

May 2012

£2 No. 338

Mascot

The Magazine of the Midget & Sprite Club



www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk





British Motor Heritage Approved

Parts 4 Sprite & Midget Cars



MGA | MGB | MGC | Midget | Sprite | MGF/TF TR2-8 | Spitfire | GT6 | Vitesse | Dolomite
Welcome to Abingdon MG Parts Ltd!

We currently have over 28,000 lines of stock in our Warehouse with many parts on our shelves today to keep your Sprite or Midget in first class condition (or on the way to it!)

As part of the David Manners Group we have massive buying power to bring you the very best deals, some of which you can see here. We offer a worldwide delivery service with a next day service available to many countries.

For UK deliveries we offer several next day delivery options including a before 12 noon and before 10am service.

To see our full product range and prices please visit our website.



Part of the David Manners Group

991 Wolverhampton Road, Oldbury,
West Midlands B69 4RJ
Open 9:00 till 5:30 Mon-Fri
9:00 till 1:00 Sat

Parts 4 Jaguar | Daimler | MG | Triumph
Mini | Morris Minor & MX5 Cars



**0121
544 4444**

<p>Heating & Cooling Parts</p> 	<p>AEA301 Fan Blade A Series</p>  <p>£10.20 inc VAT</p>	<p>AEA306 Thermostat Housing Sprite Mk1 940</p>  <p>£16.50 inc VAT</p>	<p>88G588 Heater Tap Brass Midget</p>  <p>£9.60 inc VAT</p>	<p>37H7914 Heater Matrix Sprite</p>  <p>£46.80 inc VAT</p>
<p>Braking Parts</p> 	<p>17H9438 Brake Caliper Midget 63 Cn</p>  <p>£45.50 inc VAT</p>	<p>GBH1575S Brake Hose Stainless Steel Sprite 62-80</p>  <p>£14.50 inc VAT</p>	<p>GWC1111Z Wheel Cylinder Midget 61-62 Rear</p>  <p>£11.95 inc VAT</p>	<p>GWC1102Z Wheel Cylinder Sprite 63-74 Rear</p>  <p>£4.80 inc VAT</p>
<p>Lighting Parts</p> 	<p>BHA4175 Rear Lamp Sprite Mk2 - Mk4</p>  <p>£63.50 inc VAT</p>	<p>127916LUCAS1 No. Plate Lamp OE Various Models</p>  <p>£18.00 inc VAT</p>	<p>13H23 Rear Tail Lamp Sprite Mk1</p>  <p>£18.00 inc VAT</p>	<p>1B9100 Side/Flasher Lamp Sprite Frogeye Mk1</p>  <p>£9.50 inc VAT</p>
<p>Fuel Parts</p> 	<p>17H98 Fuel Pump Midget 948 - 1078</p>  <p>£30.00 inc VAT</p>	<p>21A168 Tank Sender Unit Sprite 62-67</p>  <p>£40.80 inc VAT</p>	<p>GSS154 Locking Fuel Cap Sprite Stainless Steel</p>  <p>£19.80 inc VAT</p>	<p>WZX1859X Genuine SU Service Kit HS2-HS4 Genuine</p>  <p>£36.00 inc VAT</p>
<p>Electrical Parts</p> 	<p>13H5952LUCAS Starter Solenoid Midget 1500 & GT6 Mk3</p>  <p>£6.00 inc VAT</p>	<p>GXE3101NEW Dynamo NEW Various 1098 - 1275</p>  <p>£53.50 inc VAT</p>	<p>13H632 Rev Counter Drive Sprite Mk1 - Mk2</p>  <p>£72.00 inc VAT</p>	<p>GXE4418X Hi Torque Starter Various</p>  <p>£162.00 inc VAT</p>

It's never been so cheap to drive your car!

As you are reading this, it's fairly safe to assume that May's copy of *MASCOT* has made it up to and through your front door. With the new postage rates, that equates to about 50% of the cost of your car when new. This is an exaggeration on my part obviously, as the actual cost of posting *MASCOT* is an absolute bargain at only 33 pence (as metered post works out much better value). But it did get me thinking about the relative cost of things when our cars were new.

If we take 1961 as a guide, it cost 2½d, that's 2½ old pennies – around 1p in today's money to send a letter (the UK didn't have a separate first and second class post until 1968).

Today a first class stamp costs 60 pence (14 pence more than last week). 60 times more expensive than 1961.

A loaf of bread was one shilling (5 pence). Today a loaf of sliced bread currently costs between £1.30 and £1.40 (26 and 28 shillings). 26 to 28 times more expensive than 1961

The average house price was £2,530. But in 2011 it was £228,385. About 90 times more expensive than 1961.

According to the AA, in 1961 a (UK) gallon of 4 Star petrol was 58.5 pence (which seems a bit high to me) and on Sunday I paid £6.45 per gallon for Super Unleaded. Just over 11 times more expensive than 1961.

So there you have it. According to my calculations, the cost of filling up your car has gone up less in relative terms than the cost of stamps, houses and bread. You no longer have any excuses for missing out on thrilling drives in the countryside, popping down to your local area meeting or getting your car out on track (which is exactly what I've done for the last three weekends).

Have a great month

Gary & Gaps



Sprites at the CSMA Concorde AutoSolo, April 2012

The deadline for articles and reports for inclusion in next month's magazine is Monday 14th of May

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: *The electric Midget of Frank Bennett, Colorado, USA*

SPECIALIST VEHICLE INSURANCE

Cherished by you Insured by us



- ✓ Over 30 years' experience
- ✓ Official Insurance Partner to some of the UK's most prestigious vehicle clubs
- ✓ Cherished salvage return on all vehicles over 20 years old - automatic and free of charge
- ✓ Knowledgeable, experienced staff
- ✓ Bespoke and flexible underwriting
- ✓ Exceptional value for money

Insurance Quotation Hotline
01277 206911
www.rhclassicinsurance.co.uk

RH Specialist Insurance is a trading style of Willis Limited, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. RH Specialist Insurance schemes are administered on behalf of Willis Limited by Equity Red Star Services Limited, an appointed representative of Equity Syndicate Management Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Vintage



Modern



American



Prestige



Household



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
- 1st Wednesday **Devon Area** – **The Dartmoor Lodge Hotel**, Ashburton, TQ13 7JW 1930 – 2200. Please contact Dave Price for details, 01805 603133, daveprice@daveprice.plus.com
- 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
- 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, garyfrogeye@gmail.com
- 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 **Notts/Derby border Area** at the **Sitwell Arms** at 30 Wood Lane, Horsley Woodhouse, Derby, DE7 6BN from approx. 8.30. Just a mile north-west of the A608/A609 crossroads. Ian Cooke 0115 938 3838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk
- 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://yorkshiremasc.blogspot.com/>
- 3rd Monday **Dorset** – Meet at **St. Peter's Finger**, Lytchett Minster, Poole, BH16 6JE 7.30pm
- 3rd Tuesday **Scotland** – Meet at **The Windmill Tavern**, 4 Thorniewood Road, Uddingston G71 5QQ. 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.freeserve.co.uk Tel: 01737-552256
- 4th Thursday **Sussex** – Meet at **Bolney Stage**, Bolney, RH17 5RL 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@btoopenworld.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
- 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 Mike or Sue Gahan on email mike@mgahan.demon.co.uk or on 07850 488636.
- Last Thursday **Somerset** – Meet at **The Lord Nelson**, Norton sub Hamdon at 7pm for those wishing to eat or at 8pm for those not. Phone Ray Darch on 01460 72040 with any queries and to ensure we will be there!
robertholmes25@hotmail.com. If enough interest, will arrange a meeting.
- Northern Ireland
South West Wales Non regular and occasional meetings and runs arranged throughout the summer months. Please contact David Hill on 01239 811307 or email: david@hill.be

Club Website

www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

Members only pages Password: Kimber (which is case sensitive)

Events

Area reps please continue to make Richard Flynn aware of any events already in your diaries for 2012, so that they can be added to this "Events" section of the magazine and the website.

For the magazine Richard can be contacted at Richard.flynn@live.co.uk or 0121 559 3103

For the website Richard Mumford can be contacted at richardmumford@me.com

May

- 5 East Anglian Area, **Donington Historic Festival**. Convoy organiser Graham 01223-511835
- Saturday 5 / Heart of England Area, visit to **Donington Historic Festival**. Contact Alan East-Jones
Sunday 6 alan.east-jones@ntlworld.com
- Sunday 13th Heart of England Area, visit to **MG in the Trees**. Contact Alan Pritchett. alan.pritchett@bt.com
- Sunday 20 Notts & Derby Area, **UK Slot Car Festival** at Heritage Motor Museum, Gaydon. Large annual event with stalls and numerous layouts to try, and the museum! Contact Ian Cooke 0115 9383838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk
- 27 East Anglian Area, **Enfield Car Show** – Mick & Nigel 01223-263697 or 01954-789503

June

- 2-4 Notts & Derby Area, **Wollaton Park Autokarna and Diamond Jubilee** NG8 2AE. Probably the largest Classic vehicle event in Nottinghamshire. I plan to pre-book a club area for a fixed number of cars if enough interest. Call me asap! Contact Ian Cooke 0115 9383838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk
- Wednesday 6 Notts & Derby Area, **Renishaw Hall Classic Car and Bike Show** near Chesterfield – S21 3WB
From 3pm. Contact Ian Cooke 0115 9383838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk
- 10 East Anglian Area, **Luton Car Show** – Nigel 01954-789503
- 23/24 **MG Live Silverstone** (see ads in *MASCOT* for contacts)

July

- 6-8 Notts & Derby Area, **Le Mans Classic**, France. Contact Ian Cooke 0115 9383838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk
- 15 East Anglian Area, **Kimbolton Classic Show** – Dave 01733-222810
- 20-22 **Silverstone Classic** (see ads in *MASCOT* for contacts)
- 29 Notts & Derby Area, **Ashover Rally** S45 0JP <http://www.ashoverclassics.co.uk/>

August

- 5 East Anglian Area, **Duxford Car Show** – Diane, Nigel, Mick & Tricia 01223-263697 or 01954-789503

September

- 8 Notts & Derby Area, **Bicker Steam Threshing**, Lincs on A52 SW of Boston (in the East Anglian Area)
A great relaxing day out! Contact Ian Cooke 0115 9383838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk

October

- 21 Notts & Derby Area, **Stoneleigh Restoration Show**. Contact Ian Cooke 0115 9383838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk
- tba Notts & Derby Area, **Donington MG and Triumph Day** in the Exhibition Hall. Contact Ian Cooke
0115 9383838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk

November

- 16-18 **NEC Classic Car Show** (MASC stand)

The Key to low cost insurance

for Midget and Sprite Club members



Don't pay more than you have to for quality insurance cover. Adrian Flux have great insurance deals for Midget and Sprite Club members. What's more they offer excellent service and competitive prices too.



0800 089 0035

Quoteline Hours:

Mon to Fri 9am-7pm
Sat 9am-4pm
email: quotes@adrianflux.co.uk

www.adrianflux.co.uk

Authorised and Regulated by the
Financial Services Authority



ADRIAN FLUX
modern approach, traditional values

More on **Reproduction Parts**

A number of articles in recent *MASCOT* editions question the quality of some aftermarket items, which leave a lot to be desired. My own experience reported in "What is the problem?" (issue 328; July 2011; p 22-24) turned out to be the result of an old but failing coil, being replaced with a new and faulty coil that caused some considerable inconvenience before being diagnosed. John Davies article "On Replica Parts" (issue 327; June 2011; p 13-15) highlighted how some modern parts are manufactured with cost a priority rather than quality or durability.

John reports in his article how during production, car manufacturers were in a position to demand quality and consistency of parts, unlike today where we find ourselves dictated by parts manufacturers offering us their quality at their price. This often results in a much shorter working life and more frequent replacements than might otherwise be expected. Grahame Gibbins article "Coils!!! Don't be Fooled!" (Issue 336; March 2012; p10-11) discusses and illustrates the marked contrast in relative quality of currently available comparable ignition coils. No doubt this had a bearing on my own recent experiences with failing coils?

Whilst poor parts quality continues to influence the reliability of our cars, there are new parts which may provide comparable quality to the originals; following many reported problems with faulty rotor arms, some suppliers now offer red rotor arms – said to be equal to or better than the original, and to banish any ignition woes. I've not yet heard of any of these failing. One supplier of chrome work is offering a premium quality product in addition to standard, as many of us know the quality of supplied chrome plating can be mediocre at best.

During the restoration of my MKII Midget I needed to replace an incorrect indicator stalk with a correct period style item, I used one of the national parts suppliers and fitted an aftermarket period style stalk which fits the bill, looks the part and has not let me down. At a later date I spotted a NOS indicator stalk for auction – which I purchased at less than the aftermarket price – and fitted this unit. For all intents and purposes it looks the same once fitted, but in light of recent articles it may be worth examining the difference in construction.

Figure 1 shows the aftermarket stalk assembly with a plastic chassis, whereas in figure 2 the original has a metal chassis of different contour. The two units use a different arrangement to move the stalk up and down to engage in a recess when indicating

– figures 3 & 4. It's unclear if this is due to chassis material construction or convenience in manufacturing (or both). The distribution of wires differs between the units, the length of these connecting wires are approximately the same but the protective black sheathing in the original unit is stronger, close fitting and appears to be more suited.

What difference does all of this make? Well I have not yet heard any reports of indicator stalk failure but I can say that the action of the original stalk in use is more tactile and somewhat smoother than the reproduction unit and therefore, preferable to use.



Letters

Spridget versus MGB

Hi Gary,

I read with some amusement the lighthearted Spridget versus MGB debate in the April edition of MASC. Perhaps a little historical background may help clear the muddy waters.

During the late 1950s MG at Abingdon had spent a considerable amount of time, effort and expense to create what John Thornley [aka Mr MG] describes as a "Buzz Box" but unfortunately the castings did not make it viable for production. Enter the Austin Healey Sprite from which all Spridgets are ultimately derived, a car simple but innovative in design but fun to drive and most importantly cheap to produce! Unfortunately the latter did not prove to be so and John Thornley described the car as a "Con!"

The reason for this was that the car was not production ready, with several areas requiring redesign and strengthening. In addition many of the original costings were proven to be totally unrealistic. The result being that when the Austin Healey Sprite was made production ready, the costs had risen to a level similar to earlier versions of the too expensive to produce MG Buzz Box.

However all of this should not distract us from the fact that this and the following Spridgets were and are wonderful cars to own and



The MkII Sprite prototype photographed at the Cowley studio showing the MG designed rear end. From Geoffrey Healey's book 'More Healeys'

drive, reflected not only in their production figures [355888] but also the interest they generate today.

Turning to the MGB, [which provided both the MK II Austin Healey Sprite and MK I MG Midget with the MG designed rear end of the car, albeit a suitably scaled down version] this car was not designed in isolation, it also was as in the case of the Austin Healey Sprite and later Spridgets, totally reliant on the availability and constraints of the BMC / BL parts bin! In fact at one time the famous Abingdon factory was referred to as the "Leyland assembly plant, Abingdon". What made all these cars special was the fact that they were greater than the sum of all the parts, the care, attention and pride in which these cars were produced at Abingdon, in other words the Magic of MG.

I was fortunate to own from new, one of the last "500" MG Midgets and subsequently am the proud owner of a 1971 Austin Sprite and a 1973 MG Midget. In the 1980's I owned a rubber bumpered MGB GT which I loved and adored. All these cars have their merits and are treasured by their owners and quite rightly so. However on a sunny day with the roof down, driving along country lanes I know which car never fails to put a smile on my face and for me at least, which is the better car!

Rob Rose



The side on view described in Eric Dymock's book 'The Sprites and Midgets' as the Mark 1½ Sprite. He goes on to say that the tall front wings will be lowered to keep the proportions right before the body dies are made.



Graeme's Frogeye in the snow in 1961, resplendent with it's Donald Healey Co hard top

the Sprite, sad isn't it, but I guess it made a lasting impression on me.

When I got the car new, the floor pan leaked like a sieve. The water thrown up by the rear wheels used to run up the quarter elliptic spring into the box section, then out through the cross pressings under the mat. Lift it up and it was awash. So I got onto the dealer who arranged for it to go back to Abingdon to the factory (I lived in

Lost Frogeye

Dear Sir

Would you be kind enough to assist me please. I purchased a Frogeye Sprite new in 1960.

It was Cherry Red, Registration **698 HYC**. I had to sell it some three years later when my son was born, and extra space was required. Can you tell me if it is still in existence and is in the care of one of your members please?

Here are some pictures. You can see I still had it in 1961 by the snow. If you remember it was a very severe winter. I also had a hard top for it. I still have the original sales pamphlet and tuning manual for the car. My wife and I loved it and we enjoyed many happy hours in it. I was heart broken when I had to sell it, but a carry cot would not fit in so it had to go. I even still have dreams about



From the original brochure

Swindon at the time, so not far away). They had it for a week and sealed every nook and cranny. I undersealed it with 3M underseal, using a brush. I also sealed around the head lights so that no water could get in and start rust. So if a Sprite was going to survive mine should have made it. Unless someone wrapped it around a tree of course.

I have had some exciting cars since, but I guess it is like a woman, your first love is never forgotten. Well I have still got my first woman love (we celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary last year), but I do not have the car!! I suppose one out of two is not bad.

Hope this is a help.

Kind regards

Graeme Trim



Graeme in his Sprite. Does this pose look familiar?

New Members March – April 2012



(from last month) Paul and Liz Benson's Green 1500 Midget



Alan Bailey with his MkII Sprite

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

0527	Graham Rodda	Newport Gwent	Sprite	Mk 1
2533	Ian, Ed & Milly Luddington	Yorks	Sprite	Mk 1
4576	David Dyson	Leicestershire	Sprite	Mk 4
4577	Alec O'Beirne	Bucks	Sprite	Mk 4
4578	Cliff & Karen Spooner	Herefordshire	Sprite	Mk 2
4579	Andrew Carnell	Devon	Midget	1500
4580	Kevan Mulcahey	Bucks	Midget	Mk 3
4581	Guy Pollock	Scotland	Midget	1500
4582	John & Betty Anderson	Surrey	Dragonfly	1500
4583	Andrew Jepson	Cheshire	Sprite	Frogeye
4584	Graeme & Barbara Williams	Kent	Austin	Sprite
4585	Paul Harahan	West Midlands		
4586	Alan Stephen Bailey	West Sussex	Sprite	Mk 2
4587	Lee Clarke	Chesterfield	Midget	Mk 3 RWA
4588	Marcel Couwenberg	Netherlands	Midget	
4589	John & Judith Steele	Middx.	Midget	Mk 3 RWA
4591	Chris Moore & Lynn Oldham	Lancashire	Midget	Mk 2



Kevan Mulcahey in his MkIII Midget



Graeme & Barbara Williams' Austin Sprite



The rare original Ace wheel discs, which were an optional extra on the early Midgets and Sprites



Ian Goodchild's round wheel arch Midget



Ian, Ed & Milly Luddington's Mk1 Sprite



Marcel Couwenberg's 1974 Midget



Cambridge Rebores Ltd Engine Reconditioners

Quality You Expect On Time

see our website for more information

www.cambridge-rebores.co.uk



Some of our services include: Unleaded Conversions, Hot Pressure Testing, Refacing, Flywheel Grinding, Line Boring & Honing, Con Rod Reconditioning, Crankshaft Regrinding & Dynamic Balancing, Reborring & Sleeving.

Phone: 01638 743797 Fax: 01638 743781 Email: sales@cambridge-rebores.co.uk
Unit 1 Broads Road Business Park, Burwell, Cambridgeshire CB25 0BT

MASC and the Federation of British Historical Vehicle Clubs

Due to a request from some members, the Midget & Sprite Club Committee will be discussing the Club's option to rejoin the FBHVC at their next committee meeting.

FUEL STABILITY ADDITIVE TEST RESULTS (13-04-2012)

The FBHVC is pleased to announce the results of its fuel stability additive test programme. This research was designed to test the anti-corrosive properties of proprietary additives claiming to provide a high level of protection against potential corrosion of fuel systems, including tanks, pipework and fuel metering equipment on historic vehicles caused by the addition of ethanol into petrol.

VSPe Power Plus, **VSPe** and **EPS** from Millers Oils; **Ethomix** from Frost A R T Ltd; Ethanolmate from Flexolite all received an 'A' rating in the research which enables all these products carry an endorsement from the FBHVC. The endorsement is in the form of the FBHVC logo and the words: 'endorsed by the FBHVC as a fuel additive for protection against corrosion in metals'.

All additive manufacturers and suppliers were approached in 2011 to provide test samples for this research which was designed to simulate storage in a vehicle's fuel tank for a 12 month period.

The FBHVC's conference last October majored on the effects of ethanol in petrol with presentations from industry experts. It identified three issues to be considered: corrosion, compatibility and combustion. The Federation has been represented at a Fuel Stakeholders meetings with the DfT.

For details of the products please contact: Millers' Oils

email: enquiries@millersoils.co.uk

website: www.millersoils.co.uk

Frost A R T Ltd – email: order@frost.co.uk;

website: www.frost.co.uk

Flexolite – email: sales@flexolite.co.uk;

website: www.flexolite.co.uk

Survey 2011

FBHVC has measured the value of historic vehicle related activity in UK twice before – in 1997, and 2006. In May 2011, FBHVC –

working with the Historic Vehicle Research Institute (HVRI) – embarked on the process of surveying individuals, the trade, clubs and specialist museums with a view to bringing the 2006 data about the extent of the historic vehicle movement up to date.

The information-gathering process closed at the end of August and analysis of the data was completed in November. The results were presented to members of the All Party Parliamentary Historic Vehicle Group (APPHVG), the press and representatives of the specialist trade at a reception in the House of Lords on 6 December 2011 which was hosted by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, who is President of both FBHVC & APPHVG. Amongst those attending was Mike Penning MP, Under Secretary of State at the Department for Transport with responsibility for Road Safety.

The research programme looked into five main areas: economic value; employment; number and use of historic vehicles; social activity and concerns for the future. The title of the report, "The £4 Billion Hobby", shows the overall headline result. Other findings include:

- £4.3 billion overall value
- Nearly £1 billion in exports
- Over 28,000 people employed
- 57% of businesses are over 20 years old
- 850,000 historic vehicles
- 82% of historic vehicles are used no more than twice a month
- Historic vehicle are responsible for less than 0.24% of overall traffic
- 68% of historic vehicles are valued at less than £10,000
- 4.5 million person-attendances a year at events organised by FBHVC clubs
- 52% of traders expect their businesses to grow in next 5 years

The research project was led by FBHVC Vice President Geoff Smith and was carried out by Dr Paul Frost, Dr Chris Hart and Dr Jaime Kaminski of the Historic Vehicle Research Institute with background administrative and editorial assistance from past FBHVC secretary Jim Whyman.

The Great Western Sprint



Car no 82 Murray Wakeham

On Saturday 24th March Bristol Motor Club invited many other competitors and clubs to their Great Western Sprint at Castle Combe. The course was $1\frac{3}{4}$ laps of the racing circuit, with the start at the pit lane exit and the finish at Westway on the 2nd lap. The noise limit was set at 105db measured at 0.5 M, this caused some cars to sprout extra silencers.

the competition runs started in earnest. This is probably the longest sprint (3.3 miles) on the calendar, most of which is short hillclimbs. You really need a higher back axle ratio here; Colin's green Sprite was pulling well over 7000 revs in places!!

By the end of the afternoon Tom Walker in his Mk 1 Sprite was fastest in class with a time of 160.11 secs, and Murray Wakeham in his Ashley Sprite was 2nd with a time of 164.43 secs. This shows how nimble the Sprites are even round a circuit, as the fastest big Healey was John Tewson's 100/6 with a time of 164.57 secs. Interesting stuff!!

What a brilliant day, and entry for the public was free. Well done Bristol Motor Club, see you next year.

Dave Hansford



Car no 81 Tom Walker

The Sprites were in class B1, Roadgoing specialist production cars for engines up to 1400cc. There was a fine entry of 7 cars all running at 1380cc except Colin Gale who is still at 1330cc. Big Healeys were in class B3 with an entry of 9 cars.

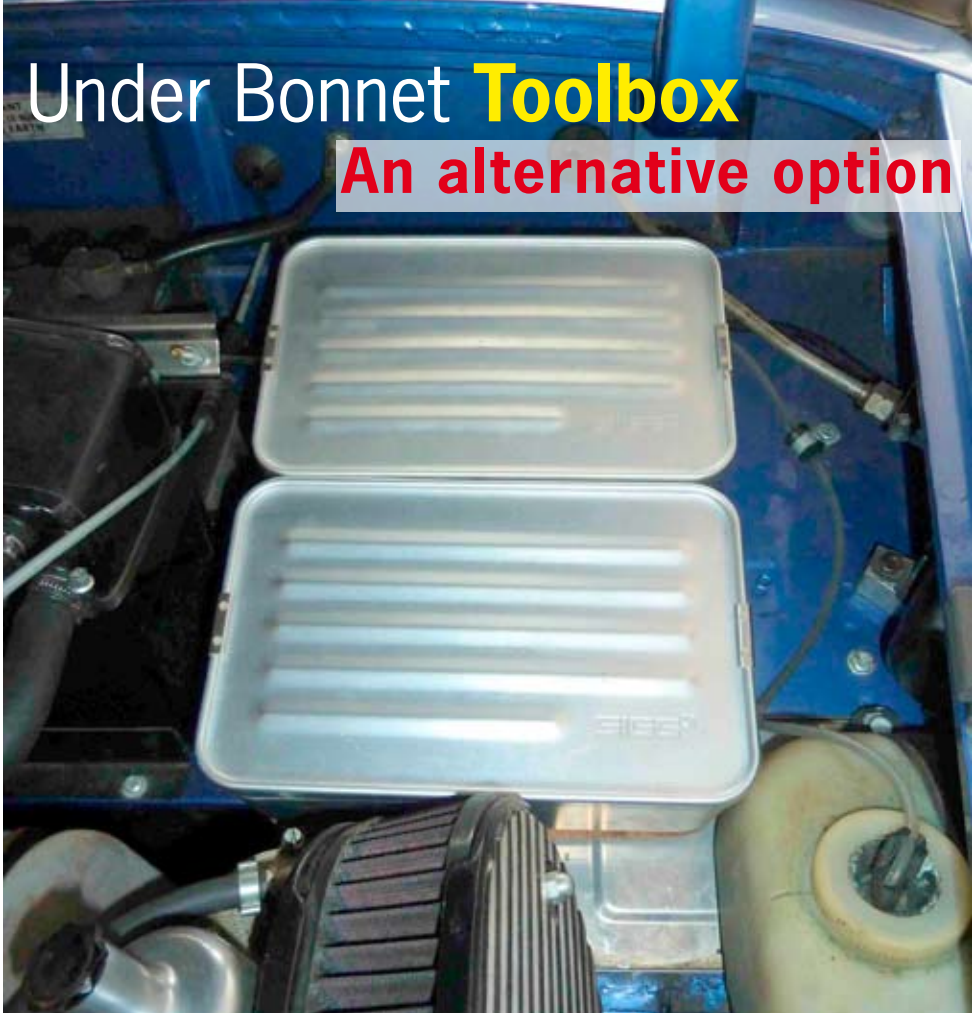
The weather was dry, sunny and warm, ideal for some fast sprinting! Practise was $2\frac{3}{4}$ laps to allow drivers to learn the fast Castle Combe circuit and then

Car no 85 Colin Gale at 7000 revs!



Under Bonnet **Toolbox**

An alternative option



Following Alan Anstead's article in last month's *MASCOT* magazine, I thought the less mechanically skilled may be interested in my take on this useful upgrade.

I use my Midget Mk3 for European trips of up to two weeks and trying to fit two people's luggage in the boot and behind the seats is challenging. As my car was already fitted with a windscreen washer bottle from a 1500 Midget (i.e. under the wing below the wiper motor), I fitted two Sigg aluminium boxes in the empty space

to store spares etc and hence free up some boot space. To make the installation easier, I fitted a piece of plywood over the blanking plate and then secured the boxes to the plywood.

The Sigg boxes, which are designed for carrying food when out walking, are readily available from outdoor shops. Whilst they are not cheap, they offer a simple solution for the mechanically challenged.

Doug Plumb
Member 4071



The Bavarian RWA Midget MkIII to Sprite MkII Conversion

MASCOT has received further correspondence from Horst Manuir, whose Bavaria based Midget appeared on page 35 of April's *MASCOT*.

Horst has written to say that after much feedback from both the UK and Germany, he may reconsider converting his round wheel arch MkIII Midget to the earlier style square wheel arch MkII Sprite. There are a number of reasons for the project being put on hold.

Firstly, Horst writes that after speaking with his father, he was shocked to find out that Herr Manuir Snr. never really liked the Sprite anyway and had actually always hankered after a Triumph Spitfire. Horst's father, Stier, felt that at the time, he couldn't bring himself to purchase a Triumph due to that particular model's name and the implications of driving



*What Herr Stier
Menuir really wanted*

one around Southern Germany in the early 1960s. Secondly, after asking for advice from the German Sprite and Midget Club (Deutsche S&M Verein), they informed him that if he tried to ruin a completely good MG Midget, they would take out an injunction in an attempt to forcibly stop him.

However, he says the main reason that the project has hit a brick wall, is that on visiting his regional Vehicle Registration Office (Kraftfahrzeugzulassungsstelle), the clerk just laughed at him and asked if it was some kind of April Fool's Joke. Watch this space for updates.

Gary

WANTED

Midgets and Sprites

Excellent prices paid for properly restored cars

Especially Frogeyes, Original or IOW Frogs

Even unfinished restorations and Heritage Shelled cars



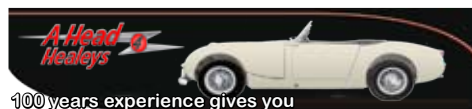
Call Mike Authers Classics on Abingdon

Tel: 01235-834-664

Mobile: 07703 465224

or

www.mgmidgets.com



100 years experience gives you access to the most knowledgeable team of Austin Healey experts in the world. Always competitive but without compromise to quality

YOP 4110 R/H
YOP 4120 L/H
Front Wings
£235.00 +VAT each

YFL4510
Heatshield - Carburettor
1.1/8" Carbs
£28.90

YBP 4010
Bumber Blade
£143.18 +VAT

YBP 4015
Over Rider With Bolt & Seal
£25.25 +VAT



Supporting British Manufacturing

A Head 4 Healeys 81 Somers Road, Rugby, Warwickshire,
CV22 7DC, England

Tel: 0044 (0)1733 565000 Fax: 0044 (0)1733 565001

E-mail: info@ahead4healeys.co.uk

A Soggy Wet Session in West Sussex



Roger and Joe in Millie on the grid at Goodwood

Most months of the year my son Joe and I take Millie the Midget along to the Goodwood Breakfast Club meetings held at the famous race circuit near Chichester in West Sussex – the one where Stirling Moss came a cropper back in the '60s. For those that have never been, it's a free event held on the first Sunday of nearly every month of the year apart from the months in which the Festival of Speed and Revival take place and is highly recommended as a great opportunity to get the automotive anorak out. There are usually 2 or 3 themes that we qualify for each year which means we get to park either on the track or in the paddock while lesser mortals have to opt for the muddy car park outside the circuit ... unfortunately that also includes us when it's Supercar Sunday though.

The first meeting this year was themed as 'Tax Free Sunday' so we HAD to go to that one and mix it with the other pre-'73 cars, Citroen C1s and Teslas. Come February 29th Millie had a quick polish and grease up, came off the axle stands and, having been treated to a new battery, fired up pretty much first time Hurray! ... then I looked at the MOT and realised it had run out 2 weeks before ... panic. A quick visit to my friendly local garage sorted that out and, with a slightly lighter wallet resulting from a dodgy sidelight we were all ready to roll on March 4th.

The day arrived with forecasts of sleeting rain, cold and wind but undeterred we battled to put up the now cold and really rather stiff hood, managing to pull one of the rear quarter windows away from the PVC. A quick

emergency application of gaffer tape sorted that out and we ventured out into the grey mist of rain and spray that was the A27 for the 12 mile jaunt to the event.

Unsurprisingly the queue to get into Goodwood was virtually non-existent and we were actually directed to park on one of the coveted grid positions ... despite the kudos this was not so wonderful an idea given the conditions, so we quickly moved to one of the dry sheds in the paddock.

Having re-fuelled with a bacon roll and coffee we spent a couple of hours admiring a fine assortment of old and new vehicles, including a few other Spridgets, before retiring home very damp but happy to have made the effort. You can see some pictures at Pistonheads via their website www.pistonheads.com and follow the link to the "Gassing" section, then "Events" finally onto "Goodwood Events".



Roughing it in the rain with the 'Moderns'

The list of future events can be found at <http://www.goodwood.co.uk/motorsport/latest-news/articles/2012-breakfast-club-themes-and-dates.aspx> but the one that looks really interesting is the 'Rule Britannia' event on 3rd June where all the Ferraris, Lamborghinis, Bugattis and other common or garden foreign cars get relegated to the muddy car park and we upholders of the British Marques get pride of place. Would any members be interested in meeting up between 7.30 and 7.45 at the Chichester Sainsburys Car Park just off the A27 so that we could get together a convoy of Spridgety things and make a grand entrance just before 8? Let me know via: rogercooper@ntlworld.com

Roger Cooper



HNX 456D

HAN9-R-237

Owned by Joe Armour, NSW Australia

This is the car driven in the Sebring 12 Hour race in 1967 by Clive Baker and Rauno Aaltonen when they finished 13th in the Prototype up to 2 litre class. It was then entered for Le Mans where Clive Baker teamed up with Andrew Hedges, finishing 15th overall at an average speed of 100.8 mph. The following year, 1968, it was entered again at Le Mans and driven by Roger Enever and Alec Poole who finished 15th, at the slightly slower average speed of 94.8 mph. On both occasions it won the "Motor" trophy for the first British car home, and at one spot it was timed at 154 mph!

While on holiday in Australia in February 2012 my wife, Susan, and I called on Joe Armour who we had met at the Oran Park

race track five years earlier on a previous trip down under. He had acquired from Ian Polley in the UK, his ex-Works Le Mans Sprite HAN9-R-237. Joe is a bit cautious about using a UK registration to describe the Healey's race cars as Donald and son, Geoff, were very inclined to swap plates from one chassis to another. Ian Polley had promised Joe first refusal when he came to sell the car after they met in 1996 but it was not until 2000 that the deal was finally struck. Even then Ian wanted two last drives with the car, firstly in the June 2000 Le Mans historic parade prior to the 24 Hour Race start, and later in the Goodwood Revival race meeting. Joe decided to go along to Le Mans and was elated to be driven down the Mulsanne Straight at 130 mph, only realising later that the floor he was sitting on was a thin sheet of aluminium held in place with just 4 pop rivets!! Ian was generous enough to include with the car all the spares which had come with it including a spare motor. Just as well, as Joe has since had the misfortune to break the crank on the original Le Mans engine. Local engine 'guru' Bob Rowntree has now rebuilt the spare motor and it is ready for installation.

The motor is of course an XSP of 1293cc using dry-sump lubrication, a scavenge pump mounted on the side of the block, driven by an extra toothed gear on the camshaft. The



On show after Le Mans in 1967

car used a single Weber carburettor for both the 1967 events, before the new fuel injected engine was fitted for 1968. A special deep aluminium sump, (one of several built) extends back to and is bolted to, the engine backplate so making the whole unit much more rigid.

Joe is hoping to rebuild the original race engine with a new crank – though a standard 1275 crank has a narrower flywheel flange so it would need to be extended towards the back plate for the ring oil seal to be effective. He also hopes to fit the full fuel-injection system and Weslake cross-flow head used in 1968. The gearbox is a 5 speed created by Healeys by modifying an MGA or MGB one with an additional gear at the back. Only a very few of these were built, one of which is in one of Jack Wheeler's cars 7080 AC.

For 1968 the new XSP engine (306313), referred to above, was fitted, which had a cross-flow, semi down-draught head and Lucas fuel injection. This explains why



Ian Polley at Silverstone, 1981

the 1967 photos have the smooth single curvature bonnet line compared to what you see in 1968 and in the current bonnet.

The exhaust manifold/extractors were on the left hand side and the generator/dynamo was mounted above the exhaust extractors. The right hand side had the Lucas fuel distributor mounted low down and driven by a belt from the nose of the extended camshaft which protruded through the timing cover. A belt driven mechanical fuel pump was also mounted low down to a modified standard front engine plate. The fuel injector trumpets were at approx. 45 degree angle off the Weslake/Eddie Maher (BMC engine man) head. The inlet ports were in the horizontal face of the cast iron cylinder head.

The relocation and positioning of these components required an overall increase in the height of the bonnet profile with an additional tear-drop shaped bulge over the trumpet ends.

The same Weslake head and Lucas fuel injection was fitted to Works rally Minis by BMC for 1968. These were homologated but the inlet trumpets were different as they were required to curve down under the bonnet and behind the grille.

The body of HNX 456D is unique in that it has the smaller triangular side vents (other similar cars have none, and others have larger ones) with a spoiler around the tail, and an extractor vent on the rear of the roof panel. Though the car is painted red, for Le Mans, you can see small specks of bright orange beneath, the colour it wore for the Sebring 12 hours on 1st April 1967.

Joe has made quite a study of all the Sebring and Le Mans cars and has, I believe worked



The Engine rebuilt by Bob Rowntree



The special aluminium sump



Joe's car in the historic demo at the 2011 Melbourne GP

where it won its class. In 2000 he and Joe attended the Le Mans 12 Hour Race Historic demonstration and then returned to Goodwood for the 2000 Revival Race Meeting where it was co-driven by John Rhodes who had driven these cars for the works at Le Mans in 1965 and 66.

Joe was lucky enough to meet Roger Menadue at the Austin-Healey Club's 1996 event at Cirencester where, along with

out the best analysis as to which ones raced where, and when, so I am hoping to make good use of his expertise in compiling a comprehensive list for my website www.sebringsprite.com. His bungalow sports a long, enclosed veranda which is to become a showroom for the Sprite and for Joe's ex-Works Healey 3000, DAC 953C. His collection of memorabilia, currently in masses of boxes, will no doubt soon be decorating its walls.

Ian Polley twice won the HSCC end of year class award with the car, and in 1999 Lord March invited him to enter the car in the Goodwood Festival of Speed hillclimb event



Joe and his Sprite with friend Eian Poustie (left)

Ian Polley, he viewed and discussed the car and Roger's involvement with the build, race preparation as well as his role as Donald Healey's first employee. Roger's title on his business card is: DHMCo Experimental Engineer. He told Joe that it was their usual practice to enter one 'proven' car from an earlier event and one experimental version, so avoiding both cars failing from an untested design fault. When Joe purchased the car, he and Ian Polley drove down to Cornwall to have lunch and share photos and stories with Roger and the car.

Below are two excellent books recommended by Joe which, since our visit, I have managed to acquire on-line, see below:

Sebring 12 Hour Race, 1970 – edited by Robert C. Auten: ISBN 1-882256-20-4.

Les Healeys au Mans, 1949-1970, by Hervé Chevalier – ISBN 2-913117-00-7.

Martin Ingall

www.sebringsprite.com

MASCOT would like to thank Martin Ingall and Joe Armour for allowing reproduction of this article.



Above – Side vents. Below – Rear spoiler





Outwardly looking as standard

Converting an MG Midget from Petrol to Electric Powered Operation

Over the years, many people have converted MG Midgets from petrol- to electric-powered operation. Usually, the owners used lead acid batteries, and produced a car that was little more than a science project. The cars had a maximum driving range of 40 miles, but only if they weren't driven over 40 mph, and after two years of service, the batteries typically wore down to the point that the range was dramatically reduced. In the past few years, all of that has changed with the advent of Lithium Iron Phosphate (LiFePo4) batteries. The LiFePo4 technology has been tested enough in many electric car conversions that it is now considered a good choice for an electric car. Unlike lead acid technology, where the batteries were at risk of a shortened life if they were drawn down past 50% of capacity, LiFePo4 batteries can be run down to 20% of capacity before concerns arise about permanent battery damage. The number of charge cycles (i.e., maximum number of recharges over the life of the batteries) has also dramatically improved: LiFePo4 batteries can be charged 2,000

times or more while still maintaining 80% of their original capacity. This puts the expected driving range for a typical electric car conversion at 100,000 miles before needing to get new batteries.

Considerations

My project goal was to replace my petrol-powered '74 Midget, which I've owned for 35 years, with an electric one. I've used my Midget primarily as a daily commuter vehicle, where I rarely drive the car over 50 miles in a single day. I wanted the performance to be as close as possible to a petrol car, meaning that it could travel at 65 mph up hills, accelerate at the same rate or better than a petrol car, and still have the handling characteristics of the fun car I'd driven all my life. Also, I wanted the range to be greater than 50 miles at 55 mph.

Compared to petrol-powered vehicles, electric cars are very simple. The electric motor replaces the internal combustion engine (ICE). Beyond that, all that's needed is a bank of batteries, a controller (that converts the signal from the accelerator pedal into the correct current and volts to move the car), and a throttle that hooks to the accelerator pedal. No carburetor, fuel filter, alternator, pollution control equipment, radiator, oil pan, or petrol tank. The battery management system and heater for winter driving are optional additions, although I believe the battery management system is well worth the added cost.

Finally, older cars like MGs and Triumphs operate with little or no power-assisted features. This simplifies the conversion because you don't need to add power steering or vacuum pumps to operate other car systems. This, along with their lightweight and small size, makes them ideal for conversion.



Frank's two Midgets

Buying the car and components

I had been considering this conversion project for the last 10 years, but finally decided the time was right when I stumbled upon a '77 Midget for sale that had been partially converted to electric. When I researched this further, I discovered that there were several Electric Vehicle (EV) calculators on the Internet that estimated the performance of a converted car. Using one of these EV calculators, I was able to pick the battery pack voltage I needed to achieve my 65 mph goal, the current required to meet my acceleration goal, and the amount of batteries I would need to drive a 50 mile range at 55 mph. The LiFePo4 batteries made this all possible, and after deliberating for a month, I bought the car. It had an electric motor, but no batteries, controller, battery management system, throttle, or heater.

Looking back, I had a couple of lucky breaks that really made this car what it is today. The first one was that the Warp 9 Impulse electric motor that came with the car was almost a perfect fit for my goals. At the time of purchase, I didn't have a good feeling for electric motor characteristics and how they could affect the way a car drives. This particular motor had a torque constant (i.e., the strength of an electric motor) that was not so large that it limited the current you can put through it at higher RPMs. Larger electric motors would have limited my acceleration above 3000 RPM unless I went with a higher voltage battery pack. This would be fine if my goal was to simply build an electric car, but since I wanted this car to drive like a Midget,



A bank of LiFePo4 batteries

a larger motor would have required gear shift points much lower than a normal petrol Midget.

The second piece of luck was that a local supplier of EV components had some slightly used LiFePo4 160 Amp-hours (Ah) batteries. The 10% reduced cost was the initial motivation for me to try to fit them into my car, as smaller Amp-hour batteries would have been an easier fit. But I soon discovered that the maximum recommended current for this type of battery is 3C (i.e., 3 times the Ah rating), or 480 amps, which was very close to the 500 amps I needed to meet my acceleration goals. Had I gone with lower capacity cells, I would have been worried about shortening the battery life by drawing 500 amps when I accelerated.

Building the car

Normally an electric conversion project would start with removing the ICE engine and putting an electric motor in its place. For me, that part of the project was already done. At this stage, people typically make the decision whether to keep the transmission. Certainly, electric cars can be made to operate without a transmission, but the tradeoff is



The Warp 9 Impulse Motor



Clutch and reduced diameter flywheel



Rear battery box



20 battery cells in the boot

performance, either slower acceleration or limited top speed. I asked the question myself, and quickly concluded that keeping the transmission would make for a better overall car. I think running through the gears is half the fun of driving a sports car, so I think it is critical to keep the transmission when converting a Midget, or any other sports car.

Placing the batteries in the car was the next challenge. While the boot had ample room for batteries, overall weight distribution had to be considered as well. I decided to cut a hole in the boot and build a battery box where the gas tank used to be located. This allowed me to place 20 cells in the boot and still have enough room to carry a spare tyre if desired. I decided against carrying a spare in order to reduce the car's overall weight and instead use the room to carry or lock up personal items.

I constructed a box to hold the rear batteries from a light, diamond plate aluminium tool box, the kind typically used to store tools in the back bed of pickup trucks. I cut the plate aluminium to the desired dimensions using a skill saw – a surprisingly easy job. Using

aluminium angle iron, sheet metal screws, and pop rivets, I reconstructed the box and suspended it on steel angle iron welded to the rear frame members in the boot.

A critical requirement of the rectangular “prismatic” LiFePo4 cells is that they be kept from expanding during charge and discharge cycles, because distortion caused by expansion can hurt the internal structure of the cells. Typically, the cells are strapped together with endplates to keep the outer two cells from expanding. In my case, I wedged two rows of 10 cells each into the aluminium battery box I constructed. The sides of the aluminium battery box provided enough restraint to keep the end cells from expanding. This was done more as a practical matter, because I didn't have enough room to fit 10 cells and endplates into the battery box.

Fitting the 18 other cells in the front of the car proved to be a real challenge. Using a steel band strapping kit, I made stiff, wooden endplates for two groups of batteries, 10 cells in one group and 8 in the other. Because of space constraints, I ended up laying the cells on their side. While this configuration isn't very common, my research indicated that people had reported success with installations of this type. I fit the 10-cell pack in the space in front of the firewall, where the heater core and regular battery normally go, leaving just enough vertical space to avoid touching the bonnet. I mounted the remaining 8-cell pack across the entire front of the car where the radiator used to be. It was such a tight fit that I had to remove the entire bonnet hold-down mechanism, fabricate a new one a few inches in front of the original one, and



The whole engine bay with the two groups of yellow batteries



The Soliton Jr control box

remove some of the radiator support. I was careful not to remove too much metal from the radiator support, as I felt this was integral to the uni-body construction of the Midget.

As stated earlier, the Soliton Jr. controller converts the accelerator signal into the correct current and volts to move the car. Without going into details, let's just say it's a very sophisticated piece of equipment that allows me to have all sorts of control over current, motor temperature, RPM limiting, etc. I fitted the controller in the engine compartment above the passenger side foot compartment. I wanted to maintain the original pedals in the Midget, so I used a cable-driven throttle that operates off the original accelerator mechanism. Three wires connect the throttle to the controller. To keep the controller from overheating when drawing over 300 amps, I installed a small water-cooling system, one that is typically used by computer overclockers (i.e., people who run their computers a faster rate than normal specifications) to keep their computer components from overheating, something easy to find on the Internet.

Since I have always driven my Midget year round, a heater was a requirement, not a luxury, so I added a small ceramic room heater for defrost and heat capabilities. It was perfect for my 120 volt DC system, since our line voltage in the United States is 120 volts AC. I used a small muffin fan to push the air, and while I should have used a stronger fan, I didn't have the room to fit a larger squirrel cage fan more typically used in automobiles.

While the basic idea in converting a car to electric is to replace the internal combustion engine (ICE) with an electric motor, batteries, throttle and controller, there are also some other considerations. For safety's sake, the main high voltage battery system is completely isolated from the frame and the 12-volt electrical system that is used to operate the headlamps, blinkers, and other electrical devices. The 12 volt electric system requires a DC-DC converter to drop the main pack voltage down to 13.8 volts, and usually people add an additional 12-volt battery to turn the whole system on. In my case, I used a small 12-volt motorcycle battery, which has the added advantage of allowing me to play the car radio when I'm working on the car. I also decided to install a battery management system (BMS) to monitor the LiFePo4 cells, because the batteries require special care not to overcharge them or draw their voltage down too far, something I felt was very worthwhile to preserve my investment in batteries. Finally, I added an AC-DC charger to charge the batteries.

The overall weight of the batteries was 475 pounds, with the motor an additional 135 lbs, and the controller another 15 lbs. In total, my electric 1977 Midget now weighs 2,060 lbs, compared to 1850 pounds for a stock 1977 Midget. The weight distribution went from about 1.5% front-heavy before the conversion to 3% tail-heavy. To further reduce the weight, I took the steel out of the rubber bumpers, removing another 43 lbs of weight. Normally, I don't like the look of the rubber bumpers, but with the black paint on this car, they looked pretty good to me. While



The small fan



The dash

I kept the stock springs, I did installed tube shocks all the way around, as I have used tube shocks for over twenty years on my '74 Midget, and really like the way they handle. With the added weight, having good damping was important to keep the ride feeling tight.

Many electric car converters choose to add all sorts of gauges to monitor the electrical system. I chose to only use an ammeter to replace the water temperature/oil pressure gauge on my dashboard. I still have the original speedometer, tachometer, and fuel gauge. My BMS system monitors the battery voltage while driving, so I didn't feel the need to have a voltmeter. It also computes the battery usage, and it drives my fuel gauge, so I know how much battery power I have left. I still have a radio and use the original speaker as a front speaker, and have two rear speakers mounted in the rear trunk divider.

Driving the car

It's a little odd leaving the garage with a "full tank," and seeing the gauge read "three-quarters full" after driving only 20 miles, but I'm getting used to it. While the car is very quiet, there is still enough noise to guess the RPMs by sound alone. I do find myself over-revving in first gear because the electric motor's 5,000 maximum RPM comes on faster with the electric motor's extra torque. It's funny how eliminating the engine noise makes all the other noises more obvious. With the top up, the gear noise is obvious and almost annoying. Third and fourth gears are fine, but second gear is pretty loud. With the top down, the car is very pleasant, because the wind noise is enough to drown out the drive train noise, and it is still very quiet compared to the petrol engine.

Filling up is simply plugging in the car when I get home. The charger and BMS take care

of the charge, and turn off when it's finished recharging. Because I'm used to driving a 1275 Midget, I do notice the extra weight of a 1500 Midget plus the added battery weight. If I had to do it again, I'd want to start with a pre '75 Midget. I'm not ready to strip the interior for weight reduction, and I don't want to pay for a fiberglass front end since I've already spent a fair amount of money on the conversion. Over time, I'm sure this Midget will feel normal to me again.

For those of you are considering converting a car to electric, and I hope some of you are, I wanted to talk about the cost. Unfortunately, it isn't cheap. My conversion cost about \$12,000 (£7,568), in addition to the donor car itself. The motor and controller typically cost between \$2,500 (£1,576) and \$4,000 (£2,523), and if you use a BMS, it will cost between \$500 (£315) and \$1,000 (£630). The cheaper chargers are \$600 (£378), and can go over \$3,000 (£1,892) for high current fast charge versions. The LiFePo4 batteries are the most expensive items. Mine cost about \$8,000 (£5,045) because I used a large pack to get the extra range. This is why so many people try lead acid batteries. But since the LiFePo4 batteries last much longer than lead acid ones, choosing lead acid batteries won't save you much in the long run, and the weight and range limitations of lead acid will not allow you to have a car that feels like the original. Some people have used surplus motors, used components, and built their own controllers and chargers to save money. While this helps, there's little chance of getting around the high cost of the batteries. However, I expect battery costs to drop dramatically in the next few years.

As for acquiring the knowledge on how to convert a car, the Internet is full of information. There are forums where many people are willing to help with any question, and typically have articles on all aspects of doing a conversion. You can also check out my web site, where I discuss all aspects of my electric car conversion, and I'd be happy to help others, especially someone trying to convert an older British sports car to electric.

Frank Bernett Colorado, USA
www.electrictmgmidget.com

Ed's note. Frank tells me that to further test the car, he has now driven it until the batteries ran out and achieved an impressive range of 112 miles.

Car Shows

I am sitting here at home chilled to the bone having just returned from a very lack lustre Transport Show held in Kent where Kent MASC had a stand. I use the word stand in its widest meaning.

A drastic change in the weather found today quite breezy and cold. The sun failed in its attempt to break through the cloud.

It had been sunny all week and I had been out and about, in my Frogeye, with Kent MASC "Old Boys" on Wednesday and solo on other days. Today what a change! There were even some spots of rain around lunchtime.

Now with regard to this car show, I had submitted entry forms for those wanting to be on a club stand and an extra form for the Club entry. John Clark unfortunately was unable to attend as a shock absorber on his car was breaking up. The fault had been found after our Wednesday run thankfully before any extensive damage had been done to his car. JC had alerted me at the earliest opportunity offering the place at the show if I could find substitute. The other member, that did not attend, took the more modern approach and just did not turn up. The rest of us assembled at the designated time and place so as to enter together thus making it easier for the Stewards to direct us to our designated pitch where we were asked to remain from 0930hrs – 1600hrs.

Our pitch was to be outside. I had declined the offer of a pitch inside due to the preceding week's weather.

Now is it right that show organisers should expect exhibitors to remain for specified times if the weather becomes inclement or is extreme? It is a condition of entry but is it right to ask people "not in the first flush of youth" to remain if it is cold, wet, windy or snow? Especially so, when inclement weather can exacerbate medical condition.

I can see the problem that an organiser faces in that the public pay to come and see a show and will complain, and stay away next time, if the show is depleted of exhibits at the first spit of rain.

However do not event organisers have a duty of care to the exhibitor? Should they not provide somewhere away from the weather, other than a cold, draughty, exhibition hall, where exhibitors can take refuge with



refreshment. At a previous show in Kent, at a different location, organisers took umbrage when exhibitors took flight in almost arctic conditions expecting them instead to shelter in draughty, and cold, old cars. Today gates were shut and barricaded to prevent exhibitors leaving but I formed an escape committee, having found a suitable escape route, and led some members to freedom.

For far too long insufficient portable loos have had to be suffered at many shows. And when portable loos are presented their condition is often unacceptable with no cleaning throughout an event.

Is it not time, with so many events now taking place and organisers only too willing to make money from our hobby to expect consideration, refuge, refreshment, and sanitation to an acceptable level.

In today's case our Club Stand was merely a "Park it somewhere over there, mate". Had we not entered in convoy we may have well found ourselves dispersed across the field. Indeed any latecomer would not have been able to join us.

Those that chose the inside venue were merely driven in as if in a barn.

What do you think?

Viva la revolution!

Alan Anstead



East Anglian Report

March MASCOT just dropped on to my doormat so that's my signal to write the next month's offering. At this point the monthly Belly of Britain Inn night is yet to happen, although Pat and I will miss it being on our way to France at the time, and apart from a brief excursion in the Sprite and rolling it out for a bath to take off the winter and phoenix dust ahead of the hose pipe ban things are still very quiet on the Spridgeting front.

Have you booked your Silverstone Classic tickets yet? The cheapest ticket offer ended 31st March and the tickets have now gone up by £5 per day but otherwise the same offer applies as in the advert, however this is only available until the end of May so if you have not booked yet please get cracking so you don't miss out on the biggest and best classic car event of the year.

I mentioned the Phoenix dust, well an awful lot of rust or to put it another way, a lot of awful rust has been cut out, a lot of panels made or fettled in to shape, offered up and

tweaked and put back together meccano fashion in readiness for my planned welding weekend when we return from France.

Nothing too major just the floor, rear toberlone section, inner and outer sills, foot well, cross member A post inner and outer, spring hangers, rear floor corners, inner and outer rear wings, jacking point and inner front wing. But then every bit of rust will be eradicated and she will be structurally sound again. There will be the little box section closing plates and little odd bits and pieces (I may even fabricate an AA box, see page 12 of April's mag) but nothing major. I also saw an interesting idea for spit roasting the stripped body with a heavy pipe through the tunnel so the car can be easily turned over for finishing off the underside once the strength is back in the structure, definitely got possibilities.

Sorry for the short report but got to go, France beckons. See you all at the oldest Inn in England and beyond.

Dave Dixon

NW Area Report

It's been a while since there was a NW Area report, in fact the last one was December last year. But don't despair we are all still alive and kicking up here int'north.

All winter jobs are either done or close to completion. Mikes IOW Frogeye is rebuilt, Bernie has his 'SuperPro' bushes fitted and Fraser has had his bodywork touched up. Neil is frantically trying to get his Frogeye

finished; he has rebuilt his bonnet and giving the car a respray. Lee is done with his engine and gearbox rebuilds and rear end repairs – remember the episode of him pushing his car into the garage, quite literally! I had all sorts of things planned for the winter months but ended up doing nothing. As for Andrew's Frogeye, I think the least said the better at the moment.



Oulton Park in March

We have done two events recently:

Oulton Park 17th March
report written by Ian

On Saturday 17th March the NOSSUS (North of Stoke, South of Stalybridge) sub-group of the NW Centre were joined by FONOSSOS (Friends of you-know-the-rest) at the Oulton Park Historic race day. Due to circumstances beyond your correspondent's control only the token Southerner (Pete) was in possession of a Spridget. I gave the BGT its first run of the season while the friends came armed with TR5, TR6 and a V12 E-Type. Peter and I extended fraternal greetings as required but did not allow them to park in the hallowed confines of the paid up members of NOSSUS/MASC enclosure.

At 10 am we all had our licences checked and then signed on to receive wrist bands that would allow us access to the track for one lap. Later we all gathered at Cascades and having had wristbands examined were waved onto the track. If you were very unlucky you made it on to the track quite slowly which meant you had to motor quite rapidly to regain contact with the car in front of you. How unlucky was !! The B was hard to wrestle through the gap in the Armco and the chap in front had the latest Aston-Martin which got off easily. It was hard to regain contact (not literally!) with him but, readers, I tried. Thank you Aston Man, Oulton Park and Jane for allowing me out unsupervised in the community.

After pies and sandwiches and coffee and cakes (and yoghurt for slim Pete) we gave our attention to the racing. Only 4 events but with driver changes and quality cars there was much to take your attention. From Mini Coopers to 7.5 litre Chevrolet Corvettes via Chevron, Lola, Mustang, Porsche and Sebring Sprite there was variety aplenty.

The sun shone, rain fell and the wind blew – so typical day at Oulton Park. If only we'd had the official club dome of dryness! Despite this a great day out and all for free. Perhaps next time the organisers will give us more notice and more members will be able to join us.

Manchester Indoor Classic Car Show 24-25th March 2012 – report by Fraser

North West Region provided a Club stand with five cars at the Manchester Indoor Classic Car show at Event City, a new exhibition



The MASC stand at Manchester



The team

centre near the Trafford Centre shopping mall. Earlier in the year, our volunteers had no doubt been glad to see the word "indoor", being mindful of their attendance at Midget 50 in 2011, with its relentless and torrential rain. However, clearly we had been sinners in a previous life because show day dawned with the start of one of the longest unbroken warm and sunny weeks in March in living memory. Yet here we were stuck indoors like naughty children and unable to go out in our cars !! Your North West members showed their

normal fortitude and endurance and stayed the course, and even managed to recruit some new members. Our cars were a good representation of the two Marques with Andrew's red and original Frogeye, Mikes extensively-modified IOW Frogeye, Les's Mk2 Sprite, Bernie's Mk3 Sprite, and Fraser's Midget 1500. We thank our lady partners for being so patient with us. The exhibition gathered many interesting cars together including the Cadillac of Liberace complete with gold leaf finish and some really impressive American cars of the 50s.

There seemed to be no other MG representation apart from us, although the other Austin Healey club was there with some fine AH 3000s.

Finally, just to give you the heads up; for the June meeting only, we will not be at the Kilton but once again will be at The Plough at Euxton (near Leyland / Chorley, just off M6 junction 28).

See you at the Kilton on 9th May.

Les

Cripps Motors

Marley Way Garage, Storrington,
West Sussex RH20 3PP

Servicing • Tuning • Upgrades
Restoration • Repairs • Shot Blasting
Welding • Electrical Repairs • Bodywork
M.O.T's Advice

Classic Car Specialist

Telephone: 01903 742430 collection and delivery available
throughout sussex and surrounding areas.

Home Counties North West Report



The line-up at Codicote

Well what a day for it! The first Home Counties North West runs of the year and we had some sunshine. We met at the Garden Centre at Codicote, north-west of Welwyn Garden City on Sunday 26th March.

The run was planned by Chris and Pat but unfortunately Chris was ill and had to pull out. A good job the Home Counties NW have an expert road run duo amongst our numbers. Roger and Maggi Byford took over as our leaders for the day at short notice and even managed a quick recce on the Saturday to check they knew where we would be going.

After catching up with friends we hadn't seen for a while the mass Spridgets hit the road; we managed a very acceptable 11 cars.

Actually only 9 Spridgets as Roger and Maggi decided to come in a big Healey they were running in and Mike and Sue came in the A40.

It was good to see so many members and particularly some of our less regular road run friends; Steve Childs driving solo, Maurice Godden also solo in his Frog and Gary and Gaps. Keith and Ann in the Midget with its recently re-installed engine (see April's *MASCOT*) looked confident and managed an oil leak free trip. Dave and Jenny also decided on the Sprite rather than Dave's winter purchase; a classic motorbike (not sure what flavour it is!)

We set off north along B roads towards Hitchin, onto Shillington and then on to Henlow before heading to a comfort stop at Baldock services on the A1. A nice run on some fun, quick B roads and some more twisty wooded roads to keep our concentration! All was well until the three car group I was in headed into the services. Mike and the A40 slowed more than usual and came to a dead stop just off the main roundabout. Why you might ask?

Well, truth is we are not sure! We rubbed an oily rag around and even looked at points and fuel, but still no go. The main group had been at the services for a while as our little group had taken a slight, but slow, detour on route and as it appeared Mike and Sue were stuck they left four of us to see if the oily rag would do the trick and set off on the second part of the run.

Quickly we admitted defeat and also left Mike who was eventually helped back on the road thanks to the fourth emergency service (their claim, not mine) and was escorted all the way back to Mill Hill by the engineer; I don't think he knew what he had done, but they made it home anyway. That left me, Keith and Ann and Steve with a choice follow the next part of the route and arrive late for lunch at the pub or follow Steve using his local knowledge to take a more direct route to lunch. Well an early lunch won and we took a nice quick route to the Sun at Lemsford. The others arrived after about half a pint and all seemed to have enjoyed the route and by now the sun was really out at The Sun. A good lunch and more time to catch up before we all made our separate ways home (to watch the GP).

A big thanks to Pat and Chris for planning a run they weren't able to attend and to Roger and Maggi for stepping in at the last minute. By the time you read this we will have been on our second run and we will be looking forward to May 20th and the Chiltern Hills Historic Vehicle Rally at Aston Clinton, just outside Aylesbury. Why not come along and say hello. Or come along to our pub night on the last Wednesday in Redbourn. Details of events on our blog...

Mark
hcnwmasc.blogspot.com

South Staffs and North Birmingham Report



Spridgets at Atherstone outside the hairdressers!

Things are hotting up at SSNB. Despite the chilling icy winds and below zero temperatures outside, April's meeting was a time to look forward to some (hopefully) top down summer events.

Last year was my first full year of events as a SSNB member. Catton, Lichfield, Ludlow, Shugborough, Silverstone and my home town of Atherstone, all attended in glorious sunshine and well organised for us by Andy. Only Midget 50 tested my wipers but even pouring rain couldn't take away the fun of attending a brilliant event with other like minded spridgeteers. Maybe Andy should have helped organise that one too!

At last month's meeting Geoff had thrown into the melting pot the idea of a John O'Groats to Lands End trip for this year. So John, in his usual proactive way, had come with a rough

blueprint on how to do it, maybe August, five days, booking overnight stops beforehand. Then, he enthused, we could do it sponsored and raise money for Acorns Hospice. We all leaned forward and he knew he had us hooked. Please e-mail us if any club members have done it before and can offer advice on distances, places to stay, spares to take!

One of the nice things about our little club is its cross section of members, we have a couple who are petrol heads and take great satisfaction in wheel spinning out of the car park, a couple who are in the throws of complete restoration jobs, a couple who like me, enjoy servicing and keeping their cars as original as possible and a couple who I think just come for the beer ... well it is Church End real ale after all.

However, this month was special in that we welcomed new member Nigel. He has just purchased a 1960 frogeye in a rather fetching rust colour. Yes, you guessed it, Nigel, is going to be garage bound over the coming months.

Members were soon offering advice and tips on how to best go about the rebuild, so keep your eyes peeled. I'm sure Nigel's efforts

are sure to be featured in our section in the coming months.

If any MASC club members are at a loss first Wednesday in the month, then please join us. We will be at Nether Whitacre, Ex Service & Social Club, B46 2EH, 8 pm onwards, all welcome.

Dave Warren



Lined up at Lichfield



Somerset Area Report

Since the last report we have had our planning meeting and sorted out our “Summer Tour” and details have been forwarded for publication in *MASCOT* and on the Website. Having said that I find that “nothing is set in stone” and already our planned run to Butleigh to view the Sunday 15th April goings on in the KIMBER TRIAL has been abandoned in favour of something very local and that is “A Classic Meeting at Haselbury Mill” Nr. Crewkerne being organised by the Somerset Mini Club well we do share some common parts! This will support a charity the “Motor Neurone Disease Association” so once again we will do our bit to help others whilst we enjoy a day out.

Sunday April 1st saw us take off from Chard for the Westonzoyland Pumping Station on the Somerset Levels for one of their “in steam days” After a chilly start things warmed up, especially when we got near the boiler, which was being ably stoked by several volunteers in period costume.

The history of land drainage in Somerset proved to be quite interesting and the old station, now Grade II listed and as a Museum it contains a number of interesting steam driven pieces of old machinery, along with some fine old narrow gauge railway engines of dubious heritage.

Now, that sort of thing may not appeal to all, but on the day there were visits by The Riley Club, a group of friends with Minis, a selection of other classic cars; Spitfire, MGB, Nissan Figaro, TVRs to name but a few. So does that say anything about our British Engineering Heritage?

The day went well and we made use of the facilities provided, including the loo which we have renamed the “Leaning Loo for Peas a” It would seem that the boggy ground on the levels has not supported the structure over the years and it now relies on the adjacent building for support! Overall a very enjoyable day out, a picnic in the sun, a run through some pretty countryside and by staying off the main routes this meant we did not meet with too much traffic; so thanks to John for sorting this out by a trial run earlier.



“Leaning Loo for Peas a”

Our last club night meeting at the Lord Nelson was on April 26th after which we will be on the road for the summer, not returning to Norton sub Hamdon until October, so if you fancy a trip out with us over the summer then please contact me for an update on the details, they may be subject to change! Oh! And we have now fixed the date for Beer Caves and The Devon Hills Run, May 13th, leaving Colyford Filling Station at 10.00am.

Happy Motoring!

Ray
Somerset Area Rep, Tel: 01460 72040
Email: raymargaret@lineone.net

Kent Area Report



Spridgets and MASC flag at the Kent meeting

Let's start off with a "big thank you" to Kent's new webmaster Rylan Williams. Our own Kent Area Website, set up, and now administrated by Rylan. The website at www.masckent.org went live on March 1st.

John Clark and I have been busy restoring a Frogeye bonnet for John to fit to his car. You can follow the work on our 'twins' website at <http://spridget.free.fr/> the pictures are captioned with English subtitles. Other members are busy with restoration projects that will hopefully see "light of day" this summertime.

Whilst on the subject of various websites let's give a 'plug' to Gary's own Frogeye website. Gary, latterly known as Gaz Laz, has a website dedicated to the Mk1 Austin Healey (Frogeye) Sprite at <http://frogeye.smugmug.com/>



John Clark gets up close with a spot welder

If, like me, you have a Frogeye then do send Gary a picture of your car. Through the website Gary has had some successes with prior owners of various cars making contact. If you have an interest in Sebring Sprites then check out, Kent MASC member Martin Ingall's website at <http://sebringssprite.com/>

And they came from the four corners of the land. Well not quite but several people did travel some distance to be at this month's Kent meeting. New member Ian Goodchilds (see Ian's car in this month's New Members section) travelled from Caterham; Surrey member Sue Judd visited us from Teddington, John Clark from Herne Bay stopping off at Chatham to pick up Carole. Roger & Sue Gray travelled south, across the QE2 Bridge from Essex and I am not sure who travelled farthest from the south.

Graeme Williams came, minus car, but with good intent. He collected a membership form so with luck we shall make an official welcome next month (Graeme's car is also on the New Member's page).

Geoff Allgood, photo file tucked under his arm, following a vehicle inspection by me, and the necessary paperwork completed by MASC archivist Terry Horler, was able to show a new V5, for his long forgotten Frogeye, showing reclamation of his vehicle's registration.

An interloper! Or is it one of ours? A Spridget LYA 513P appeared in the car park but alas no one made contact.

I was pleased to be honoured by Sir Paul, the bastard of Coveney, accompanied as usual by Lady Jane, (you will have to trawl the *MASCOT* archives for the history to this title or seek out a copy of *Debrets Peerage*) by being called MASC's answer to Jeremy Clarkson but I shall still work toward the ultimate accolade of one day being called MASC's own Richard Littlejohn (*Daily Mail*). And that despite my aforementioned New Year resolution not to upset anyone. Since last month Mel & Barb have yet again updated their car. Having removed the rubber bumper from their 1500 Midget and replaced / redesigned the frontal aspect of the car Mel has now fitted a chrome bumper. Nice work indeed!

Ralph Whitmarsh & Gavin Rowles had recently been successful on a 'Naviscat' Rally and had achieved a 1st in Class. Well done! The rosette can be 1st in the Trophy Cupboard once the Kent Clubhouse is built.

Ron Edwards & John Larrington added their cars to the total of thirteen Spridgets in attendance. If I have missed anyone then



Mel & Barb's de rubber bumpered 1500 Midget
Austin J Van with MASC logo



blame it on your poor handwriting in the attendance register.

With computer skills a photo of a J Van, that I took recently at Brooklands, has been mocked up to represent its type in use as a Club service van. I do hope the vehicle's owner does not disapprove. A challenge should anyone wish to accept would be to mock up an more appropriate Austin A35 van as if it were a MASC service van as we are hoping to have such when the clubhouse and fully kitted workshops are completed. Unfortunately no date has been set for the completion of this multi-million pound project.



Wednesday 28th March 2012 saw another MASCKent 'Old Boys' mid week run. This month's run was to Rolvenden, Kent. To visit the C.M.Booth collection of three wheeled Morgan Cars. We met at the Oakdene Caf., Wrotham for a drive along the lanes of Kent to our destination. A Frogeye bias this month with Ralph Whitmarsh, Ron Edwards, John Larrington, John Clark (again accomp' by nurse Carole) Chris Rickard (accomp' by Chris Palmer), and me, in various colours of Frogeye, Mel Collins in Midget 1500, with Richard Hassell & John Baggott in RWA Midgets. Ralph took the helm leading us through the Kentish lanes.

The museum was well worth a visit to see mainly three wheeler Morgans in a building adorned with motoring miscellany. Alas! I left my camera in the car. Lunch, as usual with such events, was taken in a local hostelry.

Alan Anstead
Kent Rep.

Tel: 01322 384050 (ans machine)
www.masckent.org

BEST OF BRITISH

Est. 1975

Parts & Accessories for Classic British Cars



Moss Europe sponsors of Youles Racing
(JT 51) www.youlesracing.com



Leather pilot helmet
Various From £79.96



MG leather travel bag
GAC9815X £189.95



Dynamat Insulation
Various From £14.95



Order online www.moss-europe.co.uk

Free parts & accessories catalogues



Either complete & return the form, call 0800 281 182, email catalogues@moss-europe.co.uk or visit www.moss-europe.co.uk

for catalogue, send coupon to: Customer Services, Moss Europe Ltd, Unit 16, Hampton Business Park, Bolney Way, Feltham TW13 6DB
Mascot October

Sprite & Midget **Restoration Tools**

MG, Classic Mini, Morris Minor & Triumph catalogues available

Name _____ Email _____

Tel no. _____ Address _____

Postcode _____

Moss Europe will not share your information with any other party. Moss may use it to send you product and special offer information. If you would prefer not to receive this please tick here
Product prices include UK VAT and are correct at time of going to print. For the latest prices please visit our website. Moss Europe Ltd. E&O.E. 2011

London
020 8867 2020
sales@moss-europe.co.uk

Bradford
01274 539 999
bradford@moss-europe.co.uk

Bristol
0117 923 2523
bristol@moss-europe.co.uk

Manchester
0161 480 6402
manchester@moss-europe.co.uk

“Dr. Dave” and **“Consultant Chris”**, in their green rubber-bumpered Midget, launched the 2012 Heart of England Tours. Six cars sprinted from Alcester’s **“little Chef”** on the Parkers’ Package **“Roam to Frome”** tour. Each pair was furnished with a golden yellow, bound, personalised itinerary. We knew from the outset that this was going to be an impeccably co-ordinated route which took into consideration the food/ drink, interests and comfort stops of the jolly Spridgeteers.

Tetbury’s **“Two Toads”** café was our first watering hole. Here we were met by Roger and Sue Orgill in their yellow Frogeye and Chris and Sheila Yates in their blue Sprite. What a wonderful venue; its array of **“froggy”** decorations were complemented by an enjoyable mid morning break.

On leaving Tetbury, Prince Charles’ special town, we travelled via picturesque Castle Combe, a site used in the filming of **“War Horse”** to Bradford upon Avon. Our travel pack alerted us to the gems of Bradford. In the Tithe barn we checked out the purlins in the fantastic roof structure. On the nearby Kennet and Avon Canal we admired the narrow boats whilst the loving couple, Jane and Andy Smith strode hand in hand to Avoncliff. Did you know that the Moulton Small Wheeled bike originates from Bradford? We were reliably informed at the museum that they are still being manufactured.

As directed, in the Golden Guide, we were given freedom to go to the National Trust garden at Stourhead House or **“do as we please”**. Geoff and Janet Hunter made tracks to Witham Friary; Geoff to take forty winks and the Parkers retreated to their room at the Frome Flyer to provide a pre- supper banquet.

At 6:30p.m, we tumbled into Chris & Dave’s room to gorge on pate, cheese and nibbles, all washed down with a super chilled bubbly. How did our hosts manage to conceal and chill? The aperitifs were most welcome as the

Heart of England’s Roam to Frome

Parkers’ Perfect Pre-Easter Package



Bowden Hill, Wiltshire

sixteen Spridgeteers had to compete with the demands of a junior rugby tour team in their pursuance of meals.

Sunday, April Fool’s Day was launched with a walkabout of Laycock, another National Trust gem. We ambled, in the sunshine amongst the narrow roads which were featured on **“Cranford”**. Bowden Hill was earmarked for our photo shoot.... All cars and crews were included except for Rosemarie and Alan Couch’s Lotus Elan, which was camera shy.

The royal theme was continued as the Heart of England troops partook of afternoon tea at Marlborough, the educational establishment of Kate Middleton. We didn’t feast at Marlborough College But a more modest café on the High Street. Polly Tea Rooms, highly recommended to all Spridgeteers if you are passing by, not cheap but a slice of old England.

In accordance with tradition the party returned to **“The Bell”** at Moreton-in-Marsh to share in our farewell drink. Euphoric and satiated we agreed that Chris & Dave had launched the season with a first class **“Parker Package”** which was an undoubted success due to their meticulous planning. Thanks are extended. They made it look simple but we know how hard it is to arrange. 10/10 A PERFECT PACKAGE A LA PARKER.

Mo Wood

Scotland Report

The important news regarding the Scottish Group is a change of location for its regular meetings. Due to the ever changing demographics of the regular attendees it has been agreed to move from the existing location at Holiday Express, Hamilton to the lounge area of The Windmill Tavern, 4 Thorniewood Road, Uddingston G71 5QQ. The meeting will continue to be held on the third Tuesday of each month commencing at 8:00pm. Hopefully the Club Night details in the front of this issue of *MASCOT* have been updated. If members require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me. The details are given below.

The vagaries of the weather continue. After a lovely spell of hot weather in March that saw many of the cars out on the roads for the first time this year, we have now returned to sleet, snow and the roads glistening white with a liberal coating of salt again. Indeed, I managed a couple of runs myself in the March sunshine including one down the Clyde estuary to Largs for the obligatory refreshment stop prior to returning back over the hills to home. Now the cars are back in garages waiting for the salt to be washed away followed (hopefully!) by the better weather.

The first official run of the Group is scheduled for Sunday April 29th travelling up to Loch Tay area so we have time yet for the situation to improve.

Plans are proceeding with the organising of the Group's traditional weekend break. A preliminary date of the weekend of June 30/July 1 has been suggested with the Lake District being the preferred destination. To date, I have 3 cars and 6 people as definites with a few others still

to confirm. If any other Midget and Sprite members would like to join us or arrange to meet us in the lake District I would be delighted if they could make contact and we can make arrangements.

On a personal note, I have recently returned from a visit to Bromsgrove and whilst there I took the opportunity to visit The Motor Heritage Museum at Gaydon. It was my first visit to this facility and I was most impressed. I am sure many of you who live in the immediate area have already visited, but to those who haven't, I can recommend it. There are good examples of many British built cars that populated our roads as recently as the '50s, '60s and '70s and which now, due in no small way to the dreaded "tin worm," are now fairly rare sights. There are also many examples of prototypes which for one reason or another never made the light of day. Being an MG fanatic I was particularly taken with a prototype MG which, in my eyes, superficially looked quite attractive.

Next month's report should include the full story of the first 2012 run, let's hope for good weather!

John Pardo

Contact: 01698 814791

E-mail: jp1kg@talktalk.net



Prototype MG at Gaydon

Notts/Derby Report

It seems that this month has passed with little activity out on the road, but much progress in the garage.

Ian reported changing his diff. to a 3.9 unit from the standard 4.2 and checking his tappets for the first time since his rebuild, resulting in a smoother driving experience overall. Alan's recent foray into the 5-speed world has encouraged him to upgrade his air filters to K+N, but unfortunately with mixed results. His running is now erratic and further investigations are under way as to the cause. We await the report Alan. My engine and gearbox are back in the car, but not actually attached to anything yet as the engine seems to be hanging off the gearbox – the general expert opinion on the night being “that’s not quite right”. Thanks folks!

New member Nigel graced us with his presence again, although the offer of a meal and an entertaining night out wasn't enough to tempt his wife Linda this month, Nigel bribing his twin brother instead with pints of Guinness to attend. Such a waste in a real ale pub! His long-term Frogeye rebuild continues and has now reached the rolling shell stage.

We are looking forwards to the Wollaton Park “Autokarna” on Sunday 3rd June. (See ad. Last month's MASCOT page 31) and would like to see members from further afield this year – please keep up with our events listings on the website and in MASCOT.



*Ian with previous owner at Donington
(before diff. swap)*



Alan's 1500 Midget



As the debate on front wings continues (well here anyway) how about this suggestion....

Everyone with odd wings could meet up and do some wing swaps.

Anyone got a green one going spare in exchange for a red one?

The next meeting at The Sitwell Arms will be **Thursday 10th May**.

Ian Cooke
(Notts/Derby area rep)
ilc@bgs.ac.uk



Hampshire Update

Cobweb Spin

On a cold, windy and very wet Sunday morning we splashed our way to the MGOC Cobweb Rally at IBM, Hursley Park.

There was a lovely bunch of marshals who gave everyone a warm welcome, and it was amazing to see how many cars had turned up; some from as far as North London (a midget) and an MGB from Brighton.

The golf club was open for food and drinks and they even had a jazz band to help cheer up a gloomy day.

After the meet, on our way home we had snow flurries and flooded roads but it had been a good run out and we enjoyed it.

Hampshire comes out on top

Well we were 560ft up in the air and we even saw seagulls flying below us. But all that was towards the end of our day trip to the South Coast.

Thirteen of us met in a car park in Gosport and walked to the ferry that would take us across the Solent to Gunwharf Quay. We couldn't believe our luck with the weather which couldn't have been more different from the previous Sunday when it had rained for most of the day and even snowed at one point.

We had about an hour to indulge in some retail therapy before meeting up again for lunch in a very nice Italian restaurant overlooking the harbour. After a leisurely meal all but two of us went up the Spinnaker Tower to take in the panoramic views across Portsmouth harbour, the Solent and the Isle of Wight. Some of us were even brave enough to walk across the glass floor – a weird sensation to say the least. We regrouped once again for one last sortie into the Cadbury outlet shop before returning on the ferry to the car park and home. A lovely outing – not much to do with cars but 'a grand day out' for all that.



Visiting the Spinnaker Tower



Glass floor, only for the brave (and shoeless)

Spreading the Word

We have used a small amount of money from our fundraising activities to produce some leaflets promoting the Club and in particular our region and the many activities on offer to Midget and Sprite enthusiasts. They will be available at the next meeting for anyone to take and put on notice boards/ car windscreens etc. This is the first time we have done this and if successful we may have a re-print later in the year. Remember that we also have Windscreen Vinyls and Windscreen Showcards – just get in touch.

Midget & Sprite Night

There are 5 Thursday's this month so don't get caught out

This month the date for our Monthly Meeting at the Fox & Goose, Greywell, is Thursday 31st of May. Please give Lyn a ring on 01189 832 467 or email her at pie@midgetandsprite-hampshire.info by Tuesday 22nd if you know you are coming. Lyn will then order your food if you want to take advantage of the £6.50 Pie Night special, but even if you are ordering from the menu or not intending to eat at all she will

make sure enough seats are reserved at the tables. However if it is a last minute decision, please don't let this deter you from coming.

We try and sit down to eat at around 7.30pm and then usually hang around nattering until 10.30ish, of course some arrive later or leave earlier so it would be good to see you even if you can only pop in for a short while.

Forthcoming Events (John's Bit) events@midgetandsprite-hampshire.info MAY

- 1st – Classics at the Emporium, Fleet. Food available
- 12th – Awbridge Village Fete. Free burger or drink for bringing your car
- 13th – Basingstoke Festival of Transport
- 12/13th Bill Targett Memorial Steam & Vintage Rally
- 20th – Merrist Wood Summer Show
- 24th – Monthly Meeting at the Fox & Goose
- 27th – SHVP Society Classic Vehicle Show & Jumble – 10.00 -16. 00 Queen Elizabeth County Park

The full Event Calendar and links to Entry Forms are available on the web site.

If you have any contributions for the web site or photo's from the events please forward them to Barry: info@midgetandsprite-hampshire.info



H&H IGNITION SOLUTIONS
the only solution to your ignition problems

the only solution to your ignition problems!!!

Reconditioning Service
This is a complete over haul of a customers own distributor, including replacement of all serviceable parts, shot blasting and re-plating of all ball on parts, available for conventional and electronic ignition systems for classic and modern vehicle applications. 48hr turnaround on most units.

Electronic Replacement
We offer direct electronic replacements ignition distributors for all vehicle applications replacing existing points type ignition, giving your classic vehicle the reliability of a modern engine, these distributors can be offered as a full kit including HT coil.

Engine Management Replacement
Due to reliability and durability, later model engines are now commonly being transplanted into older vehicles, unfortunately late engines often come with complicated engine management systems, H&H offer a direct replacement mechanical distributor system to replace the engine management on most applications enabling the engine to run with carburetors.
Note: Engine must have a location for a distributor.

Competition Starter Motors
In addition to H&H ignition distributors we also stock a small range of reduction gear high torque starter motors as direct replacements for performance engines and OE applications

Performance
H&H can customise advance curves for use on mild fast road, fast road, race and rally spec engines, matching the distributor exactly to any modifications made to the engine, this service is available on all H&H distributors for all vehicles applications.

Complete Replacement
Because of the shortage in classic and vintage ignition distributors and serviceable parts, H&H use a Lucas based distributor in points and electronic versions as a direct replacement for vintage and classic applications, giving ease of maintenance and off the shelf parts availability.

OE Replacement
H&H offer a full range of new and reconditioned ignition distributors for all OE applications for British, European and Japanese vehicles.

Light Weight Race Alternators
For all applications in cast aluminium or chrome show finish.

Unit H Fens Pool Avenue, The Wallows, Brierley Hill, West Midlands, England, DY5 1QA
T: +44 (0) 1384 261500 M: 07787 114417 / 07989 744351 E: ignitionsolutions@tiscali.co.uk W: www.h-h-ignitionsolutions.co.uk

Terms of Trade: Carriage is at additional charge on individual orders. VAT charged at the current rate at time of purchase.
Accepted methods are credit card or pro forma other than these methods account terms apply



April's Caption Competition

April's caption competition restored my faith in my fellow man's ability to rise to a challenge. I asked you to prove me wrong and prove me wrong you did ... well, sort of.

I mentioned that I thought that only two people would probably send in their responses. So imagine my surprise when I was practically inundated and overwhelmed by the massive response. Perhaps that's an exaggeration. However, I got four emails from correspondents answering my call. These four members now hold a special place in my heart and have unofficially been given the title of "The Jolly Good Fellows of MASCOT". This is a very exclusive club and I may even get some badges made up. Be sure (if and when they arrive) to wear them to any function you attend, especially Spridget related ones. At area meetings, you should be treated with reverence by your fellow members. Seats in pubs should be given up for you and the first choice of the crispiest Pork Scratchings from the communal nibbles table shall be yours. Have I gone overboard in my praise, perhaps a little (or completely lost the plot as most of you must be thinking to yourselves).

Anyway, I can hold back the replies no longer. And they are here in the order in which I received them.

From Laurence Langley:

"Don't you find that mode of transport a little old fashioned?"

From Alan Crowther:

Lady on horse: "I believe my husband has taken a fancy to you." Lady in car: "How outrageous, I don't even know the man." Lady on horse: "I was talking to the car, my dear!"

From Andy Bourne:

"Yes I saw your Fox – ran over it about a mile back" Andy adds – possibly not politically correct but I'm too old to care!

From Bob Fletcher:

"You might think yourself superior, but in 50 years time, mine will be a classic (but I might not be here to see it)!"

Please remember to treat these four members with the respect which they obviously deserve. However, special treatment should be bestowed upon Laurence who I have judged to have sent in the best caption.

Market Place

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

For sale

Austin Healey Sprite, 1969, Red, excellent condition, beautiful. Fully serviced recently. Reluctant to sell, but forced due to financial reason.

Location: Radlett, Hertfordshire. £6000.

**Tel: 07931560321(M)
or 01923857975(H)**

Sebring Sprite project. Complete Archers Sebring Sprite body kit aluminium skinned doors, 1967 MG Midget rolling shell on wire wheels complete set of instruments. Midget 1275 engine for reconditioning, gearbox, trims and many more period and special parts and a 1960 Healey Sprite V5C, VIN plate included.

Please phone for further detail,

Paul 07543328498 (Essex) £6250.

MK111 Sprite, Tartan Red. Rebuilt 1994. Fitted s/s boot rack for spare wheel. Lucas spot and fog lamps. Brake servo. Otherwise standard 1098cc car. Most recent picture in MASCOT, May 2011 page26. Good tyres, hood, tonneau. MOT to Feb 2013. Ready for the summer. £3200.

**Chris Jackson 01707 261567 Herts.
Or email chrispatj@btinternet.com**

Wanted

Windstop and boot rack for Midget 1500.
**paulbenson54@hotmail.com
or 07718.719507**

Front bumper and over-riders/brackets for a Frogeye.

Tom, Tel: 07941 153096

Dorset Area

Midget & Sprite Club



Classics at Kingston Lacy

Sunday 20th May 2012



Kingston Lacy House,
Nr Wimborne, Dorset

(10.00am – 4.00pm)

All proceeds from this Event will go to the
Southern Spinal Injuries Trust.

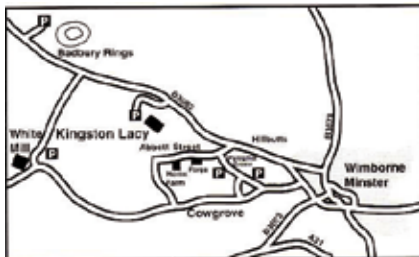
Price of admission will be £8.00 per car
(2 occupants) + £1.00 per person
thereafter.

£5.00 per motorcycle.

Thank you for your support



All Classic Cars & Classic Motorcycles Welcome!

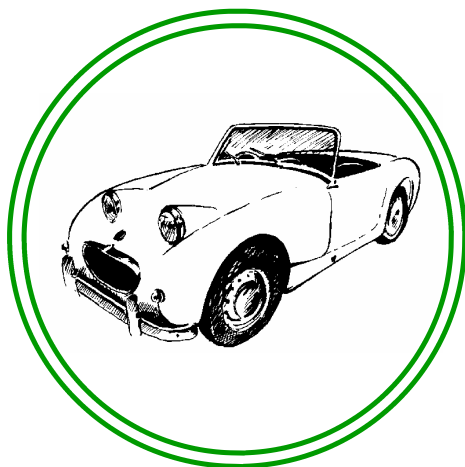


Live Music!

Cream Teas

Note: It is a condition of entry that ALL vehicles taking part must be fully covered by a current certificate of insurance, have a valid tax disc and a current MOT and are displayed entirely at the owner's risk.

FROGEYE SPARES CO



“Anything and Everything for the Frogeye Sprite”

**New Parts, Performance Parts and Many Used Parts
Interior Trim - Seats, Carpets, etc
Hard Tops, Tonneau Covers, Hoods, Side Screens
Engine Rebuilds - Standard & Fast Road
Download our Catalogue from the Website
Gift Vouchers £10, £25, £50 & £100
Range of Prints and Cards for all Occasions
Visit our Premises in Droitwich (Jⁿ5 - M5)**

Tel: 01885 400791

Fax: 01299 253198

www.frogeyespares.co.uk