so a hardy bunch and I include myself, have been making hay while the sun didn't shine. One of the really great things about icy cold days and snowy weather is that only those foolish souls who own classic cars tend to drive around in it solely for the purpose of having fun.

January the 1st saw "Gaps" and I heading around the M25 at 8.30 in the morning, on our way to annual New Year's Day Meeting at Brooklands. It was the first time that I'd visited the place in the Frogeye (the last time was in 1991 at the wheel of a Ford Transit van).

We were rewarded with almost completely empty roads and a journey which would take me at best, an hour and a half at any other time, took me only fifty minutes on this occasion. As I drove there with the roof up, the sun began to shine, so much so that by the time that I arrived, the sky was a completely cloudless.

The famous venue was crammed full of every conceivable type of vintage and classic car and I can't believe that anyone would have left disappointed. So bright and clear was the weather that I drove the forty or so miles from Surrey back to London with the roof down.

Two days later on the first Sunday of the year, another group of intrepid Spridgeteers met up at an ungodly hour to participate on the fourth (or fifth) London Bridges run. Although, once again bad weather was forecast. Those who ventured out were rewarded with a cold (but not as cold as last year) bright day. Sunglasses were essential attire for the drive as the sun shone brightly from start at Rotherhithe to finish at Richmond. In between we had traversed most of the London Bridges, again with much less traffic than would normally have been encountered on another day.

Both of these events took place in cold but beautiful weather. Both allowed their participants to drive on fairly empty roads and with their roofs stowed. And both events are covered here in this month's *MASCOT*.

I can understand why many people wouldn't wish to take their Spridgets out at this time of the year. But for those of us who did, I know that we were well and truly rewarded. That doesn't mean that I don't like driving the Frogeye in warm weather too. And I look forward to the months to come with their longer days and warmer evenings.

**Next month's deadline for articles and reports for *MASCOT* is Sunday 14th February.**

Have a lovely February and Happy Valentines from **Gary & "Gaps"**.



*Darren's Sprite crosses Westminster Bridge*

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Front cover picture: Butch Gilbert's 1959 Sebring race car photographed at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca © Gary Anderson

# 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 and 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 grahame.gibbins@hotmail.com or grahame\_gibbins@unipart.co.uk
- 1st Thursday **Notts/Derby border Area** at the **Sitwell Arms** near Horsley Woodhouse from approx. 8.30. Just a mile north-west of the A608/A609 crossroads. lan Cooke 0115 938 3838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk
- 1st Sunday **Lincolnshire Area** -- NOTE CHANGE. Lunch time meetings at various locations. Please email; brianlincslot@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
- 2nd Saturday **Yorkshire Area –** for maximum coverage, the meeting moves around Yorkshire each month – venues are listed at <http://yorkshiremasc.blogspot.com/> for the next 3 months, or contact Sarah and Tim at yorkshiremasc@googlemail.com or on 07968 261990 for more details
- 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@bopenworld.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@bopenworld.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 February,  
User name: Micro Password: Blister

From David Hill and Webmaster Toby Anscombe

## Events

### Events organised so far

#### 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

Sunday 25th DRIVE IT DAY. Get out in your classic car today and see and meet others doing the same.

#### 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

Friday 21st to Monday 24th Surrey and Kent are off on their May Run to Laon, France for the Laon Historique. Details from hilary.ann341@btinternet.co

#### 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

Sunday 27th Kent area are meeting at the Cliftonville Classic Car Show. There will be a club stand. Details from Alan Anstead, alan.anstead@btopenworld.com Tel: 01322-384050

## 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](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com) or Tel: 01322-384050

## September

Sunday 5th

Pembrokeshire Run. Classic vehicle Run through the magnificent SW Wales countryside. Let's get loads of Spridgets taking part. More details later.

Sunday 19th

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 19th

Turweston Wings and Wheels. Lots of Spridgets are planning to be there. Details [www.turwestonflight.com](http://www.turwestonflight.com) or phone on 01280 705400.

Sunday 26th

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

## November

Thursday 11th  
to Sunday 14th

South East Area are planning a Remembrance Tour to Ypres and Bethune. More details later but in meantime contact Alan Anstead [alan.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com) Tel: 01322-384050

## December

Tuesday 14th

South East Area's Christmas Meal and December meet. Details from Alan Anstead at [alan.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto: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

I was going to include a picture of our Midget in the snow but it was too deep! Way over the sills. I have not driven a Spridget in the snow before but I guess that they are not too good in the traction department! Never mind, I'll include a photo in glorious sunshine here in West Wales in a future issue. We are going to get a fantastic summer – aren't we? Must check the Met. Office long range forecast, they are always right if you take the opposite of what they say!

My hat does go off to those of our members who use their Spridgets year round. I

guess that there are many stories to tell of happenings in the recent winter weather. I am looking forward to our Area's January meeting and to hearing any stories.

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**

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# Basic Car Maintenance

## An Oil Change for Beginners

If you don't have the luxury of a whole car lift then the front of the Spridget will have to be lifted either by use of a jack or ramps. The advantage of front lifting, as apposed to a total lift, is that it directs the oil to the rear of the sump where the drain hole is. If using a jack of any sort then **do not** rely on it alone. If using a screw jack then the supporting thread can fail or if using a hydraulic jack worn seals may allow the jack to slowly creep and lower. Whenever getting beneath a car always make sure that it is supported by axle stands.

The early Sprites and Midgets were fitted with a filter that sits within a bowl. If your car is still fitted thus it may well be a good time to convert to a spin on type filter as fitted to later cars. These filters require an adaptor/ filter head that is available off later A series variants, at breakers yards, or new from mini spares suppliers such as Minispares.

If converting to a spin on filter it is also worthwhile fitting the spacer that fits between filter head and engine block that is to be found on Frogeyes. The spacer brings the filter away from the engine and conveniently angles it toward the hole in the chassis through which the filter is drawn upon removal.

Run the engine to warm the engine oil and make it flow easier. **With the engine switched off** raise the front of the car. Get beneath the car with a receptacle to catch the oil and a suitable spanner to undo the drain plug at the rear, offside of the sump. Some rag or kitchen roll is handy for spillages. You may wish to wear latex or 'Mechanix' type **gloves**. With the spin on type filters a tool is available in various guises to assist with breaking the initial seal of the filter to the filter head.

Once the oil has stopped flowing wipe around the drain hole and refit the drain plug with, preferably, a new copper washer. Tighten the plug.

Still from beneath the car reach up and unscrew the spin on filter just enough to break the seal. If you still have the original



filter bowl then slacken the thru bolt at its base – again only to slacken the bowl.

Now the clever bit. Place a plastic bag over the spin on filter or bowl. Choose a plastic bag that does not have 'childsafte' holes punched in it. By hand unscrew the spin on filter or bowl keeping it steady, and upright, lower it toward you through the hole in the chassis plate to the offside of the chassis rail.

The plastic bag should have caught any spillage of oil. With the older bowl its springs and washers and plates will need to be reassembled in order once drained of oil, cleaned in paraffin or thinners, and fitted with a new element. The new/replacement spin on type is ready for reassembly whereas the older bowl type will need a new rubber seal fitted into the slot in the filter head. Grease the rubber seal to help it overcome gravity and stay in the slot long enough for reassembly. Screw the bowl to the head rotating the bowl as the through bolt is tightened to ensure a good seal.

With the spin on type smear some washing up liquid onto the rubber. (You can use this ploy when fitting rubber coolant hoses). Only a tad! Now the bar stool mechanics will advise against this stating that the salt content, in the washing up liquid, will eat away the alloy filter head. I have been using this method for years with no untoward results.

Screw the spin on filter tightly by hand onto the filter head.

Fill the engine with oil. The original workshop wall chart advises that a Frogeye, with filter bowl, takes six and one half pints (at 3000 mile intervals between oil changes) but if using the spin on filter conversion then six and one quarter pints should suffice. Start the engine and check for leaks and ensure that you have oil pressure.

Before disposing of the old engine oil have a close look at it for signs of internal engine damage.

**Alan Anstead**  
S.E. Area Rep

# Where Are They Now?

## Mk1 Sprite 668 MTU



I have been contacted by Peter Hewitt who would like to know if any MASC members remember his old Mk1 Sprite. He writes:

*I owned the above Frogeye in the early sixties.*

*The picture (the only one I have) of me in 1962 in Manchester with 668 MTU.*

*Sadly I have no details of Chassis no. etc.*

*In 1962 it was just another car. The term "Classic" had not been invented.*

*It finally fell victim to the gearbox weakness and I traded it in for a Midget.*

*I think I got £150 for it.*

*Any sign of it these days?*

*Also photo of GMA 592C taken at my first Hillclimb in 1966 at Baitings Dam.*

*Happy days.*

*Regards*

*Peter Hewitt*



If you are looking for your old Midget or Sprite please send details with a photo, titled "Where are they now" to me at [editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk](mailto:editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk) or call me on 020 7700 5696

**Gary**

# New Members

The New Members section in this month's *MASCOT* continues with the overflow of the previous month's mammoth influx.

Once again *MASCOT* apologises to those new members who have failed to make it into this month's magazine. Be assured that if you have submitted a picture of your Spridget. It will make it into the magazine soon.

## From last month

3575	Matthew & Lizzie Wigglesworth	West Yorkshire	Midget Mk 3 RWA
4212	David Davies	Gloucestershire	Frogeye Sprite
4213	Mike Pope	West Midlands	tba
4215	Alan Goose	Nottinghamshire	Midget 1500
4221	Rachel & Michael Ward-Sale	East Sussex	Sprite Mk 4
4224	Gillian & David Hansford	Wiltshire	Austin Sprite
4229	Terry & Shirley Course	Bedfordshire	Midget 1500/Tifosi Rana
4231	Steve Roberts	Warwickshire	Austin Sprite
4234	Daniel Usher-Clark	Somerset	Sprite Mk 4
4237	Jeremy & Helen Lenox	Worcestershire	Healey Frogeye IOW
4238	Mark Kendall	Shropshire	Frogeye Sprite

## January's new and rejoined members

3640	Andrew Barrass	West Yorkshire	Frogeye
4240	Paul Devon-Rowe	Kent	Midget 1500
4241	Michael Higgins	Greater Manchester	Midget 1500
4242	Bob Jeffreys	Berkshire	Frogeye
4243	Tony & Vaida Brown	Gwent	Midget Mk 2
4244	Andy Purcell	Shropshire	Frogeye
4245	Alberto Cruz	Portugal	Frogeye & Midget Mk 3
4246	Peter Cliffe-Roberts	Hampshire	Austin Sprite
4247	Alex Matla	Netherlands	Midget Mk 3 RWA
4248	anon	Somerset	Sprite Mk 4



David Davies' Frogeye



Matthew & Lizzie Wigglesworth  
and their Mk3 Midget



Mike Pope's Mk1 Sprite?

Alan Goose with his 1500 Midget



Rachell & Mike Ward-Sale's Mk4 Sprite



Gillian & David Hansford's Austin Sprite

Terry & Shirley Course with their Tifosi Rana bodied 1500 Midget



The ex- Masc stand Austin Sprite now owned by Steve Roberts



Steve begins the strip down of the Sprite



*Daniel Usher-Clark's Mk4 Sprite*



*Jeremy and Helen Lenox's IOW Frogeye*



*Mark Kendall's Mk1 Sprite with his son Edward at the wheel*



*Tony & Valda Brown collecting their Midget from Spridget Specialist Mike Authers*



*Mk1 Sprite and MG Midget of Alberto Cruz from Portugal*



*Andy Barrass in his Frogeye*



# Track Day Preparation

With the 2010 Track Day Season about to begin, I thought that MASCOT readers, new to Track Days, might be interested to understand a little more about basic Track preparation. I have prepared a Quick Guide, based on my own experience and research, listing the main Trackday considerations and basic improvements that can be made to improve your Spridget for Track Day fun. The Guide should be regarded as a basic introduction that will get you started and enhance your confidence on Track.



I would like to write a follow up article, later in the year, to elaborate on some of the checks and upgrades that I have mentioned. In the meantime, do give Track Days a try – they are great fun and educational too. Good luck !

**Kate Andrews**

## Spridget Track Day Preparation Checklist

Track Condition	Spridget Carepoint	Basic Check	Suggested initial upgrade	Upgrade benefit
Higher cornering forces	Greater loads on Wheels and Tyres	Tyre condition (sufficient tread, no bulges in sidewalls)	Tread Depth gauge to check accurately	Accurate Tread measurement
		Correct Tyre pressures	Tyre Pressure Gauge to set accurately	Accurate Tyre Pressures
		Correct Wheelnut torques	Torque Wrench to set accurately	Accurate Wheelnut torques
	Greater loads on Suspension, Steering and Axle components and Bushes	No missing nuts/bolts on steering and suspension components. Check that Bushes are in good condition.	Polyurethane Suspension Bushes	Improved Handling/ stability
	High Speed stability (including cornering and braking)	Condition of Shock Absorbers (no leaks)	Larger diameter Front Anti-Roll Bar (eg 5/8" or 11/16")	Improved Handling/ stability
	Driver may slide about on "flat" Spridget seat during cornering	Check Drivers seat is securely fixed to floor	Fit Road Legal Harness	Driver held securely during high speed cornering
Greater demands on Brakes	Greater heat dissipation requirements (due to prolonged heavy braking)	Correct Brake Fluid level	N/A	
		No leaks from Hydraulic system (Master Cylinder/Brake Tubes/ Calipers/etc)	Dot 5 Brake Fluid	Less sponginess in Pedal when Fluid gets hot
		Brake Pad condition	Upated Brake Pads (eg EBC Greenstuff)	Less fade when Brake Discs get hot
		Brake Disc Condition	Upated Brake Discs (eg Brembo Sport replacement Discs (same dimensions as standard)	Improved heat dissipation from Brake Discs
		Brake Hose condition	Braided Hoses (eg Aeroquip/ Goodridge)	Less sponginess in Pedal when Fluid gets hot

Track Condition	Spridget Carepoint	Basic Check	Suggested initial upgrade	Upgrade benefit
Greater demands on Cooling System	Greater heat dissipation requirements on Cooling system (due to higher/prolonged engine rpm)	Correct coolant level and mix (Antifreeze/Water)	High quality coolant or additive (eg Water Wetter)	Improves heat dissipation – reduces coolant temperature
		Coolant Hoses in good condition (no bulges or hairline cracks)	N/A	
		Coolant Hose clamps not loose	N/A	
Greater demands on Oil	Increased Oil consumption (due to higher/prolonged engine rpm)	Correct Oil Level	High quality Oil (eg Penrite Classic HPR SAE 20W60)	Improved lubrication/ wear protection
	Oil leaks	No leaks from Sump/Oil filter/Oil Pressure Switch	Catch Tank for Rocker Cover Breather	Prevents Oil spill into Engine Bay or onto track
	Oil pressure fluctuations (due to Oil surge/starvation into Oil Pump from Sump)	Check Oil Pressure gauge (if fitted) periodically during cornering – slow down if pressure drops significantly	Baffled Sump/Windage Tray	Reduces oil surge/starvation into Oil Pump during high speed cornering/heavy braking
			Oil Pressure gauge or 20lb Oil Pressure Switch and Valve	Early warning of low Oil Pressure
Increased Oil temperature (due to higher/prolonged engine rpm)	N/A	Oil Cooler (eg Mocal 13 row )	Improves heat dissipation – reduces oil temperature	
Increased fuel consumption	Small Fuel Tank provides limited range during Tracktime	Check Fuel level is Full before starting Tracktime. Monitor Fuel level periodically.	Check proximity of nearest Petrol Station. Carry Fuel Jerrycan if Fuel is not available at/near Track – or visit Petrol Station at mid-day	Avoid embarrassment of running out of Fuel on Track (Circuit will charge you a premium for a tow to the pits and emergency refuel)
Noise Regulations (vary from Track to Track)	No issue if standard Exhaust System is fitted	Check Exhaust is in good condition (No rust holes)	N/A	
		Contact Track Day Organiser in advance if “noisy” Performance Exhaust has been fitted	Noise Level Meter/additional Silencer if Exhaust Noise seems very loud	Ensures vehicle meets Track noise regulations
Weather	No issue if vehicle has recent MOT	Ensure Wipers are working and Blades are in good condition	Consider Rain-X on windscreen	Improves visibility in heavy rain
		Ensure all Lights (and indicators) are working	Consider adding High Level Brake Light onto rollover Bar – if fitted	Improves safety
		Ensure Windscreen Demister is working	N/A	
Misc Safety	Mirrors	Ensure all Mirrors are secure (doesn't wobble about) – can be distracting on track if you have to constantly reset your mirrors	N/A	
	Towing Eyes	Ensure Towing Eyes are fitted and visible	Add “Tow Here” Decals onto bodywork above Towing Eyes (Tow Hooks may not be visible if vehicle is in gravel trap)	Ensures Recovery Truck doesn't damage your vehicle by using inappropriate towing location
	Rollover protection	N/A	Consider Rollover Bar	Improved head protection should the worst happen !

# Isle of Wight Frogeye



bonnet are inlaid with Kevlar panels to add strength, in fact one of Keith Brading's party pieces was to throw a blanket over the rear deck and stand on it!



The original brochure

"Yes" said the expert, "very nice" he continued, "shame they aren't the original dials" was his conclusion. The scene was the arrival of Elmo at the club night of a well known one make car club (not MSOC). The self appointed expert had just finished examining our recently completed Frogeye, however he had not spotted that the body was made of fibreglass, such is the quality of the Frogeye Car Company Healey Frogeye.

Back in the '80s, Isle of Wight businessman Keith Brading spotted a market for a good quality body/chassis combination that would accept the mechanicals of the many rusty Sprites and Midgets that in those days commanded a very low price.

In conjunction with Geoff Healey, he developed what he called a "Restoration Assembly", you supplied the cross-member from the chassis of your donor car which was then incorporated into the new galvanised tubular chassis – allowing you to retain the identity of the original car. You also supplied the axle tube that was modified in the factory to take the brackets for the novel rear suspension. The chassis supports a two piece body comprising the main part from the footwells back and the bonnet that hinges at the front.

With Geoff Healey's involvement, the car was officially known as the Healey Frogeye and a "Frogeye" badge in the style of the Sprite arrow is the only external indication that the car was produced long after the Austin Healey Sprite Mk I morphed into the Spridget.

The Isle of Wight is well known in the boating world and it was boat-builder Island Plastics that were commissioned to produce the moulds and bodies. They did a very good job, the rear deck and the centre section of the

The chassis took all the mechanical components from the donor but with one exception, instead of the leaf springs, rubber block Indespension units supported the rear of the car with the radius arm from the suspension unit acting as the lower axle link. You also had the option to specify an alternative gearbox and the chassis was made accordingly, we opted for the Toyota 5 speed unit.

By the time we bought our Frogeye, the factory had started to experiment with other power units, including the Rover K series and the Ford CVH. Although there was an agent appointed in the USA, sales across the pond were lower than expected but there was a strong interest from Japan. In fact the interest was sufficient for a Japanese company to fund the evolution of the Healey Frogeye into the Super Sprite. The brief for this was that all the components could be purchased new. As a consequence there are some significant differences between the Super Sprite and the earlier cars, these include a K Series mated to an FSO 5 speed gearbox and coil-spring suspension all round. Externally, the later car has a repositioned flush-fitting fuel filler and a bowed rear deck just behind the cockpit to accommodate the centre mounted seat belts.

Karen and I had owned an original Frogeye back in the '70s, it was a tin worm colony and beyond economic repair, so it was sadly broken for spares. We were therefore taken with a magazine article that praised the output of the Ryde factory and decided to go and have a look. As it happened, the



weekend of our trip coincided with the worst snowstorm in the country for a long time, the island was covered in snow and ice and a demonstration drive was out of the question. So we returned a few months later and Keith handed us the keys to the demo car and asked us to be back by the time the factory closed – what a way to sell the car, after a fantastic day exploring the island in the sunshine we were hooked and an order placed.

That was back in 1991, we collected the components, bought a rusty 1500 Midget as a donor and started the build.



The finished car sported a coat of Speedwell blue, a 1480 A series mated to a Toyota 5 speed 'box and the windscreen and aluminium cockpit trim from our original frogeye.

It was great fun and we enjoyed a number of trips including a holiday in Cornwall before an MGF joined the scene in 1998.

Poor Elmo took a rest beneath an apple tree for the next 5 years as the F offered top down motoring with a greater range (from a comfort point of view) with holidays in France and Spain.

In 2006, with the F long gone, Elmo was recovered from his resting place and given a good inspection, the only damage was a small section of leather on one of the seats that had been chewed by a mouse, the

body and chassis showed no signs to the prolonged slumber outdoors – try doing that with an original!.

The mechanical components were given a thorough overhaul including new brakes all round and the engine was replaced with a 1340 based on a misguided belief that this would cure the oil leak from the back on the crank. At the same time, the body was treated to a new coat of paint.



However Elmo was not happy with being sidelined for so long and in a fit a peek progressively rejected all the fluids in the system – even the oil in the steering rack. With the leaks finally addressed, the teenage tantrums produced an erratic misfire that was eventually traced to the rotor arm, then the final stamping of the foot was an exploding clutch release bearing.

I am happy to say that we are now getting on much better and Elmo has been a real pleasure with some great runs with the NW section of the MSOC as well as some more distant trips to Goodwood, Mid Wales, Whitby, Northumberland, Moffat and most recently the Christmas Cracker run in the Lake District.

A total of 166 cars (we think) were produced by the Frogeye Car Company before they went into receivership, we have set up a web-site at <http://www.healey-frogeye.co.uk> where we are trying to build up a register of all known examples. Paul Hodgkinson has a wealth of knowledge on the Super Sprite and between us we would love to hear of any IOW car out there.

These are great cars to own, not only do you benefit from the corrosion resistance, but as they are not original Sprites, you don't feel compelled to maintain the diminutive engine and moving a few switches on the dash produces no pangs of guilt. Added to that there is the rarity factor.

**Mike Bennett**

# Gas Struts for Bonnets

## Part 3 Frogeyes

**A**lan Anstead's article on this subject, entitled "Strutting your Stuff Spridget Style" p.9 of December edition is much more appropriate to Frogeyes with steel bonnets which make up about one third of the car and possibly one quarter of its total weight. At least that is what it used to seem to me, certainly a two handed job to lift and as much as anything else why a lot of the were discarded and replaced with glassfibre as the dreaded tin worm took hold.

Furthermore my car came with a bit of bent wire to hold it open until I bit the bullet and splashed out on a pair of sliding struts at around £18 each. Being something of the parsimonious persuasion I thought them very expensive especially as they are not handed right or left. All too frequently on attempting to open or close the bonnet one would latch and one wouldn't. Thereafter you spend the next ten minutes heaving the bonnet up and until finally they synchronise and you retire for 10 minutes to recover.

So earlier this year I fitted a pair from the bootlid of an MG Metro which is languishing at the bottom of my garden (criminal waste but soon to make a Chinaman happy). The are not strong enough, they assist lifting nicely but don't hold the weight of the bonnet open. Fear not say I, there are a pair from the hatch of a VW Passat estate car that I happened to have around somewhere and which no one bought from my autojumble stand at Gaydon-Spridget 50. I can now open my bonnet using one finger and it stays open with only light pressure to close it. See illustrations.

It was necessary to drill two ¼ inch holes next to the fixing lugs of the now redundant brackets to attach the threaded ball to the bonnet at either side. I then drilled two more holes each side approximately 2 inches down from the bulk head. The Passat struts have ready drilled swivelling "feet" attached to the bottom which take 11mm. (¼ inch) size bolts and it is a simple matter to bolt them to the bulkhead. I used a stiffener extending beneath each foot to spread the load because the bulkhead steel is of slender gauge though I am not sure it is really necessary.



*Foot of strut nearside*



*Offside strut*



*Top fixing point*

There is one snag with the Passat struts in that they are 21 inches fully extended which limits the height of the opened bonnet. I have already priced a pair of 24 inch struts at my local breakers (fiver apiece mate he said and he has hundreds of them) which even for a parsimonious Spriter like me is do-able. I will have to make a couple of brackets and must remember to get a pair of threaded swivel balls off one the scrappers. £37 – Humbug!

**Geoff Hunter**  
Member 2565

# Auction Watch



The sharp eyed among you may have noticed that this vehicle isn't anything like a Spridget. It doesn't have the 13" wheels, the A Series or later 1500cc engine. And as far as I can tell, the roof doesn't come off.

I do however think that it is worthy of a place in MASCOT due to its BMC history and the fact that I would love it.

It is a 1963 BMC Technical Support Vehicle and is estimated to sell at auction for between \$115,000 – \$145,000 US dollars.

RM Auctions describes it as follows:

*It has a 6.1-litre Perkins inline six-cylinder diesel engine with fuel injection, five-speed manual gearbox, two-speed rear axle, BMC/Morris FFK 140 commercial vehicle chassis. Wheelbase: 205"*

*The BMC Competitions Department stormed the racing world during the 1950s and 1960s with a seemingly endless array of "works" Austin-Healeys, MGs and Minis. During this era, BMC also produced a number of unique bus-type vehicles based on the BMC/Morris FFK 140 commercial truck chassis.*



While originally conceived to carry a racecar and provide mobile trackside support, these vehicles were also utilized by BMC in the USA for product demonstrations, technical instruction and dealer promotions. In all, these vehicles were built in very limited numbers, with just eight survivors believed remaining in existence. When new, they were strictly reserved for official BMC use and were not publically available until their eventual retirement.

With styling by Pininfarina, these vehicles incorporated a number of unique styling cues that enhanced the utilitarian features of BMC's regular commercial vehicles. Their bold exteriors featured sculpted side panels and flowing side-window arrangements, while their long, neat tailfins echoed those of BMC's own passenger cars, including the Austin Oxford. Their alloy bodies also had an aircraft-type inner structure with construction by Marshall's of Cambridge, a natural choice given their expertise in airframe construction. Marshall's also enjoyed a long association with BMC, ever since Sir Herbert Austin awarded the firm an Austin distributorship at the end of World War I.



Mechanically, the vehicles utilized a Perkins six-cylinder diesel engine, as well as enhancements including a two-speed rear axle assembly and power steering, providing outstanding over-the-road performance capabilities that belied the vehicles' bulk and relatively modest horsepower ratings. Other unique features included a sporty banjo-style steering wheel similar to that of contemporary MGs and Austin-Healeys, as well as a pair of racing-style bucket seats in keeping with the competition flavor of the vehicles.



Resplendent in its red, white and blue livery and complete with period "Special Tuning Department" rosettes, this left-hand drive example is one of just two such vehicles originally created for the U.S.-based dealer network of BMC. In period, they were mainly employed for promotional purposes, complete with advertising and educational display materials. In fact, this vehicle formed part of the MG display stand at the 1964 Chicago Auto Show, among many other high-profile appearances during its early days with BMC.

Fully functional and presented in good condition today, this very interesting and usable vehicle is ready for its next adventure and will certainly be a welcome visitor to shows and vintage racing events everywhere.

More recently, it has been retrofitted with a larger and more-powerful engine, and it comes complete with a comprehensive selection of service manuals covering the engine, mechanicals and electrical system.

Another one of the surviving few examples has been faithfully converted to a replica of the BMC Competitions Department transporters, with a ramp door and car-hauling capabilities, and recently won the coveted "Spirit of Goodwood" award. The example presented here still maintains its original configuration and will certainly be even more desirable, as an original artifact of BMC's own "British Invasion" during the Swinging Sixties.

With thanks to RM Auctions USA for their words and images.



## Which Choke Cable?

I note choke cable **A** (CHA 288) which says choke and lock on it, was a very late 1275 fitment (April 1974: GAN5 -147531) My car which is a late 1973 model but is a 1974 coloured car, has the type **A** (CHA288) cable fitted as seen on page 97 of Terry Horler's excellent book "Original Sprite and Midget" depicting a 1972/73 car with the 1974 cable! The same later choke cable is shown on the dash of the 1972 Midget in Porter service guide!

I have seen choke cable **A** on many 1973 cars. However I cannot prove if my cable has ever been changed to the later type.

Is it possible the later choke cable **A** was introduced on an adhoc basis prior to the official 1974 changeover if supplies of cable **B** were unavailable? I have put this question on the MG webring and some cars of this era 1972/73 have cable **A** and some cable **B**!



I note that on the official BL MG Midget photo of the 1974 model, it clearly shows the earlier choke cable **B** (AHA7748) also pictured on page 96 of "Original Sprite and Midget". Which cable would be correct.

Does anyone know?

Thanks

**Rob**  
Member 2606

# Austin Healey Sprite Factory Race Car 1959 Sebring Team



## Vehicle Description

- \* AN5/8145 WORKS AUSTIN HEALEY SPRITE
- \* 1959 SEBRING RACE 2ND IN CLASS

This is a car that is unique because of its history and originality and is probably one of the most important Sprites in existence. It is one of the two remaining cars from the Donald Healey Team that swept the podium for the 750cc – 1000cc class at Sebring in 1959 and it is the only remaining car with the original parts from the Sebring race. The three-car finish proved the stamina of the little car in a 12 hour endurance race and showed the factory's commitment to racing. Sebring kicked off an advertising campaign

that resulted in the sale of almost as many Sprites in 2½ years that Big Healeys sold in 14 years.

AN5/8145/Body # BAE7324 left the assembly line on November 24, 1958 and was dispatched to Donald Healey Motors on November 26, 1958 and sent to the US on February 23, 1959. It was one of four cars prepared for the 1959 Sebring Race by Donald and Geoff Healey. At Sebring this car ran with the number 53 driven by Ed Leavens and "Doc" Kunz, finishing second after leading the class for most of the race until the gearbox failed on the last pit stop.

After Sebring this particular Sprite was sent to Kjell Qvale the BMC distributor in San Francisco, where it was raced with the local BMC sponsorship and used for advertising. Since it was raced only a few times after 1961 and not updated to later SCCA rules, the car survived with the original Sebring parts mostly intact. The Sprite led a sheltered rust free life in California where it changed hands several times after Qvale's ownership. A previous owner ran the car in several Vintage Races between 1986 and 1989. Butch Gilbert purchased the car in 2004, undertaking a rotisserie restoration during which he strived to insure that every detail is correct to the 1959 period. Even the correct nuts and bolts (replated or new) were used.



*Sprites no.53 and No.54 line up at the start of the 1959 Sebring race*



The engine is not the original XSP from Sebring but it appears to be a real XSP motor serial number XSP1757 with the correct connecting rods and cylinder head.



The original Dunlop Light-car Disc brakes have been rebuilt and are installed on the car but the wire wheels are a new replacements (although Butch still has the original Dunlop 60 spoke wire wheels).



*The rear brakes before and after the rebuild*



A new custom fuel cell was installed in the bottom tank of the original dual gas tank. A custom double width removable rollbar fits unseen under the correct Jensen hardtop. This is the most recent of many detailed restorations that the Butch has done on other Sebring cars and other Vintage race cars. Notably the two Qvale Team MGBs from the 1964 Sebring race.

Part of the restoration has been to document the cars history with book and period magazine references and pictures and a trace of ownership. Everything has been done to provide an accurate history of the car. There

is an impressive collection of documentation that includes copies of letters from Donald Healey and others connected to the Sebring Team. A British Motor Industry Heritage Trust Certificate is included with a copy of the certificate for AN5/8146 that has reference to the sequential serial numbers of the team cars sent to Sebring in 1959.

The car has been registered with the FIA and a Historic Technical Passport issued.

### **BUILD SHEET SPECIFICATION ST200 FOR THE 1959 SEBRING RACE**

- \* FACTORY TUNING ENGINE XSP 1757 (REPLACEMENT FOR XSP1157-7)
- \* TWO 1/4 INCH SU H24 CARBURETTORS
- \* SPECIAL INTAKE MANIFOLD
- \* SPECIAL TUNED "Y" HEADER
- \* DUAL EXHAUST TO THE REAR OF CAR
- \* Q2354 SMOOTH CASE TRANSMISSION WITH CLOSE RATIO GEARS
- \* DUNLOP 60 SPOKE WIRE WHEELS
- \* Q2337 DUNLOP LIGHT-CAR BRAKE KIT ON ALL FOUR WHEELS W/HUBS, CALIPERS AND CALIPER BRACKETS
- \* REINFORCED A-ARMS WITH GUSSETS WELDED NEXT TO BOTH PIVOT POINTS
- \* Q2334 COMPETITION FRONT SPRINGS WITH SPECIAL WIRE DIAMETER
- \* Q2335 COMPETITION REAR LEAF SPRINGS
- \* Q2315 TORSION ANTI-ROLL BAR
- \* RE-VALVED FRONT SHOCKS
- \* ARMSTRONG ADJUSTABLE REAR SHOCKS
- \* LONG DISTANCE PETROL TANK
- \* LUCAS LE MANS HEAD LAMPS WITH SCREENS
- \* LUCAS REAR MOUNT DRIVING LIGHTS
- \* LUCAS SIDE LIGHT #537 ON RIGHT SIDE
- \* JENSEN HARDTOP AND SIDE WINDOWS (LOW SERIAL NUMBER)
- \* SPARE TIRE HOLD DOWN
- \* HEAVY DUTY GENERATOR WITH TACH DRIVE AND BEARINGS ON BOTH ENDS
- \* HEAVY DUTY VOLTAGE REGULATOR RB310
- \* SMITHS CHRONOMETRIC TACHOMETER

Everything has been done to insure that this car is as close to as it was ran at Sebring in 1959 using the original parts and in a few cases a replacement part.

Since getting this information from Butch, he has written to inform me of some interesting developments regarding the Sprite's history.



*The interior before and after the rebuild*



Butch writes:

"I bought the car from my neighbour who bought the car from a BMC mechanic who had been retired for some time. He worked at the dealership which received the car for Kjell Qvale after the Sebring race. The mechanic worked on it getting it ready for a local race the following weekend and a number of races later that year...he was friends with the designated driver and store manager of the Napa California BMC store. Many years later he spots the car on a lawn with a "for sale" sign on it and buys it. He works on it for sometime and gets it prepared for some local vintage races and runs it for a number of years. While he is vintage racing, he becomes friends with the owner of the #55 Sprite from the same team from the 1959 Sebring race.

They exchange known histories, letters and documents which they have both gathered over the years. He then sells it to my neighbour who has plans of restoring and racing it again, but other projects get in the way. Along I come ... I have watched this car run it's races in California from early 1959, as my boss ran in the same race group and I worked on his car at about every race in



*The No.55 Sprite following the No.53 Sprite at the start of the race*

1959. I spied the car running in the vintage races in the '80s and kept track of it. I sold the two MGB 1964 Sebring entries which I had just restored I bought the Sprite.

I always go through the known history on the cars I restore and try to fill in the blanks and double check the facts. I went to Southern California and interviewed the owner of the #55 Sebring Sprite and went through all the paperwork that he had gathered over the years. I also went through his car and took pictures and noted every detail that I could and studied the same features on "my" car.

As I poured over of the information I uncovered some facts that were not quite on centre. I made many phone calls, emails letters and looked through racing programmes, results and books trying to uncover pieces of its history. One fact never made any sense to me .... After the Sebring race there was a meeting at Sebring where the MGAs and Sprites were reassigned to new owners. Nowhere in anything written can I find who was to receive which car. The only reference is an article written as a letter to the editor of Sports Car Illustrated about the trip from Florida to California with the #55 Sprite and the #29 MGA that was being received by the BMC distributor in Southern California. Other than that I can not find any reference as which serial number car went where. Then while I was going through the notes that the owner of the #55 car has, he shows me a note dated (1986) that he received from Phil Stiles (driver of #54 Sebring Sprite and owner of the #78 back up car he bought after Sebring).

Phil remembered which serial number went with which car number at Sebring ... and my car according to Phil was number 53 ... I had talked with the mechanic who said he received the car in mid week and the just



*The No. 53 and No.54 cars in the pits at Sebring*

had a few days to get it ready for a race they had planned to run the car here in Northern California. I asked him if they had another gearbox ready for the car because the #53 car at Sebring had broken 2nd gear leaving the pits on the last pit stop while leading the class. It limped around the last stint and finished in second place. He said that it did not have a broken box. I always thought it odd that Qvale would get the second placed car with a broken gearbox as he was by far the highest ranked distributor for BMC and he always got the first placed cars. I could never find any evidence to disprove Phil Stiles' note and I knew Phil had owned and driven two of the four cars so he was probably right.

Well I recently received a note from a guy who owns the Falcon Sprite from the 1960 Sebring race...he asked if my car had ever been in the Midwest for races in 1960. He has a picture that was given to him by the then owner of a Lotus Eleven that he now owns showing a blue Right Hand Drive Sprite #53



*A Sprite with the number 53 (seen behind the Lotus) racing in the Midwest during the 1960s*



*The Sprite at Laguna Seca*

with wire wheels pictured behind the Lotus in the pits. I told him I was very interested in a copy of the picture and he emailed me one. It clearly shows a blue Sprite with wire wheels and the #53 in the same exact font and place as the "real Sebring car".

I could make out the hole under the headlamp where the driving lights were attached for the Sebring race. I have had notes stating the name of the fellow who was racing the other Sebring car and he was living in the Midwest. The car was destroyed while being towed to a race in the early '60s in the mid-west.

Does this picture trump the note from Phil Stiles as to which number went with which car? I have got in touch with a local race historian to see if they can find the programme from the race that the picture was taken to see who owned the #53 Sprite in that photo. So My car might be #54 and Qvale did get the class winner and the gearbox was indeed not broken! I'm waiting for the fellow's name that had the car at that race so long ago...

**Butch Gilbert**  
Northern California  
USA

*This Sprite is one of those featured in John Sprinzel and Tom Coulthard's book "Spritely Years". Tom informs me that he still has a few signed copies remaining (for MASCOT readers) and he can be contacted at: spritelyyears@btinternet.com*

Photo credits at Sebring © Russ Knauer, who was pit steward on #55 Sprite. I included a couple of period shots on Nor-Cal tracks shot by Russ at Laguna Seca 61 shot at Vaca Valley raceway same time period.

The pictures engine compartment carb side and the ¾ front in the path and the body shot in the pits at Laguna are done by Gary Anderson and the rest by Sharon Gilbert.

# London Bridges Run

3rd January 2010



After about 7 months of Spridget ownership I had considered taking part in last year's London Bridges Run. For various reasons I didn't do it but since then had regretted the decision as the reports in both *MASCOT* and on the bbs forum both suggested it was a great day out. So as soon as the 2010 event was advertised, I penned it firmly in the diary – yes a Christmas present.

Leaving a frosty but sunny mid-Essex at 0800 with the hood down, we arrived to join four assorted Spridgets in the car park of McDonalds in Deptford, SE London. The "we" included John Beckinsale who was originally planning to join us in his MGB. However, as both our wives had succumbed to the Big Bug, John had volunteered to be my co driver for the day. After introducing ourselves to the organiser Darren and *MASC* editor Gary, our next stop was a hot drink. Gradually more cars began to arrive with a total of 13 comprising eight Sprites (five of them Frogeyes), four Midgets (Peter's was the only rubber bumper in attendance) plus a lovely AC Ace. Gary and ourselves were the only northern (i.e. north of the Thames!) representatives this year.

As the start time approached, more decided to go topless despite the still near freezing conditions – at least the sun was shining. At 1000, we all left the car park and headed for the first bridge. Soon we passed the railway units that formed the backdrop in the photos of the 2009 start. Observing the 20mph limit of course, the cars were soon attracting the attention of visitors as we crossed Tower Bridge. The route then took us into the infamous Congestion Charging Zone, which is fortunately free at weekends, before heading for London Bridge.

Along with several others, we missed the right turn immediately after entering Southwark Street. A quick u-turn sorted that minor error but the following group had now shrunk to a single car as the others seemed to prefer an alternative route. Back on route, a series of small back streets brought the two cars to the roadworks on Southwark Bridge. After a seemingly long time, the lights changed to green and we headed for Blackfriars underpass where the beautiful sound of a couple of Spridgets echoed off the walls. Then came Blackfriars Bridge before an informal regroup on Waterloo Bridge.

We then followed some of the major tourist areas such as The Strand, Trafalgar Square, Whitehall and then Parliament Square. Not surprisingly our cars were again attracting admiring glances and also provided the subject of many photos. Whilst waiting at the traffic lights to turn left to cross Westminster Bridge, the bells of Big Ben announced it was 1045. We took the 2nd exit, instead of the 3rd exit, at the roundabout to cross Lambeth Bridge turn but another u-turn sorted that error. After another informal regroup on Millbank, Vauxhall Bridge was crossed and finally the ninth and halfway bridge – Chelsea – soon arrived.

Albert and Battersea Bridges came up quickly before we joined the busy Chelsea scene complete with a possibly XK150 classic Jaguar, the local tractors (i.e. 4 x 4s), and the odd supercar. Then it was only Wandsworth Bridge before the formal regroup after 16 miles at another McDonalds. Here most settled for another hot drink and the inevitable comfort break although a few were seen with something more substantial!

After 30 minutes or so, it was time to leave and cross the final six bridges en route to Richmond. After the Wandsworth one-way system, complete with two upmarket sportscar dealers, we crossed Putney Bridge to Fulham. A loop, which twice passed under the Hammersmith flyover, was followed by Hammersmith Bridge before another riverside section through Mortlake and Barnes and on to Chiswick Bridge.

Another riverside section led to Kew Bridge. If we thought this was congested, we hadn't seen anything yet with the sting in the tail! Once across, a group of cars in front made an erroneous early turn right but soon rejoined the route behind us. Another busy section was followed by Twickenham Bridge. Only Richmond Bridge remained in the final 2 miles. Once finally across the bridge the reason for the congestion became obvious with a mini roundabout followed by a zebra crossing and then roadworks. Once clear of all the traffic, it was only another 800 yards to the finish at the Rose of York pub where there was plenty of space to line up the cars overlooking the River Thames for a photoshoot. We then headed indoors for refreshments and Sprigety conversation by the roaring log fire.



A big thank you to Darren and Tracey for the accurate and informative route instructions – it was a great day out. It had been many years since I drove through central London on my trans London trips prior to the M25 and the route bought back memories.

**Doug Plumb**  
Member 4071

# Plastic Frogs

My love of Frogeyes extends beyond the real thing, I tend to collect all sorts of stuff relating to Frogeyes and Spridgets in general.

I am a keen model maker and have a small collection of plastic model kits of Frogeyes. Frog models are not that common, and later 'square' cars are not (to my knowledge) modelled at all apart from an incredibly inaccurate and awful Mk 2 Sprite made by Lindberg, a lower stream US manufacturer. More about this one later.

The best-known Frogeye kit is the 1/32nd scale example by Airfix. This was introduced in April 1961 and came in a plastic bag with a card 'header' showing the splendid Roy Cross artwork (See Gary's article Jan 2010). These kits are fairly difficult to find and can command quite high prices (£30 – 40 seems to be the going rate for a bag kit). This kit was re-issued in later years in a box, and as a 'starter' kit complete with glue, paints and a brush. These are now in themselves getting rare, but can be had for £5 – 10. The Airfix kit is an excellent representation of the Frogeye and is an easy kit to build.

Monogram in the USA also made a Frogeye in their 'Forty Niner' series. My example is dated 1960, so possibly pre-dates the Airfix offering. Moulded in a reasonably accurate shade of blue, it is a larger scale than the Airfix kit, possibly 1/35. The Monogram kit differs from the Airfix rendering, in that the body shell is in 4 pieces, making a slightly more complex build, it also comes with some funky decals to make it into a 'hot-rod' racing version. This kit is now quite rare, fetching high prices, especially with a perfect box and decals etc.

Next we move up a scale to 1/24 (1 inch to 24 inches to you non-modellers!) Gunze Sangyo, a Japanese kit manufacturer produced a Frogeye kit in the 1990s, now unfortunately discontinued, it is still available – expect to pay about £20. There was also a hardtop version, and a competition version of the normal Gunze kit.

The kit itself is a very good example of the car, although it is a 'kerbside' kit (no engine detail) everything else is well represented. My only criticism is that it sits very low at the



back end when assembled, but it's nothing that can't be adjusted in the building process.

Gunze also produced a 'High-Tech' version of the kit. This is basically the same product but has a die-cast metal floor pan, wheels and axle. Also included is a sheet of photo-etched metal components – grille, dash, wipers etc. Chrome parts are also included unlike the Airfix and Monogram kits.

The High-Tech kit is quite unusual and can be quite expensive (can go for up to £50).

This is not a definitive listing of plastic hobby kits of the Frogeye, there may be more that I haven't discovered, if you have any that I haven't featured then please let me know – I'm always on the hunt!

What of the Mk2 Sprite I mentioned earlier? As I said it's a horrible, inaccurate offering that has the wrong shaped front end, rear end, and the middle isn't too clever either! It is best avoided if you want an accurate scale model, but it's good for a laugh. Would I buy another one? Yes! Just for the novelty value alone, but I wouldn't pay more than £1.

Happy Spridgeting everybody.

**Terry Langridge**  
(Hampshire)

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# Bristol Area Report

**W**ell I never – I've been labelled a distorter of the truth by a fellow Area Organiser. Mr Andy Cross of nearby Wiltshire alleges in the January edition that the Bristol Area reports are fiction. This is truly a 'half shafts' at dawn moment, I'm sharpening mine up right now. I can assure the membership that the places, names and characters all exist. My reportage is based upon actual events, events that could have happened or may happen if I didn't keep a tight rein on things. If you still doubt me, ask Alan Lo or our esteemed General Secretary – they certainly wouldn't tolerate such behaviour. Moreover, our respected Editor would certainly not allow inaccuracies to appear in *MASCOT* and even backs up my reportings with graphic images of Bristol events.

Our January meeting due at the Rose and Crown at Pucklechurch was snowed off well and truly. Fingers crossed that the second Wednesday in February will see our happy band of Mascateers gathering once more. On the technical side, Alan Lo has been experimenting with some new ideas on clean burn combustion. Tired of the endless problems of carbonisation and cleaning out the inlet tract of his Mk1



*Alan Lo's Guinea Pig engine gets the once over from an expert*

Midget with anything that comes to hand, usually a toothbrush, Alan has now made this his mission in life. Alan has built a demonstrator engine that allows him to study more closely the effect of combustion flame path and carbon deposit. Although this demonstrator engine is just a Guinea pig for further research programmes, Alan is experiencing some early teething problems. The cylinder has a propensity to melt on start up. Keep trying Alan, I hope nothing hampsters progress.

**Terry Horler** – and that's the truth!

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# Another Frogeye Rear Divider Appears



Further to the recent article in *MASCOT* featuring the CEP Mk1 Sprite Boot Locking partition, my car "Cherry" has got one of those! At least, I don't think it's one of those exactly, because it's bigger and it isn't fixed to the strengthening rib, but about an inch and a half behind, with three screw heads in brass cups, nicely bedded in sealant, showing on the rear deck.

The previous (and first) owner – Walter Caines – was a great one for accessorizing his Sprite, and I'm guessing this was one he did himself – perhaps having seen a 'CEP' somewhere. And pretty essential if the Sprite was your everyday car. He and his wife went touring on the continent in the holidays, probably leaving the car parked for longish stops with their luggage in the boot.



What Cherry's got looks very similar to the 'CEP' model: piano hinge right along the bottom, leathercloth covering, and mortice lock with a proper old-fashioned key. But the opening dimensions are  $28\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $11\frac{1}{2}$ ", and the door has a cherry red painted hardwood strengthening bead around it.

Mr. Caines recorded everything he did to the car in a logbook, so now I shall have to see if he recorded the fitting of this, and if so when.

The CEP brochure

Nick Rowlett

# East Anglian Report



in turn would like to show mine for all the individuals who have had a part in organising and supporting our many and varied events through the year.

I think I have an easy job in reality with none being backward in coming forward to suggest and organise a bewildering variety of events, the biggest problem is fitting them all in. All I really have to do is a bit of sifting and coordinating, and keep my ears open for material to help me pen a

The only club event to report this month is the Christmas Sunday lunch held on 13th December at the Mad Cat. The format was to have a lunchtime eating meeting around the same time, and in place of our normal Mad Cat evening meeting, and being in the daytime the plan was to coax a few Spridget out of hibernation. Sadly this year it was not a terribly good day weather wise and even I (who can be a little obsessive about using the little car) had to bow to Pat's common sense against freezing conditions and the threat of heavy rain (or worse). In actual fact the rain did keep off and a couple of correct cars did turn out, even one without the roof (well done guys).

The meal was a great success with a turnout of twenty people (our best turnout so far for this event), the food was brilliant, the best meal I have ever had at the Mad Cat, and as always-great value. We managed to almost fill the venue with only six or eight non-MASC people in the dining room (with a little bit of luck we will take over the entire place next time). The meal coincided with my birthday and Graham surprised me a little by announcing this and voicing a few kind words of appreciation regarding the contribution of the area Rep, however for some reason he insists on referring to me as the secretary (a position I have neither the legs nor the typing skills for). It is always nice when people are gracious enough to show appreciation, and I



few words for MASCOT each month (anything you say at a MASC gathering will be taken note of and may be used against you in a MASCOT article).

Deadlines and lead times being what they are, by the time you read this it will be early February, and with a bit of luck the need to scrape the global warming from our windscreens will have passed (or be well on it's way to having passed) and our thoughts will be firmly on planning the events and exploits for the new season. Possibly the Yesteryear run, a Treasure hunt or two, Kimbolton Classic, BMC Rally, Wisbech run, Silverstone, a Stilton Cheese or Pork pie run, or possibly a visit to the Frogs life centre, who knows.

See you all at the Mad Cat and beyond.

**Dave Dixon**

# Home Counties North West

**O**n a miserably cold and wet Wednesday December 30th evening, eleven souls sat; no, eleven old souls sat down; (try again) eleven *jolly* old souls sat down to share a festive spread. (*Revision*) Eleven jolly old, *shivering* souls sat down to a pub supper. The central heating was on the blink, as was half the menu, as was the chef, who issued rubbery beans. Nevertheless a magnificent war time spirit enveloped the group of OAP members of the HCNW MASC group. Conversation blossomed and, at times, even became a bit risqué- but why not. There must be some excitement to fill the gap while the Spridgets are locked away in warm storage. Car natters had their place as well.

In the more sensible moments some planning for the coming year was discussed. We can now publish a calendar with an event in each month of the good weather season, which we are sure will be our blessing.

By the time this article is resting on your loo-side table (where else to digest the wonderful contents of *MASCOT?*) we will have enjoyed our belated Christmas do at The Lilley Arms. We expect 35, or perhaps more, to be there with nine of them coming from the Hampshire Round Wheel.

The temptation to postpone the essential jobs on the car is great because who thought of installing under floor heating in the garage? Concrete becomes colder and harder as maturity makes its inevitable way into the bones. BUT ... Some people have been out and about and have survived to tell the tale. This has turned out to be only one, Keith, who adds his few lines.

This snow could be great fun in a Spridget but the salt puts the mockers on it. Pity that.

**Chris**

## Car Club Event at Brooklands Museum – 1 January 2010

I and my wife Ann went to Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey on 1 January for their Annual Car Club Event. For those of you who do not know, Brooklands is home to British motorsport and aviation – if you have never been I would recommend a visit as there are many interesting exhibits from both



the motoring and aviation worlds. A Concorde is on site on which you can have a simulated flight – check out their website [www.brooklandsmuseum.com](http://www.brooklandsmuseum.com). Mercedes World is next door – you can pose in all the posh cars that you cannot afford!

I am sorry to say that I did not go to Brooklands in my Midget this year as it failed its MOT in mid-December – nothing drastic just a split steering rack gaiter but due to the inclement weather I had not been able to repair it and get a retest done.

One of the other Clubs I belong to, Harrow Car Club, has been booking an area at this event for some years. Harrow CC has got some history with Brooklands as a few of its members from the 1920/30s competed on the Brooklands banking including A.E. Moss, the father of our club patron Sir Stirling Moss, Kay Petre and Dr Sammy Davis.

Among the cars on display this year under the Harrow banner were Gary and Gaps (he was the first to arrive), a Mercedes 450SLC rally car, an Audi 80GT, a Porsche 996 and a GM Holden V8 road going version of the Australian Touring Car.



Other vehicles on display elsewhere on the site ranged from Austin 7s with what looked like bicycle wheels as they were so narrow, to an 8 Litre Supercharged 1920s Bentley that if you wanted to buy would probably cost more than the average family home.

There were other Midgets and Sprites on display and one had a Supercharger. There was a Triumph TR4 that looked good with its matching colour scheme tiny caravan called TR-Drop.

We enjoyed the day and if you are not too hung-over on 1 January 2011 would recommend you try and go along in your Midget/Sprite to give it a New Year run.

By the time you read this I will have fixed my car and had it retested ready to be enjoyed as soon as this snow has gone – we've had about 30cms this January where we are in Hertfordshire.

**Keith Warner**



*Peter Renn's Supercharged Midget*

## Yorkshire Report



Given the extreme snowfall in North Yorkshire the night before, it was no surprise that most people didn't want to take any silly risks by venturing out in a spridget to our January meeting at The Crosby. However, in addition to Mark and Anita who came across from Knaresborough by Landover for their last meeting before leaving the UK, John & Carol made it all the

way down from County Durham in their truck. We were also joined by Mark Forster of Mk 1 Performance Conversions (A series period tuning website) fame, and Trevor from Staveley whose Sprite was also safely tucked up in a warm garage. We had a great lunch in front of the roaring log fire and the rounds of sticky toffee pudding and other homemade delights more than made up for the poor weather. Lucky Anita & Mark won't have the same freezing snow problems on Australia's Gold Coast by the time you are reading this, but their gain is our loss. I am sure you join us in wishing them every happiness and success in their new venture out there.

February's meeting is on Saturday 13th February at The Kings Arms, Heath, near Wakefield, from 12pm. You will need to pre-order food by email through us – a link to their menu and other details are on the Yorkshire area website: <http://yorkshiremasc.blogspot.com>. Hope to see you there.

**Sarah & Tim Saunders**

# Lenham Cars MG Midget Challenge 2009 with Surveying Devon and Cornwall

The second half of the 2009 season kicked off at MG Live – Silverstone, a superb weekend of everything octagonal. Friday's qualifying session saw Will Smallridge (A), Mark Turner (B) and Will Sharpe (C) emerge as the three Group pole-setters for the following day's race. Smallridge as having his first Midget outing of the season as he had been busy racing a Sunbeam Tiger. Many were savouring the prospect of Smallridge and Paul Sibley going head to head for overall victory.

When the lights went out. Will stormed off the front row of the grid but his slicks did not like damp track and he slid off at Abbey handing the lead to Richard Perry who would go on to win by five seconds from Sibley. with Smallridge recovering to take third in Group A. Turner. Who capitalised on the adverse conditions to take third overall, claimed Group B honours from Andrew Actman and Peter Collinson. Sharpe led home close following Dean Stanton in Group C with David Pymm a lap down in third.

Next it was off to the undulating Cadwell Park in Lincolnshire for a double header. David Weston. Dominic Mooney and Sharpe were the pole setters for race one. Weston. cleanly away from the grid, looked set for victory but pulled off on lap 8 – out of fuel. Yes David it is a longer than average circuit! Behind, Ethard Reeve, Sibley and Martin Morris jostled for position but the former two were also sidelined leaving Morris to secure the



*The paddock at  
Cadwell Park*

overall win. Perry was second with Group B front man. Mooney third overall. Two Sprites completed the Group B top three: Turner's Frogeye second with Actman's Sebring in third. Sharpe showed the other Group C cars a clean pair of heels and spent the race enjoying a dice with Group B driver Martin Hilliard and beat him? Stanton and Stanyon (think I got it the right way round) were second and third. The same names topped the grid sheets for race two. Weston led from the start but Sibley soon pulled up from his third row grid spot to challenge and took the lead on the second lap. Demoting Weston to second and that is how it stayed till the flag. Reeve, Morris and Perry had a fair old scrap for the final podium spot with Perry snatching it on the very last lap.

Turner was the early Group B leader, but second placed Mooney was in a determined mood. 11 seconds down on lap 5 he steadily



*Signing in at Cadwell Park*



Snetterton

reeled him in and the gap was down to 3½ seconds one lap from home. On the final tour he made his move to secure second but failed to make it stick- a really close bit of racing. Nigel Pratt finished third. Sharpe again converted his pole to a win with Dean Stanton and John Stanyon second and third.

Two weeks later the Midgets were at Snetterton for a race with our good friends the 750 Motor Club. Robin Knight, the club's Comp Sec, is an ex Midget racer himself. The writer recalls a Modsports race he and I had at Lydden in the late 80s when the pair of us along with an attractive lady in a Davrian rounded the hairpin three-abreast and it didn't end in tears! Never did get a picture of it though. Back to 2009 and Smallridge, Mooney and Sharpe were the fastest men in qualifying.

Smallridge led from the lights, and lapping in the 1:1 8s looked set to win but was forced to retire two laps from home, leaving Sibley to take victory. Gil Duffy, Weston and Martin Morris had a fair old scrap in the early stages. but Morris retired on lap 8. Reeve and Weston then fought it out for second with Reeve just getting his nose ahead at the flag. Mooney failed to make the start leaving James Bilisland an opportunity, which he seized to take the honours in Group B, with David James and Holly Painter second and third. Sharpe secured another Group C win, leading home Stayon and Pymm.

The season closed with the Krissy Duffy Memorial Race at Mallory Park. Sibley, Turner

and Sharpe, who was quicker than all but one of the Group B guys. headed the timesheets after qualifying. Dominic Mooney pulled off after six laps and would sadly pay no further part in the proceedings. However, as it turns out he had done enough in his previous races to secure the overall Midget title, though he would have obviously preferred to end the year on a high.

The 26 starters had to wait patiently whilst the marshals laid cement from the start line to Gerrards to soak up oil from the previous race. Everyone got away despite the dust, with Smallridge heading the field but he along with Perry and Weston. had all retired by lap 3. Sibley took the lead and went on to win from, Reeve and Duffy. In Group B, Turner's Frogeye got the measure of Actman's Sebring, to win the battle of the Sprites and take the coveted Krissy Duffy Trophy, with David James just holding off Ian Staggs for third. Group C winner Sharpe finished well up amongst the Group B drivers and must surely graduate to race with them next year. Langford was best of the rest from Mark Boldry. who came home third.

Another Midget Challenge season of close racing has concluded. Congratulations to our three Group winners: Paul Sibley, Dean Stanton and Dominic Mooney. who having scored the most points is also overall champion. Word is Dean is bringing the ex-Smallridge Group B car back into the series next year. Thanks to the drivers for taking part, MGCC. 750MC and CCCC for organising the races, all the marshals, without whom it



*Paul Sibley's radically modified Group A MG Midget at Brands Hatch*

would not have been possible and of course series sponsors Lenham Cars plus Surveying Devon and Cornwall. Not forgetting series founder Larry Quinn, still at the helm of our really friendly championship after 33 years.

The top six drivers in each group:

Group A Fully Modified: 1 Paul Sibley 147. 2 Richard Perry 116. 3 Edward Reeve 97. 4 Martin Morris 86. 5 David Weston 75. 6 Gil Duffy 63.

Group B Race Modified: 1 Dominic Mooney 164. 2 Andrew Actman 140. 3 James Bilsland 104. 4 Mark Turner 90. 5 Nigel Pratt 85, 6 Peter Collinson 63.

Group C "Road Going": 1 Dean Stanton 134. 2 Will Sharpe 123. 3 John Stanyon 97. 4 Ian Langford 72. 5 David Pymm 43. 6 Peter May 37.

The 2010 season is scheduled to start at Brands Hatch on 10/11 April. For more information go to the championship website: [www.mgmidgetchallenge.co.uk](http://www.mgmidgetchallenge.co.uk) or for a behind the scenes insight to the 2009 season have a look at the Collinson brother's website [www.teamsiblingrival.com](http://www.teamsiblingrival.com). If you would like to chat about racing in the series ring driver's rep Gil Duffy 01886 880882 or email him at [gilduffy@supanet.com](mailto:gilduffy@supanet.com)

**John Baggott**

Paul Sibley & Andrew Actman Images © John Baggott  
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*Andrew Actman in his Group B Sebring Sprite replica*

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## Adventures of a 9 year-old

**W**hat do you do with a 9 year-old kid who leaves his council flat in Hackney for school 45 minutes early just to see the man in the flying helmet and goggles drive past in his MG PB.

Come to that what do you do with a 9 year-old who knows it's a PB and the full spec of said, car which in 1955 was only 19 years old. (To save using all your fingers and toes it makes me 64 this year)

Well I don't know what you'd have done with this little urchin, but I do. I left school at 15 with no exam qualifications, to serve an apprenticeship with University Motors. I started on January 1st 1961, as there was no new year's day bank holiday in those days.

Skipping all the exciting stuff including mechanically rebuilding the companies 1932 MG M Type with another "lad", Chris Mumford (his father owned the Devon/Cornwall group – Mumford Motors) and the setting up of the legendary mini-bay. In those days mechanics that were used to engine bays you could hold a dance in didn't want to work on Minis where you couldn't even get an arm in! A few of us saw an opportunity and took a section of workshop and 4 of us did all the Minis (and then the 1100s and 1800s). In the early 1960s a workingman's wage was about £20 per week. I was taking home (after tax) about £60 a week! I like Minis.

Moving on, I left UM and ended up at a small dealer group based in the East End of

London. We now run a software company providing systems for car dealers.

OK, nearly there. In 1999 we decided to give our usual drunken 10 days in Eire a miss and booked a gite in Brittany. To this day I don't know how I managed to convince Lynne that we should use the 1973 Lotus Elan FHC for the trip but we did. Lynne has no interest in cars other than they should be warm and comfortable. We set off and got the ferry from Newhaven to Dieppe so as to allow a nice long drive across the northern coast of France. Having spent 2 hours trying to find the gite we arrived at midnight. I'm sure most of you know that France traditionally shuts down for August for the holidays. We were in the first week of September. What is not widely known is that Brittany stays open for August to cater for the French holidaymakers and closes for September! Not only could we not find a shop open but all the restaurants were closed as well!

So, tired, hungry, thirsty and weary we arrived at the gite. A cup of coffee and bed was all we needed. Nothing! No coffee, no milk, no bread, no bedding on the bed. Just what you need under the circumstances. We got the bedding out the car and made the bed, fell in and went to sleep, thirsty and hungry.

A few years later I decide I want to retire and move to France. In 1992 I had bought a Caterham 7 and joined the Lotus 7 Club. I became friendly with a member who lived in

France and was known throughout the club as "Richard-in-France". He had lived on his little farm for 14 years. I mentioned that we were thinking of moving to France and he informs me, under a promise of secrecy that they were thinking of moving back to the UK. At that point we were weeks away from the annual trip to the 24 Hueres Du Mans. He lived about an hour and a half away so a visit was arranged. It rained! The only other person to witness rain like that was Noah! We were in an aero screened, hoodless, door less, open wheeled Caterham 7! By the time we got there we didn't have one item of dry clothing on. Even our socks were wet. The Tillet carbon seats had morphed into miniature baths.

Fortunately Henrietta found us dry sets of clothing and then made lunch. After lunch it stopped raining and Richard showed us around. We duly left and caught up with the rain so we arrived back at the Le Mans camp site soaked to the skin again. I had a heavy feeling. You know the type of feeling that says your wife is going to make a decision based on her current circumstances rather than .... I'd better leave it there, I'm told the ladies read this magazine.

To my utter amazement Lynne announces she loves the place and I should buy it. So we

did and moved in on December 10th 2005. We set about converting the large barn into gites. Remember our experience in Brittany. It gave me the idea of offering gites to sports car owners, which had plenty of food and drink (especially drink), bedding, towels and toiletries. In short our guests only need bring some clothes and a toothbrush. But if you forget the toothbrush we have spares in the gites so we think we've thought of everything.

We are now in the fifth year of being gite operators extraordinaire. To be honest we don't make much money on it, it's more of a hobby and we enjoy seeing old and new friends. It's become so popular that I cancelled all the adverts in the various Lotus clubs that I belong to in October 2008 and 2009 was so busy we only had 2 weeks of empty gites!

So, an abbreviated version of why a car mad urchin who loved MGs ended up on a small farm, in the middle of the Loire Valley running gites for sports car owners. Let me see if I can talk Gary into letting me tell you all about our new, 36 year old MG Midget.

**Norman Verona**

MASC Member 4121

La Foie, 49520, Noellet, France

Tel 0033 (0)2 41 94 35 52



# Scotland Report

## Whitby Revisited



The snag with sput-navs is you need to buy an update as soon as you leave the store. I discovered this in England when I came upon an enormous roundabout, not on the screen. Anyway, that wasn't the excitement, which came from a C5 tyre squealing round this empty circular race track. 'Where's the loot!' I shouted expecting the cops to be in pursuit; but no, he was just having fun at the expense of the brilliant road engineers. It must be a popular spot on Friday nights 'Let's scrub rubber, guys!'

Then, 22miles from Whitby, in a lay-by, sat Betty and John in their Midget, bonnet up. I pulled over. Their coil was scalding. Bob had raced on to organise rescue. John asked if I had a spare coil and I said no. That was a dunderhead's truth. Here's a first outing of the awful truth: it was only when I got home I said to myself, why have I not got a spare coil? There, in the little crumbling cardboard box, I carry, lay a new one. Gulp! Anyway, Betty and John got to Whitby. On Saturday, Bob drove to Scarborough for a new coil and John worked on the points then dropped and lost some parts; so everything took him about five hours. Meanwhile, Betty had become ill as a result of not eating when broken down and had not taken her medicinal pills. Crunchie bars for sugar intake!

The roadster boys from Scotland, Steve and John were parked at the hotel as were the Les bolshie boys who have virtually become the Frogeye Immaculate Club. Well done

you all and what an alive and lovely group of people you are. Everybody got parked at the hotel and I went up to Tim Hicking's and parked my wobbly Midget at his home. Saturday was the day to meet with Anita's chums at Saltburn-by-the Sea. All I wanted to do was sleep, but if I reported back to Linda that I hadn't gone on the run, there would have been a lashing against wimpism. So I became roadster Steve's passenger for the day. Boy, you should see inside his cabin – everything is so polished. Saltburn has a beautifully elegant Victorian pier, the only one left on that coast line and is a visual delight.

The run that Anita put on was great and very Yorkshire which didn't terribly suit our John in the other roadster. 'Hard on the cars' I heard him say. Tیره for flat roads and no trees, John.

We got to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and I slept in Steve's roadster in the biggest line up of Midget's I've ever slept in, but many congratulations to you Tim and your wife for taking over from Anita in what is an outstandingly famous and successful section of the club.

There's something I would like to cover in all of this, so indulgence for the finale next month, if that's possible, please. Meanwhile, thanks to all for being there; especially to our brave Pauline recovering from cancer. Terrific.

### *Carson, Chums and English Friends*





## Warks Talk

Tops down, gloves on, hats secured ... we were off on the Christmas Cruise through the unspoilt Heart of England countryside led by Alan and Rosemary Couch. Geraldine and Roy Cole drove their Isle of Wight Sprite from Hagley to wave off the intrepid crews. The open air and the table moving at the Little Chef in Alcester was the perfect antidote to poor Geraldine's sickness. Having had our hot drinks we faced the cold Warwickshire roads. The Sprites were represented by Dave and Chris Parker in their glimmering grey Sprite and Mo and Phil Wood in their white topless number. The classic cars were outnumbered by the likes of a Mercedes (the Couch Coupe), BMW (the Willis Warm Seaters) and Skoda (The Sporadic Smithson Indicators). However, in the true spirit of MASC Members they took down their hoods ... with a flick of a switch.

Alan's route exposed us to the 25% Cleeve Hill; single track Gloucestershire lanes where

sliding on ice provided the Spridgeteers with some testing conditions; the pretty villages of Winchcombe and Broadway; the Prescott Hill Climb, huge Cotswold Stone properties, stunning frosty views and fields of sprouts. These little green grenades reminded us that sprouts are not just for Christmas Day.

"The Harvest Home" at Greet was our lunch stop. Having been alerted to the health and safety issues related to the moving of a round table at Alcester's Little Chef, we were dumbstruck to be addressed as "perfect" in the Greet pub, whilst the Landlord bustled around rearranging table to accommodate the hungry ten travellers.

The Bell at Moreton in the Marsh has become our traditional finishing place. Waiting for us were Chris and Sheila Yates. Together, we sipped hot mulled wine and complimented Alan and Rosemary for providing us with the final, fab drive of the decade. It may be cold but there is always a warm glow in a MASC Social ... just a little warmer in a modern car.

**Mo Wood**

## An Interesting Frogeye Photo

I saw this lovely photograph (opposite) by Chris Anderson, while I was surfing the internet. It was taken last summer on the seafront at St Mawes in Southern Cornwall. When I looked closely at the image to check the registration number of the Frogeye, the face of the driver looked very familiar to me but I just couldn't place it. I've now racked my brains and come up with an answer. Is the man driving the Frogeye David Richards ex-boss of the BAR F1 team as well as the Chairman and founder of the motorsport company Prodrive. Is really looks like him. Does anyone know?



David Richards

### Gary

With thanks to Chris Anderson for allowing MASCOT to reproduce the image.

## Caption Competition Results

Much to my surprise, MASCOT has received a relatively good response to last month's caption competition.

When I say relatively good, that really depends on what we're comparing the response to. If we were to lay the all of the replies end to end and assuming that I didn't print them out in really big letters, it would stretch all the way from one side of the room to the other. That's if that the room was the same size as the cover of MASCOT! Yes, we had four people respond to the competition which is twice the number of people who sent in replies last time. So we can look at this result one of two ways.

Only 0.57% of the membership bothered to reply or MASCOT received 100% more replies to this competition than it did with the previous



one. I'll go with option 2 and announce it as a resounding success!

After sleepless nights and many hours arguing the merit of the various replies I can announce that the winner of the Winter 2010 Caption Competition is Alan Cowther with: **"The boys**

**brief their wives on their engine cleaning duties."** Alan will receive a MASCOT Binder and a free one day ticket to Race Retro 2010, held at Stoneleigh Park, Coventry from 12th to 14th March.

Honorable mentions (but no prize this time) go to Graham Gibbins with **"I didn't know the lights were meant to fall off when you open the bonnet!!"** Bill Longstaff with **"My bonnet doubles as snow clearing device"**. Alan Anstead with **"That must be one honey of an engine (bees around a honey pot)"**.

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The shot was taken on the seafront  
at St Mawes in southern Cornwall.  
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