

September 2011

£2 No. 330

Mascot

The Magazine
of the
Midget & Sprite
Club



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

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Also see the Club Nights section on page 4 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

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September Editorial

Another great month seems to have just flown past and already I've noticed that it's getting darker just that little bit earlier every night. So I'm determined to make the most of the late summer evenings.

Gaps and I have been out and about (as usual) with the main event of our month being the regular meeting at the Ace Café (close to Park Royal in North West London) on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, where the London Area of the Midget & Sprite Club alongside the Lotus Seven Club piggybacks on the Classic Car Magazine's appropriately named "Classic Cars Night". We are usually blessed with a wonderful array of classics and there are always a few surprising vehicles which turn

up. Last month we had the added pleasure of a contingent of MASC members converging on the Café from the Midlands as well as Hampshire and the Home Counties North West Areas. It really is lovely to see so many Spridgets from far and wide. If you've never visited the Ace Café and you happen to be in or around London on the second Tuesday of the month, it is well worth the visit. Their "Toad in the Hole" alone is worth the journey. Let me know if you are coming down (either with a Spridget or without) my contact details are on the previous page.

Alan Anstead who has long been the stalwart of the Kent, Surrey and Sussex areas (as well as sitting on the national committee) has decided to try to spend more time concentrating on the Kent area and having previously passed over the reigns of Sussex to David Southcott, Alan is now able to relax even more due long time MASC member (number 141) Mike Gorman agreeing to take over the "reppage" of the Surrey area. Congratulations to both Alan on getting a bit more of his life to himself and Lisa. As well as to Mike on his promotion to Surrey area supremo.

Tempering Alan and Mike's good news it is my sad duty to have to inform members of the death of Diane Larrington, wife of member John Larrington, mother of Nicola & Michael and known to many throughout the south eastern regions and also the addition sad news that Christopher John Severn from Nuneaton has passed away having been ill for some time. On behalf of the club, MASCOT would like to send its condolences and best wishes to both families.

Gary & Gaps

The deadline for articles and reports for inclusion in next month's magazine is Wednesday the 14th of September.

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.

Cover image: Simon Taylor's immaculate award winning Rubber Bumper Midget.
Look out for a future article chronicling its 15 year renovation



HCNW area Mark Hall's Frogeye in good company outside the Ace Café

New Members



Steve Peplow's
MkIII Midget



Dick Mather's 1500
Spider project

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

2767	Keith Oglesby	Lancashire	Frogeye Sprite
4477	Paul & George Cannon	Bedfordshire	Midget Mk 3
4478	Sue & Alastair Pakes	West Midlands	Sprite Mk 4
4479	Paul Wiles	Essex	Midget Mk 3
4480	Tim Dalton	Worcestershire	Sprite Mk 4
4481	Steven Peplow	Worcestershire	Midget Mk 3
4482	anon	West Sussex	Midget Mk 3 RWA
4483	Dick Mather	Wiltshire	Midget 1500
4484	Rob Harris	West Midlands	Sprite Mk 4
4485	Bob & Jacqueline Hobbs	West Sussex	Midget Mk 3
4486	Philip & Helene Dodd	France	Midget Mk 3 RWA
4487	Colin & Debbie Martin	London	Frogeye Sprite
4488	Roger Carroll	West Yorkshire	Midget 1500
4489	Mike Cornwell	Bedfordshire	Speedwell GT
4490	Adrian Jukes & Kate Garnett	Hampshire	Frogeye Sprite



Adrian Jukes' Frogeye



Skip Jackson of Cincinnati Ohio
with his Mk1 Sprite

Club Nights

- 1st Tuesday **Essex Area** – Now meet at **The Bell**, Beckenham Road, Tolleshunt Major, CM9 8LL. For further details contact Jane Gates Tel: 01255830 509 or email: jgjanegates257@googlemail.com
- 2nd Tuesday **London Area** (Congestion Zone) – Meet at **The Ace Cafe** at 7:30pm. together with the Classic Cars Magazine night. Details: Gary Lazarus on 020 7700 5696 garylazarus@blueyonder.co.uk
- 1st Wednesday **South Staffs & Birmingham** – Meet at **Whitacre Ex-Service & Social Club**, 66 Station Road, Nether Whitacre, Coleshill, Birmingham, West Midlands. B46 2EH, 8.30-8.45pm
Contact: John Collins, Tel: 07970 213084 email: 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
- 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
- 2nd Wednesday **Heart of England, covers Worcs, Warks, West Midlands and surrounding areas** – 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 **East Anglian Area**. Previously the Cambridgeshire Area meet at **The Ferry Boat**, at Holywell, 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 Holiday Express, Keith Street, Hamilton 8:00pm. Contact John Pardo on 01698 814791
- 3rd Tuesday **Surrey** – Meet at **The Blue Ball**, Walton-on-the-Hill, 7.00pm onwards. Contact Mike Gorman, mike@birchwood44.freemove.co.uk Tel: 01737-552256
- 4th Thursday **Sussex** – Meet at **Selsey Arms**, Coolham, RH13 8QJ from 19:00. Contact David Southcott at dandlsouthcott@btinternet.com
- 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 Angel**, Addington Green, West Malling, Kent, ME19 5BB at 12:00 for lunch. Contact Alan Anstead, Tel: 01322 384050. alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
- Last Monday **Wiltshire** – Meet at **The Barge Inn**, Seend, Nr. Devizes, about 7pm except on Bank Holiday Mondays when it will be the Bell Inn at Yatton Keynell near Castle Combe, 6.30pm. Contact Andy Cross on 01225 743554 or e-mail andy@cross743.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** – Venue changed. Please contact David Hill for details of new venue, Tel: 01239 811307 or email david@hill.be
- Northern Ireland robertholmes25@hotmail.com. If enough interest, will arrange a meeting.

Club Website

www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

Members only pages Password: Speedwell

Events

From Richard Flynn & Webmaster Richard Mumford

September

- 4th East Anglia Visit the top secret Nuclear Bunker, contact Hubie (01733-212722)
- 10th – 20th MIGLIA 2011 For M.G. Midgets, Austin Healey Sprites, and derivatives only. For more details contact Alan Anstead Surrey / Kent Area Rep. alan.anstead@bopenworld.com Tel: 01322 384050
- 10th SW Wales Area are going on a Carmarthenshire Run. Meet at Morrisons Car Park, Carmarthen at 10:30. Details from David on 01239 811307
- 18th East Anglia Mystery Tour Details from Nigel and Dianne (01954-789503)

October

- 15th East Anglia Bowling and Meal in Pidley 1700 details from Nigel and Dianne (01954-789503)
- Sunday 23rd MASC AGM 2011, Coventry Transport Museum Millennium Place, Hales Street, Coventry CV1 1JD 024 7623 4270. 1:30pm for 2:00pm start

November

- Friday 11th Join Heart of England group at the Classic Car Show at the NEC. Details from John Platt on 01789 488321 or email john@platt2085.freemove.co.uk
- To Sunday 13th
- 12th East Anglia we are all going to the dogs (Greyhounds that is) Contact Dave Dixon (01733-222810)

December

- 11th East Anglia Christmas meal (Sunday lunch) details from Dave Dixon on (01733-222810)

Sorry Sprite (In defence of the Frog-Eyes)

The following two letters in defence of the Mk1 Sprite were received by Motor Sport magazine. The first titled **"The Sprite's Good Looks"** is from June 1960, and the second titled **"Sorry Sprite"** was published in July 1961. It just goes to show, that what ever and when ever, some people just don't like progress.

.....

THE SPRITE'S GOOD LOOKS

Sir,

It is time someone wrote in defence of the frontal appearance of the Austin Healey Sprite.

When compared with some proprietary modifications to the bonnet, the original is referred to as having an "amusing grin," or "a toad-like appearance," and sometimes far ruder remarks!

I have never yet seen a modified Sprite which looks balanced from a side view, they all look either nose heavy or tail heavy. I congratulate the makers on their perfectly balanced-looking design and I doubt if any one can better it. Leave the headlights where they are—why take away the distinctive appearance to make it just the same as every other sports car?

I am, Yours, etc.,
"A SATISFIED SPRITE OWNER."

Collingtree.

.....

SORRY SPRITE

Sir,

In common with other Sprite owners I was awaiting with trepidation the new edition of the car which brought fame to Venner-Pack, Sprinzel and "Pierre." Over the past three years B.M.C. had succeeded in de-naturing most of their products, but surely they wouldn't spoil the Sprite?

Alas, on my breakfast-table one Monday morning appeared a photograph of a sterilised horror that could best be described as an Austin-Farina Bandit. Where was the cheerful smile, the neat tail of my small friend? Gone, to be replaced by a humourless mask and antiseptic fins that seemed to ape the anonymity of the larger products of the land of vermicelli and innocent.

Where is the attraction of eyes which would never deign to blink, and a boot in which it is impossible to investigate the finer points of human relationship?

I shall not desert my friend, until the day when connoisseurs, sickened by the flow of Morris-Healeys, A.G.s and B.M.C. Berlinettas that will surely follow, will pay good money for a noble sporting companion with a true sense of humour.

I am, Yours, etc.,
"POPEYE."

London, W.1.

.....

Bigger Brakes

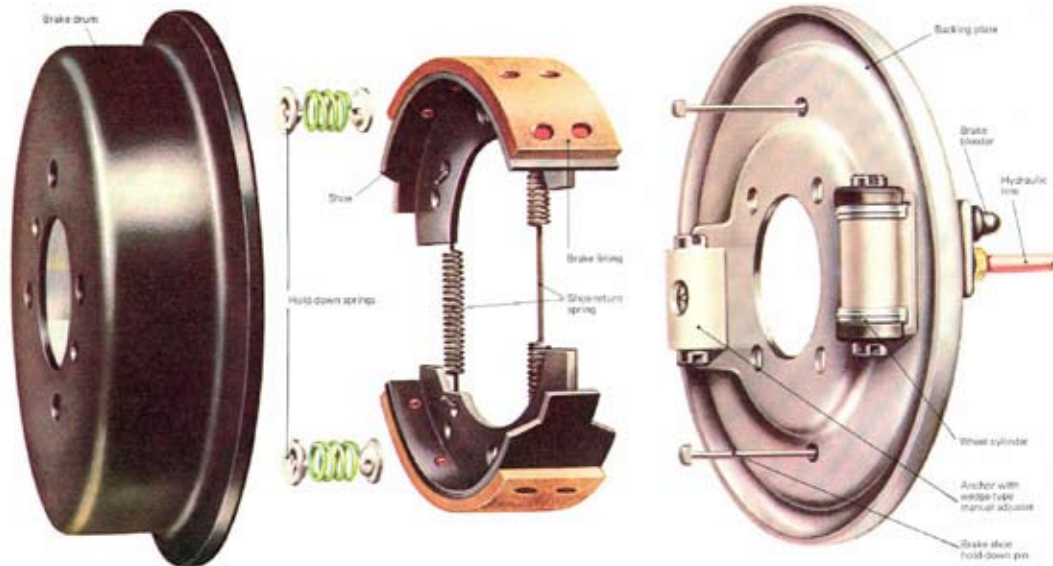
The Sort You Don't Want!

A local member had been experiencing vibration under braking, identifying the problem as the rear brakes. The rear drums can sometimes distort, especially if the handbrake is pulled on hard when the drums are very hot, and then left for some time.

Suspecting that the drums had become oval, a new pair was purchased from Moss. Disappointment quickly followed as these made no difference. As I had made up a piece of equipment to check for ovality in drum brakes, I checked both old and new pairs. Sure enough, the originals were a snug fit over the location diameter, this being the inside diameter of the drum where it fits over the hub outside diameter. With a dial indicator, the original drums were running within $.010''$ of concentricity – quite acceptable. The new drums absolutely fell over the location diameter; indeed, one hub was $.029''$ oversize and the other, $.035''$. This is far outside of an acceptable tolerance.

Even the countersunk retaining screw holes were produced on the wrong pitch circle diameter and not allowing the screws to engage properly. To use a technical term, these were rubbish! Brake drums are a major safety related item and to produce such poorly fitting items is a black mark to the manufacturer – whoever they may be. Moss took back the new drums and said they would get their R & D department to have a look at them. Feed back awaited with interest. So you may wonder, if the old brake drums were a good fit on the hub and running within $.010''$, what was causing the vibration under braking? Turned out to be a half shaft with a twisted inner splined end. No doubt caught just it time before it broke. My advice to you, if you have bought new brake drums in recent times and have had any doubts about how easily they fit over the hubs, or produce any vibration, they have probably come from the same slip shod manufacturer.

Terry Horler



BMW 5 speed gearbox for AH Sprite MKI and Midget I/II/III – 1275cc engines

This has come from Treffen friends in Germany and is a simpler (perhaps) solution to conversion from 4 to 5 speed. There is no cutting or welding which can be a major hurdle for those who do not have the facilities or skill. Also it offers a solution to the fast disappearing and consequent price hike to Ford Type 9 gearboxes.

The BMW 316/318 and 320 used a ZF gearbox which is believed to be bomb proof. Apparently there are still lots of them in German scrapyards and so are reasonably easily sourced.

From personal use of the Type 9 gearbox I can thoroughly recommend the conversion to 5 speed. It transforms the car, noise and comfort levels are vastly improved and for long distance touring is a virtual must. My 1500 Midget cruises at 70 mph as an easy 3000 rpm.

Geoff Hunter

The idea was to modify these little cars with a modern 5 speed gearbox not using the Ford T9 box, but the very reliable and sporty BMW gearbox from the modern BMW E30.

Advantages: No changes of the car structure are necessary and it is fully reversible to original.

After many tests and measurements I realised, that the BMW gearbox would be the ideal choice.

Using an adaptor plate for the engine and prop shaft (alloy machined, drilled etc.) the BMW box fitted to the engine.



Ready for assembling, adaptors in alloy

Great advantage of this gearbox – no fixed position of the gearlever. It can be positioned as required using a rod with eyes at both ends. Very short length.

The prop shaft has to be purpose built and requires with new bolts, nuts, brackets etc.

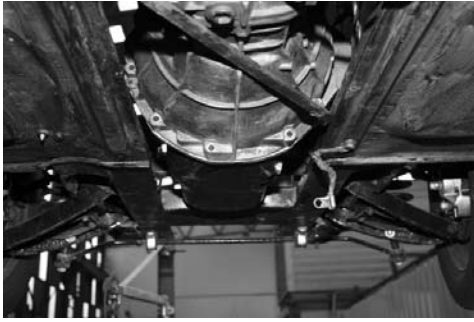
A replacement hydraulic pipe and clutch slave cylinder (new or second hand) is used as well. Following pictures show details of assembly.



Both gearboxes by comparison



Clutch and adaptor plate are already mounted



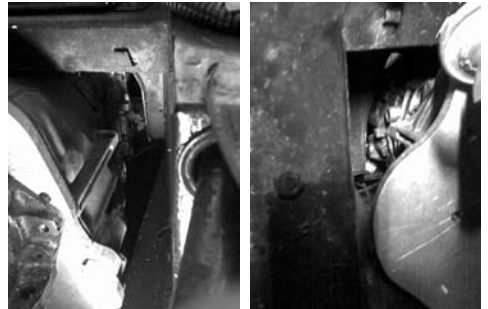
Seen from beneath



Propshaft



The lower bracket



Space at left and right



*The propshaft
with adaptor*



Gear lever



*Floor view
showing gap*

The complete kit is available with a short delivery time.

See costs below – single parts of the kit are available too, if you want to provide for e.g. the gearbox, or do some work yourself.
+ P&P to GB

Some photos show the prototypes, but some parts are now more professionally made.

Address ORDERS and any questions to either:
 Ruediger Wolters, e-mail: xs.wolters@t-online.de (only in German)
 or Heinz Schattner: e-mail: aconite@hotmail.de (in English or German)

It is just a Hobby for us, we are not dealers and this is not a business! These are almost our cost price, and only for other enthusiasts.

COSTS (prices in Euros)

Adaptor plate f. engine and propshaft (machined etc. + machined part f. propshaft + pilot bearing.	€260,00
Bolts, nuts, brackets, rubber blocks f. gearbox and adaptor	€35,00
CLUTCH:	€210,00
Clutch plate, adapted for BMW gearing	
Clutch cover, adapted for BMW clutch plate	
C. release bearing new	
C. slave cylinder used	
Gearlever: ringbolts, machined sleeves, lever (without knob)	€45,00
Prop shaft (new manuf. acc. to sample)	€400,00
Flywheel fitted to clutch and balanced together	€200,00
BMW Gearbox (used, tested by specialist)	€350,00
BMW gearbox used (auction, scrap yard etc.)	On > €150,00

Ed's note: Thanks to Geoff who has edited the information, as it came to him needing some modification in translation and choice of words.

MASCOT Technical Articles January to June 2011

MASCOT would once again like to thank Alan Anstead for compiling his biannual list of technical articles which have appeared in MASCOT over the first six months of 2011.

		Edition 2011
Spridget Colour Schemes 1500 Midgets	Reprint	January
Wrapped up for Winter	Sellen	January
Nil		February
Cleaning leather seats	Lodge	March
Kingpins	Anstead	April
Boottracks	Ward-Sale	May
Ignition	Anstead	May
Master cylinder replacement	Anstead	May
Oil relief valve	Mills	May
Five speeds for a (IOW) Frogeye	Anstead	June
Replica parts particularly brake light switches	Davies	June
Chassis repair	Gilbert	June

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Washing your Spridget Part 2

There is a whole industry of experts with various practices and approaches on how to bling up the cars like those in Tokyo Drift. I am not someone who cares to compete with those that have neon lights fitted underneath their cars; I am keen to protect the paint work from the environment keeping the car looking fresh. Here is the approach and some products I use to get the job done effectively. The products I chose are based on my experience, and it is a personal choice; you may wish to try out different products and I would be grateful for any feedback.

First of all, I avoid using polish only wax. Polishing is a process that uses abrasives to take a thin layer of the paint away. Wax is used solely to protect that shine from the elements; good quality wax contains no abrasives, just protecting the paint and enhances shine. It is necessary to have the paint really cleaned and prepared before applying a fresh layer of wax. If I need to remove an old layer of wax I would use a

water based panel wipe; the one I have been using is U-Pol S2000. I found it very effective in removing contaminants, gentle on the paint. Being water based, there is little environmental effect and it is kind to hands. The U-Pol S2000 is great in removing grease and cleaning up dirty parts; I use it both in the garage and around the house. If the surface feels gritty like sand paper, you may want to use a fine grade clay bar and solution to refresh the surface; but you don't want to do that too often or you won't have much paint left.

When the surface is decontaminated, check if the chrome works need brightening up. Chrome polish is only necessary if the surface is oxidised otherwise use wax for protection. When polishing the chrome work, it is essential to protect the adjacent paint work. Chrome polish is highly abrasive, often you find lines of swirl marks adjacent to chrome strips on the car body, noticeably on early Midget bonnets. I place thin plastic cards on either side of the chrome strips



Oh look he's polished all the paint off

while polishing. If you have excessive swirl marks, you could use swirl marks 'reducer'. I think reducer is a more appropriate word than remover; I have tested at least 5 different top recommended products and have yet to find one that works effectively. The best result was achieved using SwirlX from Meguiar's; it removes very light scratches and fills the deeper scratches making them not so visible in light.

If the car surface is reasonably clean after wash it only requires removing minor contaminate and swirl marks, then a pre-wax agent is a quick and effective way to achieve results. I found Paintwork Cleanser from R222 is very easy to use, you don't need a lot of effort and it is quite easy to buff off unlike some other brands.

Now the car is ready for the 'Last Step'; this is the key to protecting and making your car look shiny. There are two main types of product, natural carnauba wax and synthetic polymer sealant. Opinion is divided upon which is the best to use; generally, natural carnauba waxes produce a much softer, warmer, glossier finish, while synthetic sealants tend to produce a sharper, cooler, shinier finish. Carnauba waxes last for 4 to 6 weeks of daily use, about 4 weeks less than synthetic sealants. But with a good base coat of sealant such as the Paintwork Cleanser, carnauba wax can last as long as synthetic sealant. I have seen some products containing both carnauba wax and synthetic polymer sealant offering the glossy shine of wax and long lasting effects of the synthetic sealant; I am not sure if they can be better than separate coatings of base sealant and

wax. Regarding which is best to use, I found synthetic polymer sealants are better for light colour cars; the sharper and more reflective finish seems to bring out the best of the colour. Natural carnauba waxes produce softer, richer and glossier results on mid to dark colour cars. Wax containing a high content of carnauba can be expensive; they can be up to £1000 for a small jar! R222 Concours Look Carnauba Wax is my choice at the moment; it is inexpensive, no need to wait for it to dry and it buffs off extremely easily and you can apply it over trim.

I found a superb interior cleaning product purely by chance while I was on holiday in Canada a few years ago; I saw a hire car employee cleaning the interior with a bottle labelled 'Poorboys'. I was concerned that it may be a cheap product full of nasty chemicals. A friendly chat and a quick demonstration later, I was totally impressed with how good it is. Almost all the vinyl and plastic cleaners I have used tend to leave sticky, unnatural oily finishes. The Poorboys Natural Looking Dressing leaves a very natural, matte finish making the vinyl and plastic look like new from the factory. It is a water based product that can be applied on vinyl, plastic and rubber. I used to order them from the US, I believe Motaman now stock a range of the Poorboys products.

Lastly, I think almost all of you agree with me that the Spridget's standard windscreen wipers are quite useless in rain. I have used RainX since I first got my MG BGT in 1989; their wipers were just as useless. The problem with RainX is that it doesn't last; you need to reapply almost every couple of weeks to keep it effective. I discovered BMW dealerships used Aquapel on their convertibles to discourage rain stagnating around the windows to hood seal. I found Aquapel is more effective than RainX and lasts around 6 months depending on how often you use the car. I bought my last Aquapel from Amazon £15 for 4 applicators.

Now if you are wondering why I wrote all this information down, it's not just because I am tied to the kiddies' playhouse at Rose and Crown waiting for someone to set me free; I really wanted to persuade Terry Horler to start cleaning his Mk1 Sprite. It is getting embarrassing whenever we meet; people ask if BMC were pioneering matte paint in the late '50s.

Alan Lo

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Members' Cars

Derek Stewart's Sebring Sprite Replica



Registration No 674VMX. Date 1/7/1959. Received a MOT on the Wednesday before 'Midget 50' (close run thing!) Car was built over a 4 year period

Engine 1380cc. Balanced, lightened flywheel, new bearings and piston rings, Swifttune camshaft, ported and flowed head, 1.5 rockers, DCOE45 and Manifold manifold and exhaust. I refurbished a donor engine.

Gearbox. Toyota T50. Came with the engine and was stripped and found to be very good. Ratios are perfect.

Differential. Rebuilt with 3.7 ratio. Ideal for modern driving conditions

Wheels. MWS running on 185/60 Yokos

Brakes. Sebring type pedal box, uprated with 9" discs and MGB callipers.

Apart from the body work and painting (no small thing!), I did the build myself.

I've attached a photo of the engine bay.

Regards

Derek Stewart (4002)

Hopefully a more detailed article will follow at some future date.

Ed's note: Beautiful from any angle.



Lost and Found

(Another successful result)

Following an appeal for information on page 16 of July's magazine, MASCOT was delighted to be able to tell David Mayle that not only has his old Guernsey registered Sprite survived but is alive, very well and in the excellent care of MASC member Nigel Saynor.

Below is a reminder of David's appeal and Nigel's reply received this month.



From David Mayle

Hi, back in the mid '80s I brought a frog-eye to the UK from Guernsey, Channel Islands. It had the Guernsey registration 1913. I sold it in about 1987 to a chap that lived in Bath. Would like to know if it is still around. Not much to go on, but was brush painted green, had a single carb 1098 engine, fibreglass front and white 8 spoke wheels.

From Nigel Saynor

Hello Gary

Following the request for information in the July edition from David Mayle about the mark 1 registration number 1913, I believe I probably own the vast majority of the car in question. Not that he would recognise it now. It has of course had replacement floor and sills and a lot of other new metal as well. It's no longer green, has lost those steel wheels and the fibreglass bonnet, has reverted to a 948 cc engine, and does not have the Guernsey number. Much of the above was with the car when I acquired it though, and I still have the bonnet and the number plate.

If you can pass on this email I would be pleased to hear from him.

Regards

Nigel Saynor
Member 3582

And a very happy David Mayne replied:

"Fantastic Gary, Many thanks. Have emailed Nigel. Far more exciting than finding ex-girlfriends on Friends-reunited! Will keep you posted."



David's Sprite as it is today, now owned by club member Nigel Saynor

The Annual South East BBQ

14th August 2011



This year we had a new venue for our annual bash, Jeff's Victorian villa next to the Hedgehog. That's a pub not a non-cuddly mammal.

The venue was different (and excellent) but the usual BBQ rules (as supplied by colonial cousins) were applied and unknown to our host the BBQ was being scored as below:

A manly BBQ burns wood and is simple yet sturdy, reliable, unpretentious, tough and strong

10/10

Traditional BBQ attire is required to exhibit the chef's true manliness. Accepted attire includes stubbies, singlet and a thong.

4/10

The BBQ host must always offer a chilled beer to those other real men that are without a beer or running low.

10/10

Real men stand around the BBQ taking turns to cook the meat whilst discussing manly subjects, e.g. how the meat is cooking, what needs turning, engines, football. There are many dangers involved in this step (spluttering hot oil, smoke, intense heat) but it will be a true test of your BBQ manliness.

10/10

Like your home and your car your BBQ is one of the most important inanimate objects in your life and a man should know how to treat it. Be sure your BBQ is cleaned after each use, cover your

BBQ against the elements and make sure your BBQ is fixed as soon as a problem is found.

10/10

So congratulations to Jeff for scoring 44 out of 50 – will the addition of a thong and singlet make it a full house next year?

In addition to the spridgits, including one human powered midget from over the road, there were an amazing variety of vehicles including the latest green electric powered Landrover, a 3 gang lawn mower, a tracked kubota digger (necessary to provide a receptacle to cool the beer), a beach buggy, a 1934 Morris, a Mustang, and an MGA.

Our younger members enjoyed a good outing but Theo was unable to stay as he had an invitation to another venue where the balloons and jelly we were unable to provide were on the cards. The newest member, Jenson Green, struggled with the BBQ steak and after a heavy previous night decided that the fresh air made him very sleepy.

Tours of the house, grounds and outbuildings were very popular, as were the pick your own fresh blackberry deserts.

So well done Jeff for providing us with an excellent summer's outing, good food and raising money for a worthwhile cause, the Karenni Student Development Programme.

David Southcott with photos by Kirk Green





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As Seen on the Internet

A personal view

Having owned my Frogeye for twelve years (a mere drop in the ocean compared to some of you) and been a fan of Spridgets for as long as I can remember, I have found that, as with people, however bad they may be, there is usually at least one thing that you can find that is good about them. Occasionally though, something comes along that is so despicable and wrong, that no amount of liberalism or open-mindedness can excuse or justify its existence.

I almost wish that I could have this thing hidden behind curtains and present it to you after you have read the description because even then, the full horror of it would surpass my description and your imagination. However the medium of the printed page won't allow for this, so you will possibly already be stunned and shocked by what you see before you. For that I apologise after the fact.

I will simply present the owner's description and images as they appeared on eBay.

The owner's description **1974 Corvette MG Midget**



I put this car together to drive and enjoy but due to other causes unable to do so. Has 350 4 bolt main fresh rebuild, 700 R4 Tranny fresh rebuild. Mounted on 74 Corvette frame, PS, 4 wheel disc power brakes, posi rearend, new radiator, new exhaust, new brakes, new gauges, recovered Honda seats, all lights and gauges work. Got the idea from Gatsby/





Gatsby Cabriolet kit car, just Google that and view to compare. Clear MG Florida title. Have quite a bit invested and many hours work but must sacrifice. Will answer any questions.



Buyer must arrange shipping/pickup. Winner contact seller within 48 hours after auction to arrange payment and how vehicle will be shipped/pickup. Must be paid in full within 7 days after auction end.

I note that the original Midget steering wheel has the added "safety" feature of one of having one of its spokes removed!

The Gatsby Cabriolet kit car mentioned in the seller's description is a small production kit

unbelievably for such a large vehicle, it uses a midget tub as its cabin area. The modified MG Midget body is placed on the frame of a 1977-1979 Ford Thunderbird or Mercury Cougar, the donor car. The engine from the donor car, usually a 302 cubic inch motor, is moved approximately 30 inches towards the rear of the car. The drive shaft is shortened and the steering shaft is lengthened to accommodate the relocation of the engine and transmission. (Fuel injection engines and over-drive transmission are available as an option).

This is how it should look. The Midget doors, quarterlight and windscreen are clearly recognisable and while it may not be my cup



of tea, it is infinitely better than the vehicle which appears in the eBay advert, which you may be interested to know attracted one bid and sold for a for \$2,500.00(US) approximately £1,500.

Gary

MASC at Silverstone Classic 2011



Lining up on track

Silverstone classic was the biggest and best classic car event in the world this year and so was a fitting place to stage MASC's national gathering in the 50th anniversary year of the MG Midget. Silverstone is not only the birthplace and home of F1 racing and all of the history that goes with it, but is also at the geographic centre of British MASC.

The three-day event was stunningly brilliant with something for everyone from, 7000 classic cars, classic racing with a thousand classic racing machines being put through their paces in dozens of races, car club stands, rare machines, air displays, steam cars, traction engines, trade stands, live music and lots more. I attended all three days and still didn't get to see everything, but what I did see was brilliant and made for a hugely enjoyable weekend.

The best thing, for me and I suspect all those who took part was undoubtedly the chance to drive our little cars around the track on our 50th anniversary parade laps. My sincere apologies to anyone who missed out on this, I did write about it in *MASCOT* on several occasions and spent Sunday morning trying to round up everyone who had a car on our stand to sign them up and issue official wrist bands, however I know that at least one car broke down at the entrance, didn't it Geoff, and one or two who booked tickets may

not have made it for one reason or another however for those who did (or managed to blag a spare seat) it was a memorable experience.

David Dixon



Most people's view of Arie's K Series Midget



Mid morning at the MASC



And we're off

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Classic Car Gathering



This was our first outing to the Wirksworth based rail preservation group, organised as part of their calendar of events for this year.

Our morning run through the lanes of the Peak District from Nottingham made a promising start to the day and we arrived in time to put up a few signs to direct participants in. A former raised loading platform had been cleared for our parking area with excellent views of the surrounding countryside and railway activities below. As the temperatures increased to what eventually became the hottest day of the month, an interesting collection of vehicles gathered.

I had invited the local Ashbourne Car Enthusiasts (ACE) group to join us to help boost numbers (based on the initial poor response) and soon we had quite a variety of



Midgets and Sprites along with a 1950's Land Rover, a one-owner from new Ford Cortina, Ford Consul, MGTA, a 3-wheeled Lomax kit car and Healey 3000.

Our drivers enjoyed free train rides down the line to Duffield, the smart new platform only





opened earlier this year, travelling along the Ecclesbourne River Valley. The track has been creatively cleared to give views across the meadows to the rising hills topped with pretty agricultural villages of Idridgehay, Kirk Ireton and Shotton, and passes former stations and under gritstone bridges blackened with the soot over the years. We were privileged to have a running commentary from Paul for our journey down the line as he is one of the many hard working volunteers and our point of contact for the event.

The buffet car provided a good range of food and some shade from the rising temperatures, whilst a judging of cars by the railway staff went ahead to decide who should get their prize trophy of the day.

All participants received a plaque from EVRA, and the "best car of the day" award went



Jim complains of short measures...

to Jim Clark for his rather nice pale blue Frogeye. As he left early to pull in another local event, a belated presentation went ahead at the following meeting at The Sitwell Arms.

Report by Ian Cooke,
Notts/Derby area rep.
ilc@bgs.ac.uk



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Notts/Derby Area Report

Well the damp weather of "Midget 50" hung over all of us for a while, but despite this the number of events on offer keeps growing.

Paul had won the Rocker Box challenge at Burleigh and was invited to "MG Live" at Silverstone a couple of weeks later in order to compete in the final rounds. I was offered the chance to hold the camera while racing commenced and enjoyed the trip there and back in Paul's Isle of Wight Supersprite with the top down.

The following day I had to be up early to oversee the Classic car event at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway (EVR – report elsewhere) for which we had a good turnout and superb weather.

We are fortunate to have a great choice of events throughout the summer in our area, so much so that Jim managed to pull in both the EVR and the Rolls Royce Open Day on the same day. Clearly going for the award for most shows in a day.

July and August meets at The Sitwell were well attended and plans to visit forthcoming meets were made there. Some of us decided to chance the threatening clouds at the beginning of August and visited a local gathering at The Griffins Head in Papplewick



Paul hopes to sign a new sponsor for Goofy



Paul models his latest Pringle sweater whilst letting the clutch out

which grows more in popularity with time. Stephen also used the occasion to give his "new" MGB a run out. This month produced the biggest variety of cars we have ever seen there, including four DeLoreans! The pub seemed to be caught on the hop as the queues for the bar stretched outside.

Here's hoping to see more of you in September at The Sitwell with stories of what you have been up to over the summer.

Ian Cooke
ilc@bgs.ac.uk

Award Winning NW Area (see below)

On the weekend of 16th/17th July we went to the Pageant of Power at Cholmondeley Castle. This was our third year here and unfortunately the weather was once again not favourable – it rained part of Saturday and non stop on the Sunday. We had a club stand with 10 cars displayed over the weekend – it was nice to see Barry again.

A number of us camped over and we had a bbq on the Saturday, fortunately the weather was fine for this. One gripe we had with the camping is that the toilets and showers were not working for most of the time, not an ideal situation. It was so bad that on the Sunday there was only one shower in operation and then only a dribble. This was in the ladies shower block and out of desperation Diane and I shared this. Our kids thought this was gross, their parents naked in a shower together!

Unfortunately Lynne had bit of an incident, tripping over one of the guy ropes (mine, sorry) and busting her lip. Incidentally, a week later while on holiday Bernie did exactly the same and broke his toe! Talking of Bernie and Lynne, they had a pop up tent, apparently you simply twist and fold it to pack away – have you ever tried doing this? Well could Bernie do it, even with my help (or was it hindrance?). The rain was pouring down, we stood round watching and getting soaked while Bernie got more and more frustrated – ‘this stupid tent, its in the skip when we get home’ he kept saying, I know we shouldn’t laugh but it was funny.

As usual there was an impressive selection of cars taking part during the weekend together with aerial displays, trade stands etc.

However, one of the best events for us was the motocross (I hate that name) or scrambling as it used to be called – do you remember when this was on Grandstand on BBC 1 in the '60s. There were two classes, the youngsters – age 57 and under and the seniors – age 58 and above. One chap was 72! Most of the riders were ex racers. The commentator was brilliant, a northerner who has never heard of political correctness. There was a woman taking part, obviously a novice, and to hear the chap explaining



MASC at Pageant
of Power 2011

how she was doing her best for a girl was hilarious, he kept digging deeper and deeper as to tried to be nice to her. Apparently the purpose of these races was to give a display, they were not supposed to be competitive. Just imagine, a load of ex-racers (plus one girl) told not to race, it was never going to happen now was it – boys will always be boys I’m afraid, that’s how God made us. Tremendous fun.

Overall a good weekend but the highlight was us winning the Best Club Stand – Vintage Class awarded by Morris Lubricants. Considering the number and calibre of some of the stands this was quite an achievement for both the NW area and the club, so well done to us.

The following week was the Silverstone Classic. Dennis and son Daniel plus Andrew and Oliver went along. Here is a brief report courtesy of Dennis:

Silverstone Classic 22, 23 & 24 July 2011

Daniel and I, in his Mk3 Sprite, had a 426 mile drive to Silverstone and back joining many motor clubs to watch and take part in the event. Travelling down on the Thursday it was overcast but despite the weather forecast we got sun burnt on Friday. Other than a bit of rain Friday evening we had great weather for the weekend.

We met and made new friends particularly Ian and Barbara who are also from the North West and who would dearly love to come to our meetings but unfortunately the distance is much too far as they live in Workington.

Saturday morning we joined the queue going into the circuit, four abreast. Lots of E Type’s celebrating its 50th. Thought we would miss our time slot for the ‘Retro Run’ but made it just in time. Our route map took us on a 63 mile round trip through lovely Northamptonshire countryside and country

roads via Newport Pagnell and the Aston Martin works. We were followed most of the way by a Swallow Doretti.

Later we met up with Andrew and his son Oliver in their Mk1 Sprite. Unfortunately for Andrew he had to call upon his friends at the AA to assist him – he broke down entering Silverstone. It was the fuel pump and after spending a couple of hours fiddling he managed to make temporary repairs which would get them back to Silverstone on Sunday morning.

On Sunday it was the big day of our Parade lap. This was a big thing for Dan, reaching 50mph on one of the straights, he is a learner driver and his was the only car with L plates on! They even let us do two laps.

We packed up camp and left at 3 pm, even got the roof in the boot. At Stafford North Service at 5:40pm I got a text from Andrew to say they were hitching a ride with the AA. We got home at 7pm still with roof off and were greeted with a lovely cup of tea.



Daniel at the Silverstone Classic

August club night was a quiet meeting, not so many of us due to holidays etc. Yet again it was raining, is it me or is this really a poor summer? However Mark braved the conditions and came along in his Midget.

September is a busy month for us with three events, I will report on these as and when.

That it for now, see you at the Kilton on 14th September.

Les

British Motor Heritage Visit 20th July

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Derek Stewart had arranged for a group visit to the British Motor Heritage production facility near Witney, so at 07:40, as instructed, we were ready for departure when Derek arrived. Along our route to Witney we collected Chris Flinders and Graham Kirkup in their car at Eltisle, and then caught up with 2 Spridgets at Bicester. At the factory we met up with Bob Welch and Ian Mackenzie from Scunthorpe who had a very early start, Mark Darlow-Joy and Ian Webb who came from Northants, and the last arrivals (who had been to a relatively close B&B overnight) were Matt Wigglesworth from Yorks and Arie de Baer from Holland.

We were ushered into the boardroom for a welcome cup of coffee and an introduction to the company by Martin Davies the Sales Manager, ably assisted by (allegedly retired) expert Dave Savidge. Following a health and safety briefing we started the tour with a visit to the Admin Office and then passed through the stores to the factory. The first view was the production of Jaguar E-type bonnets.



Intro and briefing



Inspecting panels



Completed Sprite shells



Roger with Les Holmes



Bodyshell assembly

We then moved on to see the Spridget panel making process from all angles, as staff carried on with their tasks at the various work stations and fabrication booths all contributing to the final assembly of Heritage body shells for Spridgets, which was the current production run. There was a small area for storage of completed shells whilst awaiting transfer to the finishing booth and dispatch to the spray shop

Outside in the yard was the pressed tool storage area, where everything was colour coded to its particular vehicle. Although the actual pressings are not done at this site, when the tools are to be used in a production run they are brought indoors and cleaned and checked over prior to use, the same system that was used at car plants 50 years ago.

Next we all went upstairs to where Les Holmes, a true craftsman, gave a live



BMH Spridget Race Car

demonstration of the many processes involved in making an MGB wing. All of which would have taken a dozen times longer if any of us amateurs had tried to do it. The tour continued through all areas of production and stores, and finished back in the boardroom for a final Q&A session.

On leaving BMH, 8 of us drove to the White House at Bladon for beer, sarnies and more technical chat and reminiscences. It was past 3pm when we went our various ways to return home. Thanks to Derek Stewart for organising a very interesting day out.

Roger & Maggi Byford

See their products at www.bmh-ltd.com, and check out the magazine at www.motoringclassics.co.uk



Pressed tools out in the elements



East Anglian Report

Four brilliant events to report this month, first up was super Silverstone the biggest and best classic car event on the planet with 8000 cars (60 of which were MASC). East Anglia was not all that well represented with only about 6 of us present, a real shame especially for our fabulous parade laps of the circuit which were pure pleasure for everyone. I can't describe quite how wonderful it was to drive that track and how much everyone enjoyed it and how much fun it was (watch out Lewis Hamilton).

Next up the ever popular BMC rally at Ferry Meadows near Peterborough, as always a sunny Sunday with lots of great auto jumble, lots of great cars and a great friendly venue. I thought our numbers would have been a bit depleted this year since we were running two events in different parts of East Anglia on the same day (Talk about area reps showing off) but we still managed a very respectable 10 cars, even without that nice light blue frog from Nottingham (where were you). This was the first outing for my flashy new waterproof pop up gazebo (the old one succumbed to the wind at Silverstone) which proved very useful when we got a short sharp shower at 15:30, however it soon cleared up so we could have a glorious drive home in the evening sunshine.

Next our other event on the 7th was a run to Bletchley Park and Diane kindly provided me with a report which I have summarised

– We assembled at Caxton Gibbet (a place where we often hang around) and then drove in convoy through lovely villages to Bletchley Park. Unfortunately one of our number suffered quite badly at the entrance speed bumps. Once inside the tour, exhibits and talks were fascinating so much so that we didn't have time to see everything so another visit will have to be made next year. We rounded off the day with a lovely meal even though the poor waitress struggled to get our bill right. Everyone enjoyed the day and a vote of thanks is due for Sally and Hubie who organised it.

Finally Sprite night at the FBI Pat was working and since it was dull and overcast and the road I live on was being resurfaced and was festooned with raised man hole covers two foot high curbs and wet tarmac it was a rusty Rover night. I suppose I could have ventured out in the Sprite and got the underneath under sealed in tar ready for the winter but I decided against it. We had a good turn out but only two Spridgets (well done guys), we chatted about Silverstone, the treasure hunt arrangements for the following Saturday and generally put the world to rights over a

foaming glass or two in pleasant likeminded company. We even mentioned cars a couple of times.

See you all at the Ferry Boat and beyond.

Dave Dixon



Midget 50 US Style



Our version of Midget 50 wasn't as large a gathering as the one at Burghley House but we were every bit as enthusiastic as our British and European brothers. For three days in July Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin turned into Spridget heaven with 53 Spridgets from all parts of the US, converging for some fun and camaraderie with other Spridget owners. I'm not sure but I believe that I was the only member of the Sprite and Midget club present at the event; I certainly didn't see any other windscreens decals to that effect. I was also proudly displaying a pink plaquard from the Burghley house gathering thanks to the assistance of Rachael Macabe.

Events for the three days included a driving tour to a local cheese factory where we were given a guided tour of the facility and purchase cheese from their factory store. I bought a couple of packages of mixed Cheddar which proved to be a great snack during the following few days and on the trip home.

After the cheese factory we drove to a local park where we held a car show and enjoyed a catered BBQ lunch before gathering for a group photo.

The next day was all about some driving fun as we were escorted around the original road circuit at Elkhart Lake and then on to the new track at Road America where we enjoyed

about an hour of track time on the race course followed by another catered lunch and then on to the auto cross course for about 3 hours of low speed tight corners. Following that we enjoyed an evening meal of burgers and brats before returning to the hotels for the night.

The final day started out with a scenic drive in the morning followed by some tech sessions in the afternoon as well as some general relaxing. That evening we gathered for the banquet dinner and the awards ceremony. This meeting was especially meaningful





as we had lost two very avid Spridget enthusiasts during the past year and both were remembered with great presentations by close friends.

Our guest speaker for the evening was Burt Levy, well know author of some great motoring books and an accomplished racer as well. His humourous anecdotes from his years of racing were great listening. He accompanied his presentation with a slide show which included shots from the events past few days. Many of our cars showed up on the screen, even my Midget which he said after noticing the bonnet had a goiter.

Then it was time for the awards. We had awards from the car show as well as from the auto cross. I received the "Best Bodge" award for my modified Midget.

The next morning I was off early for home. My trip was one of the shorter ones as I only had about 600 miles to drive. We had people at the event that drove their Spridgets as far as 2100 miles, and many came from well over 1000 miles to attend. I suppose that's one reason our numbers weren't nearly as large as the event at Burghley House as there are certainly a lot of Sprites and Midgets in the US.

Links to photos and videos from the event may be found on the Sprite and Midget Club (US) web site at <http://www.sprite-midgetclub.org/> and my photos can be viewed at yahoo flickr, search for mgmidgetbill.

Bill Young, USA



Home Counties North West Report



MASC at Bletchley Park

I am taking advantage of an unusually late deadline this month; I can tell you what we have been doing in the first half of August!

July's pub night was a quieter than usual affair.

It clashed with Classics on the Common in Harpenden and the good weather meant that people stayed later rather than join us in the pub, Mike Harrison and his wife joined us on his way back into t'smoke and it was good to see him and his K series. This event gets bigger every year and the sunshine is a rare visitor!

There has been plenty to do in August so far and various HCNW members have been along to a number of events. On the 2nd we joined the Harrow Car Club at their August bring 'n' show evening in Chipperfield. It is one of those events that 'does exactly what it says on the tin'. Park up on the grass, have a chat, a pint and something to eat. Harrow CC members own a wide selection of cars and it means that you get an unusual mix of cars on the night. We parked up with an immaculate Cortina 1600E, an original and spotless Lotus 6, a Subaru and an early Nissan GTR complete with trick air suspension to name just a few. The shock of the night? Our esteemed Editor and Gaps winning a trophy for the best open car! I did say you could drink... but that was not the reason for the win. The judge thought it was an honest, well used and well-loved car that we could all learn something from apparently!

The following night was the annual 'Classics on the Green' in Croxley Green, just outside Watford. The weather was great and by the time I arrived at 6pm the green was fuller than I have ever seen it. The nature of the event means no club area; you just park up and wander around. This year it was so big I don't

think I saw any other members in person other than Steve who I went with. Again an amazing array of cars and you have to wonder where they all come from!

On Sunday 7th August a group of HCNW members attended the Classic Car and Bike Picnic at Bletchley Park, the site of secret British codebreaking activities during WWII and birthplace of the modern computer. We met at various points on the A5 and arrived nice and early at the site where we were able to park up adjacent to one of the local MG clubs. We were later joined in the same area by our friends from the East Anglia area.

Proper summer weather returned for the day. We had sunshine and showers all day, but it didn't spoil anything. There is plenty to see in the various 'huts' which house the displays and museum exhibits. Everything from the largest collection of Enigma cipher machines on display, through a working replica of Colossus the first semi-programmable computer and a huge collection of Churchill information and memorabilia. There is too much on display to describe here and really too much to see in a day. I forgot to visit the model railway hut! There was also a varied, but quite small, collection of cars and a few bikes to look at. I think the MGs and the odd Sprite, probably outnumbered the other cars. An enjoyable day was had by all.

So what is left this month? Well we have a BBQ this Sunday, Tewin Village Car show next weekend and a club stand at Knebworth Classic Car show on Bank Holiday Monday. At least there will be something to report next month!

Mark hcnwmasc.blogspot.com

Scotland Area Report

Firstly, I must apologise for there being no Scottish news in the August edition of MASCOT. I had decided to take a few days holiday and this coincided with the article submission date.

Actually with the Scottish schools having broken up for their summer break and hence members meeting their family holiday commitments, the Midget and Sprite scene had been rather quiet.

Some of the members did attend two local small "promotional" shows. The first was organised on June 18th by Hamilton Chamber of Commerce with a view to promoting Hamilton as a shopping facility. Some 40 or so classic cars, from a number of local car clubs, were parked in the pedestrianised area of the Hamilton shopping precinct. There had been a considerable amount of local publicity and it was hoped that the cars would attract people into the shopping area and that they would then be acquainted with what Hamilton had to offer as a shopping location. The day was somewhat dull weather-wise but a good number of people came over and chatted to us about the various cars. We can only hope that the Chamber regarded it as a success.

The second show was organised by North Lanarkshire Council and was held at Summerlee Heritage Park in Coatbridge. This has existed for a number of years and comprises a museum which depicts the Industrial and social history of the North Lanarkshire area. This locale was totally dependent on the Iron, Steel and Coal industries until their decline and the museum contains many examples of the machinery from these industries together with Scotland's only working electric tramway. There are also reconstructions of an underground mine and miners cottages from 1840 to 1960. In many ways it is similar to the Beamish museum, reflecting life as it was during the industrial age. It was a very hot day and the crowds flocked to the museum with the approx. 30 cars from local clubs creating much interest.

Five cars representing the Group travelled to Ayr on 24th July for the show organised by Ayrshire Vintage Tractor and Machinery Club.



Midget at Summerlee with crane

As the organising name suggests this was primarily a show with agricultural tractors and farm implements. However, there were also many classic car clubs and individuals attending together with motorcycles, steam engines and traders stalls. It was a beautiful day and the public attended in force. At the end of the show three of us decided to lengthen the day and go for a run. We headed from Ayr to St. John's Town of Dalry and then over the moors to Moniaive, where we stopped for some refreshment sitting in the sun at the rear of a village hostelry (It was coffee, before anyone starts tut-tutting). From here it was over the Dalveen pass and then back up the "old A74". On the way back we stopped at Dave's to view progress on the restoration of his imported Midget shell. It now has the suspension fitted, engine/gearbox and steering installed. The doors, boot and windscreen have also been mounted.

The annual Scottish SpeedFair and Classic Show was held at Knockhill on 31st July, and a combined total of seven cars from MASC and the Blackwood Club attended.

The day comprised racing on the track for classic saloons and sports cars in various classes dependent upon engine size and in addition Formula Ford races. Also taking



Dave's Midget renovation

place was Autotesting and timed competition runs on the rally course. A display was presented by a stunt biplane during the lunch break and a track display by various Ferrari

models. It was a good day's motor sport but, as the locals know, Knockhill has its own micro-climate, this was no exception – it was cold standing in the biting wind on the hill overlooking Lothian basking in the sunshine below and only a handful of miles away.

The calendar for August and September is well filled, so hopefully I will be able to bring you plenty of news of the activities the group is involved in. Remember, I'm just a phone call or e-mail away if you would like to find out more and join us on one of our outings.

In the meantime I will leave you with a picture of David's current Midget in front of one of the steam cranes at Summerlee and another showing the progress on his project car.

John Pardo

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E-mail: jp1kg@talktalk.net

Somerset Area Report

Time flies, or so they say and I just wonder what happened to the past three or four months since I wrote a spring report. Mind you, they say that when retired you often wonder how you found time to go to work!

Well I am pleased to report that we continue in the best tradition of all good trenchermen, with food and ale being consumed at the Lord Nelson at our monthly meetings usually accompanied by much discussion on cars.

Though our June meeting, yes we do get out in the summer, saw us run to Beer in Devon, (a delightful small fishing village; for those who don't know it, best visited slightly out of season to avoid the crowds). However even this trip could not pass without a Fish Supper and we enjoyed great fish and chips: yes, out of the paper is best! This was followed by a superb fruit salad, thanks Leslie; whilst overlooking Lyme Bay, basking in the evening sunshine. On the way back to Somerset

we stopped at Musbury Nr Axminster, where Rod one of our members lives, to enjoy coffee and cakes and thanks are due to him and his good lady also.

Our next meeting at the end of July was also a run down to Devon when we visited the Colyford Motor Museum, (www.motoringmemories.com) a fascinating insight into the changes in "Motor Spirit Retailing", followed by supper at Gerry & Leslie's: thanks folks it was great. August 19th will see us taking another trip on the Tramway from Seaton to Colyton; (



co.uk) though this will not be on a regular club night as we shall be inviting friends to join us to help fill the tram as it is a Charity Fund Raiser. We have yet to decide if we will meet the following week as well. September sees us off on a week's holiday in Brittany. But no doubt, by October we will be back in SOMERSET at Norton.

Trips out other than club nights saw many of us at Culmstock Classic Car Show, Branscombe Air Show and Classic Car Day, Forde Abbey Summer Fayre and also the Ilton Festival of Transport. All venues providing lots of interest for "petrol heads" like us.

At past meetings we have discussed the possibility of a change of name to "Somerset – The Three Counties Borders" which would encompass E. Devon, W. Dorset, and South and West Somerset which would more accurately reflect the area from which we might draw our members. Though this change of name was regarded by some "natives" as slightly controversial we wondered if it might attract a few more Spridgeteers to join us at our meetings, as we are only some 6 or so regulars.

With that in mind, we recently asked John Platt for an up to date list of members and finding another six or so "possibles" have been in touch with them to extend a personal invitation to join us. To date, there has been limited response.

At the recent day out at the Culmstock Car Show, organised by the NSPCC, we had a club stand which attracted interest from several people, some of whom were already SPRIDGET owners, but have yet to join MASC. So one must wonder, despite the news in the August MASCOT of increasing membership numbers, is the annual subscription putting off some, perhaps less enthusiastic owners from joining the club? Having just had three e-mail reminders and at £29 for me and "she who must be obeyed" I too begin to wonder if it is really value for money; when the likes of, for example, the 75 and ZT Club can apparently run on a shoestring and yet offer good support through their web site, even to non subscribers. So is the publication of MASCOT costing too much – charged at £2 a month? Perhaps it could be published quarterly or only as an e-magazine? Not only could that save money it might be easier on the Editor who often has to request "copy" to fill the pages! A controversial subject-me thinks.

Anyway we continue to enjoy ourselves and our Spridgets and our other cars, Cobra, MX5's, Westfield, MG PA, MGB's GT and Roadster to name but a few and offer a warm welcome to all who share our enthusiasm for food, wine, fellowship and new or old motors! All are welcome to join us. Q.E.D.

Ray Darch
raymargaret@lineone.net



Bristol Area Report

Seen here, the MASC Bristol – Rose and Crown Kiddies playground emergency response team. Hearing a shriek from the playground, the team leapt into action to rescue a poor unfortunate soul who had an attack of vertigo on one of the more challenging pieces of equipment. Deploying our new 'Friendship' rope, the team quickly secured the terror struck fellow who should have known better than to have gotten out of his depth – or is that height? Once safe, our counselling team calmed the squawking victim with some well chosen, comforting words, followed by a face slap. Well, quite a lot of slapping actually. Not really necessary perhaps, but for training purposes only, we all had to have a go, and thoroughly enjoyed it too. With our grateful victim secured and quiet, the team retired to the pub to write a report and to phone the press. Despite waiting three and a half hours, they failed to turn up; so sadly, we had to release our victim. Rather ungratefully, he failed to thank the team, although he could still have been in shock I suppose. Personally, I would rather have kept our new rope safely coiled up in its box and let the victim fall off. We have not

had an opportunity to call out the 'proper' emergency services for quite some time now.

My apologies for the lack of a report last month. Our legal representative was on holiday (so he claims) and did not have time to vet our monthly report before forward transfer to our Editor. On more Spridgley thing matters, we have been out and about a bit with our fiends (friends?? – no, right first time) from the Wiltshire branch. Some of which look scarily like some Bristol branch members. Our joint gathering at the Vine Tree at Norton was quickly relocated to the Salutation at the Gibb and then onward to Castle Combe village. I will leave our Wiltshire colleagues to explain this one away. Anyway, we have been enjoying some good Spridgley thing weather which hopefully, will continue.

And finally, our caption competition (which our editor fully encourages to the extent that he will provide the prize).

Question – Which one of the above do you think might be Alan Lo?

That's all,

Terry Horler

Kent and Nearby

The following may contain flash photography, sex and violence, and may be unsuitable for persons with a frail disposition. Parental guidance is advised!

Some say that even the mention of page twenty eight, July edition of *MASCOT*, sends the atmosphere electric. Others say that if mention must be made then god fearing folk hide in the shadows and only mention page twenty eight in a whisper. A few that are enraged bay for blood. Send in the assassins!

As a consequence *MASCOT*'s own, would be Richard Littlejohn now sits behind a locked door. The windows are shut and curtained lest someone should look in. On the desk awaiting inspiration stands an ancient Olivetti.

Three fingers of Jack Daniels sit in crystal – English crystal no less! A stainless framed Model 66 offers confidence and encouragement.

Aged fingers begin to flail the Olivetti keys – the strike pads echoing in the silence of the dim lit room. An attempt is being made at this onerous monthly task, that detractors will not attempt, to provide such readers with yet another, inoffensive, literary masterpiece.

“Perhaps this month some people (names have been withheld for fear someone / anyone / everyone may take offence) may have gathered in some part of a county, in the south eastern area of England, in such numbers that may not be disclosed. It may have come to pass that a Sprite or Midget had been involved. Any photographs that may have been taken have been withheld for fear of breach of privacy or collateral intrusion.”

However, moving on to Kent Section for we are ‘Kentish Men’ or ‘Men of Kent’ dependant upon which side of the river Medway that individual may have been born. Rallying around the Invicta Standard our County motto ‘Unvanquished’. For did not Shakespeare say of us “Sweet is the County and is full of Riches. The people liberal, valiant, active, worthy.”

The Angel at Addington is our meeting house. Not far from Brands Hatch, motor racing circuit, Addington is made mention in Arthur Mee's, Kent volume, The Kings England series

of books, first published in 1936. He begins “We are in beautiful scenery in the shelter of a glorious park among the gravestones of a vanished race. It is just beyond Wrotham Heath.”

Mee makes no mention of the pub, which looks out upon the village green and, in one form or another, has apparently stood here since 14th Century. The ‘gravestones of a vanished race’ are the Neolithic graves surely no more than a short walk from our position. The park now swallowed by a golf course the village is, none the less, still a lovely setting.

It was good to see such a turn out with so many distractions elsewhere, as well as being holiday season. Fourteen being our number boosted by two, non Masc, visitors – Lawrence Slater in a Spridget, owned for 32 yrs, and young Rylan Williams who has a 1500 Midget undergoing fettling to achieve an MOT status. On this day there was of course Midget and Sprite National Day at Silverstone and Zed Day at Duxford – several of our number own M.G. Z series saloons. Five spridgets made it to the meet but alas not mine, Sue & Jim Judd's, nor John Clark's & Carole Grove – all suffering mechanical ailments. Mel & Barb had made it with replacement of a fuel pump arm the original having broken and fallen into the sump (since recovered). John Gibbons and Ralph Whitmarsh presented their frogeyes whilst I must check out the badging on Trevor & Jennie Page's Spridget.

It may be recalled that in an earlier *MASCOT* I mentioned that Paul & Jane Coveney had traced their lineage back to Sir Paul the bastard of Coveney, a 13th century knight, living at Castle Coveney in Cambs. Jane has now, unfortunately, become totally deluded and announced to all that she now spends all her days at Bodium Castle, in Sussex.

That's all from me this month as I am off to lunch with the Queen and Prince Philip.

Alan

Kent / Surrey rep.

Mail to: alan.anstead@btopenworld.com

Tel: 01322-384050 (answer phone)

Hants Area Report



Ardingly and the Great Ken Mystery

For the last few years we have visited a show in Woodcote the first weekend in July, but having been invited to join up Sussex, Surrey and Kent regions at a show in Ardingly we decided it was time for a change.

So, early on Saturday we met up with John and Vic and travelled to the Showground in good time where we were joined by Alf & Lyn and lined up with the other Midgets and Sprites on the Club Stand. It was a great day with lots to see and do, and all was well but for one small problem. "Where is Ken?" "Hopefully he hasn't broken down en-route -do we have his phone number on us?" "No we don't, but don't worry; perhaps he is due to come on the following day."

Saturday evening was spent around the Barbie with Alf and Lyn and a tippie or two and listening to the music drifting across from the beer tent.

Sunday arrived but Ken didn't. Has he been kidnapped and held to ransom, if so we need to have a whip round, or abducted by aliens? After all they can be a funny lot.

We arrived home on Sunday after a very enjoyable weekend and emailed Ken. "Where were you? Is everything OK? Did you get invited to spend the weekend at a stately home in the country?" No, none of the above! It turned out he'd had an 'incident' with a

pair of nail clippers and put his back out (You couldn't make it up) Further details on application to Ken. Mystery solved.

Classic Car Show and Family Fun Day – Clandon Park

Not quite a 'Glastonbury' but more than a little damp to say the least. A real shame as this fundraising event in aid of Macmillan Cancer Care would have been a nice little show. Also a pity that Terry & Harriet decided to bring their soft top in favour of the gazebo but it was either/or and the lid won. Thankfully the organisers had erected some shelters which were put to good (and frequent use). Entertainment was supplied by four bagpipes and a drum – much to Terry's chagrin – and our amusement! Not nearly so funny was the mishap that befell Barry & Jenny on their way home.



Beware Skoda drivers in Guildford!!!!

Yorkshire Area Report



Descent to Rievaulx

It was good to see a few Yorkshire folk at the MASC national gathering at Silverstone Classic, including (in their cars) Steve from Hartlepool and Jordan & Tanya in their IOW frogeye, who joined us in Sarah's sprite on track to do two parade laps of the new F1 circuit. This was a lot of fun, and many thanks to Dave Dixon for organising the national "do" which was excellent.

In early August, Sarah & I went to the Croft Nostalgia weekend which was just like a mini Goodwood Revival, but in Yorkshire. There were several spridgets racing in the HSCC series, and next year we are going to try and get MASC an area in the club parking, as this is too good an event not to support.

We were surprised at August's meeting to see Jason & Michelle turn up with some new-fangled form of eco-Spridget, aka on a tandem bike! They almost had us believing that they had cycled the 70 odd miles up from Doncaster to Dalton, but later they were

caught red-handed loading it into the back of Jason's van... It was good to see regulars Rob & Jenni, along with new folks John and Carol who have recently bought an Iris blue frogeye and Peter & Leonie in their 1500. It was also good to see the "Spridget Family" aka Paul and Lorraine in their Weller-wheeled 1500 and sons Sam and Adam in their newly restored red frogeye of which they are rightly proud. John came in EEV, his daughter's Sprite which he is fettleing and which was partially stripped down, but at least he's managed to cure its overheating problems since we last saw him. After excellent pies at Ye Jolly Farmers, a few of us had a little run up to Hawby for afternoon tea and cakes.

For your diaries: we are invited to the MGCC's Canada Run on Sat 1st October, organised by our Ken Cothliff. Details on the website and we have circulated them by email. We will also be having a pre-bookable Christmas Dinner at Ye Jolly Farmers for the December meeting.

We would also like to re-float the idea of a second mid-week meeting somewhere in the general vicinity of Wakefield. There are quite a few of you in that area who can't make it up to Dalton on Saturdays regularly. If anyone thinks this is a good idea and would attend, and/or fancies volunteering to organise it, please email us.

Our next meeting is on Saturday 10th September from 12:30 at Ye Jolly Farmers Inn, Dalton, YO7 3HY. Keep up to date with what is going on at <http://yorkshiremasc.blogspot.com>



A work in progress

Sarah & Tim



Harewood Hillclimb 7th August

I enclose a few photos all taken by Healey Fan, David Copley at the Harewood Hillclimb on Sunday 7th August 2011.

The day started out overcast. The 1st practice runs were OK then drizzle made the 2nd practice in the morning very slippery. By lunch time the clouds were moving over and the sun came out too!

Although we were all in class with big Healeys with 16 entries overall, 10 Sprites. Several of the drivers were new this year. Some of us managed to better our last years times by more than 1½ seconds.

Just for the record Tom came 1st with a time of 66.90, 2nd Murray 68.63, 3rd Paul 70.25, 4th Colin 70.46, 5th Rafe 70.87.

All very close and we had enough time for a third timed run.

A good day had by all, though I wasn't looking forward to the journey home !

Best Regards

Colin Gale
(car 24)

See photos opposite.

Market Place

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

WANTED – Road wheel for 1959 Mk1 Sprite i.e one with 12 holes around the hub cap. My spare at the moment is a later model wheel, which I would gladly exchange for the Mk1 wheel.
Contact: Stuart Thompson, casserole@btinternet.com

WANTED – Leaf Green Frogeye Sprite with 948 engine.
Contact: Tom Thompson, TOM@HARFORDTHOMPSON.COM 07941 153096

WANTED – One set (min 4, pref 5) Minilite type wheels, i.e. Minator or K&N, 5 or 5.5 inch x 13 inch. centre locking to replace wire wheels. Offers to 01223 208396.

FOR SALE – Drop on' Hood Frame to suit Midget Mk2 or Sprite Mk3 with wind-up windows. Frame in grey enamel in excellent condition – for photo contact kencothliff@hotmail.co.uk. Buyer to collect, as its too large to post – Leeds area, or can meet at reasonably local Northern location. New these are about £250.00 – for quick sale £95.00 ono.
Ken Cothliff 0113 250 9524



No 26 Mike Cockayne



No 29 John Tewson



No 32 Rafe Haywood



No 731 Tom Walker/Robin Johnson



No 33 Paul Baker Ashley Sprite



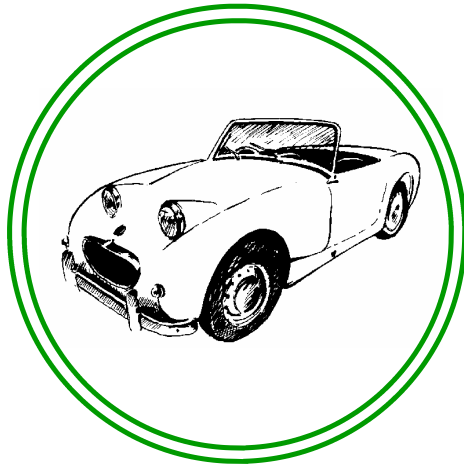
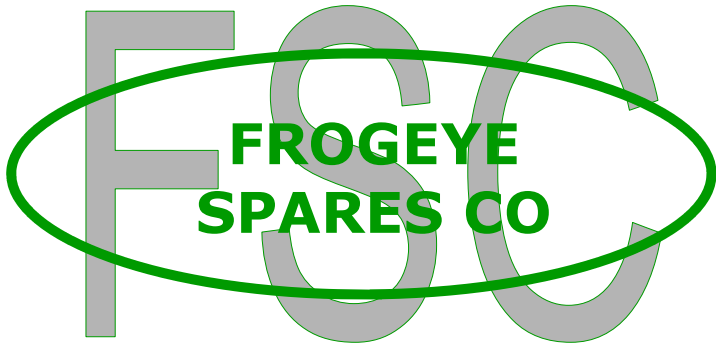
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