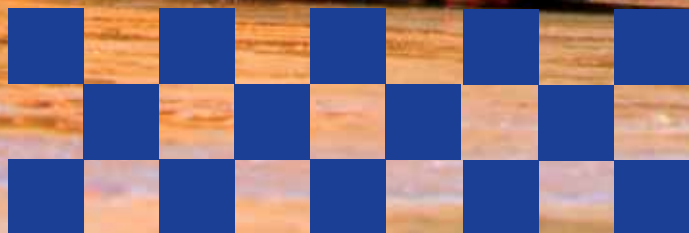


April 2010

£2 No. 313

# Mascot



The Magazine  
of the  
Midget & Sprite  
Club

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

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<b>CHAIRPERSON</b>	<b>Now on a rota basis</b>
<b>GENERAL SECRETARY</b>	<b>Philip Sellen</b> , 40 Amberley Way, Wickwar, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos, GL12 8LP. Tel: 01454 299222 email: P.N.Sellen@bristol.ac.uk
<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>Anita Lachowicz</b> , 5 Park Grove, Knaresborough, Yorks. HG5 9ET. email: anita.lachowicz@yahoo.com
<b>EDITOR</b>	<b>Gary Lazarus</b> , 40B Hungerford Road, London, N7 9LP. Tel: 0207700 5696 email: editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
<b>AREA REP'S DELEGATE</b>	<b>Geoff Hunter</b> , Tel: 01562 851544 email: hunters360@btinternet.com
<b>TECHNICAL ADVISOR</b>	<b>Mark Boldry</b> , email: mark26r@hotmail.com
<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>John Platt</b> , 2 Pear Tree Gardens, Bearley Road, Aston Cantlow, Henley-in-Arden, Warks. B95 6HT Tel: 01789 488321 email: membership@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
<b>GENERAL MEMBER</b>	<b>Mark Hall</b> , Tel: 01296 660103 email: markdhall@aol.com
	<b>Nigel Williams</b> , 7 Kings Avenue, Hanham, Bristol BS15 3JN. Tel: 0117 961 2175 email: nigelwilliams8@tiscali.co.uk

## OFFICERS

<b>CLUB ARCHIVIST &amp; TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION</b>	<b>Terry Horler</b> , 63 Littledean, Yate, Bristol, BS37 8UQ. Tel: 01454 881770
<b>EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR</b>	<b>Gary Lazarus</b> , 40B Hungerford Road, London, N7 9LP. Tel: 0207700 5696 email: editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
<b>MEMBERS ADVERTISING</b>	<b>Alan Lo</b> , Tel: 0117 9572617 Mob: 0775 3867806 email: alan@mobuzzing.net
<b>MUTUAL ASSISTANCE CO-ORDINATOR</b>	<b>David Hill</b> , Llyserfan, Beulah, Newcastle Emlyn, Ceredigion. SA38 9QB. Tel: 01239 811307 email: david@hill.be
<b>CAR REGISTER</b>	<b>Bob Clarkson</b> , Tel: 01902 842643 email: raclarkson@tiscali.co.uk
<b>REGALIA OFFICER</b>	<b>Mike Grout</b> , 55 Park Road, Spixworth, Norwich, NR10 3PJ. Tel: 01603 890211 email: mike@motorparts.freeseerve.co.uk
<b>WEBMASTER</b>	<b>Toby Ancombe</b> , 7 Lysander Court, High Road, North Weald, Epping, CM16 1HF. email: tobyancombe@taratec.co.uk
<b>TRADE ADVERTISING</b>	<b>John Clark</b> , 16 Barley Close, Broomfield, Herne Bay, Kent. CT6 7XG Tel: 01227 368638, Mob. 07971 153556 Email: jrclark@sky.com

## AREA REPRESENTATIVES

<b>BRISTOL</b>	<b>Terry Horler</b> , Tel: 01454 881770
<b>EAST ANGLIA</b>	<b>David Dixon</b> , Tel: 01733 222810 email: e-dave@ntlworld.com
<b>DEVON</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>DORSET</b>	<b>Ian Beaver</b> , Tel: 01722 326840 email: ian.beaver@btinternet.com
	<b>Bryan Fox</b> , Tel: 01202 683842 home, 01202 674017 work email: susanfox123@btinternet.com
<b>ESSEX</b>	<b>Jane Gates</b> , Tel: 01255 830 509 Email: Jgjanegates257@googlemail.com
<b>HAMPSHIRE</b>	<b>Terry Langridge</b> , Tel: 01252 626063 email: Hampshire.spridget@ntlworld.com
<b>HOME COUNTIES</b>	<b>Chris Jackson</b> , Tel: 01707 261567 chrispatj@btinternet.com
<b>NORTH WEST</b>	<b>or Mark Hall</b> , Tel: 01296 660103 markdhall@aol.com
<b>KENT</b>	<b>Alan Anstead</b> , Tel: 01322 384050 email: alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
<b>LINCOLNSHIRE</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>LONDON</b>	<b>Gary Lazarus</b> , Tel: 020 7700 5696 email: garyfrogeye@gmail.com
<b>SOUTH STAFFS &amp; NORTH BIRMINGHAM</b>	<b>Bill Mohan</b> , Tel: 0121 353 7211 or mobile: 0798 461 6371 email: bill.mohan@sky.com
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>Betty Kerr</b> , Tel: 01357 300355 email: Deansgrove@aol.com
<b>NORTH WEST</b>	<b>Les &amp; Diane Robinson</b> , Tel: 01772 432138 email: lesrobinson@blueyonder.co.uk
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	<b>Robert Holmes</b> , Tel: 02892 689274 email: robertholmes25@hotmail.com
<b>NOTTS/DERBY</b>	<b>Ian Cooke</b> , Tel: 0115 938 3838 email: ilc@bgs.ac.uk
<b>OXFORD</b>	<b>Grahame Gibbins</b> , Tel: 01865 383199 grahame.gibbins@hotmail.com
<b>SOMERSET</b>	<b>Dave Bearne</b> , Tel: 01823 412004 email: david.bearne@barnwoods.co.uk
<b>SOUTH WEST WALES</b>	<b>David Hill</b> , Tel: 01239 811307 email: david@hill.be
<b>SURREY</b>	<b>Alan Anstead</b> , Tel: 01322 384050 email: alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
<b>SUSSEX</b>	<b>David Southcott</b> , email: dsouthcott@ukonline.co.uk
<b>WARWICKSHIRE</b>	<b>Alan Couch</b> , Tel: 01564 773302
	<b>Chris Yates</b> , Tel: 01608 665066 email: chrishe@tiscali.co.uk
<b>WILTSHIRE</b>	<b>Andy Cross</b> , Tel: 01225 743554 email: andy@cross743.freeseerve.co.uk
<b>YORKSHIRE</b>	<b>Sarah &amp; Tim Saunders</b> , Mobile: 07968 261990 email: yorkshiremasc@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

# April Editorial

## Two become Four

Last year at the Midget and Sprite Club's AGM at the Coventry Transport Museum the members present voted in favour of the resolution for the Club to become a Limited Company. It was a great step forward and meant that the club ceased to be one whose members had an unlimited liability to one whose members now have a maximum liability of £1.00 each. At that time the original Directors of the Limited Company were Toby Anscombe (our webmaster), Bill Mohan (South Staffs and North Birmingham Area rep and a previous Chairman), Anita Lachowicz (the Treasurer) and myself (The Editor).

After a few years solid work, neither Toby nor Bill wished to seek re-election to the committee and under the new constitution this meant that MASC only had two directors, Anita and me. Anita's move to Australia earlier this year left me as the sole UK based Director. While this situation is acceptable under the club's constitution, clearly it was not an ideal arrangement for the general running of the club as a Limited Company.

It is with great pleasure that the committee can announce that two of its members, Geoff Hunter (The Area Rep's Delegate) and Mark Hall (Area Rep for the Home Counties North West) have agreed to become additional Directors, bringing the total number from two to four Directors. Geoff and Mark as well as myself will be attending the next Area Reps' meeting on April the 10th in Northampton. We would love to see as many of the Area Reps there as possible and request that any member who may have questions regarding anything to do with the running of the club to get in contact with your Rep (whose details are on the previous page) ASAP so that they can be passed on to the committee or raised at the meeting.

It really is important that you are represented. Additionally if you feel that your area is not well catered for, why not consider becoming an Area Rep yourself? The pay and working conditions are rubbish but it is a way of getting more involved in the running of the club and I am reliably informed that due to some quirk of nature, Area Rep's cars have better road holding and rust more slowly. What more could you wish for?

Have a great month

**Gary & Gaps**

**Next month's deadline for articles and reports for MASCOT is Tuesday the 13th of April.**



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

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*Front cover picture: Stuart Gunn's 4 Wheel Drive, V8 engined Midget on the MASC stand at MG Spares Day, Stoneleigh*

# 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: [jjjanegates257@googlemail.com](mailto:jjjanegates257@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](mailto: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](mailto:bill.mohan@sky.com)
- 1st Wednesday **Oxford Area** – Meet at the **Blackhorse Pub**, Gozzards Ford, Nr Abingdon. 7pm for those eating or 8pm for those not. Contact Grahame Gibbins at [grahame.gibbins@hotmail.com](mailto:grahame.gibbins@hotmail.com) or [grahame\\_gibbins@unipart.co.uk](mailto: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. Ian Cooke 0115 938 3838 [ilc@bgs.ac.uk](mailto:ilc@bgs.ac.uk)
- 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](mailto: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**, Steps, 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.freemove.co.uk](mailto:andy@cross743.freemove.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](mailto:david@hill.be)
- Northern Ireland Point of contact is Robert Holmes, tel: 02892 689274 or email: [robertholmes25@hotmail.com](mailto:robertholmes25@hotmail.com). If enough interest, will arrange a meeting.

# Club Website

www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

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

## Events

From David Hill and Webmaster Toby Anscombe

### Events organised so far

#### April

- Sunday 4th Chatham Festival of Steam and Transport at Chatham, Kent. [www.thedockyard.co.uk](http://www.thedockyard.co.uk) Kent and Surrey will be there with a Club Stand. Details from Alan Anstead at [alan.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com) or Tel: 01322-384050
- Monday 5th Hampshire are planning to attend the Spring Vehicle Meet at Picket Piece, Andover. Cars and Autojumble. Contact John Tel : 01420 87947 or Email [john@johnfoard.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:john@johnfoard.wanadoo.co.uk)
- Saturday 24th & Sunday 25th Warwickshire are going to the New Forest for their "Sprites in the Wood" event. Details from Chris or Sheila Yates on 01608 665066 or email [chrishe@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:chrishe@tiscali.co.uk)
- Sunday 25th DRIVE IT DAY. Get out in your classic car today and see and meet others doing the same.
- Sunday 25th Yesteryear run Cottenham Cambridgeshire, a cavalcade of classics through streets lined with cheering fans, with food stops in traditional English villages – contact Graham Kirkup or Dave Dixon for details (EAMASC)

#### 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
- Saturday 1st Warwickshire are going on the Droitwich Spa Classic and Vintage Car Rally. Details from Roy Cole on 01562 885766 or email [roy@geraldineandroy.co.uk](mailto:roy@geraldineandroy.co.uk)
- Saturday 1st Kent and Surrey will be at the Herne Bay Classic Car Show. Club display. Details; Alan Anstead at [alan.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com) or Tel: 01322-384050
- Monday 3rd Hampshire are attending The Popham Airfield Aero/Auto jumble Drive in, at Popham Airfield. Contact John Tel : 01420 87947 or Email [john@johnfoard.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:john@johnfoard.wanadoo.co.uk)
- Sunday 9th Hampshire are going to the Basingstoke Festival of Transport , War Memorial park, Basingstoke. Contact : John Tel : 01420 87947 or Email [john@johnfoard.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:john@johnfoard.wanadoo.co.uk)
- Sunday 9th Warwickshire will be at the Berrington MG event. Details from Mo or Phil Wood on 01905 456303 or email [philipwood@btinternet.com](mailto:philipwood@btinternet.com)
- 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.com](mailto:hilary.ann341@btinternet.com)
- Sunday 23rd South West Wales trip to the Red Kite Centre. Meet at Synod Inn on the A487 at 10am. Details from David Hill, 01239 811307
- Sunday 30th Motorsport at The Palace! Kent and Surrey will have a club stand at the Crystal Palace Sprint on Sunday only. Event is also on Monday 31st Details: Alan Anstead at [alan.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com) or Tel: 01322-384050

#### 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 13th South West Wales are having a run to Lake Vwrnw. Meet at Synod Inn on A487 at 10am. Details from David Hill, 01239 811307
- Sunday 13th Warwickshire are having their "MG in the Trees". Details from Mo or Phil Wood on 01905 456303 or email [philipwood@btinternet.com](mailto:philipwood@btinternet.com)

- Friday 18th  
To Sunday 20th  
Sunday 27th  
Sunday 27th
- Warwickshire are going to the “Spridgettreffen” in Germany. Details from Geoff or Janet Hunter on 01562 851544 or email hunters360@btinternet.com
- 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
- Warwickshire are going on their “Worcs/Shrops West Run”. Details from Roy on 01562 885766 or email roy@geraldineandroy.co.uk

## July

- Sunday 4th  
Monday 5th  
to Friday 16th  
Saturday 17th  
& Sunday 18th  
Sunday 18th  
Saturday 24th  
Friday 23rd to  
Sunday 25th
- Independence Day Run. West Wales are going to the Welsh National Botanical Gardens. Meet in Morrisons Car Park, Carmarthen at 10am. Details from David Hill, 01239 811307
- South East Area are going to the Le Mans Classic 2010. Yes really! These event take advanced planning to secure accommodation. There is a provisional list and I will be seeking non refundable deposits from around May 2009.
- Warwickshire are going to the Royal Air Tattoo at Fairford. Details from John Platt on 01789 488321 or email john@platt2085.freeserve.co.uk
- Kimblton charity classic at Kimblton Castle, great country show with hundreds of classics plus horses, dogs, displays, food, stalls and something for everyone – contact Dave Dixon for tickets (EAMASC)
- Warwickshire will be at the Silverstone Classic. Details from Chris Yates on 01608 665066 or email chrishe@tiscali.co.uk
- Silverstone Classic BRILLIANT!, come for one two or three days. Overdose on the best of British historic racing machinery anywhere, watch the racing, meet Stirling Moss view the car clubs and stalls and drink in the atmosphere of the birthplace of F1 -contact Hubie or Dave Dixon for details (EAMASC)

## August

- Sunday 1st  
Saturday 7th  
Sunday 8th  
Sunday 8th  
Tuesday 10th  
Tuesday 10th  
Saturday 14th  
& Sunday 15th  
Sunday 15th  
Saturday 21st  
Friday 27th  
To Monday 30th
- BMC Rally at Ferry Meadows, Peterborough, hundreds of classic cars, guaranteed sunshine and an autojumble, all in a country park – contact Dave Dixon for details (EAMASC).
- Kent and Surrey will be at the Whitstable Classic Car Show. Details: Alan Anstead at alan.anstead@btopenworld.com or Tel: 01322-384050
- Kent and Surrey are having a BBQ at Turners Hill. Details: harding.cm@btinternet.com
- Wisbech road run, start from Peterborough or Wisbech, great event in association with the Wisbech Historic vehicle club – Contact Fred Leach or Dave Dixon (EAMASC).
- South West Wales Area are going racing – horse racing at Wales' newest racecourse, Ffos Las. Meet at 5pm, Morrison's Car Park, Carmarthen. Details: David Hill 01239 811307
- Warwickshire are going to the Ace Café for Classic Night. Details from John Platt on 01789 488321 or email john@platt2085.freeserve.co.uk
- Classic Cars and more at Leeds Castle. Kent and Surrey will be there.  
Details: Alan Anstead at alan.anstead@btopenworld.com or Tel: 01322-384050
- 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
- Herne Bay Classic Car Show. Details: Alan Anstead at alan.anstead@btopenworld.com or Tel: 01322-384050
- Warwickshire are going to the French Ardennes. Details from Alan Couch on 01564 773302 or email roalan@talktalk.net

## September

- Sunday 5th  
Sunday 5th  
Saturday 11th
- Pembrokeshire Run. Classic vehicle Run through the magnificent SW Wales countryside. Let's get loads of Spridgets taking part. More details later.
- Warwickshire will be at the Coventry Motoring Festival. Details from Dave Colclough on 02476 677897 or email david@colcloughsonline.co.uk
- Warwickshire are going to the “Fly to the Past” at Cornborough Hall. Details from Dave Colclough on 02476 677897 or email david@colcloughsonline.co.uk

*Events continue on page 12*

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# Basic Car Maintenance

## More On Oil Changing

We now live in an era when lifting a bonnet between service intervals by a non-competent individual is frowned upon. Although many of us 'period' Spridgley thing owners grew up with a grease gun in one hand and a set of feeler gauges in the other, we should be aware that more 'modern' owners of Spridgley things may drive on awaiting a service indicator 'spanner' to light up somewhere on the dashboard. More perplexing, the 'modern' day vehicle technician (latter day grease monkey) failing to find where to stick the diagnostic plug into one's Spridgley thing. (No doubt we could tell him). Owners new to Spridgley things may be horrified to learn that oil changes were recommended every 3000 miles with a change of filter at alternate periods. Furthermore, it would not be unreasonable to have to add 3 or 4 pints of oil to the sump between oil changes. Bonnet lifting was a weekly exercise so one soon became as familiar with the engine compartment as today's driver is with their sat-nav.



Following on from Alan Anstead's excellent introduction to the basic art of oil and filter changing, I herby throw my spanner's worth into the works. All 'A' series engines prior to October 1969 used a disposable element cartridge oil filter. This is easily recognised by a central bolt head at the bottom of the filter bowl.

Inside, a spring exerts pressure on a plate to keep the filter element hard against the face of the filter head casting. All too often, this plate sticks firmly to the element itself. Anyone not familiar with this arrangement can easily miss the presence of this plate and throw it away with the old filter. You need to look for it and recover it from the old element.

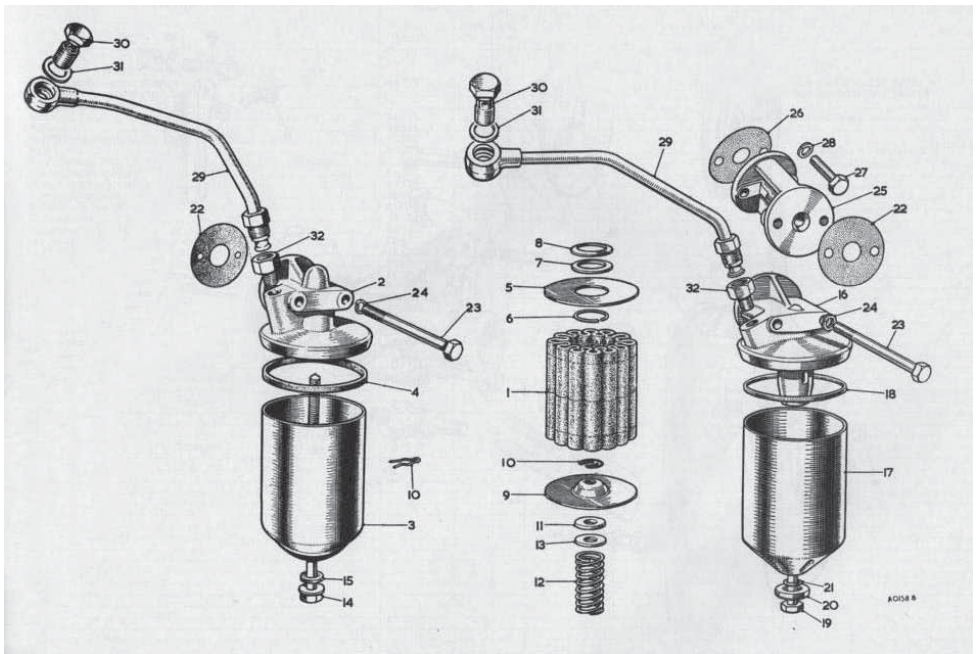


*An advert for the Purolator Oil Filter from The Autocar May 1958*

Without this plate, the element will drop to the bottom of the bowl and allow unfiltered oil from the sump to pass directly into the main oil gallery. The oil pressure gauge will not indicate any different reading with or without the plate until the main bearings suffer. So many times I have carried out filter changes on 'A' series engines to find that some previous Grease monkey has lost the plate and left the engine to drink unfiltered oil – especially bad news on the front wheel drive applications where bits of gearbox circulate with the oil! You will notice the plate has a raised centre pressing. The convex side must be

upwards, if inverted, the paper element will be partly crushed – yes, I have seen this too. Before refitting the bowl, fill it with fresh engine oil. It takes a little while for the paper (or cotton) element to soak up the oil. Yes, this can be a bit messy when wriggling the bowl back into place but is an absolute must in my book. It prevents a delay in oil pressure build up which will result if the pump has to fill and pressurise an empty bowl and element. When starting the engine, get your head back under the bonnet as quickly as possible and watch the filter bowl for leaks. The top rubber seal has a nasty habit of not sealing and oil at 60lbs/in sq is sure to find the easy way out. I tend not to replace the top seal as this seems far more reliable than trying to get a new one into place and to seal first time.

If your Spridgley thing lies between the introduction of the HAN8/GAN3 up to the 1275cc versions of June/July 1970, you will have a curious little light above the oil pressure gauge. Has it ever lit up? No – I thought not. This is connected to the oil filter head casting and is there to show if the oil filter by-pass valve opens. Should the oil filter element become blocked, this valve will open to allow unfiltered oil into the main gallery



and allow the engine to remain lubricated and prevent seizure. It was a move by BMC as a precaution on the front wheel drive applications whereby the oil had both engine and gearbox to serve. Someone at BMC must have had sleepless nights dreaming of bearing cages and bits of synchromesh filling the filter bowl. Personally, I have never heard anyone report of this light coming on – so it's useless then. Well, maybe not. Do you drive along watching your oil pressure gauge? You probably wouldn't notice any serious drop off in pressure until it was too late. However, you would almost certainly notice if the warning light lit up. Obtain a standard oil pressure warning switch as fitted to all other BMC 'A' series engine vehicles that don't normally have an oil pressure gauge. These are usually triggered at around 7lbs/in sq. Fit this into a 'T' piece which can be inserted into the oil pressure gauge take off union on the right hand side of the engine just below the main oil feed pipe. Now the simple bit, just run a cable from the switch to the terminal on the oil filter head. Your warning light will now register either a blocked oil filter and more importantly – low oil pressure.

One last point on the subject of oil filters. Early Spridgley things prior to July 1961 had the filter bowl mounted to an adaptor which spaced the bowl away from the engine and at an angle. After this point, the bowl was hung

vertically and closer to the engine. However, a small adaptor was inserted twixt the two to raise the filter bowl sufficiently above the frame rail to allow it to be accessed. No where near as easy as the earlier arrangement but beware. I have known a number of instances where this adaptor has been omitted following an engine change. The filter head will still bolt up to the block OK but there will be next to no clearance to remove the bowl. Only Spridgley things had this adaptor so engines lifted directly from Morris Minor/A35/A40 or perhaps even a reconditioned engine may leave you with a very difficult filter change.

It is easy to see why so many owners swap to the later type of spin-on filter – much simpler but again, don't forget to fill it with oil before fitting and still watch for leaks.

One last point, which oil? Our Spridgley things have engines dating from the early 1950s, well before the synthetic oil revolution. 5W/40 may be OK on a freezing cold morning but once warmed up – it will be gone. Either burnt or escaping from every nook and gasket – this is not the stuff for our old engines. A good 20/50 will not only provide good lubrication but is more likely to stay in the engine. A good 'A' series engine will burn and leak a little oil to the tune of around 800 miles per pint. If your engine manages more than this then you do have a good one indeed

(or you are not driving it hard enough!). Less than 500 miles per pint is acceptable and indeed there are many examples doing less than this but still running just fine. If your Spridgley thing is down to 2-300 miles per pint then it will not just be you that will be aware of the state of your engine.

On the subject of service intervals, the original 3000/6000 oil change/filter change may not be applicable today. For an 'A' series engine in regular usage and using a good

quality 20/50, then a 5000 mile change of both oil and filter should be fine. For a little usage example, then once a year may be more applicable. Little used engines can suffer from moisture absorption just thorough lack of use or regular cold start ups. It depends on storage conditions and atmospheric conditions. Remember; dispose of your old oil properly.

**Terry Horler**

## Midgets, Sprites and Derivatives

### What are your views on this subject?

The Midget & Sprite Club (MASC) was formed in October 1983 to bring together all Midget & Sprite MKs built between 1958 and 1979. Unlike the established one marque (sic) clubs who have to cater for a wide variety of different cars and therefore owner's interests, MASC can concentrate exclusively on these highly successful small cars.

That is the definition of the club – MASC as appears on the website [www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk](http://www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk)

If that definition were applied today it would exclude Isle of Wight Frogeyes which, having a space frame supporting a fibreglass body, did leave their factory, on the Isle of Wight, bearing a plate showing approval by Geoffrey Healey and thus may be considered a 'continuation'. Later still, but without official approval one, maybe two, Trojan Frogeyes were made. What of the much later Banham Sprint, a kit car replica, following the silhouette of a Frogeye Sprite.

Should the Club's definition, or statement of purpose, be altered to "all Austin Healey Sprite and M.G. Midget Mk's, built between 1958 and 1979, and derivatives thereof"?

MASC is a "one make" Club in so far as it caters only for M.G. Midgets and Austin Healey Sprites so what is the opinion, of MASC members, of those members, who own other classic car makes, participating in tours and displays at club events. At a 2009 Classic Car Show, where MASC members formed a display, a member with a Midget required that a member with an MGB distance his vehicle, but not himself, from the line of MASC cars.

For my own part I advertise my continental tours viz: Battlefields, Le Mans Classic, and Miglia Tour 09, in *MASCOT* Magazine, as being for Sprites, Midgets, and derivatives thereof.

Of course if a member is unfortunate to have their Spridget break down, before or during an event, it would be quite unreasonable, in my opinion, to refuse to allow them to continue in another vehicle. I have done that myself when, having started a tour my Frogeye's crankshaft broke, I substituted my daily driver. But what of a member that has not yet purchased a suitable Spridget, or has perhaps sold their Spridget and now owns another Classic Car, or the member that knowing MASC is for Sprites and Midgets joins with no intention now, or in the foreseeable future, of availing themselves of a Spridget, or a member for whatever, seemingly pathetic, excuse refuses to use their Spridget preferring to keep it as if it were a priceless ornament. Should such person(s) be included, or excluded, with their 'other' vehicle, except, perhaps, in such cases where such an event is run in tandem with another car club(s).

I now expect my e-mail to glow red hot or will our editor receive, and print, replies? Perhaps an opportunity for a 'Letters to Editor' section in *MASCOT*?

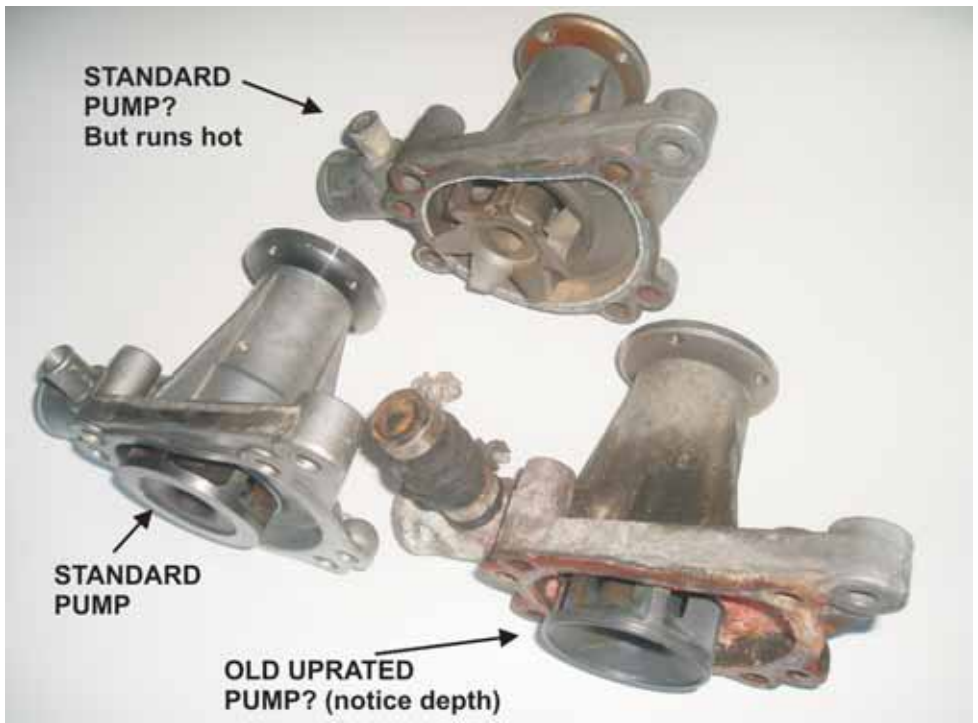
**Alan Anstead**

*Area Rep Kent / Surrey*

*Tel (answer phone) 01322-384050*

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

**Editor's note:** I can be emailed at: [editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk](mailto:editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk)



## Pumps Ain't Wot They Used To Be

**T**ravelling down to Somerset last summer for a week's holiday my 1958 Frogeye overheated resulting in total coolant loss.

We pulled into a country park on the A303 where fortunately there was a café on hand to take shelter during the inevitable cloud burst. In fact the entire journey had been spent trying to stem the spray of water coming from along the top of the windscreen. Why is it that the joint between the hood and the windscreen replicates an aerosol spray can – straight in the face, and then drips down between your legs!!!

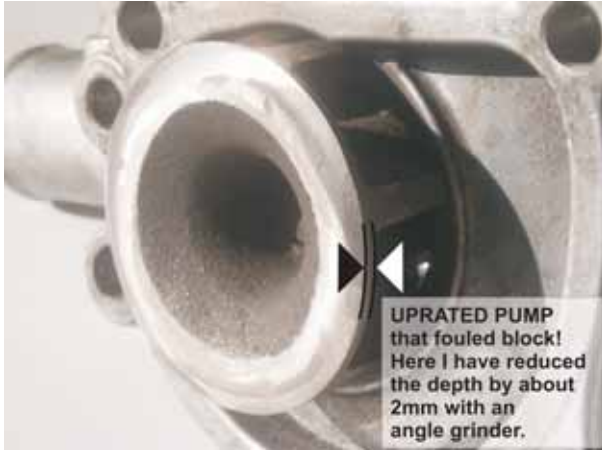
I checked the cooling system during a break in the weather and couldn't see anything obvious so I refilled with water and a bottle of Radweld that I carry in my door pocket for such an event.

We arrived at our B&B in Chard shortly afterwards and the following day I checked the car and found a trail of rusty water marks from the water pump. Fearing that the pump may give up totally and having to resort to a recovery service to get home, I duly phoned

Moss and arranged next day delivery. The pump cost £13 but the total bill was £50! – Ouch!

It is now February and top marks for Radweld, it has not needed topping up for 8 months but time has come to make a permanent repair before the onset of the good weather. So bonnet off, radiator off and finally dynamo and water pump. This is where it hit the fan if you pardon the pun!

The pump from Moss was different from the pump I removed, the impeller on the pump that I removed was twice as deep as that supplied by Moss. In addition, after speaking to our group's mechanical guru Alf, he brought to our monthly meet a pump that had virtually wrecked his Italian holiday a few years ago by constantly running hot. And surprise, surprise his pump was different again, the impeller was not cast alloy as the pump from Moss was but fabricated steel, the impeller on the pump I removed was plastic, so now there are three types of pump. Reading the Moss catalogue they refer to an uprated pump, combined with a warning



one that matched my old one. Cleaned the surfaces, offered up the gasket and pump, and yes you beat me to it – it fouled the No 1 cylinder sleeve. I was determined to fit the updated pump, after all it more closely matched the one I had taken off which had never caused overheating – thus maintaining my cool in more ways than one. It had been suggested that I 'shave' a little bit of the cylinder sleeve but thought it would probably be easier to 'shave' a little off the end of the impeller. So angle grinder in hand, after half hour or so I got the pump to fit without fouling.

to 'check clearance between vane and block before fitting'. I checked and the depth of the impeller seemed to be the same depth as the one I had removed so I bought another pump. When I got it home I noticed that the impeller was slightly deeper than the original.

I now had a total of 4 pumps and every one was different – confused. Never mind, fit the

Whilst I was at it I replaced the bypass hose and top and bottom hoses, they all appeared past their sell-by date.

So – nudge, nudge anyone want to buy a cheap pump, wink, wink.

**Barry Green (Hampshire Chapter)**  
[www.midgetandsprite-hampshire.info](http://www.midgetandsprite-hampshire.info)

## Paint Me Something ...

Commission paintings by Louise Lawrence



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- Pets and animals
- Portraits

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

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 Email: [louise@paintmesomething.com](mailto:louise@paintmesomething.com)  
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# Events continued

## September

- 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 19th East Anglia are having a Treasure Hunt in the Cambridge/Newmarket area. Great fun and a nice Pub Lunch at the end! Details from Dave Dixon on 01733 222810 or email [e-dave@ntlworld.com](mailto:e-dave@ntlworld.com)
- Sunday 19th South West Wales' Gower Run. Meet in Morrison's Car Park, Carmarthen at 10am. Details from David Hill, 01239 811307
- 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

## October

- Saturday 9th Warwickshire will be at the GWR Vintage Rally. Details from John Platt on 01789 488321 or email [john@platt2085.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:john@platt2085.freereserve.co.uk)

## 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
- Friday 12th to Sunday 14th Warwickshire are going to the Classic Car Show at the NEC. Details from John Platt on 01789 488321 or email [john@platt2085.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:john@platt2085.freereserve.co.uk)

## December

- Wednesday 8th Warwickshire are having their Christmas Dinner at the Green Dragon. Details from Sheila Yates on 01608 665066 or email [chrishe@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:chrishe@tiscali.co.uk)
- Sunday 12th EAMASC Christmas lunch at the Mad Cat, great food excellent company and fantastic value (you can even bring the Spridget if it stays dry) – Contact Dave Dixon at East Anglia M&SC.
- 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

Well, if you look in the events section at the front of Mascot, you will see that there is a huge number of events planned for the rest of the year. No excuse then for not taking the old Spridget out for a run! We all hope that nothing will go wrong when far from home but if it does, MAD is there to offer help, advice, local knowledge, maybe even B&B, or at the very least, a sympathetic ear and a hot cup of tea or coffee from a fellow member.

The whole system only works when we have lots of members signed up so that we have a

good geographical coverage. So, if you are NOT in the MAD, contact me to get included. My contact details are on page 3 or use the club website, members only section.

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**

# Past *MASCOT* Technical List

## Part 2

The table below is Part 2 of a list of technical articles which have appeared in *MASCOT* over the last few years. This second installment lists articles which appeared between March 2006 and December 2007. Part 3 will be printed in next month's magazine. *MASCOT* would like to thank Alan Anstead for taking considerable time and effort to compile these tables.

<b>Article</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Edition 2006</b>
Rear Crankshaft oil seal	Mohan	March
Spin on oil filter	Anstead	May
Fitting Front Line Suspension	Anstead	July
Fuel Gauge pick n mix	Davies	July
Tow eyes	Anstead	August
Mk1 rear spring replacement	Anstead	September
Mk1 rear spring wedges	Anstead	October
Vented 4 pot discs	Wrigglesworth	October
Vented 4 pot discs (2)	Wrigglesworth	November
Megasquirt ignition	PPC reprint	December
		<b>Edition 2007</b>
Remote Clutch bleed	Anstead	January
Posidrive Screws	Flack	January
Technical Hints	Flack	January
Fuses	Cogman	January
Up or down instrument lights	Davies	February
Rear seat cushion	Davies	April
Carry a child (legal)	Anstead	May
Rocker cover racing	Horler	June
Gear lever cover colour	Davies / Horler	June
Fit a 5 speed	P.c.reprint	July
Early tacho gear and pulley ratios	Davies	July
Notes on a 5 speed conversion	Anstead	August
Frogeye mods	Cornwell	September
Moss dynamo alignment	Anstead	September
Early twin bore master cylinder (1)	Davies	October
Sebring pedal box	Anstead	October
Opening the bonnet	Davies	November
Sprite Models	Wright	December



## From A to K – The Story of a MkII Midget Transformation

Part 2 of a 3 Part Series

*Last month we followed the transformation of Neil's rusty MkII Midget to a gleaming fully painted shell. This month the story continues.*

**W**ith the engine back out of the car I then set about relocating the battery. As the heater tray had been cut back the battery had to be placed elsewhere. Some place them in the boot but I wanted to keep that space for luggage and so I chose to cut a hole in the passenger side top footwell panel, fabricate a plinth and place the battery in there. I also cut another section out in the same panel but closer to the firewall to

allow the 1500 heater box I was using to sit comfortably in its position on the heater tray. I fabricated another plinth for this.

Happy with the changes to the engine bay I masked the affected areas off, primed them up and sprayed the area with two pack Tartan Red. The engine bay looked good as new again.

One of the issues I had identified earlier on was that the flywheel that came with my engine was too big to fit inside the Caterham Bellhousing and instead a flywheel from a 1.6 was sourced. These are smaller in diameter



and would fit. My next step was to obtain a suitable clutch plate and cover. Whilst I considered utilising an off the shelf Ford clutch and cover, the Rover flywheel would need to be re-drilled to accept the clutch cover. I decided not to do this and instead purchased the clutch kit from Frontline. This made life easier. I already had a clutch arm and bought a new clutch bearing. One other issue that needed addressing was that the first motion shaft on my gearbox was too long and so I shortened it by 12mm so that the gearbox and bellhousing would mate to the engine. It was also necessary to install a spigot bush in the end of the crank shaft. This was relatively easy to do although I had to use a shim to make the spigot bearing fit correctly. On earlier engines it is sometimes necessary to drill the end of the crank which can present additional work and usually involves removing the crank and have the machining done professionally to accomplish this. I was also fortunate to have supplied with the gearbox a speedo angle drive which later made it much easier to route the speedo cable to the speedometer.

My car had the early master cylinder fitted with the combined reservoir for both brakes and clutch. I decided that I would use a cable clutch arrangement for my set up as cables are much easier to change although a hydraulic concentric clutch system could have been utilised. With the cable set up I removed the piston rod from the clutch side of the master cylinder and made a link to connect the end of the clutch cable to the clutch pedal and utilised a return spring. I then blocked off the pipe outlet on the clutch side of the master cylinder. Adjustment of the clutch cable was accomplished by making a bracket and attaching it to the inner offside wing. The cable could be adjusted at this point by loosening or tightening adjuster nuts. I then fitted the engine into the car again and calculated the length of the prop shaft I would need. Having taken the necessary measurements I contacted Bar Prop in Neath, South Wales and by the next day the prop shaft was ready. Trial fitting however revealed that there was insufficient clearance in the gearbox tunnel to allow the universal joint on the propshaft to turn freely as it was catching on the reinforcing triangles adjacent to the handbrake lever inside the tunnel. This was quickly sorted with a little redesigning of the reinforcing triangles.

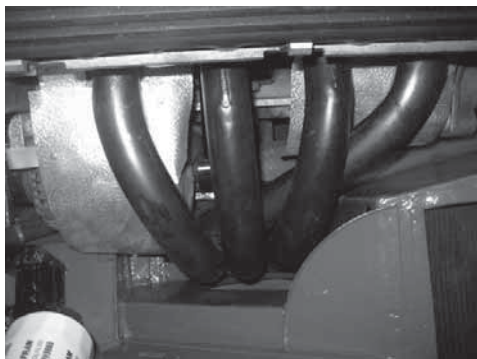


Whilst I already had a Rover alternator I didn't have a starter motor. Enquiries with a local auto electrical engineers led me to buy a starter that would be suitable for a Sierra 1.6/1.8 made by Magnetron and had the equivalent Lucas part number of LRS743. To fit a starter motor with this conversion requires some of the aluminium engine casting to be ground off thereby allowing the starter motor to line up properly with the bellhousing. Also required is a spacer that fits between the face of the starter motor and the bellhousing. Frontline sell these or if you have the equipment and skill you could make one. Some just use washers as spacers.

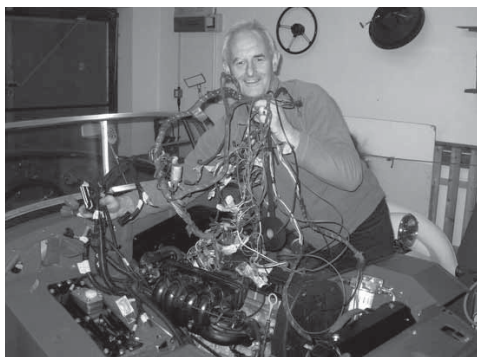
The engine bay chassis rails on a Midget do not allow the oil filter on the K series engine sufficient clearance and so a remote oil filter has to be used. This involves fitting an adaptor plate to the side of the engine and from this pipes go to a remote oil filter head which I placed on the nearside inner wing. Care needs to be taken here to ensure the direction of oil flow is correct or damage could be caused to the engine when started.



The exhaust system was next on the agenda. Whilst I know there are companies that can supply ready made systems for these types of conversions, I took my car to a local exhaust builder and he custom built my exhaust and manifold. I wanted my manifold to be in two pieces that could be easily removed and this was achieved. The exhaust pipe is made of 2" diameter pipe with a repackable silencer.

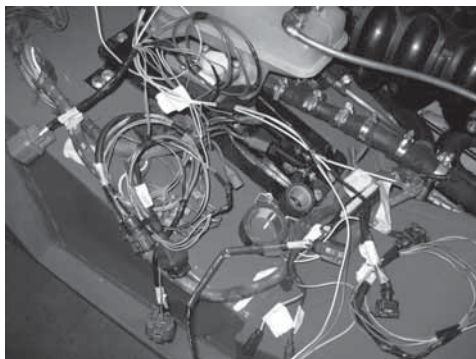


With the main mechanicals now sorted I turned my attention to the first stage of the electrics. I had chosen to buy an Emerald ECU to control the running of the engine as opposed to using the original MEMS unit that came with the Rover. Now electrics aren't my strongest point however I was determined to work this out myself.



Whilst I bought the ECU from Frontline, Karl at Emerald was absolutely superb in providing advice on how to wire it in. My K series engine was the later type and as such the plugs that fitted to the MEMS unit consisted of one plug with 28 pins and another plug with 52 pins. The Emerald plug had just 36 pins. Therefore I stripped the engine loom, identified which sensors I needed to retain and removed the wires I didn't need.

I had decided that my Emerald was going to be placed in the cockpit of the car rather than the engine bay. Most of the wires would reach and those that didn't I extended. For all my joints I used solder rather than rely on crimping and used heatshrink to cover them. I also used a number of relays for items such



as the coils and injectors, the fuel pump and the cooling fan. I also used a separate fuse block so that electrical items could be fused separately. I covered the wiring in plastic sheafing for protection.

Connecting the original wiring loom to the K series engine loom was straightforward as the Midget fusebox effectively provided the interface between the two. Of course I did away with the regulator altogether as I was now using an alternator and had to bear in mind that my MKII Midget was originally positive earth. I converted to negative earth. I drew wiring diagrams for my installation for future reference in case, in time, I forgot how I had done it!

With the Emerald wired in I turned my attention to the cooling system. For this I followed the layout for the Rover 200. I had been told that a standard Midget radiator was up to the job for ordinary road use and so utilised a 1500 radiator I had albeit I had the outlets changed slightly so that they would line up with the new pipework. The header tank I acquired from the scrap yard which came from a Rover 200. The local autospare shop provided the pipe and MAFCO joiners. I bought the coolant rail with the tappings for the original Midget water temperature sensor and the Rover electrical temperature sensor from Frontline. Some had made their own but it was convenient for me to purchase one ready-made.

### **Neil Thomas (3617)**

*Pembrokeshire*

The proud owner of a 1970 Mk III Midget, a 1958 Frogeye, an ever faithful MGC GT and now of course a 1964 K series Midget.

In next month's *MASCOT* we see how Neil got on with the final stage of the K Series Midget.

# My First Year of Sprite Ownership

## Part 2



Last month I told you about my 480 mile trip in the Frogeye from the UK to Spain. The story continues this month with the Sprite's conversion.

Now that I was safely back at my house in Spain the first priority was to find out why the Frogeye was running so hot. Delving into the box of spares I had brought out from the UK I replaced the thermostat with a cooler running summer stat, also changed was the 4lb radiator cap with a correct 7lb cap. Also the fan belt was slack but this created a problem, I could not adjust the dynamo anymore and the spare belt I had was too small. I had been supplied with a belt for a 1275 engine with an alternator, but I was running a dynamo. So after a measure up a belt was purchased locally and even then I had to elongate the slot in the adjuster to get the belt on. I suppose this is what happens when you mix and match parts from many cars and years. The biggest problem was the radiator, although it looked new about 50% of the fins were squashed flat, this meant that the airflow was obstructed, so with a small screwdriver and a knife each fin was teased back into shape. After this I had no problems all summer with fuel vaporisation or running hot.

The Spanish classic car scene is not a large as the UK. One make clubs are virtually non-existent and most classic cars on the Costa Blanca are owned by Expats. As a member of the Phoenix car club in Torrevieja it's mostly

British members and British cars that make up the membership. My Frogeye made a nice change from the numerous MGB,s that seem to be the most common choice. Now once a month the club have run out on a Sunday of about a hundred miles that ends up in a nice restaurant having a lazy all afternoon lunch. During July and August no runs take place as it gets too hot for owners and cars. This year temperatures reached 40 degrees many times, so as the car was not to be used in July and August I set myself the task of changing the car to LHD.

In the first week in July I raised the car up on axle stands and stripped out the radiator to gain access to the steering rack and removed the dash board and steering column. Also I crushed the brake pipe next to the four way union then cut the brake pipe and removed the pedal assembly from the bulkhead. With

*A lovely Spanish LHD Midget for sale*



the car in pieces I started to notice other faults with the car. From what I can make out the car was bought by the previous owner as a restored rolling bodyshell and boxes of parts. Now I guess that if you didn't strip the car down then you will have little idea how that car should go back together. The engine mounts were shot, the plastic fan was rubbing on the timing case breather, the starter solenoid was located on a lump of angle iron and very little of the wiring was secured properly. So a new list of extra parts was drawn up and emailed to suppliers and work put on hold until I had received the extra parts. I never found out why the fan rubbed but a spacer was obtained from Minispares and this moved the fan nearer to the radiator, not a bad thing. The only part I could not locate was a solenoid mounting bracket, and as I didn't know what it looked like I thought it was going to cause me a big problem until Alan Anstead kindly copied one for me and stuck it in the post. Top man.

Now with all the parts to hand I started reassembling the car. I fitted a 1500 throttle pedal instead of the standard organ pedal type. All new grommets were fitted in the bulkhead and all wires and ancillaries fitted through the correct holes. A diagram of what goes through what hole was found on an American website, and also some underbonnet shots of a concours Frogeye on the internet showed me how the LHD hydraulic pipes were run across the bulkhead. The only problem I had was that I had ordered a clutch pipe for a LHD Frogeye. Now a 948 cc engine and clutch uses a 3/16th diameter clutch pipe and that's what I had ready to fit. However I had a 1275 cc engine and clutch and these run a 1/4inch pipe from the master

cylinder to the slave cylinder. I only had a flaring tool for 3/16th tube and the tube I had wasn't long enough. So there was no off the shelf way of connecting the pipe to the cylinder, so I made up a drawing and emailed my son in the UK, he then had a stainless flexi pipe made up to connect up from the slave cylinder to the 3/16th tube. Job done.

Converting to LHD is so easy, everything except the steel dash is available from specialist, and even then fibreglass dashboards are available so I would have used one of those if I had to. The car is a mirror image and all bolts holes are there except for the brake pipe clips on the bulkhead.

One job I was not looking forward to was bleeding the clutch and brakes. Having heard horror stories of clutch bleeding marathons I had plenty of brake fluid in hand, but it worked out fine at first attempt. And it brakes well. After bleeding the brake calliper nearest the 4 way union I had a really solid pedal, so I just had to bleed new fluid round all the system. Somebody was looking down on me this day. After a short road test into town to get the tracking checked and retighten up of all bolts it was now a fully functioning led car.

Only one job left to do, and that's locate a Kilometre per hour speedometer, but until I find one it's driving constantly working out my speed by mental arithmetic. Since then I have used the car frequently. I try never to put the hood up, hey it's a convertible it's meant to have the hood down, but it's now January and it's snowing. So the weather is not always good in Spain, and for that reason I got from Gary Lazarus a hardtop for winter use. Just got to find a way of getting that hardtop out here, it's a bit too big for hand luggage.

About 2 months ago got a tip off that there was another Frogeye about 50 miles away so set off to find its owner. Found a very nice pale blue example, again owned by a UK expat, story behind his car is that it was imported from the USA and he converted it to RHD only for a couple of years down the line to be converted back to LHD.

So for the time being the car and I are staying in Spain, nice weather and no salt on the roads in the winter. Maybe a trip up to the Le Mans Classic in 2010, at least I won't have to pay for a ferry.



*Frogeyes in the Spanish Sun*

**Roy McKnight**  
Spain

# New Members



Barbara Burnyeat with her Frogeye



Ian Burnyeat with his Frogeye

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

193	Ken Brooks	Gloucester	Midget Mk3 RWA
4261	Meredith Hutchins	West Sussex	Sprite Mk3
4262	Barry & Edna White	Essex	Midget Mk3 RWA
4263	Mark Oxborough	Northampton	Sprite
4264	John Mays	London	Midget Mk3
4265	Paul Evans	Ceredigion	Midget K series
4266	Heinz & Edith Mueller	Switzerland	Sprite Mk1
4267	Sarblast Aram	Hertfordshire	Sprite Mk4
4268	Stephen Greenhaff	Co. Durham	Midget Mk3
4269	Pete Simkin	Oxfordshire	Sprite Mk1
4270	Ken Samen	U.S.A.	Midget 1500
4271	Ian Phillipps	Cornwall	Sprite Mk1
4272	Andrew Lloyd	Co. Durham	Sprite Mk1



Barry and Edna White's Midget Mk3



Ken Samen's 1500 Midget. See "Letter's From America" elsewhere in this month's MASCOT

# 1961 Austin-Healey "Sebring Sprite" Vintage Racing Car



Sir Stirling Moss at the 1996 Monterey Historics  
photo credit: John Lamm, courtesy RM Auctions

This 1961 "Sebring Sprite" has just come up for auction on the 13th of March and while it had an estimate of \$50,000-\$75,000 US. It eventually sold for (only) \$44,000 US! It was offered without reserve by Mr. Peter McLaughlin who had generously donated this car, so that the entire net sale proceeds will benefit The Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance Foundation, Inc.

The Sprite also appeared in an article which appeared in *Thoroughbred and Classic Cars* magazine from April 1987.

The Auctioneer's description is as follows:

The Sprite has a Race-prepared 998 cc BMC A-Series inline four-cylinder engine, four-speed manual gearbox, independent front suspension with upper and lower A-arms and coil springs, live rear axle with double trailing links and quarter-elliptic leaf springs, and front disc, rear drum hydraulic brakes. Wheelbase: 80.

Following the Austin-Healey 100, Donald Healey and BMC teamed up to introduce the Sprite in 1958. Speed parts were soon available from tuning firms and most notably from Speedwell Performance Conversions. The firm also collaborated with Frank Costin and the Williams & Pritchard coachworks to produce a number of lightweight body components, including the "Monza" bonnet

and the Speedwell Sprite GT fixed-head coupe.

Sprites were campaigned in the most important rallies and sports car races, with particular success at the Sebring 12 Hours, where three standard-bodied Sprites swept the podium in 1959. As later described by Sprinzel and Tom Coulthard in *Spritely Years*, "Sebring Sprite" was a catch-all term for racing Sprites homologated under FIA guidelines in 1960 with various mechanical upgrades and other modifications including standard or modified bodywork.

At Sebring in 1960, Stirling Moss took first in class and fourth overall in the four-hour race, while John Sprinzel earned a class victory in the 12-hour event. The 1961 Sebring Sprite offered here, originally registered JAX 12, is listed within *Spritely Years* as having been originally fitted with lightweight alloy door skins and rear bodywork. It was first owned by Jack Wolchover, an English rally racer of note who competed with JAX 12 in the October 1961 Bournemouth National Rally, the March 1962 Cullen Cup Rally and the August 1962 Bolton Rally, followed by a number of club events.

Re-registered 791 NAR, the Sprite found its way stateside where it was restored by Jeremy Bowkett and raced by Peter

McLaughlin. At the 1996 Monterey Historics, the Sprite achieved a podium finish with Stirling Moss driving, after a spirited battle with a Morgan Plus Four and an Abarth Porsche. As Moss commented in the January 1996 *Road and Track*, "The Sprite's a lovely car, and with its modest power, it handles so well." As offered, the Sprite is fitted with a fiberglass bonnet and a lift-off hardtop, as well as being fully sorted with Tilton clutch and brake assemblies, an ATL fuel cell and Minilite racing wheels.

MASCOT would like to once again thank Amy Christie of RM Auctions, Ontario, Canada for permission to use their words and images.



The 998cc Race-prepared engine

### Sebring Sprite

In the March '86 *Discovered* we mentioned that the John Sprinzel Sprite, PMO 200, had surfaced again and we thought that the number had been carried on at least two different Sebring Sprites. One journalist friend who was close to the racing scene in those days had telephoned us to say that he feels the number PMO 200 was possibly carried on more than two of them. What we did not mention was that John Sprinzel went on modifying the Sprite from his 32 Lancaster Mews premises and marketing them as Sebrings. These were open cars with aluminium bodywork and many options on engine, chassis and bodywork specifications. In front of us as we write is a sales catalogue for these cars from the files of the National Motor Museum.

Jem Bowkett of Bracknell writes to say that he has one of this later type of Sebring Sprite which he bought from Sprite racing driver David Jordan. The car is registered 791 NAR and has the chassis number ANM5L/38131. At one time the car is believed to have carried the registration number JAX 12.

As purchased by David Jordan the car looked in very fine condition but it had been well and truly bodged and "was about to break its back and needed most of the steel-work replacing. If it hadn't been a Sebring it would have been scrapped. It had obviously been rallied as there were bolt holes for sump guards, holes for lamps on the bonnet and plenty of graunch marks on the floor pan, and evidence of several accidents including one which twisted the right hand chassis leg." If any reader knows the history of 791 NAR/JAX 12 letters will be forwarded.



Sebring Front



Note the later rear lights and opening boot



This smart-looking Sebring Sprite was about to break its back



Thoroughbred & Classic Cars  
magazine from April 1987

# NEW! Historic Rallying for Spridgets! LBL 2010 IS HERE: JULY 16-25!

## Exclusive discount for MASC members!

**For 2010 we are opening the event to cars that couldn't join us in 2008, either because their engines were a little too big or they were a little too new: 500-1200cc cars and three-wheelers.**

**Liège-Brescia-Liège** – an evocative name that brings to mind greats like John Sprinzel, Pat Moss and Eric Carlsson thrashing across Europe on the toughest endurance events of all time... Sleep was forgotten as they drove day and night over the Alps and Dolomites, winding round hairpin after hairpin, engine screaming, tyres scrabbling for grip on gravel mountain roads...



*Stunning weather and scenery on last year's Rally*

But didn't they go to Rome, or Sofia? Well spotted – they did; but just once, in 1958, the Liège-Brescia-Liège route was used and it is that original 1958 route, faithfully rediscovered, that you could drive next year: provided your Midget or Sprite has less than 1200cc. Cars up to 1500cc will be admitted in 2011, and larger engines in years beyond – but the history of this route dictates starting with small cars, a new style of historic rally that sees you rallying only with like-minded enthusiasts in small-engined cars.

John Sprinzel achieved an astounding third overall on the rally to Rome in 1960 in a 975cc Sprite, and 8th in a 948 Sprite in 1959, but the event was always won by big, powerful cars. That's where LBL came in,

in 1958 – it was for tiny cars and the 2010 event has categories for pre-1948, 1958, 1968 and 1978, with classes for engine sizes of 850/1000/1200cc. Ideal for pre-1967 Midgets and Sprites!

The route follows many of the same passes as on the Rome and Sofia events, including the challenging Moistrocca in Slovenia and the legendary Stelvio and Gavia – twice.

But instead of driving flat out day and night, it's divided into 10 manageable chunks of around 200 miles each, with an ingenious new form of competition combining map plotting, navigation, observation, good car preparation and consistent driving: you must plot and drive the correct route, but there are no boring or dangerous speed consistency tests. 2008 competitors, who ranged from complete novices to rally legend Willy Cave, all loved the new format.

Visits to places of interest like private motor museums, castles etc are thrown in, along with a party in the famous Piazza Loggia in Brescia, while competitive drivers have even more fun with speed tests on delightful kart circuits in Belgium and Germany, each over 1km long. Rallying small-engined cars is a special challenge for driver and navigator alike, and builds a camaraderie that you'll never get on more general events. If you have a Midget or Sprite under 1200cc, 2010 is your year: there won't be a second chance! If your Spridget is up to 1500cc, sign up now for 2011.

Eleven nights in superb hotels of four and five stars are included, as are (most unusually) ALL meals including lunches, mechanic back-up, luggage van and more. The normal entry fee is £3400 but, exclusively for MASC members, a reduced rate of £3200 is offered for entries by 30 April 2010.

More details on [www.classicrallypress.co.uk](http://www.classicrallypress.co.uk), email [LBLrally@aol.com](mailto:LBLrally@aol.com) or tel 07711 901811: register your interest now!

# GREAT NEW RALLIES FOR SPRITES & MGs!



1958

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for small-engined cars



2010 2011

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Both rallies include ALL accommodation – in high-class hotels – ALL meals, mechanical back-up & trailer, luggage transport, all maps, rally plates, door stickers, route book, trophies and more. Unlike most events, the only extras you'll be paying for will be your petrol and your beer... Why not enter an MG or Sprite team for the Marque Team Trophy?

**Liège-Brescia-Liège** offers 10 days (11 nights) following the most historic of rally routes – roads used on legendary Liège-Rome-Liège and Alpine Rallies since the 1930s, ticking off famous passes from Belgium to the Dolomites, to Ljubljana in Slovenia and to a great reception in the historic centre of Brescia (home of the Mille Miglia), twice over the Stelvio and Gavia and back to Belgium – and it costs just £3400 for two people.

See [www.classicrallypress.co.uk](http://www.classicrallypress.co.uk) for full details and get your entry in soon to avoid disappointment: we anticipate both events filling up fast. Grab your chance to do LBL NOW while your car qualifies – it may not be eligible again for at least 10 years, so don't miss out! Email or phone us now for the Regulations and to get your names on the list...

The organising team for **Liège-Brescia-Liège** is led by Malcolm McKay  
ClassicRallyPress Ltd, 9 Sycamore Leys, Steeple Claydon, MK18 2RH, England  
Tel 07711 901811 Email [LBLrally@aol.com](mailto:LBLrally@aol.com) [www.classicrallypress.co.uk](http://www.classicrallypress.co.uk)



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# Door Mirror Upgrade

Probably like many other owners, I feel the rear field of view using the door mirrors on my Spridget is too restricted. Although this is not a major problem for the situations we all like to drive our Spridgets (ie winding country roads), it can be a problem when travelling on a motorway, in heavy traffic conditions or in Europe for us Brits.

I was therefore interested to read in a recent edition of the MGCC's *Safety Fast* magazine that replacement convex mirrors are available from the OE manufacturer of door mirrors, Tex Automotive who are part of the British Motor Heritage group. Subsequently, I purchased my replacements from the MGOC Spares but they should be available from other similar suppliers.

Before removing the existing mirror, I decided to photograph the field of view with a flat glass.



After fitting the convex glass replacements, and adjusting the mirror to include the side of the car as previously, I took another photograph to show the new field of view.

The field of view, at a distance of 10 metres, increased from 4 metres with the flat glass to 6 metres with the convex glass and clearly shows another vehicle that was hidden from view in the first photo.

I would recommend this quick (10 minutes) and cheap (£10) modification as a worthwhile upgrade that offers some very useful safety benefits to us and our cars.

**Doug Plumb**  
Member 4071



## Letter from America

For years I had sought after a car that was more than just boring transportation, something that would add a little fun to my driving experience.

On Father's Day 2005, my prayers were answered as I drove an hour to pick up "MeG", a 1977 Brooklands Green MG Midget that I found on eBay.

On my first attempted of sitting in the car I suffered an agonizing Charlie Horse\*. I knew then what kind of a driving experience I was in for. The previous owner had replaced the original seats with bucket racing seats, which are very comfortable but difficult to

get in and out of. My wife Melissa, friend Jeff, and I have completed the majority of the maintenance on the car which includes installing a new windshield, leaf springs, tie rod ends, and a roof. In addition, I rebuilt the manual fuel pump and the Zenith Stromberg carburetor.

The auto choke assembly originally on the car was never dependable, so I replaced it with a manual choke. (Now always starts within two key turns.)

The VIN # listed on the body is GAN6UH18045G and the manufacture date is 12/1976. Thus making it the 45th Midget built for the 1977 model year, probably on the 1st day production. (BODY #: GU4YT037176P ENGINE#: FM99647UE).

I enjoy the car parked in my garage as much as I do driving it. The car is driven for leisure fun and going to my daughter's soccer practises (football for those not in the US).

With only 45,000 original miles, I look forward to many more years of enjoyment.

**Ken Saymen**  
Pennsylvania, USA

\* a charlie horse is ... a pain that runs up the muscle of your entire leg. The only way to get rid of it is to straighten out (or stretch out) the leg as much as you can.



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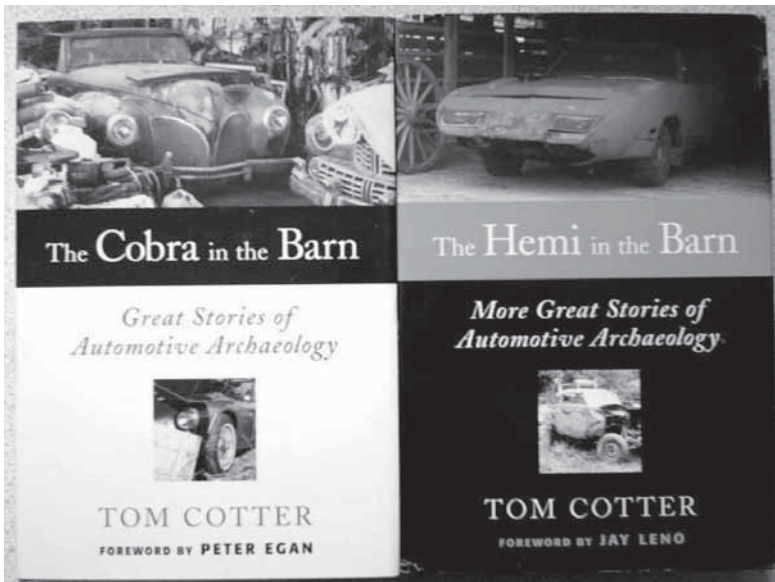
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# Book Review

## The Cobra in the Barn/The Hemi in the Barn



It's 1973, I'm sitting in the Odeon, Richmond, open mouthed, a choc ice dripping all over my Levis. I'm in love. I'm in love with an image on the screen. I'm in love with a 1932 "piss yellow" deuce coupe (that should identify the film). Just how cool is that car? Finally, I understand what the Beach Boys were going on about, although I think 'she'll do a hundred and forty when the top end's floored' may be displaying a touch of hyperbole (why, that's almost as fast as editor Gary's Frogeye). As a British petrolhead, a devotee of the products of Abingdon, I immediately become more cosmopolitan and have been broadening my tastes ever since. The 1939 Ford coupe that Bogart drives in the Big Sleep. The truly iconic GT40. Abarth Monomille anyone? For all you fellow broadminded gearheads (note how I slip effortlessly into the international argot there), who never know how to respond to the "what do you want for Christmas" question (there's only so many times you can say "Claudia Schiffer in an E type") – here is the answer. The title gives it all away – stories of barn finds, not just Cobras but an MG Magna, an Allard, a couple of Woodies (and if my Woody

breaks down I'll be somewhere on the Surf route) and so on (40+ cars in each book). Each story runs to some four or five pages, so perfect bedtime reading. Inspired by the success of 'Cobra', Tom Cotter went on to pen a sequel, 'Hemi' (and now, the 'Vincent in the barn', if we have any fellow motorcycle enthusiasts out there in Spridgetland). Every time I see the word Hemi, I have a mental image of the scene in the TV movie Hot Rod where the hero steals a Hemi engine from a Police car to fill the underbonnet (or hood for our colonial cousins) space of his 1940's Willys – to the oh so cool soundtrack of 'I fought the law and the law won' (not the Clash version sadly). It's every bit as good as the first book, better in some ways in benefitting from reader feedback from 'Cobra'. Honesty suggests that I'd better 'fess up' and admit that Spridgets are, curiously, missing from the cars covered in either book, but...

Add both to your Chrimble wishlist and look forward to something more enjoyable than socks this year (unless, of course, Claudia really is coming over in your new E type).

**Andy Duff**

# Scotland Report – Changing of the Guard



**F**ive years ago, when I left Arie de Best and his girl friend at John o' Groats and drove direct to Torrance, I developed a mental problem. [Ha! You say]. This was the discombobulated [confused ] Midget condition of right arm compression against the side panel causing an inability to turn the steering wheel. I hope writing this, doesn't cause contagion. In August last, when Arie and I went to the Mull of Kintyre, he said, as Alan Plumtree had before him, 'Stick your elbow out the window', as it were. Maybe the original seat is now too low for that to be comfy. Anyway, Arie and I, in our very different Midgets, headed for Campbeltown. I warned him this was the definitive end of the line nothing place of destination, only mythically redeemed by the song, 'Campbeltown Loch I wish you were whisky, och aye'. But I hadn't warned him sufficiently, for Arie subsequently said he had never before been in a town of such Friday night forlornness. When we were finally leaving there at night to drive down the coast to our hotel near Glenacardoch Point, I made a mistake with a turn and the local young rips unforgivingly honked me like mad. 'You see Arie, I've brought life to this place' then added 'I gave the honkers a rare opportunity of pretending they were in a metropolis, in a traffic situation.' It certainly gave them a

break from their incessant driving round and round and again round the roundabout at the pier. Campbeltown at night is a great place to observe the atrophy of youth that's beyond wasting, if that's your thing. Earlier, we had driven close to Borgadalemore Point in a premature darkness in a slurry of spumed Atlantic agitation, as dementedly wild as in any winter month. What a scoured country this is.

Throughout, Arie, being a sensible European, ran with his headlights on; whilst me, being a Scottish meanie, didn't even have sidelights on, when something at least, should have been on. As a result, heading to Carskey Bay in the rain, I nearly rammed a pickup truck at a T junction. I've learned. I'm now going to follow Doug Paterson's lead. His Spitfire is fitted with LED running lights. I don't think these will suit the Midget the way they do his Spit, but it's Safety First, from here on in. Doug says these lights use virtually no power and never need replacing – all very attractive – so that's the way I'm going this year. For purists, that would be horrible, but for a daft wee laddie, it's now mandatory; especially as our cars have a different silhouette that no one is expecting to see. If it saves a Midget from hurt, that's an important point. And, here's another: the Scottish Section formed in 2001 and Betty Kerr has kindly agreed to become Area Rep. With her lifetime enthusiasms for Midgets, Betty will take Scotland forward to further strength and fun. This I know.

## **Betty's buddies and me**

### **Editor's note (I think that's Scottish).**

*Slipped among Carson's words at the end of his report, you could be forgiven for missing out on some important news.*

*Carson, who has since 2001 valiantly (through summertime midges and wintertime storms) driven forward the Scottish Area of MASC, has now decided to hand over the Area Rep reins to Betty Kerr (whose contact details are in the front of this month's MASCOT). The Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank Carson for his endeavors as well as for his lively reports over the years which will be very much missed by me.*

**Gary**

# Yorkshire Area Report



*The Halls in their Atlantis Midget on Gated Road at Lindley*

March saw our first road run of the year, the Phoenix Run from Otley Chevin to Thirsk. This was a re-run of November's washed out event, but this time in the dry. We had six cars, which was a good turnout for so early in the year, including newbies David and Liz in their recently restored 1971 heritage shell midget. We were also joined by the orange Atlantis Midget formerly owned by Anita, now fully fettled and running strongly under the new ownership of the Halls, who will be doing several Harewood Hillclimbs and some historic rallying in it this year. The twisting roads of Wharfedale and Nidderdale beckoned and we all had a great drive in the sunny yet still quite fresh weather. There were even some daring souls like Frank and John and Jeanette were true Yorkshiremen, and went "roof down"! 16 of us gathered at The Watermill at the end of the route for a fine carvery lunch. We were joined in spirit by Mark and Anita who called Sarah and Tim from Oz on the day, to wish everyone luck. They are settling in well, and looking forward to having their Midget and Frog released by customs shortly.

April sees two Yorkshire events – our traditional Hot X Run on Good Friday, which you need to book for, starting from Tadcaster main car park at 11am, ending at Ye Jolly Farmers Inn, Dalton nr Thirsk at 5pm; and an informal drive on the North York Moors on Drive It Day (Sunday 25th April), meeting in Thirsk market square

at 10:30am – no need to book, just turn up if you feel like it. With two road events in the month we have decided against a separate formal pub meeting in April.

We return to The Cross Keys at Hillam near Selby for our meeting on Saturday 8th May from 12pm. This curious little pub, which does great food, has a roof covered in gnomes, so is eminently suitable to host their Midget and Sprite cousins! Hope to see you there.

There has been quite a bit of interest in the October Coast-to-Coast Challenge, but there are still a couple of places left, so if you are interested, get in touch.

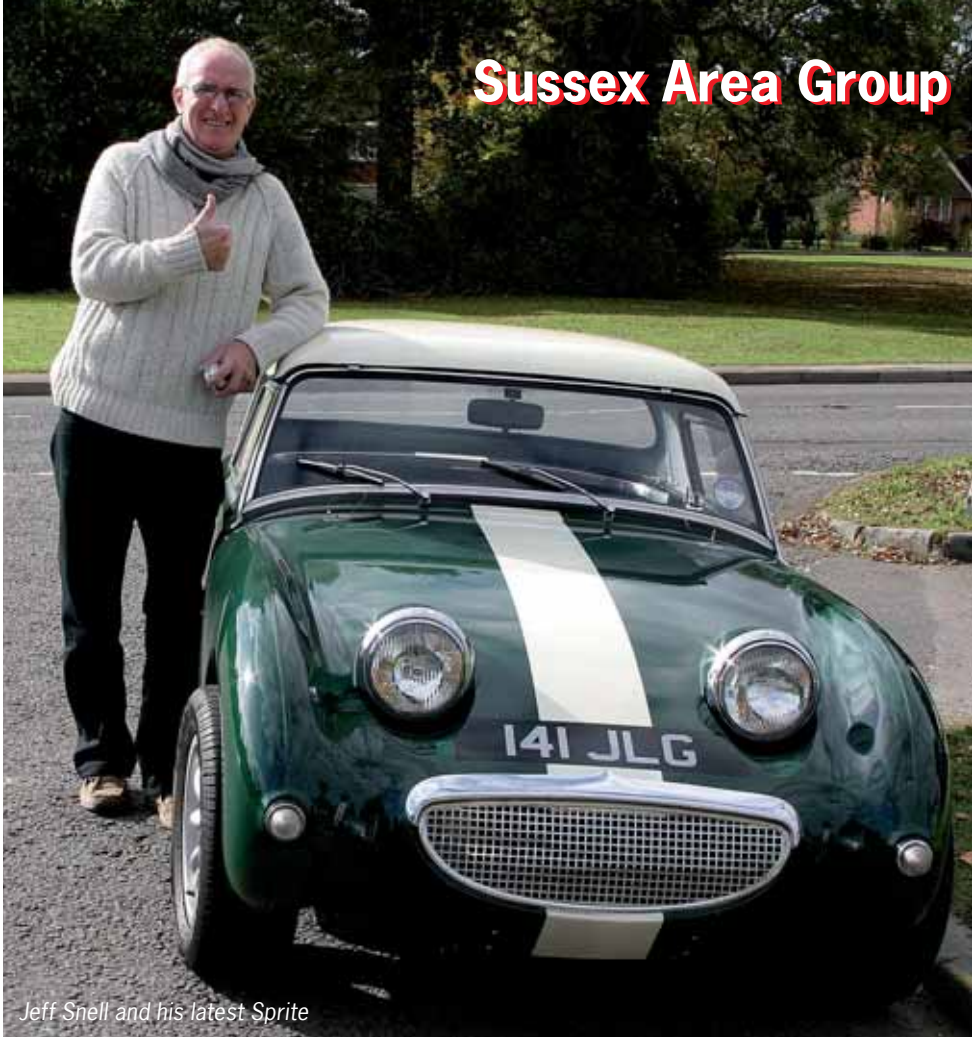
Finally, details of all Yorkshire area events are kept up-to-date on the area website at <http://yorkshiremasc.blogspot.com/> – so keep looking there for the latest news and pictures.

**Sarah and Tim Saunders**



*Above Wharfedale*

# Sussex Area Group



*Jeff Snell and his latest Sprite*

The February rain seems to have put paid to most classic motoring, so the committed 12 Sussex members who gathered at the Red Lion on Thursday had resorted to moderns for their transport. The advantage of being of the silver years, however, has meant that when salt had been washed away, and a glimmer of dryness appeared, it is then possible to jump in the car, whatever the time, and get out on the road. So it is for some Sussex diehards!

Congratulations were bestowed upon Kirk and Gabi on their forthcoming tying of various knots in Prague, and also on a more material vein, to Chris Harding for unearthing the Chef and Brewer "2 for 1" main meal vouchers which were all duly presented on the night!

It was great to see Pam accompanying Mike, and plans for trips to France and elsewhere were debated.

It's excellent that Elsa and Geoff have offered to take on the coordination of the Ardingly Classic Show Club Stand on 10th/11th July, come on Surrey, Sussex and Kent, you know who you are, let's see a good showing! If you want to know more contact Elsa on [elsasherwood@hotmail.com](mailto:elsasherwood@hotmail.com)

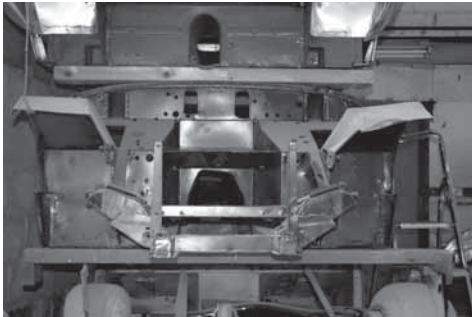
Jeff has the luxury of two Frogs to play with, one destined for racing and one for pootling on the roads, so as he was so despondent about not getting out in them, here he poses with "Fletch" almost ready for Goodwood!

**David Wright**

# Hampshire Happenings

It was great to welcome four new people to our February meeting, Gloria and Ian and Robin and Anne joined us for our natter night at the Fox and Goose and were keen to get involved in some of the events we have arranged for this season. John has been organising a Sunday Lunch for 28th March at the highest pub in Hampshire and has been approached by several others who are new to the club and would like to join us. We have been hoping to increase the number of regulars for some time so this is great news for our region.

We also have another new addition to our family. John and Ellen are the proud owners of a Californian shell that arrived just last week. John hopes to have it on the road



*Front view John's new baby!*



*Spring Sunshine at Brooklands Museum*

in time for a trip to Scotland in 2011 to celebrate their fifth Wedding anniversary. So, many happy hours of cursing and swearing ahead for him. For more photos please visit: [www.midgetandsprite-hampshire.info/arrivals-lounge](http://www.midgetandsprite-hampshire.info/arrivals-lounge)

Last Sunday saw our first official event of the season in the form of the Austin and Morris Day at Brooklands. The sunshine brought the visitors and there was a good turnout of cars on display, as well as all the usual aircrafts, cars, motorcycles etc. in and around the museum. We met up with quite a few familiar faces including some friends from the Home Counties region.

**Jenny Green**

# East Anglian MASC Report

As I write this it is early March, the sun is shining and it's turned a little milder so I am starting to think that at last the winter may have loosened its grip on us just a little, I even ventured out in the Sprite a few days ago (for the first time in months) it was great but only a short topless trip since it was very cold indeed. I normally use the Sprite quite a lot in the winter, taking advantage of those crisp clear days (when the roads are dry) to have a blast round the local fen droves to blow the cobwebs out of my carburettors and top the battery up so she will start first pull next time. This time she took a while to

catch even though I had waited for the fuel pump to stop ticking before I turned the key, which normally results in instant starting (much better than my much more modern oil burner).

By the time you read this it will be the glorious month of April and the winter should be the last thing on our minds, at least I hope so since Pat and I will be in France on holiday in Frogeye cottage in southwestern Brittany. Unfortunately I will miss the April Mad Cat meeting which is at a bit of a crucial time of year for getting our 2010 events finalised and advertised. Currently we have

14 confirmed events but just 6 with firm dates advertised in this issue of *MASCOT*, so it is vital that we move things on very quickly particularly for those events that fall in the first half of the year. Currently we have finalised the Yesteryear run on the 25th April, Hubie is investigating a trip to the Bubble car museum, something we have had on our list for a couple of years now, for mid May, I will sort out the Chip shop challenge for late May, Chris and Mary are working on a treasure hunt for mid June and Nigel and Diane mentioned something about a trip to Bletchley Park (which a number of people expressed an interest in at the last meeting) also in June.

Unfortunately so far I have not had much response to my call for our friends in Suffolk

and Norfolk to suggest some event venues in these two wonderful coastal counties, so guys please please send me some suggestions (my contact details are in the front of *MASCOT*. I am actually considering taking matters into my own hands and taking the chip shop challenge, combining it with something in Suffolk and transmogrifying (put that in your spellchecker and digitise it!) it into a run involving James Bond, Bomber Command and the FBI intriguing isn't it well to find out more you will just have to come along, maybe starting out from Thetford so no excuses!

See you all at the Mad Cat and beyond

**Dave Dixon**

## Is this the Only Photograph of a Prototype Frogeye?



Last year I wrote a piece for the March Issue of *MASCOT* (Gaydon has a lot to answer for) and included some old photographs of mine from 38 years ago. In addition I had included a slide that my late Dad took back in 1958 showing Stirling Moss in a Big Healey being followed by a couple Frogeyes around the racetrack in Zandvoort, Holland.

Having originally scanned over 600 slides, I thought it would be prudent to transfer the photographs to a CD for future safekeeping. In the process this slide caught my eye, taking a closer look it appears that the white

Frogeye (No 32) on the starting grid does not have the characteristic frog eyes instead although difficult to tell from the quality of the photograph they appear to be the pop up type similar to the Lotus Elan.

I have heard people within the club who are far more knowledgeable than I am on these matters mention that the Frogeye Sprite was designed to have pop up lights, but they were scrapped as being too expensive and therefore never went into production.

**Barry Green**

[www.midgetandsprite-hampshire.info](http://www.midgetandsprite-hampshire.info)

# Warks Talk

Unfortunately Warwickshire's report last month did not get into the magazine due to circumstances beyond our control, however, it was not very informative as the January Meeting was cancelled by the inclement weather. As a result, we have only just finalised our events for this year and they should appear in this issue (with the kind assistance of David Hill). In actual fact our first two have already taken place and are detailed below!!

## A day at the Severn Valley Railway Classic Car Day

Not for the first time this year I donned my thermals and two pairs of socks but this was just to take the Sprite to the Classic Car day at the Severn Valley Railway. February 20th was a bright sunny day but as has been usual this year at 9:30am the temperature was only just above freezing and with the top down you certainly needed all the protection you could get. Sybil and I journeyed the relatively short distance to the beautiful village of Arley. We gingerly descended the steep and frosty hill to the railway station overlooking the picturesque Severn Valley where we joined about ten other classic cars which, not surprisingly, were all saloons – Hillman Imp, Austin 10, Morris Minor and an apparently rare Hillman Imp van badged as a Commer among others.

Having chatted with the other owners for a while we took advantage of our reduced price day Rover ticket, took the steam train to Kidderminster where there were many more cars on show, including Roy's IOW Frogeye which was the only other M&S Club car out for the day. Roy had long since started his day's roving and even with the aid of many mobile phone conversations we never did manage to meet up albeit at one time we were at the same station but on trains going in the opposite direction.

More vehicles were viewed at Bewdley including a pre war Scammel mechanical horse – remember those, and more Morris Minors. Finally we went up to the new engine shed at Highley which temporarily is the northerly limit of the line as a derailment towards Bridgnorth meant that that section is closed until early March. It was a good day



*Setting up the Club stand at Stoneleigh*

but it was nice to get home and to be in front of a blazing fire after travelling back home as the sun was setting before another freezing evening.

**Stuart Watson**

## MG Show at Stoneleigh

Four cars were arranged for the show and all turned up (unlike the Austin Healey stand which had the embarrassing situation where they did not have a single car!!!)

Jim and Alan had taken the precaution of delivering their vehicles to the MASC stand on Saturday which was pleasantly dry; however Stuart and Andy had to brave the snow which had fallen in some quantity during the night. Stuart and Andy both arrived in plenty of time but only Andy had actually removed his hood, as you can see from the picture, in fact I think he was the only car to travel with the hood down.

Alan arrived with the stand itself which he had taken out of storage (thanks Jim) and we soon had the Gazebo erected. Mike Grout had brought the Regalia, driving all the way from Norfolk through blizzards and setting off at some unearthly hour.

Despite the weather it was a busy show with Gary, Alan, Bill and Geoff adding a helping hand to man the stand. We signed up 4 new members and several application forms were taken away, a small amount of Regalia was also sold. Alan's MGC had been allowed onto the stand but I forgot to put on the "My other cars a Spridget" sign which will please John Platt on his return from holiday.

**Chris Yates**

# Kent Area Report 1



MASC at Dering Arms Pluckley

**A** keen lot in Kent and Surrey! Not content with one monthly meet this month, in Kent, there was a call for two. Sunday 14th February was chosen to coincide with a Classic Car lunchtime meet at the Dering Arms Pluckley, Kent. Pluckley village is reputed to be the most haunted village in England. It is also where the T.V. programme 'The Darling buds of May' was filmed. A look at the weather report, intelligence reports from various members dotted about the county and a look outside did not bode well for a great turn out of Spridgets. It was raining in parts, snowing in others, and the dreaded salt lay on roads everywhere. A small convoy formed, along the drive, at Paul and Jane Coveney's country estate. Being fairly local to our destination Captain Coveney led off. Paul was probably having

a funny 'turn' in response to the mention of convoy. Both he and Jane, their Austin Sprite devoid of hood, wore head gear suited to a North Atlantic wartime convoy. Then emulating an Azalea Class Sloop he began to protect his convoy from imaginary submarines by laying an almighty smoke screen. I suppose these problems must be expected as our membership ages. Poor Alex behind, top down on his Frogeye, must have been choking, could he have been seen. Had Hils and Pete had a premonition? They had travelled from afar in an Isuzu Trooper thus losing 'Brownie Points' but what luck this was for one poor enthusiast, en route to the same destination. I am privileged to be Area Rep to some of the most selfless people. An MGTf replica was stranded beside the road with bonnet arched. Captain Coveney stopped his anti submarine antics and brought the convoy to a halt. Without being asked all surrounded the stricken, steaming, replica. Alex diagnosed an air lock in the waterworks caused by a kinked hose. Captain Paul supplied a Hauser from his rigging and Pete and Hills hitched up for a tow. I got the fickle female as she deserted her escort with a broken car for the comfort of mine. On arrival at the Dering Arms we numbered seven Spridgets amongst eighteen members. New members Ian and Noel Pickard brought along their Austin Sprite and immediately signed up for some events. Darren Tyre, with Tracey, was without his Sprite which has recently won a classic car magazine 'Egnuity award' for his efforts in converting a Sprite into a road going Intercontinental Ballistic Missile. Well done Darren!



Masceteers to the rescue

# Kent Area Report 2

Sunday 28th February 2010 and the regular monthly, lunchtime, meeting at the Moat, Wrotham Heath. The County of Kent was blitzed by rain flooded roads were everywhere yet three members Ron Edwards, with Marilyn, Mel Collins, with Barb, and Peter Gardiner arrived in Spridgets – Mel after having to stop to replace a blown fuse. Most surprising was Mel whose Midget is booked for a photo shoot with a Monthly Car Magazine on Tuesday. After the meet the car will need a good bit of spit and polish. Thanks to HCNW members Keith and Ann Warner and Roger and Maggi Byford who made the effort



*John you are meant to blow them out not keep yourself warm*

to join us. Let's hope both Areas can hook up for some events during the year. Ralph Whitmarsh and Ian Pickard looked after our guests.

Paul and Jane Coveney surprised John Clark with a Birthday Cake adorned with Frogs. What else for a Frogeye owner! Born on 29th with a birthday every four years does that make John only 45 years of age. I don't think so!

Roger Gray posed a question. He's a grandfather. Is that a mis-spent youth or is he really that old? Where can he get overalls for a six year old grandson? Why ask me I'm allergic to kids. Anyone?

Martin Bird has dented his Frogeye. Will he be another beating a path to Fisher Services

at Bell Green? Proprietor Mark will soon be seeking to display a sign 'By appointment to Kent Surrey MASC' with his tally so far. My own Frogeye currently resides with him receiving a bare metal respray.

John Gibbons, his Frogeye resto' almost complete came in an MGB thus giving MGB owning Simon Coveney someone to talk to on a subject other than Spridgets. Much talk of our Le Mans Classic Tour. I was able to distribute our exclusive Tour designer wear. Our own John Clark having designed the logo. But what is this! Mike Pearson confessed, under interrogation, that he is attending but not with us. Chris and Jackie Playfoot, Col' Carpenter, with Colin and Jude Aldridge completed our number. Twenty six people. Well done! But, and there must always be a but, we have recruited some new members of whom we have not seen hide nor hair. Why did you join MASC? Where were you? That applies to some older members as well.

Finally for our meet on Sunday 25th July 2010 (1200hrs) Ralph Whitmarsh R.Whitmarsh@btinternet.com has suggested that we meet as per the norm, partake of food, and then drive through the lanes to visit Brattle Farm Museum Nr Tonbridge (TN12.0HE). Interested? Contact Ralph. Essex, Hants, HCNW, anyone want to join us?

## Surrey Area Report

**A**nother club meeting and instead of snow it is pouring with rain. I doubt that I shall show at the Blue Ball Walton on the Hill, Surrey tonight in anything other than a tin top. Roll on the summer! I certainly hope that we have a good summer as we have so much planned already. I wonder what the turn out will be like tonight?.

More rain, in fact it was pouring when I arrived. The poor landlord was looking desperate as rain, and school half term, conspired to keep punters away. With my arrival his clientele had suddenly doubled. Had it not been for the arrival of the MASC crew then he may have well closed, sent his staff home, and had an early night in front of the TV. Chris Harding, with Sue, was keen to announce a BBQ, on 8th August, at his Furzewood address. MGOC, HDC, and possibly a guest of honour are invited as are

MASC members. More details to follow. I was attempting to enlist people for events that have to be booked with organisers but was finding it difficult with "possibly", "maybe", "probably" when organisers want a simple "yes" and for my part either "yes" or "no". I did manage to get some positive responses with regard to a Battlefield Tour to Ypres (Belgium) on November 11th. I shall ask Gary to include an advert, for this tour, in a later MASCOT should anyone, from anywhere, want to come along in a Sprite, Midget, or derivative and join us. Interested? Just contact me for details. Alex Bowers, with Jess, arrived in a Frogeye with hood erect against the elements. Their young blood must run thicker than the rest! Pete and Hills arrived clutching maps as they plan a route to Bulgaria. Our Miglia '09 Tour having whetted their appetites are they planning a MASC tour,

there, next year or possibly later for Midgets, Sprites, and derivatives? Watch this space! Sussex rep David Southcott, with Linda, Mike Gorman, Nigel Saynor bolstered our number. Good news, with an appearance from John Gibbons, was that his 'Frogeye resto' is at MOT stage well in advance of our May Laon Tour, with Continental Car Tours, to which he has subscribed.

*Perhaps you have changed your e-mail? It has been drawn to my attention that some Kent / Surrey members are not receiving my monthly e-mails. If you are one such person then please contact me and we will try to solve the problems.*

**Drive it Day on Sunday 25th April 2010.** Instead of the usual Kent meeting at the Moat Wrotham Heath. Kent and Surrey will be

joining with Hants Chapter at Fox and Goose, Greywell, RG29 1BY. For those wishing to 'convoy' there will be the usual RVP at Grasshopper P.H. on A25 o/s Westerham.

**Safety Note:** I have picked up, on the M.G. Enthusiast BBS Forum, that some new front wishbones are, allegedly, being supplied with faults viz cracks / splits. If you have fitted new wishbones then for your safety, and the safety of others, please check. If you are buying then have a good look and do not accept the goods if you suspect them to be defective.

**Alan Anstead**

Area Rep Kent / Surrey

Tel (answer phone) 01322-384050

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industry. These Mohair hoods and tonneaus do not require any special treatments. They are harder wearing than the standard vinyl material and benefit from superior quality, improved fit and a noticeable reduction in cabin noise through enhanced insulation qualities inherent in the fabric.

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Happy Healeying.

**The AH Spares Team**

For further details see the advert on the rear cover of this month's *MASCOT*.



THE MOAT

## HCNW visits Kent



*Wet and windy in Kent*

Keith Warner has been encouraging HCNW group to go visit other groups at their regular meeting for some time. A visit to the Kent group was proposed, and the date set for 28th February. Little did we know how long this winter would last!

There had been significant amounts of rain the previous few days, but on Saturday 27th we got the Sebring Sprite out of the garage, ready to leave early for the rendezvous at South Mimms service area. However at 8am on the Sunday morning, we had a phone call from Keith to say it was only now him and Ann and Roger and me who were still 'on' for the trip, and looking at the weather and forecast, suggested we travel 4-up in his tin-top.

So the scenic route Keith had planned was saved for a future date, and we set off round the M25. Nasty spray, but no hold ups, so we arrived at "The Moat", Wrotham Heath, Kent at 11:45, and shortly after that a couple of brave local members arrived in their Spridgets. I took a quick photo between car and restaurant door, and you can see how the rain drenched tarmac reflects the cars.

The restaurant had allocated the MASC an area with plenty of seats for the 30+ members who arrived in quick succession for the meeting. There were visitors from the Surrey meeting there too. I think it took longer to decide what to have to eat, than for

the kitchen to deliver it, and the dishes we chose were very good. Tasty and hot.

Alan Anstead brought round his folder of forthcoming events, some of which we may ask to join in. The Midget 50 celebrations next year were also discussed. Much of the general chatter was tales of the trials of getting the Spridget out for the first run of the year, or the apparently never ending rebuilds which always seem just hours away from completion.

Then a birthday cake arrived with candles lit. John Clark was born on 29th February, so has had his celebration cake at this meeting two years running. Very generously the cake was sliced into portions for all present.

It was around 3pm by the time we left the restaurant for the journey home, but being some of the last to leave there was no chance to take photos of the other Spridgets which had been there. (Hopefully someone from the Kent group has some). An uneventful and slightly less wet drive back around the M25 brought us back to our own car for the onward journey to Cambridge. Parting words with Keith and Ann were that we must go back again, so, Kent Group, thanks for your hospitality and hope to see you again in the summer.

**Maggi Byford**

# John Sprinzel's Long Lost Rally Suitcase Found

As a collector of all things Mk-1 Sprite, Ray English in Australia is always on the lookout for that something special to add to his collection, and over the past thirty years he has managed to find some very interesting things, like the pair of John Sprinzel Ltd overalls that an ex employee had hanging in his garage for some thirty years (a copy of Spritely Years was exchanged in this deal), or the two Earls Court 1958 Motor Show posters that spent 40 years in a tube without being looked at, this took six months of negotiations and a 3ft diameter illuminated BMC Rosette dealers sign to convince the owner that Ray needed them more than he did. As he tells visitors to the "Sprite Room", many of the things on display have a story to tell, and sometimes the story is more interesting than the item itself.

The recently found old suitcase that John Sprinzel carried personal items in when he went rallying would fall into that category, what stories it would be able to tell us if only it could talk.

According to the person that Ray bought it from it was found in a rubbish tip here in England in 2009, it was found by a lady who noticed it going up a recycle belt, and seeing that it had rally plates fixed to it, decided that it should be saved from being crushed, she then gave it to her friend Oliver, who she knew was into classic rallying, and that is where the story starts as far as Ray is concerned.

The new custodian of the case contacted John Sprinzel by e-mail in mid November (2009) to let him know that he had his old case and was he interested in buying it. The following day John forwarded the email on to Ray, as they both often do when something of special interest happens, and so it was from that first email that the ball started rolling. John had sent an e-mail to Oliver telling him that Ray would be very interested as he had a Sprite museum and that he should contact Ray, which he did the following day.

Oliver pointed out that he originally thought that John would be interested in acquiring the case himself, as this was not so, he suggested that Ray make an offer and tell him



about the collection before he made up his mind.

Ray sent off a couple of magazine articles about the "Sprite Room", he must have liked them as the following morning Ray received an e-mail telling him that he had given it some thought and decided that the case should be, in his words, "Added to your impressive collection," he also pointed out that he could possibly get more for it on eBay, but it was better for this little bit of history to be on permanent display for the Sprite enthusiast to see.

The easy part was buying it, getting it to its new home in Australia was a bit more complicated, but having a Spritely friend (Gary Lazarus) living in London helped no end, as it happened he was going to visit someone in the area where the case was located (Norwich), so he picked up for Ray. He also went to a lot of trouble working out which was the best and cheapest way to get it to Ray, sending an item this big by air was never going to be cheap, the best deal that he could get was £100 (\$185.00 AUD), but sending it by surface mail was not an option due to the time it would take, plus the chance of it getting damaged would be tenfold.

Gary also made sure that it was packed properly before sending it off. The only thing to go wrong happened in Australia, with Christmas coming up Australian Post workers went on strike so all parcels were held up for several weeks, and the case just sat in the International mail centre in Sydney until the

backlog was cleared, eventually arriving safe and sound.

The only thing left to do was to match the rally and race plates with the events that John had competed in, this was quickly solved with the help of Ray's copy of *Spritely Years*.

John cannot remember when he last saw his old case, he does remember replacing it with a new super lightweight one which he got for winning a go-cart race for journalists at the Nurburgring, in the early 1960's, but has no idea where the old one went after that.

He doubted that he would have thrown it away with all those badges on it.

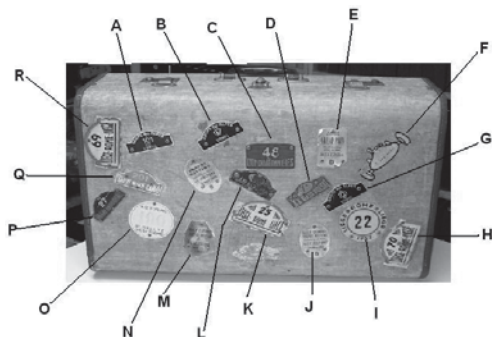
So where has John Sprinzel's case been hiding all these years, and what else was thrown away at the same time, more historical rally items perhaps? We can only wonder.

## Used Case Test

A trial run was carried out using Ray's Frogeye, after removing the hood, tonneau cover and side screens from the boot, the case was test fitted. It is shown here as far back as it will go, the case is sitting on top of the 4½" wire wheel and touching the bodywork at the top. Ray imagines it would go further back if the car had the original 3½" steel spare wheel in the boot. It does not leave a lot of room for anything else. I wonder where the navigator put their things?

*Article originally written for "Marque One" magazine by Ray English and reprinted and adapted for MASCOT with his kind permission.*

"Marque One" is the magazine of the Worldwide Austin-Healey Sprite Mk-1 register.  
e-mail – rayenglish@dodo.com.au



- A Alpine Rally. 7-12 July, 1958. Car #101. Co-Driver Willy Cave, Speedwell Sprite, PMO 200. 1st in class, 14th overall.
- B Alpine Rally. 23-28 June, 1959. Car #97. Co-Driver Willy Cave. Austin A35, MRX342. Retired when 8th overall.
- C Lyon Charbonnieres Rally. 13-15 March, 1959. Car #48. Co-Driver Stuart Turner, Sprite, PMO 200. 4th in class.
- D Polish Rally. 8-12 September, 1960. Car #71. Co-Driver Peter Garnier. Works Ford Anglia. Retired.
- E 11th RAC British Grand Prix meeting – Silverstone July 19, 1958. Car #3. Speedwell Austin A35, 119 KMH. Retired
- F Shell sticker – "J.Sprinzel".
- G Alpine rally. 24-30 June, 1960. car #20. Co-Driver Willy Cave. Sebring Sprite PMO 200. Retired.
- H Liege-Rome-Liege, 2-6 September, 1959. Car #70. Co-Driver Stuart Turner. Speedwell Sprite PMO 200. 1st in class 12th overall.
- I Liege-Rome-Liege. 28th August – 1st September. 1957. Car #22. Co-Driver George Hulbert. Speedwell Austin A35. 119 KMH
- J Daily Express Trophy Meeting – Silverstone (BRDC) 3rd May, 1958. Car # 3 Speedwell Austin A35 119 KMH. Retired.
- K Leige-Rome-Liege. 27-31 August, 1958. Car #25. Co-Driver Richard Benstead-Smith. Broke stub axle.
- L Acropolis Rally. 27-31 may, 1959. Car #12. Co-Driver Richard Benstead-Smith. Works MGA Twin Cam RMO 101. Crashed
- M Daily Express Trophy Meeting – Silverstone. 14th September, 1957. Car #2. Speedwell Austin A35. 119 KMH – 2nd in class.
- N Trophy Meeting – Silverstone. 2nd May, 1959. Car #12 Speedwell Sprite. Car #2 Austin A35 119 KMH – 2nd in class
- O Sestriere rally. 26th Feb – 1st March. Car #190. Co Driver Jimmy McCartney. Austin A35, 119 KMH. 27th outright.
- P Acropolis rally. 19th-22nd May, 1960. Car #27. Co-Driver Bob Domey. Sebring Sprite, PMO 200. Crashed.
- Q Monte Carlo Rally. 18th-25th Jan, 1959. Car #201. Co-Driver Willy Cave. Works Sprite PMO 200. 2nd in class, 14th overall.
- R Liege-Rome-Liege. 31st Aug-4th Sept, 1960. Car #69. Co-Driver John Patten. Sebring Sprite 2214UE. 1st in class, 3rd overall.





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