

# Mascot



The Magazine  
of the  
Midget & Sprite  
Club





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

## COMMITTEE

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**YORKSHIRE** Caretaker Area Reps: Sarah and Tim Saunders, Tel: 07968 261990 email: yorkshiremasc@googlemail.com

Also see the Club Nights section on page 2 for new areas and contacts.

Compiled by Richard Flynn (richard.flynn@live.co.uk). 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

# December Editorial

## (The post NEC sort out)

Despite the inclement weather and the lack of road events, the month of November has always been a busy one for the Midget & Sprite Club. In addition to the new committee settling in and finding its feet, the implementation of ideas and issues arising from the AGM plus organising, setting up, running and then dismantling the Club's stand at the NEC, means that for a few of us the month seems to have whizzed past at lightning speed.

The club's stand at the recent NEC Classic Car Show was as busy as ever, doing brisk business taking on new members, meeting and greeting existing members as well as visitors. This has meant that MASC Committee Member, Classic Car Show Organiser and Membership Secretary John Platt's feet have barely touched the ground. Saddled with a cold (man flu, we like to call it) and a bad back he has managed to fulfill all of these roles with absolute efficiency. Parallel to this, John has also been trying to get the new isubs (online membership and regalia purchasing to you and me) web page up and running with the minimum of fuss and disruption. All this, from a man who by his own admission, would rather be dealing with things that have working mechanical parts as opposed to the black unfathomable depths of the World Wide Web.

However by the time that you read this, the new section of the club's website should be up and running (fingers crossed). But it hasn't all been plain sailing. Links leading to blank pages, a few membership renewals arriving on John's computer minus vital information and the knowledge that some people have been pulling their hair out with frustration while others have had absolutely no problems with the club's website has meant that John has literally had a full time (but unpaid) job sorting everything

So rather than give John the round of applause which he richly deserves, all we ask is that you visit our new regalia page complete with colour photos, have a little look around and perhaps even buy something. The least that you'll need will be a new binder to hold next year's MASCOT and what's more, anything which you buy should arrive in time for Christmas.

The website can be found at [www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk](http://www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk) and then just click on the "JOIN NOW" button which will get you to the regalia page too. See page 7.

In the meantime, here is a message from John.

**We apologise for the inconvenience caused to those who have been trying to join and renew on our website during the later part of November – Our on-line provider Secure Web services have introduced a new order pad which is much better than previous with enhanced features, but has unfortunately suffered the inevitable glitches – Thanks to all of you who have persevered during this time.**

**John Platt (Membership Secretary)**

Enjoy the festive season and be safe and happy. Gaps and I will see you all again in 2011.

**Gary & Gaps**

**Next month's deadline for articles and reports to be included in MASCOT is Monday the 13th of December.**

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Cover image: *The Spridget line-up outside this year's AGM at Coventry Transport Museum.*  
Photo courtesy of Sarah Saunders.

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# Club Nights

- 1st Tuesday **Essex Area** – Now meet at **The Bell**, Beckenham Road, Tolleshunt Major, CM9 8LL. For further details contact Jane Gates Tel: 01255830 509 or email: [jgjanegates257@googlemail.com](mailto:jgjanegates257@googlemail.com)
- 2nd Tuesday **London Area** (Congestion Zone) – Meet at **The Ace Cafe** at 7:30pm. together with the Classic Cars Magazine night. Details: Gary Lazarus on 020 7700 5696 [garylazarus@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:garylazarus@blueyonder.co.uk)
- 1st Wednesday **South Staffs & Birmingham** – Meet at **The Green Man**, Middleton Village, 8.30-8.45pm Contact: John Collins, Tel: 07970 213084 email: [green\\_mx5@hotmail.com](mailto:green_mx5@hotmail.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@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 & Crown**, Pucklechurch at 8pm. All Bristol, Bath and surrounding areas members welcome. Contact Terry Horler on 01454 881770
- 2nd Thursday **East Anglian Area**. Previously the Cambridgeshire Area Meet at **The Mad Cat** pub in Pidley Village, midway between Huntingdon & Chatteris, 8pm
- 2nd Saturday **Yorkshire Area** – meet each month at **Ye Jolly Farmers Inn**, Dalton near Thirsk YO7 3HY - please note new fixed venue - more information at <http://yorkshireremasc.blogspot.com/>
- 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.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:andy@cross743.freeserve.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** – Venue changed. Please contact David Hill for details of new venue, Tel: 01239 811307 or email [david@hill.be](mailto:david@hill.be)
- Northern Ireland [robertholmes25@hotmail.com](mailto:robertholmes25@hotmail.com). If enough interest, will arrange a meeting.

## Club Website

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

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

## Events

### From Richard Flynn & Webmaster Toby Anscombe

#### Events organised so far

#### 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)
- Friday 10th Essex Area are having a Christmas Dinner. For details please contact Jane Gates on 01255 830509
- 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

Area Reps please let Richard Flynn (**email: [richard.flynn@live.co.uk](mailto:richard.flynn@live.co.uk)**) have confirmed dates for new events asap.

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

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

# Meet the Committee

Over the coming months, Mascot will be introducing (or reintroducing) the members of the National Committee. Many will already be familiar to you as members of previous MASC Committees. Some also as Area Reps.

## ALAN ANSTEAD

**Chairman of the National Committee,  
Area Representatives Representative and Kent & Surrey Area's Rep.**

I have owned my Frogeye since 1969. I joined the Midget & Sprite Club circa 1993 (membership number 1542). As I live in Kent and there was not a Kent Section, in those days, I joined Surrey Area; then represented by David Wright.

Upon retirement from full time work in 2004 I took over the Area Reps role from David as he was moving to Sussex. Around this period I also found the time to build my Sebring Sprite replica to join my Frogeye in the garage.

Then as if representing one area is not enough of a challenge I started the Kent Area. For a short time I was also Area rep for Sussex until a coup thwarted my aim at world domination. David Southcott is now Rep for Sussex.

The Midget and Sprite Club has a new Committee for the next twelve months with some new ideas on the table that we may be able to develop to fruition. I have taken on the role of Area Representatives Representative, to keep the Reps apprised of what is happening on Committee, and of chairing the National Committee meetings. But it is not all for the Committee to do. The Club and its Area representatives need support from the members. You, as a member, can show that support by actually attending the Area meetings and events. Nothing can be more frustrating than organising meetings and events only for to receive little or no support. Also do make a decision to attend early as some events have to be planned many months in advance if for instance a hotel has to be found to accommodate all comers or a block booking is required by an event organiser. I have this year come across two events where our club entry has been limited. (Bearsted & Crystal Palace) If you do not like the format of the meeting or event then speak up. You could consider organising an event. Keep it simple for a start. It does not have to be along the lines of the Liege or Dakar Rally maybe, for instance, just a drive out to a pub for lunch. You may not be alone with your views and / or ideas. Constructive ideas and suggestions are always welcome. Your first port of call should be with your Area Rep but I am available via telephone or e-mail for anyone who wants a chat.



**Alan Anstead**

*Surrey / Kent Area Rep.; Area Reps Rep to National Committee  
mail to: [alan.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com)  
Tel: (answer phone) 01322-384050.*

## DAVE DIXON BRIEF PROFILE

### General Committee Member and East Anglia Area Rep

I am married to Pat, live in a village near Peterborough and work for a well-known diesel engine manufacturer. I have been a MASC member for ten years and started the Cambridge area (which has now grown into the East Anglian area) soon after I joined and have recently become a general committee member. Having had years of fun out of MASC and met some great people, I want to see the club grow and thrive with ever more active members and high profile events. I drive a well used (polite words for tatty, however it regularly goes to France and once drove all the way down to Spain) 1966 MKIII Sprite, with two more rescued rotting Sprite hulks in my garage waiting for when I have the time and money to sort them out.

**David Dixon**

mail to: [e-dave@ntlworld.com](mailto:e-dave@ntlworld.com)

Tel: 01733 222810



## Regalia Page on Club Website

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

**THE MIDGET & SPRITE CLUB**  
SICUTUM BUNDAE HABEA

PRODUCT

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<b>Sweatshirt</b> £ 17.75 <a href="#">more details</a>	<b>T-Shirt</b> £ 11.75 <a href="#">more details</a>
<b>Peaked Cap</b> £ 8.45 <a href="#">more details</a> <a href="#">add to basket</a>	<b>Grillo Badge</b> £ 38.20 <a href="#">more details</a> <a href="#">add to basket</a>
<b>Cloth Badge</b> £ 3.75 <a href="#">more details</a>	<b>Leather Key Fob</b> £ 3.25 <a href="#">more details</a>

# Unusual Spridget item seen for sale on the World Wide Web



the vast majority of the period Mk1 Sprite adverts. Many of you will be aware that "PBL 75" is still alive and very well living here in England having been repatriated from Australia in the last few years.

Although the coin's true value is probably much higher than £5.00, It is actually legal tender should someone be silly enough to try and purchase something with it.

My thanks to MASC member David Bridge for the information.



Like me, some of you who regularly scour a well know internet auction site may well have stumbled on this rare bit of Spridgetabilia (Wow! I always wanted to make up a new word). Have any of you seen one of these before or do you even own one?

It is a solid silver £5.00 coin produced by the Royal Mint depicting a Mk1 Sprite. The coin weighs 36 grams and the size is approximately 38 mm diameter x 3 mm thick.

The wording on the coin says:  
 "Austin Healey Sprite Mkl 1958-1961"  
 and the reverse side says:  
 "ALDERNEY FIVE POUNDS  
 ELIZABETH II 2009"

The coin comes in a sealed presentation pack mounted on a card with a photo of "PBL 75", the famous Froggy which appeared in



# MASC Membership Subscription Increase

As of 1st of January 2011 the club is reluctantly increasing its yearly subscription rates as follows, to take account of additional costs incurred over the last 3 years.

UK single membership	£27.50 (was £25.00)
Europe Single membership	£32.50 (was £30.00)
Rest of World single membership	£37.50 (was £35.00)
Additional Joint & Family membership	£1.50 (was £1.00)
Once Only Joining Fee	£5.00 (remains unchanged)

It is not a decision that the committee have taken lightly however we believe that this still represents extremely good value when compared with similar clubs who cater for our cars whose UK rates are between £35.00 and £41.00

We hope you will understand.

**John Platt (membership secretary)**

## Membership Secretary Vacancy

At a recent committee meeting I notified the committee giving 12 months notice that that I do not wish to continue as membership secretary after the AGM in October 2011 as after 5 years I now need some more time for myself.

I was "encouraged" into the role by the then chairman Bill Mohan to sort out the function as we were not serving our members adequately. The role was at that time split between the membership secretary and treasurer, the latter having ceased to function completely with many issues of members cheques not banked, cards not issued and dozens of bank order payers not adjusting their rates. We had one member from Switzerland still paying his joining rate of £8.50!

After about a year we had most things sorted and I enhanced the role to add a welcome to new members, directing them to local area reps and a robust system to "round up" late renewals.

The routine is computer based using excel and word files with communications to our editor, Stuart Miller (renewals) Secure web provider and magazine printers.

As I am still "feet and inches" I am sure that someone with better computer skills than me

could develop and automate the systems to make it all much simpler.

The job would suit someone early or recently retired and needs attention most days, when eagerly meet the postman and you log in to see what has arrived. Indeed being in a similar position myself the role neatly filled the gap left by the day job but without the commuting.

The pay is poor (non existent!) but the rewards immense with daily involvement with Spridget related matters. You can have a variety of enquiries from around the world, requests from magazines for cars for articles, offers of scrap cars etc.

You will need to be a committee member as the role is a pivotal part of the club structure and you can count on the support of possibly our strongest and most enthusiastic committee yet.

Ideally you would "shadow" me for a couple of months prior to handover and of course I would be available to answer any queries afterwards.

Should you be interested in taking over the role please contact me for a chat on 01789 488321 / email: johnplatt1275@btinternet.com and I can send you a copy of the routine

**John Platt (membership secretary)**



*Pierre Lequeux  
and Yogi in the  
Frogeye*

## New Members

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

4008	Stephen Bowen	Belgium	Sebring Sprite
4348	David Puzey	West Midlands	Frogeye Sprite
4349	Pierre Lequeux	London	Frogeye Sprite
4350	Phil Mead	Essex	Sprite Mk 2
4351	Yousuf Sabah	West Glamorgan	Midget 1500
4352	Andrew Chaffey	Kent	Midget Mk 3 RWA
4353	Terry Coulter	Co Antrim	none yet
4354	James Ricketts	Buckinghamshire	Frogeye Sprite x 3
4355	Elsa & Colin Newman-Draper	Kent	Austin Sprite
4356	anon	Lothian	tba
4357	David Gentry	Essex	Austin Sprite
4358	Stephen Mayne	Kent	Midget 1500
4359	Nick Proudlock	West Sussex	Frogeye Sprite
4360	John & Carl Nicklas	Humberside	Frogeye Sprite
4361	Neil Larke	Nottinghamshire	Frogeye Sprite
4362	Mike Haig	West Yorkshire	Midget Lenham Le Mans
4363	Rosemarie Maule	Warwickshire	Sprite Mk 4



*Elsa and Colin Draper  
and their Austin  
Sprite*



*Andy Purcell's Mk1 Sprite*



*Nick Proudlock's Mk1 Sprite*



*Mike Haigh in his Lenham Midget  
on the grid at Goodwood*



*Andy Ainsworth's  
1500 Midget*



*Steve & Sue  
Mayne's Midget  
1500*

# Spridget Colour Schemes

## (Part 5. Later Sprite MKIV, Austin Sprites and Later Midget MkIII including round wheel arch models)

We continue the series listing the various colour schemes throughout the Spridget range.



*Note the black windscreen, one of only twenty one made*

### HAN10 Sprite / AAN10 Sprite / GAN5 Midget

Body Colour / Paint code	Seats/trim/carpet	Period
Black (BK1)	Black	Throughout
British Racing Green (GN29)	Black	Until June '70
Glacier White (BLVC59)	Black or Autumn Leaf*	Oct '69 on
Bedouin (BLVC4)	Black or Autumn Leaf*	June '70 on
Pale Primrose (YL2)	Black	Until June '70
Blaze (BLVC16)	Black	June '70 on
Flame Red (BLVC61)	Black	Oct '69 on
New Racing Green (BLVC25)	Autumn Leaf	June '70 on
Blue Royale (BU38)	Black	Oct '69 to June '70
Midnight Blue (BLVC12)	Black	June '70 on
Bronze Yellow (BLVC15)	Black	Oct '69 on
Teal Blue (BLVC18)	Black	June '70 on

\*Autumn Leaf became available from HAN10-86301 & GAN5 – 89501.



### Round Wheel Arch GAN5 Midget

Body Colour / Paint code	Seats/trim/carpet	Piping
Black (BLVB122)	Navy	Until July '72
Bronze Yellow (BLVC15)	Navy	Until Aug '73
Glacier White (BLVC59)	Navy or Autumn Leaf [1]	Throughout
Flame Red (BLVC61)	Navy	Until Jan '72
Teal Blue (BLVC18)	Autumn Leaf or Ochre [2]	Throughout
Blaze (BLVC16)	Navy or Black [1]	Throughout
Mallard Green (BLVC22)	Autumn Leaf or Ochre [2]	May '71 to Aug '73
Aqua (BLVC60)	Navy	May '71 to July '72
Damask (BLVC99)	Navy or Black [1]	May '71 on
Harvest Gold (BLVC19)	Navy or Black [1]	May '71 on
Black Tulip (BLVC23)	Navy or Black [1] Autumn Leaf or Ochre [2]	July '71 on
Limeflower (BLVC20)	Navy	July '72 to Aug '73
Mirage (BLVC11)	Black	Aug '73 on
Bracken BLVC93)	Autumn Leaf	Aug '73 on
Aconite (BLVC95)*correction	Autumn Leaf	Aug '73 on
Citron (BLVC73)	Black	Aug '73 on
Tundra (BLVC94)	Autumn Leaf	Aug '73 on

Second trim colour replaced the first in August 1973.

Ochre was available only between GAN5 – 123731 (Aug '72) & GAN5 – 138801 (Aug '73).

**These charts are based on information obtained from the MASC Archivist  
Terry Horler's book 'Original Midget & Sprite'**

# Letters to the Editor

## Scottish Sprite Club



*Eric and his Frogeye photographed in 1968*

Dear Gary,

Regarding the Scottish Sprite Club in the November issue. I went to a couple of "gatherings" around 1965 with them. Also a couple of night car rallies. These night rallies were very popular and there could be up to two or three a week throughout Scotland and the north of England. Legislation following some rather overenthusiastic driving on public roads late at night have made them almost impossible to organise and run. However the club was very much based in the Edinburgh and Lothians area. The Bruce Peebles motor club was the works car club of Bruce Peebles who made large electrical transformers in Edinburgh. There used to be large number of such small one make or local car clubs in Scotland. They also used to have an involvement in race days when Ingliston near Edinburgh had motor racing.

You could get in for free if I remember if you were a track marshal or some other lowly helper. Along with a large number of these clubs there was an attempt to buy a road to be used for hill climb events in the Bo'ness area which seemed to fail. A number of these car clubs used to band together during the winter to run monthly meetings. These were usually film nights. I recall going to listen to Jackie Stewart at one such meeting long before he was world champion. In those days car clubs could negotiate discounts of 5% or 10% from motor factors.

You tended to use these motor factors rather than visit a BMC parts garage to buy motor oil, oil filters, champion spark plugs, Ferodo brake shoes, Lockhead rubber brake pipes

and wheel cylinders, Trico windscreen wipers, Desmo wing mirrors, Borg & Beck clutches, tyres etc. Even the mighty Lucas used to give discounts. It was usually the same product in the original manufacturer's box at a few shillings cheaper than the BMC part. Almost anything could be obtained via these networks of small independent motor factors. I recall buying a pair of brake drums, shock absorbers and heavy duty ¼ elliptical rear springs at a considerable saving over those available via the BMC parts network using a Scottish Motor Racing car club discount card. By the time of my slight involvement very few of the members were running Frogeyes. Most seemed to have MGBs, Midgets or the later Sprites.

Regards

**Eric Flack**

## Safeguarding the future

Dear Uncle Gary,  
I was wondering if I am the youngest member of the Midget and Sprite Club? I joined on 1st November 2010 and I was just six months old on the 11th November. I received my membership card and my daddy promises to laminate it for me (to protect against dribble stains – from me, not the MG of course!) Even at my young age, I've got the MG bug having had my first ride home from the hospital at five days old in Daddy's MG ZT-T. I've got my eye on my Daddy's two MG Midgets, and have begun to work out that when I'm old enough to drive, Daddy will be nearly 60 years old, so his back may be too worn out for him to use the MGs so I could help.



*Austin Collins SS&NB  
Area rep in waiting*

Do you think that there are any other young members of the club who help keep their mummy and daddy's cars on the road?

I'm a bit tired now after all this thinking so am off for a quick nap. Bye for now.

**Austin Collins, Member number 3435B**

**If you have any questions or opinions which you wish to have printed in MASCOT, please send them to me. [editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk](mailto:editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk)**

**Or by post to; Gary Lazarus, 40 B Hungerford Road, London. N7 9LP UK.**

# Lara the De-feralised Midget

My car has been back on the road after her rebuild for nearly ten years now and there have been several changes made to the wiring already as “add-ons”. Because of this I have been intending to do a general tidy up of the wiring and the engine room in general.

When I began to replace my worn out gearbox I decided to do the tidying up too. My underbonnet wiring has recently been described as “feral” by my mate Guy and after seeing the definition I had to agree...

Feral = “**A feral organism is one that has escaped from domestication and returned, partly or wholly, to a wild state**” (Wiki) --- It seemed sort of appropriate!

I had decided to fit the later style of pedal box to the car since the original 1966 twin bore master cylinder one was giving me a very hard pedal on the clutch which was no fun in heavy traffic. John Collins supplied me with the necessary setup and I renewed the seals in the master cylinders on it ready to fit it to the car.

To fit the pedal box to the earlier cars you need to add new stiffeners below the footwell roof so the metal doesn't flex as you stomp on the slowdown pedal and clutch. I made a new frame to fit under the roof but in fact the original stiffening arrangement only needs to have augmented stiffness, soon added by two small angle steel strips with captive nuts. I cut out a new hole for the different pedal arrangement and flattened the concave area usually occupied by the separate heater fan

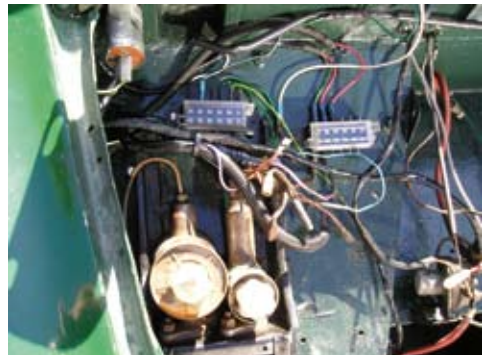


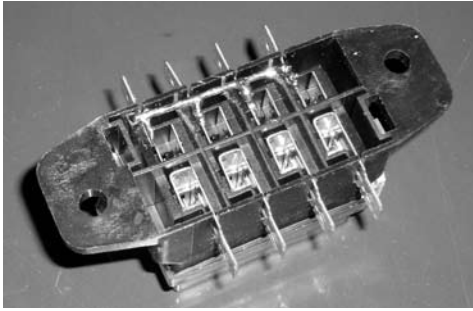
motor which will be replaced with the later style fan and heater radiator combined unit later (before winter sets in too deeply I hope). The flattened area was then covered up and the new pedal unit fitted after filling in the unwanted large hole left behind by the old style pedal box metalwork.

Nowadays you can't just pop into your local petrol station to pick up a 30amp glass fuse in case of need, so I've been planning for some time to fit modern blade fuses to each circuit. Looking at my fusebox it was obvious that I could easily arrange for a separate fuse for each glass fused circuit, both the battery live fed and ignition live fed.

I found that on my car six ignition circuits are fused off the single 30A fuse and several battery live ones off the other one so I bought two six way blade fuse holders (you can get THESE fuses anywhere) from Auto Electric Supplies, along with a roll of “loom tape” and a tube of Anti Corrosive Paste (their version of the long lost and lamented No-Crode paste) and got to work.

Because the twin fuse box originally fitted actually has the links for all the necessary





circuits I soldered a “busbar” across the IN terminals so they could all be powered as originally from one source. Underneath the fusebox then placed the wires from the single fuse holder onto the new fusebox to give the same feed or user pattern. I had been quite worried about this part of the job, expecting a lot of trouble making the cables run far enough to work on the fusebox, but in fact they just fitted as if it had been planned this way by BMC back in '66. The picture above shows a spare four way fuse box modified this way. This was done for both fused circuits and as I have a few non-standard electrical additions to my car I allowed for one feeder wire to drive a couple of relays I am using to protect the brake light switch and operate an electric cooling fan feed.

Since I converted from dynamo to alternator many of the brown wires around the old location of the Control Box have become redundant and are being cut off to further tidy the wiring. I used my roll of “loom tape”, a non adhesive PVC tape that was able to pull all the separate strands of “new” wires together to tidy up the compartment, which made the engine compartment a tidier and easier place to work in.

Before these modifications were made I painted the entire underbonnet area with Smoothrite Dark Green and the finished engine room looks far smarter to the eye.

Before refitting the engine and gearbox into the newly repainted space I decided to make an engine leveller from an old side lift jack and some odds and ends. This enabled me to control the fitting of the power unit and fit the whole lot without even grazing the new paint. I built mine instead of paying out hard cash as a cost saving exercise, I can think of dozens of uses for thirty pounds...

**Bill Mohan**

## The 2011 London Bridges Run



Hi all, it's that time of year again for the annual Bridges Run along the River Thames, it will be on the 1st Sunday of the month on the 2nd of January.

The start point will be East of London at the McDonalds in Rotherhithe, **Evelyn Street, London SE8 5AW**. We will meet from about 9 am to leave at precisely at 10.00ish.

The route will travel to and fro across the bridges stopping along the way for refreshment and comfort breaks and we will end in the West of London in Richmond in the Rose of York.

Hope to see many of you there. Contact me for more information

Darren Tyre

Tel: 07774 128 245

Email: darren.tyre@ntlworld.com



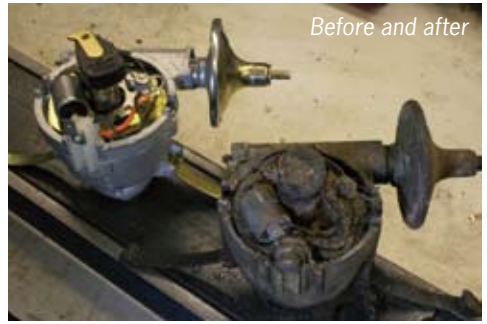
# Rebuilding a Distributor

**Lee Hull of H&H Ignition Solutions shows how**

To most people a change of cap and rotor, points and condenser is the most amount of attention they will go to when checking the distributor. The distributor is the heart of the engine and is the crucial component for ensuring a substantial spark provides sufficient combustion to force the pistons down the cylinders and rotate the crank shaft. Fortunately at H&H Ignition Solutions in the West Midlands they know all there is to know about distributors and the pitfalls that surround them.

Very rarely is there any thought given to the condition of the main-shaft, bushes/bearings, centrifugal advance mechanism, vacuum advance/retard unit, base plate or any of the other components which make up a distributor, it is vital that every component is in top working order otherwise everything else will be compromised.

H&H can offer a full rebuild for your Spridget's distributor and return it to as new factory condition, which involves a complex and in-depth process which will see all serviceable components renewed or replaced including internal bushes honed and matched



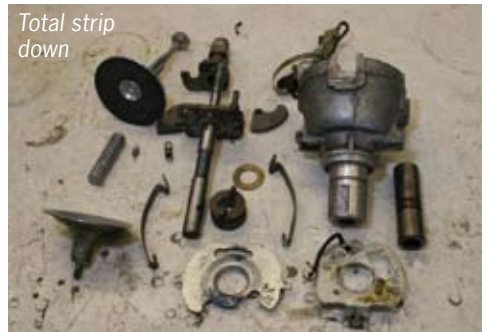
*Before and after*

to the original spindle, advance weight and springs replaced and recalibrated, vacuum diaphragms, external/internal oil seals and all of the usual serviceable items including contact, condenser, cap and rotor arm, with a typical 3-5 day turnaround when business is steady, the overhaul service is based on the assumption that distributor body and its main components are in serviceable condition, Lucas DVXH4A – £95.00 INC VAT and p&p Lucas DM2 – £90.00 INC VAT and P&P and the later Lucas 25D4 and 45D4 – £85.00 INC VAT and P&P.

New replacement distributors can also be offered for all models of the 4 cylinder engine based on the later 25D or 45D distributor



*Dismantling*



*Total strip down*



*Cleaning*



body along with the addition of electronic ignition which starts at the very competitive price of £65.00 inc VAT and P&P.

Before the advent of engine management and electronic ignition vehicles of all makes clocked up years worth of miles in relative ease, unfortunately today's classic car owners are dogged by poor quality reproduction parts widely available within the automotive world and the murky depths of the internet, often indistinguishable from original parts, you won't know until 2 miles from home you arrive kerb side to a spluttering halt, often overlooking the newly fitted rotor arm or contact set, fortunately H&H spotted this trend in the early days and carefully sources its serviceable parts from



well trusted suppliers to keep their name squeaky clean and give your engine the years of reliability it once had.

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# USA Spec Midget 1500



For the 1975 model year, the need to use unleaded fuel, initially in California, and new low speed impact without damage regulations meant that the Midget now gained the 1493cc Spitfire engine and the big energy absorbing rubber bumpers. However, the Midget 1500 for the USA lost the twin HS4 SU carburettors to be replaced with a single Zenith-Stromberg 150 CD4. Compression ratio dropped from the UK standard of 9.0:1 to 7.5:1 although oddly, for 1976 only, all USA states other than California enjoyed the higher compression ratio of the UK versions.

In reference to the USA spec Midget 1500 in the November edition, then yes indeed, three windscreen wipers and side marker lights were only 'tip of the iceberg' changes made for the USA market. From 1968, the USA demanded far more stringent changes to comply with new emission and safety regulations for the continued sale of Spridgley things.

Initially, this demanded an energy absorbing collapsible steering column, a crushable, padded dashboard, twin circuit brakes, three windscreen wipers and side reflectors. The engine gained an air pump to inject air into the exhaust ports and a more effective crankcase and fuel system venting system.

A gulp valve was added to the inlet manifold, hence the cutaway section at the top front corner of the heat shield which seemed a mystery revision on UK versions. Likewise, the air pump dictated a change of radiator from vertical to cross flow which was similarly applied to UK market versions. As the years rumbled on, the USA, which was the biggest market for Midgets, an increasing amount of safety and emission revisions was required.



*An immaculate US Spec Engine*

At its lowest ebb, the USA Midget 1500 had but 50bhp and 67lb ft of torque to pull itself along with. The engine compartment became filled with pipework as all venting was now directed through carbon absorption canisters with an interconnection pipe to the fuel tank. The tank was fitted with a capacity limiting chamber and no longer vented through the filler cap. An anti run on valve and exhaust gas recirculation valve were fitted and a catalytic converter for the unleaded equipped versions. The gulp valve was re-introduced for the final year of production; this allowed a small amount of air from the air pump to enter the inlet manifold under deceleration. From October 1975, a Zenith-Stromberg 150CD4T carburettor was fitted, this having an automatic choke as drivers could no longer be trusted to adjust the mixture manually for fear of choking America to death.

Naturally, the air inlet temperature was automatically controlled as well.



*Gulp Valve*



Zenith Stromberg 150 CD 4

Although the optional front anti roll bar was standardised on home market Midgets from August 1973, USA bound Midget 1500s had to wait until December 1977 to have this factory fitted. With the additional weight and raised centre of gravity, USA Midget 1500s lacking an anti roll bar must have had 'interesting' handling characteristics to put it politely.

Dashboard warning lights to remind of service intervals of emission control components were also a part of USA Midgets as was the sequential seat belt safety system. With this, the driver could not start the engine and drive off without fastening the seat belt. After all, if the average American could not be trusted to use a choke knob correctly or release the hand brake without a warning light, a seat belt could easily be dismissed! In truth, the electrical warning devices were revised over



Special side graphics

the years but were well removed from the simplicity of the home market versions.

Despite all this complexity and reduction in performance, the Midget 1500 continued to sell well in the USA although some encouragement was required in 1976. To boost a drop in sales, a limited edition Midget 'Special' was offered. At no extra cost the Special came with chromed wheel trims, luggage rack, radio and side graphics in the shape of an extended T with a Special script just behind the doors. In 1979, the American ROAD & TRACK magazine, in their final road test of a Midget 1500, began with the statement "Why would anyone want one?" MG responded by finishing production in December 1979.

The practice of re-importing USA Spridgley things from the dry, rot free states has become popular in the UK as a fast track, cost effective way to replace a well rotted body shell. Prior to 1968, right and left hand drive bodies were common but after then, not so simple. The additional windscreen wiper, side marker reflectors and marker lights, energy absorbing steering columns and a growing number of other minor details made the swap from left to right hand drive far more work. Of the 72289 Midget 1500s made, 54442 were made as left hand drive. With the inevitable rot attack of UK Midget 1500s, are they becoming far rarer than we think?

Just to answer the question from last month's edition, USA regulations stated that a certain percentage of the windshield had to be swept, which was not achievable with just the two short wipers that the UK versions were equipped with. Hence the extra blade. Oh, and they also gained sun visors which the home market never had.

**Terry Horler**



# Lost, Found ... and Recovered



32 PPD looking lost

We read with interest Alan's article on page 22 of October's MASCOT about an abandoned Frogeye in Sanderstead, Surrey. We already had a reconditioned Frogeye, and a 1500 Midget, which was upside down in our garage in the throes of major restoration. We waited a week before contacting the owners of the abandoned vehicle to arrange a visit.

The car was in remarkably good condition for its 51 years. It had only 42,000 miles on the clock and, in checking up with DVLA, we found the last tax had expired in August 1984. The V5 showed that it had only one previous owner. It appears that the car had been stored in a wooden garage for most of the last 26 years. However, when the garage was rebuilt, it had been pushed into the back garden leaving only a personal gate as access to the outside world. There it had remained, landlocked, nestling under a cover. Anyone buying this car would have the problem of getting it out of the garden. This now became an interesting rescue project for us and we decided that, should we be able to get it through the gate, we would buy the car. We returned a couple of days later with a large wooden frame representing the side profile of a Frog, which we walked through the gate and around various obstructions to check whether we could physically remove the car from the garden on its side. As this worked out ok we made an offer for the

car which, after a bit of negotiation, was accepted.

It was obvious to us that the only way we could handle the car was to strip it down to a bare shell.

We made two further visits to the site, bringing with us what was virtually a mobile workshop complete with lifting equipment and axle stands, a mobile crane, winch, cutting tools and Plus Gas for those awkward nuts and bolts. The householder, Muriel, kept us well supplied with cups of coffee which was very much appreciated. By the end of our final visit the car was just a shell resting on tyres in the middle of the garden. We had transferred all the bits which we'd removed, including the engine and gearbox, rear axle,



Anne with the partially stripped Cedric



*Piers with the fully stripped Cedric*

suspension, etc. to our home. We had built a large skateboard to move the car on its side, and a smaller one to fit under the front chassis extension. The purpose of the smaller board was to wheelbarrow the car into the van when we collected it.

Fortunately, our daughter was due to hire a long wheelbase box van the following weekend, so she volunteered to help. Together with a couple of friends and Muriel's husband and brother, we were able to manoeuvre the body shell out through the gate with only an inch to spare, and into the truck. The operation went like clockwork thanks to the preplanning.

The rescued Sprite now resides in our garage between our restored Sprite and the upside down Midget. Although our priority is to get the Midget back on his wheels, we can't resist having a go at the new Frog. The structure appears to be in good order with no evidence of previous repairs. Looking for a reason as to why this car has been laid up for so long, we've investigated the engine and gearbox but found nothing obviously wrong. The engine appears to be a very low mileage 1275cc. The more we look at it the more it the car seems to be



*A tight squeeze*



in exceptional condition for its age. We are spending a lot of our spare time working in the garage – Piers still welding the Midget and Anne working on the engine of the Frog. We've already had the head machined for unleaded fuel and there's lots more to do before he's roadworthy. He already has a name – Cedric.

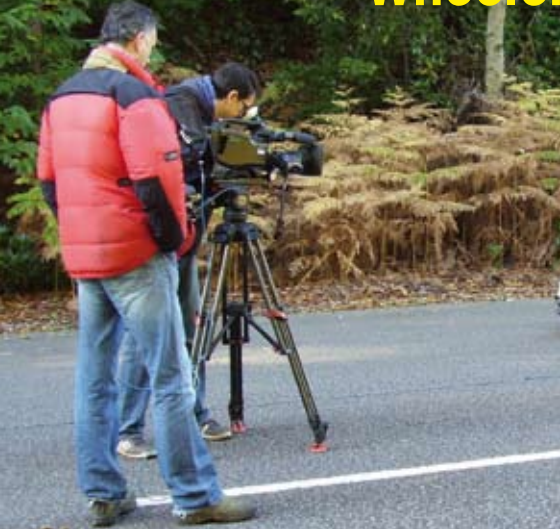


If anyone knows any history of this car, registration number 32 PPD, with a Sebring bonnet and hardtop, we'd be very grateful to hear from you. He's obviously been used for rallying in the past as he's fully kitted out with all the lights, etc.

Many thanks to John Clark and to Alan Anstead for introducing us to Cedric. Such an exciting project. Hopefully, we'll be able to give you an update later next year.

***Piers and Anne de Legh***

# Wheeler Dealer



*Static filming*

Us hard up pensioners cannot afford Sky TV so when Attaboy T.V. Co contacted me I had not heard of Wheeler Dealer – the T.V. programme. That was on a Tuesday. Could I source a Frogeye, other than red, by six o'clock that evening for a 'shoot' at Wokingham that Friday? I could think of several people in my area with green, blue, and white Frogeyes. But at such short notice? Surely they would all be at work? I offered my car and then the shoot was cancelled. Wokingham was not available on that day. To cut the story short we re-convened on the following Thursday, 21st October, at Longcross Test Facility, Chertsey, Surrey.

Thursday morning I rose early and drove away from home with the hood stowed. I took the precaution of wearing some Long Johns, several layers, and a thick leather jacket as the day started cold with a heavy frost. And then I drove straight onto the world's largest car park – M25. An hour and three quarters to travel fifty miles!

The crew turned up on the dot, at 0845hrs, except for Tony who was deputed to be my minder. It ended up with him, not I, needing directions on how to get to the rendezvous point to meet me but I can't complain as he did present me with a bacon butty and a large mug of steaming tea. Most welcome!

I parked the car where the cameraman told me and stood back and watched. After the static's I handed the keys to the production



*Within seconds the gantry will be raised*

company's designated driver and watched as he drove to and fro whilst being filmed from a static camera and then from a camera mounted on the back of a modified Ford Mondeo. It turned out to be quite a good day for filming as the sun came up and the chill went away. After several hours my car was returned to me and time to depart.

The footage will apparently be used for a programme in the spring 2011 but daresay I shall not see it, as I don't have Sky T.V., which is what happened back in the '70s when I let a production company use the same car for a T.V. advert for the Anglian Building Society. That advert only went out in the Anglian T.V. region. Does anyone recall seeing that advert?

**Alan Anstead**

# Scotland Report and Next Year's Diary

The October meeting of the Scottish Group was held, as usual, in The Garfield House Hotel, Stepps with the business of the night being the organisation of the Christmas Lunch, discussions about the format of the meetings and the possibility of inviting guest speakers; and finally the calendar for the 2011 runs and outings.

The Christmas Lunch is to be on Sunday 12th December 12.30 at Angels Hotel, Main Street, Uddingston. If interested please contact Betty Kerr on 01357 300355.

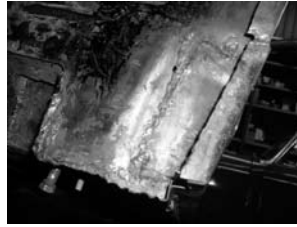
It is evident that our present meeting place, the communal lounge area at Garfield House, is not suitable should we wish to receive speakers to give presentations to the Group, and consequently further research is being undertaken into the meeting format and the availability of a suitable location for entertaining speakers.

With regard to the 2011 calendar, after some of those present had volunteered, there followed a certain amount of cajoling and much arm-twisting before the attractive looking provisional programme, as indicated below, was agreed.

If anyone is going to be in Scotland on any of the above dates, or interested in visiting around these times and would like to join us please do not hesitate to contact either Betty on 01357 300355 or myself on 01698 814791 for details of meeting points/times. You would be made most welcome should you wish to accompany us on any of the runs.

In the meantime, work is proceeding on the assortment of winter projects on the various cars within the Group.

With respect to the Spridget ventures, David A has been clearing his garage/workshop and



*New suspension mount and strengthening plates*



*New wing ready for fitting*

moving other vehicles around to allow him sufficient room to start on the re-assembly of his recently re-sprayed imported shell.

John T has completed some more work to "Tango". The driver's side rear spring mount and surrounding area had succumbed to the dreaded tin-worm. The defective metal has been cut away and a new spring mount and plates have been welded into place around the mount and to the wheel arch adjacent to the sill. A new front wing for the same side has been sourced ready for installation when required (See pictures).

By the time you read this, a group of us will have attended the Classic Car Show at the NEC and hopefully met some of you at the Midget and Sprite Stand. Just remember, don't spend all your money at the one stall, others are available!

**John Pardo**

Date	Organiser	Destination
24th April	John T and Betty	Spring Mystery Tour
15th May	John P	Myreton Motor Museum, Aberlady
3/4/5th June	Betty/John P	Skye Weekend
21st June	John T	Mid Summer – Culcreuch Castle, Fintry
3rd July	Michael	To be Arranged
24th July	Steve	To be Arranged
August	Willie	Loch Lomond and surrounds
August	David L	Mull of Kintyre
11th September	David A	Sanquhar and surrounds

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As it appeared on the MASC stand at last year's show



## 2009 NEC Classic Car Show Barn Find Austin Sprite

This is an update of the progress of the restoration of my Austin Sprite one year on. As many of the Warwickshire and South Staffs & Birmingham members will recall John Platt's barn find of the Austin Sprite which was sold at last year's classic motor show at the NEC. Well I brought it knowing full well that I had a challenge ahead. The first challenge was getting it in the garage before the wife had seen it, sorry love!

As many people who know me will tell you that I don't do things by half and a full restoration was decided on. The vehicle was duly stripped down, with the usual labelling and note taking we all have done. It was then taken locally to be sandblasted to reveal the extent of the project ahead. A body rotisserie was measure and made up in the garage at home. This works a treat and I have found it a real godsend. With the sprite now trussed up like a stuffed pig on the newly formed rotisserie a lot of head and nether region scratching commenced.... Where do you start! Well in no particular order, the sills, (inner and outer) both floor sections, kick panels, rear inner and outer bulkheads, spring hangers, both A posts, both door skins and o/s/r ¼ were replaced. Rear panel and some boot floor repairs to complete. I would like to thank my Tuesday evening companion for all his help (Mr Lockhart) and my grandson (pictured) for his help/ hindrance.

The deadline for metal work to be complete is Christmas; with a view for completion of the



Stripped down



Grandpa's helper

remainder in time for the Classic Car Show 2011. Anyway back to the stuffed pig, as it's Tuesday night.

**Stephen Roberts**

*Ed's note. It's great to see such a popular car coming along so well. MASCOT looks forward to receiving regular updates.*

# New Date for International MG Show as it marks the start of the classic season

Enthusiasts of Britain's best-loved sports car maker have a new date for the diary as the International MG Show and Spares Day returns to Warwickshire's Stoneleigh Park on Sunday **20th February 2011**. It's the ideal start to a classic year and brings together all that's best about the small sports car maker that developed a global fan base.

Sponsored by Heritage Insurance, the MG Show features displays from many of the UK's most dedicated motoring clubs; they will be showing rare and stunning examples of MG models down the ages, from the earliest to the very latest.

And for enthusiasts looking for parts there's the very popular autojumble – from a dashboard switch to a complete body shell, everything you need to start or finish your restoration project will be there.

Alongside the autojumble, MG specialists will be promoting their products and services, as well as sharing their know-how and expertise with other enthusiasts.

The International MG Show and Spares Day is open from 10am until 4pm. Tickets are available at £8 for OAPs and adults in advance (with a £1 transaction fee), £10 for OAPs and £12 for adults on the gate. Advance ticket holders will also benefit from 'Early Bird Access' from 8.30am, allowing you to beat the queues and bag an early bargain!

Car parking is free. To book tickets, call 0871 620 7067 or visit the website at [www.mg-show.co.uk](http://www.mg-show.co.uk) for further updates.

Companies or clubs interested in exhibiting can contact Kelly Delaney on 01775 768661 or email [kelly@livepromotions.co.uk](mailto:kelly@livepromotions.co.uk).

For the autojumble, traders can contact Helen Morton on 07545 160 353 or email [h\\_norcombe@hotmail.com](mailto:h_norcombe@hotmail.com)

TICKETS

£10

in advance

£12

on the day

Under 16's  
**FREE!**  
when accompanied  
by an adult

**THE  
LARGEST**  
INDOOR MG SHOW  
IN THE WORLD!  
(OR SO WE'RE TOLD...)

THE INTERNATIONAL  
**mg show**  
& spares day

20th  
**FEBRUARY**  
2011

National Agricultural Centre  
**STONELEIGH**

Warwickshire, CV8 2LZ  
(4 MILES FROM JN.15, M40)

**10am-4pm**

**Trade Stands & Autojumble**

specialists, professionals and smaller stands for the enthusiasts, 'garage clearouts' and a massive choice of spares, accessories, tools, models etc. Stand and autojumble space is limited and must be pre-booked, SO CALL TODAY

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HELEN NORCOMBE ON

**07545 160353**

[www.mg-show.co.uk](http://www.mg-show.co.uk)

**FOR GENERAL ENQUIRIES CALL 01775 768661  
FOR DAY TICKETS CALL 0871 620 7067**



## South Staffs and North Birmingham Report

Well it's been a busier time for us this month. It started with the Midget and Sprite Club AGM at Coventry Motor museum on 17th October. I met up with Andy and Mark at the usual meeting place of McDonald's carpark, before the three of us setting off for Coventry. Mark led in his red Midget as he said that he knew the way (and also he had his copy of MASCOT with him with the directions!)

There was a good line up of cars there when we arrived and we joined the line up. Bill 1 and Bill 2 turned up soon after, as did John W. So our area was represented by the 6 usual suspects. We all remembered our bits of carpet for under the cars, although Mark put us to shame with his very smart rug that he placed under his car, rather than the oily, dirty remnant that had come from my garage floor (good job it was hidden under

the car). The cars attracted lots of attention from the passing public and many camera phones were in evidence, I wonder how many Spridgets have now appeared on facebook pages? Sadly though we didn't get much chance to have a look around the museum, so it will be somewhere to visit on another day.

At our November meeting, we had a good turnout and again lots of photos of restoration progress were in evidence. Andy also stepped up to the mark in offering to help me out as area rep by taking on the role of events organiser.

Other events of November included myself and John W joining in a MGCC organised event at Aldon Automotive in Briely Hill on Saturday 6th. This was a great day out with approximately 14 cars turning up including MGBs but mainly spridgets. All cars were put on the rolling road and power runs carried out. Both John and myself were very pleased with our results with John W's car showing very healthy output of standard 1275 figures and my 1400 K-Midget showing 119bhp.

In addition this month, several of our members are planning to venture to the classic show at the NEC near Birmingham, but are planning to take the train rather than drive to save car park fees and also the traffic jams on the M42.

**John Collins**  
Tel: 07070 213 084  
Email: green\_mx5@hotmail.com



John's Midget  
on the rolling  
road

# Kent Meeting



What a difference a day makes (sounds like a cue for a song). Saturday was full of rain and the forecast for Sunday was no better but on the day – the difference. Sunday was sunny if a little bit chill. A low winter sun did its best to blind but did not detract from the enjoyment factor of driving topless, – ooh ah missus, in a classic sports car. Eleven Spridgets turned out for our monthly Sunday lunchtime meet at the Moat, Wrotham Heath, Kent. Most, but not all, had their hoods stowed.

Mel & Barb reported that Ashley Hinton had made them a personal invite, for some bespoke tailoring of a radiator grill, at his Gt Bookham base. You may have seen their de-bumpered rubber bumper Midget in a monthly motoring magazine in recent months. Initially on seeing the cover photograph I thought Mel was one of three triplets.

We welcomed Elsa & Colin Draper to the fold. They will be new members; once the 'paperwork' is done tomorrow. Dick Robson dropped in, complete with Spridget, to see what we are all about. Maybe if he likes us he will join MASC.

Paul & Jane brought along the rally plaques for our November Remembrance Run to

Ypres (Belgium) on 11/11. We are monitoring what is occurring with the unrest in France. Hopefully the rioting will desist or we may be forced to cancel.

Paul & Jane, assisted by JC, are currently reconnoitring our Late May Bank Holiday Tour. This will take place 28th – 31st May 2011 in, and around, Suffolk. Expressions of interest are invited (via my e-mail). I will try to get an advert into *MASCOT* when they have decided on a base Hotel. I don't have much more info other than you will need to bring a bucket and spade? Come one, come all. It will be a fun weekend!

Several people asked me if I was going to re-run the Miglia Tour. The answer is YES the Miglia Tour, through France, Switzerland, and Italy will take place from 10th–20th September 2011. I will be asking Gary to place an advert in *MASCOT* around January as I am currently working on amendments to the route.

**Alan Anstead**

Surrey / Kent Area Rep. Area

Reps Rep to National Committee

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

Telephone (answer phone) 01322-384050



# Remembrance Run 2010

11th-14th November

A tour late in the year brought out five cars. Three 1500 Midgets, one Austin Sprite and my Sebring rep. The weather was always going to be of concern, in November, but no one expected that the Dover / Calais ferry would require towing from its berth, by a tug, because of the gale raging at sea.

The P&O captain rigged and trimmed the ship well as whilst wind and wave battered the hull and superstructure both were hardly noticeable to us hardy sailors within. Two cars, of our five, had chosen the softer route by Eurotunnel so all met up at the Campanile Hotel, Bethune which was to be our base for the four day tour.

Booked in and cases stowed we set off together for Ypres (Ieper) to spend time at the Remembrance Ceremony at the Menin Gate. Every evening at 2000hrs the 'Last Post' is played, here, and one from the thousands of names, of the fallen of World War 1, with no known grave, commemorated on the 'Gate' is read out. This being Armistice Day the ceremony was joined by many Old Comrades Societies laying wreaths and there were several pipe bands parading. Although starting together our party soon became parted in the heavy rain. Heavy rain was to fall all weekend as I am led to believe it did all day at home.

The next day we made our way, via the Plug street (Ploegsteert) Memorial to Tyne Cot CWGC cemetery, the largest of its

type in Europe. En route we came upon a magnificent Rotunda which we found to be a memorial to the Indian Divisions that fought in this region. A little further away was a Portuguese Military Cemetery where many had fallen under allied machine gun fire when, because their uniform was similar to the Germans, when overrun and retreating they were mistaken for the enemy. Although the weather was nothing compared to that experienced by those combatants of long ago, Passchendaele Ridge was no place to be on such a foul day so we lowered our colours and withdrew in good order to Zonnebeke, first to partake of an excellent Flemish Stew at the De Volksbond restaurant, 26, Ieperstraat before visiting the Passchendaele Museum. [www.passchendaele.be](http://www.passchendaele.be).

Nay & Col's Midget was beginning to sound like a tractor: eventually a large chunk falling away from the exhaust manifold leading to the car being placed in 'park ferme' for the third day of our tour. Nay & Col joining Peter & I respectively as we travelled solo.

Saturday morning began with a walk in to Bethune to stock up on umbrellas as the rain just would not let up. A ship's chandlery would have been more useful to purchase some bilge pumps to bale out the cars. No one was even considering lowering hoods on the cars!

I had arranged for a visit to a private museum at Fromelles run by the Assoc' Souvenir de la Bataille de Fromelles which is located in



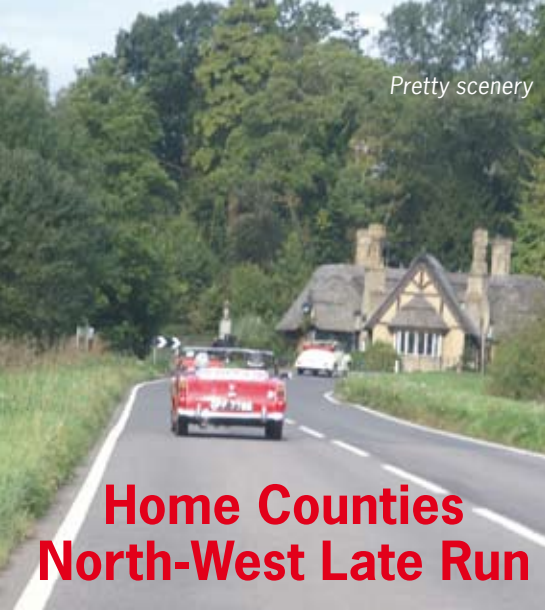
the attic of the Marie. On arrival it was all locked with no one in sight but right on the designated hour Mr Martial Delabarre arrived with some acquaintances to open up and show us around. This is a most excellent museum. Mr Delebarre, after an introduction, explained that the local clay preserves much leather and wool as well as other materials, metals etc, that have been buried for many years. That reminds me of the quote of the Tour, from someone who may remain anonymous, when later, over a glass of wine and a pint, discussing Frogeye Radiator Grills: "they are not made of metal they are alloy".

The weather caused us to make the most fleeting of visits to the newest CWGC cemetery at Fromelles and the new (this past June) monument to the Tunnellers Memorial at Givenchy where, tunneller, sapper William Hackett, in an act of selfless valour, was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross. He still lies in a tunnel some forty feet below the surface with the comrade he tried to rescue. Sunday we beat a hasty retreat, homeward bound, from what must rate as our wettest ever tour. Roll on Summer 2011!

**Alan Anstead**



Pretty scenery



## Home Counties North-West Late Run

It was quite chilly when we set out for Little Gaddesden and the start of the HCNW October run, but the forecast was promising a dry day. We arrived at the meeting place at 9:45 to find Chris & Pat and Vic & Lily already there in their Sprites, and over the following half hour another 2 Frogeyes, a Midget and a Morris Minor convertible arrived. They all put their hoods down, but unfortunately our recently acquired Frog only came with tonneau or hard top and the hard top had been fitted for a drive, in torrential rain, to the Ace Café in August.

The run had been organised by Maurice and Sharon Godden who set us off with route instructions and emergency rations – a bag of toffees each! The route was through the leafy lanes and charming villages of Buckinghamshire, but a requirement to count churches on the way kept us alert.



*Did someone mention a cuppa?*



*...then there was us and the one behind..."*

We had a coffee stop in an old bakery, where the proprietresses made their own cakes, then drove a further 30 pretty miles with occasional stunning views to lunch at Winslow. Maurice had organised an alcove to be reserved for us, so we enjoyed lunch and some convivial chat and stories until it was time for the awarding of the prize for the correct number of churches seen. We were surprised and pleased to be the only crew with the correct number, and were awarded a Terry's Roger's Chocolate orange. Many thanks to Maurice & Sharon for a very enjoyable day.

**Maggi & Roger Byford**

*With apologies for quality of photos taken through windscreen*



*The group parked up for lunch*

# East Anglian Report



Not very much going on on the event front this month, more a time for planning than doing, apart from the customary well attended Mad Cat Meeting (note this year there will be popular demand be a December Mad Cat meeting), the only MASC outing was me being sent to Coventry for the inaugural meeting of the new committee and the AGM. As a new committee member this was a new and interesting experience for me, although it was a little disappointing that the committee was chosen by default rather than by the voice of the membership. Eleven people were nominated for the eleven committee positions, hence were appointed unopposed, I suppose this avoided the cost of a postal ballot (which all helps to keep the club subs down) and is in accordance with club rules, but as was pointed out at the AGM, was rather more realistic than democratic.

Getting back to the outing itself, it was a cloudy start to the day and since I was fighting off the early signs of Burke flu (Chris Burke had been coughing and spluttering all over me all week at work) reluctantly I set off for Coventry in my old Diesel dustbin, but after just 11 miles the sun came out and the clouds all burned away to reveal a perfect blue sky, if I had had the time I would have gone back for the Sprite. As it happened I arrived at Coventry in good time, but without the aid of Pat nav found myself travelling clockwise round the inner ring road, instead of anti clockwise hence a quick

circumnavigation of the city centre before arriving at the Coventry Transport Museum on Millennium Place. I found a car park close by however, we had permission to park on the space age Millennium Place for those who arrived in proper cars, with the proviso that we didn't drip any oil (that is what you said wasn't it Gary). I was one of the first to arrive so climbed up onto the curling aerial walkways over the square that make it look a bit like a Dr Who set, and took a couple of photos of the Sprites parked below. I think there must have been twenty or more Spridgets in the square at one point but sadly I didn't get time to get an aerial shot of them (or Gary's frantic efforts to clean up under a certain Frogeye, with a paper tissue, before making a rapid getaway).

Regarding the meetings, since there were two, the first being the ordinary committee meeting at 11:00 where the new committee got to know one another and were brought up to speed on where we are and what the outgoing committee saw as issues to be dealt with. I have to say with 11 people to bring up to speed, 11 points of view and 11 sets of ideas and suggestions it made for some lively and interesting discussion and a great many actions, so much so that we almost collided with the start of the AGM so we had to save some issues for the next meeting in early January.

I was asked to raise a couple of issues by the EAMASC members, one on the procedural

point that any officers (especially the committee) should disclose any commercial or other professional connections to the classic car industry, I am not sure what prompted this suggestion but obviously the committee should be open about such things. The other issue was that people felt that we should have a designated chairman. On the first point Gary stated that to his knowledge nobody on the current committee had any such vested interests, however it was suggested that all members should write a brief profile in *MASCOT* and state any such issues. On the second point we did appoint Alan as chairman (so a vote of thanks is due to him for stepping up to the plate).

I thought the AGM was quite well attended, especially by area reps and retiring committee members (it is always good to be able to put names to the faces), and once things got going they raised some very good points and stimulated some lively discussion. One issue that was raised was the idea that we should have an annual national club event, OK we have Midget 50 coming up but we will have to wait another 50 years for the next one. The national event would ideally have its own attractions that we could piggyback our agenda onto and give people even more reason to make the effort and travel to meet

up with members from other areas. The venue we came up with was the Silverstone Classic. Silverstone is the home of British motor sport, the Classic is the biggest and best classic motor sport Festival in the world, MASC has had a prominent presence at this super event for several years and Silverstone is (by my estimation) close to the geographic centre of MASC membership population distribution. Pencil in 22nd 23rd and 24th July 2011 Friday Saturday and Sunday (you can attend any or all of the days) and watch *MASCOT* for details of how to obtain your heavily discounted tickets. This is not only the best car show in the world, it comes with fabulous racing with tens of millions of pounds worth of historic cars on the grid of many races, full access to the pits and cars, hundreds of food and trade stalls, aerobicic shows and top line live entertainment in the evening all included in the price.

Amazingly as you read this the festering season is upon us another mad MASC year over and a new (even better) one almost begun. Have a brilliant Yuletide and Mahogany and I will see you out in your Spridget in the New Year when you have sobered up.

See you all at the Mad Cat and beyond

**Dave Dixon**

## Home Counties North West – Part 2

### A tail-end tale from a tell-tale tale teller

The letter from Dale Lodge, in the November issue, about removing engine and gearbox, brought to mind this tale.

Once upon a time there were two mechanics (sic) who set out to re-fit the engine and gearbox into a motor car not unrelated to a Spridget; the car which donated its rack and pinion steering system that we know and love. These two mechanics (sic) had the great advantage of being equipped with both an engine hoist and a pit. So, easy peasy! No lying on your back getting a face full of bits and pieces.

The engine is in place, held there on the hoist operated by M.... (no, mechanic (sic) A).

Anonymity is expedient!

Mechanic (sic) B is in the pit with the gearbox on his shoulder. Simple. Lift it into place.

Reach for the top set of bolts, strategically placed (you see they know what they are doing). Turn them in, finger tight and then reach for the other bolts...??? Ah! Not so easy with your head stuck fast between gearbox and chassis! And bolts go in finger tight but can require a spanner to take 'em out!

Mechanic B (very sick) gets absolutely no help or sympathy from mechanic A (sick with laughter).

I know not how the situation was resolved, but it must have been because I have seen them both since the debacle.

Our Christmas dooo is arranged for January 16th. Details from me at the address in the front of *MASCOT*.

**Chris**

# Bristol Area Report

Just in case you were wondering, the photograph in last month's *MASCOT* purporting to be that of John Ruderman, Nigel Williams and yours truly – Terry Horler, contained some inaccuracy – I don't look at all like that. I will leave my fellow members to speak for themselves however.

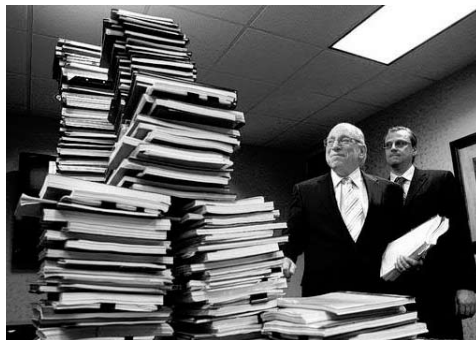
It was most useful to receive the new club representative information pack from MASC HQ. This spells out how things should be done on the front line of MASCateering in the field. In truth, I have been expecting this and have already introduced a protocol to ensure that the fair name of MASC and the protection of its members is properly administered in the Bristol region.

No one sits at the Masc table at the Rose & Crown at Pucklechurch without providing the necessary paperwork, signing the disclaimer and performing a little song or dance. However, we do seem to have a problem. When we outnumber the small table, thus enforcing a move to the large table, this act now constitutes a club 'event'.

This being an organised movement of multiples of members on recognised club business. To cover this movement of members in a public place, we have introduced a sub-disclaimer that protects the club in the event of – tripping, spillage, soakage and becoming lost or damaged in transit. This criteria being agreed following a full risk assessment of the 'event' and the venue.

The landlord now rings the bar bell to warn the public that MASC members are about to move table and to seek suitable shelter. A second bell rings when the movement is completed and that all MASCites are accounted for, seated safely and paperwork signed off. One or two members feel that this is a bit over the top although the random strip search in the toilet seems to be getting just a little bit too popular with some members – but it has to be done none the less.

With this new found organisation, our etiquette at meetings has also been reviewed with the objective to allow only one member to speak at a time. OK, some of the Bristol regulars may have thought that this has always been the case so I will revise this by



*A rare glimpse of Terry Horler without his customary hair piece, backed up by Alan Lo, who looks a lot smaller in real life*

stating that members other than Alan Lo will now be given the opportunity to speak. Hence, I have introduced a token that is passed around the table, only the token holder is allowed to speak and on putting it down to pick up the drink, the token is grabbed by the next speaker. Simple in theory, not so in practice.

I reckoned that the token just had to be a Spridgley thing component; however, my choice of a prop shaft was not well received. In swinging this around the table, two members were rendered unconscious and another nearly lost a significant facial feature.

The landlord was not well pleased when I took out two ceiling lights and a window with the splined end as we left – oops. Next month we shall use an old seat belt, not to pass around, we can gag Alan with it so that's another little problem sorted in the Bristol area.

Escape the Christmas meal at our December club night, where as usual, we shall all sit and stare at Andy as he gets down to his last six chips whilst we try to make him feel guilty with our hungered looks and empty pockets.

Second Wednesday at the R & C at Pucklechurch. Don't forget to bring some form of I.D. utility bill, library card, insurance policy, SORN and a recent photograph of your neighbour's pet.

I declare that this is a true and accurate record of the events of the 10th of November 2010.

**Terry Horler**

# Yorkshire Area is Back! With a new fixed venue



At Byland Abbey

After a sad summer with no Area Reps and no activities for MASC within Yorkshire, Sarah and Tim have agreed to take back on the role of caretaker Area Reps for the next six months, albeit on a more restricted basis than previously. We are no longer able to dedicate the substantial amount of time required each month to organise rotating venues around the vast expanse of Yorkshire's far flung territory without any assistance. So we will now have meetings in the same venue for the next six months, and then we will review the situation. Yorkshire Area's monthly meeting until at least April 2011 will now take place on the

second Saturday of each month at Ye Jolly Farmers Inn, Dalton near Thirsk, YO7 3HY from 12.30pm. We appreciate that this venue is not the most geographically central, but the reason we have chosen this as a fixed venue is because there have been no volunteers to organise meetings elsewhere, and the landlord at Ye Jolly Farmer's is exceptionally friendly to MASC and will not take offence and bar us if low numbers turn out. This is one of the major stress factors in organising meetings. It is also an exceptionally good CAMRA pub that does great home-made Yorkshire cooking at very affordable prices, with a decent car park. We



On Snilesworth Moor

hope that you will support the Area by trying to come along at some point over the next six months - you don't have to be in a Spridget, particularly over the winter months - but you can share fellowship and expertise with fellow spridgeteers next to a roaring fire over a steaming pie, and cheeky half of real ale.

We also hope to be in a position to organise some road runs for the Spring. As a taster of good times to come next year, we were able to meet up and go for a Spridget drive in late October with Jason & Michelle in "Cybil" their Mk II Sprite, and the following weekend we had a great drive out in the Hambleton and Cleveland Hills with Frank & Val and new member Andrea in her Austin Sprite on

a crisp autumnal day. We discovered that Andrea has a fantastic accessory on her car, a luggage-rack lectern that is perfect for holding maps in cold windy car parks!

Don't forget that you can keep up to date with what is happening in the area on the area website at

<http://yorkshiremasc.blogspot.com/>

Finally, wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a Spridget filled 2011. Hope to see you all soon.

**Sarah & Tim Saunders**

Caretaker Yorkshire Area Reps

Tel: 07968 261990

Email: [yorkshiremasc@googlemail.com](mailto:yorkshiremasc@googlemail.com)

## Surrey October Club Night

It was a cold, dark, wet night that greeted anyone setting foot out of doors on the 3rd Tuesday of the month so I was not at all surprised to find the bar empty when I arrived at the Blue Ball, Walton on the Hill, Surrey, KT20-7UE. [www.theblueballpub.co.uk](http://www.theblueballpub.co.uk) for the October Surrey MASC meet.

I had almost finished my meal when Col & Nay joined me followed by a steady stream of members that would eventually bolster our number to 15 as well as bolstering the number of people in the bar to that same number. The landlord must have given a sigh of relief when he witnessed everyone arrive.

The weather brought a change of conversation. Three of the ladies huddled in a corner obviously trying to shield me from their conversation following my scribbling in the past two MASCOTs. But elsewhere conversation encompassed Antique Pear trees, with a cooking tip from Jan to poach the pears in lemonade, to the rising price for hay. Mike Gorman arrived care of his chauffeuse Pam. Mike has recently had surgery on his shoulder as he tore something whilst pulling a rock out of his, and Pam's, French Mansion's swimming pool. Must have been some rock or was it his wallet?

Ashley Hinton also needed assistance getting there. A fleet of cars and he had to borrow the wife's. Midget with leaking slave cylinder, Porsche with flat battery, and Ferrari allergic to rain. It's tough at the top! But then he did bring with him some automotive bling.



*New Ashley Hinton grill on Mel's de-bumpered Midget*

Diehards of authenticity please turn away. Ashley has manufactured, at his factory, a radiator grill, in stainless steel, that will service all Midgets and Sprites except a Frogeye. It will also service a de-bumpered rubber bumper Midget where the original type reveals the chassis legs. The perforations are octagonal as befits a Midget but are not 'original'. I am led to understand that this item will only be available at selected suppliers, at a fraction of the cost of an original item, so you may want to contact Ashley direct (01372-456304). I am now trying to convince him to manufacture a similar grill for Frogeyes.

Peter Gardiner the true Spridgeteer came to the meeting in his Midget the sole Spridget gracing the car park.

**Alan Anstead**

## Optional Extras

This Spridget (Mk2 Sprite or Mk1 Midget) seems to have been given the full “optional extras” treatment. Wire wheels and a boot rack along with the Speedwell door handles. But does anyone recognise the make of hard top? MASCOT would also like to know if any of its readers have ever seen one of these “continental” spare wheel kits, let alone owned one. Answers on a postcard ...



## Market Place

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

### For Sale

Frogeye, Reg. January 1960, exceptional fully rebuilt approx 10 years ago (photographs), hardly used since, Iris blue, leather seats, tonneau, hood and hardtop, £10500.  
Call Elaine 07511 299423. West Mids. (non-member)

### For Sale

1972 MG Midget (SWA), red, older restoration, recently refreshed, all photos, receipts and MOTs etc incl leather seats and Minilite wheels. MOT June 2011. £3500.00.  
Tel 01752 851217 / 07906 331107 (Plymouth) (non member)

### For Sale

Mk 2 Sprite bootlid, doors c/w sliding windows in yellow – Mk 3 Sprite speedometer and rev counter and windscreen.  
Tel 02476 594487 (non member)

### For Sale

Midget 1500 S reg failed MOT with rusty spring hangers. £1000.00 or less.  
Tel Louise Roberts 01704 896511 / email: [louiseroberts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:louiseroberts@hotmail.co.uk) (Nr Ormskirk) (non member)

### For Free

Hardtop for Mk 2 Sprite / Mk 1 Midget. Needs restoring but not broken. Free.  
Tel Simon 07932 372323 (Manchester area) (non member)

### Wanted

127 Midget RWA reasonable price, good shell with paint, do not mind project.  
Tel Tony 01269 822552 (South Wales) (non member)



## Hampshire Area Member's Cars Spotted on the Web

Occasionally while surfing the World Wide Web, I come across a special photo which has relevance to the Midget & Sprite Club. Even less often, I feel it is worthy of inclusion in *MASCOT*. The photo opposite was taken by Ian Freeman (see his images on [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com) under the name gingertrailertrash) and features the Sprites of (left to right) John Foard, Barry Green and Alf's Frogeye. I have Ian's email address should anyone from the Hants area wish to contact him.

## Also Spotted on the Web

I also spotted this nicely aged bit of Spridgetabilia, but I have no idea what it is or where it came from. It's obviously a photo of a right hand drive MkIV Sprite but the fact that the top speed is written as "Toppfart ca 150 km" (rather than MPH) confirms that it can't have been made for the home market.

Is it a collector's card, a sticker or even a beer mat?

If anyone has any idea, please could they let me know.



Gary



*Gift ideas!*

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### CARPET MATS:

CAB190 - CAB198

Our new heel mat carpet sets are made by our own talented trim shop team. A matching set of these will help prevent build up of dirt and debris and also prolong the life of your carpet.

2011 will be a great year as we will see the launch of more exciting new projects!

A.H. Spares Ltd would like to take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

*The Austin Healey Parts Specialists*

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All major credit cards accepted

