

June 2015

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Mascot

The Magazine of the Midget & Sprite Club



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| SCOTLAND | Graham Smith , Tel: 0141 954 8276 email: smith.grahamf@yahoo.co.uk |
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| SURREY | Mike Gorman , Tel: 01737-552256 email: mike@birchwood44.freerve.co.uk |
| SUSSEX | David Southcott , email: dandl@southcotts.plus.com |
| WILTSHIRE | Andy Cross , Tel: 01225 743554 email: andy@cross743.freerve.co.uk |
| YORKSHIRE | Rob Armstrong , Tel: 07889 090411 email: mascyorkshire@gmail.com |

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

Compiled by Gary Lazarus (editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk). Please advise me of any changes, errors etc.
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: IF YOU EXPERIENCE 'MASCOT' PROBLEMS UPON RENEWAL,
PLEASE CONTACT THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY OR THE TREASURER STRAIGHT AWAY. The Committee

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June Editorial

This month's editorial was all set to describe the rising excitement of my tenth consecutive trip to Le Mans along with my Frogeye, in the company of a few other MASC members. However, I've scrapped it at the very last minute (27th May), to announce sad news of the passing of two men, both with strong links the world of motor racing, around the time when our cars first appeared on the scene. The first is Cyril Simson who passed away earlier this month. Cyril was the original owner of the Williams & Pritchard bodied Sprite **S221** (which was his personal registration number). He entered alongside H221 and X221 as **Team 221**. Which he raced at Goodwood on Easter Monday, 1960. Cyril later delivered it to John Sprinzel where it was further modified for the 1961 season.

John Sprinzel has written "Very sad to report that Cyril Simson has died. One of the original Sebring Sprite racers, and long time friend, the photo is from Sebring, with Paul Hawkins, John Hill and I after the twelve hour race. RIP" John Sprinzel



Chris Clegg, the current owner of S221 says: "Thanks for the sad news. I'm so glad that he was able to join us at Goodwood a few years ago where he seemed to be so pleased to meet up again with some of his old racing friends. He said to me at the time that the two years when he raced S221 were the two most enjoyable years of his life".

And within the last few hours, I've been informed of the passing of Erik Carlsson, husband of Pat Moss and a giant of the rallying world, who died today at the age of 86.

Erik rallied Saab's almost exclusively from the mid 1950s. One great story shows how things were in those days. Erik should have been crowned European champion in 1959, but lost out in the strangest of circumstances.



Erik and Pat Moss-Carlsson

The final round was in Portugal and Carlsson needed to finish fifth or higher for the title. After rolling the Saab he, alongside co-driver John Sprinzel, ended up with the car lying on its side in a ditch. However, they still made third place.

Ready to start celebrating, he was given 25 penalty points for having white (instead of black) numbers on the side of the car. However – the points only dropped him to fourth. So he should still have won the championship. Not quite. The organisers came back and said the penalty was 25 points per side. So Coltelloni was champion!

Our condolences and best wishes go to the family and friends of both Cyril Simson and Erik Carlsson.

Have a great month.

Gary & "Gaps"

The deadline for articles and reports for July's Mascot is Tuesday 16th June

The statements and opinions expressed in each and every issue of *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: Andy Cross' Sprite relaxes in a field on a sunny day

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Club Nights


- 1st Tuesday **Essex Area** – Now meet at **The Green Man**, Green Man Lane, Kelvedon Road, Little Braxted, Essex CM8 3LB. For further details contact Jane Gates Tel: 01255830 509 or email: jgjanegates999@gmail.com
- 1st Wednesday **Central Area** – now Meeting on the at **The Railway Inn**, Whitacre Heath 30, Station Rd, Whitacre Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands, B46 2EH. Contact: Dave Warren Tel: 07831 101850 email: central.masc@live.com
- 1st Wednesday **Oxford Area** – Meet at the Blackhorse Pub, Gozzards Ford, Nr Abingdon. 7pm for those eating or 8pm for those not. Contact Grahame Gibbins at grahame _ gibbins@hotmail.com
- 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
- 2nd Wednesday **Devon Area – The Dartmoor Lodge Hotel**, Ashburton, TQ13 7JW from 8 to 10 pm. Michael Ellis Michael _ Ellis@live.co.uk and telephone: 07527 598091
- 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. Neil McLeod email neil _ mcleod2@hotmail.co.uk Tel 01772 323770 Mobile 07921 089 68
- 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 rebelwithasprite@hotmail
- 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 lunchtime from 12:30pm at **The Nags Head**, Pickhill, near Thirsk, YO7 4JG – more information at <http://yorkshiremasc.blogspot.com/>
- 3rd Tuesday **Scotland** – Meet at The Windmill Tavern, 4 Thorniewood Road, Uddington G71 5QQ at 8pm. Graham Smith 0141 954 8276 email: smith.grahamf@yahoo.com
- 3rd Tuesday **Surrey** – Meet at **The Chequers**, Chequers Lane, Walton-on-the-Hill, Surrey KT20 7SF. 7.00pm onwards. Contact Mike Gorman, mike@birchwood44.freemove.co.uk Tel: 01737-552256
- 4th Monday **Dorset** – Meet at **St. Peter's Finger**, Lytchett Minster, Poole, BH16 6JE 7.30pm Dorset area March Meeting is still the 3rd Monday but from April will move to the 4th Monday of every month.
- 4th Thursday **Sussex** – Meet at **Bolney Stage**, Bolney, RH17 5RL from 19:00. Contact David Southcott at dandl@southcotts.plus.com
- 4th Thursday **Hampshire** – Please ring Terry or Harriet Langridge on 01252 626063 for details.
- 4th Sunday **Kent Area** – Meet at **The Angel**, Addington Green, West Malling, Kent, ME19 5BB at 12:00 for lunch. Contact Alan Anstead, Tel: 01322 384050. alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
- Last Monday **Wiltshire** – Meet at **The Barge Inn**, Seend, Nr. Devizes, about 7pm. Contact Andy Cross on 01225 743554 or e-mail andy@cross743.freemove.co.uk
- Last Wednesday **Home Counties North West** for members in Herts, Beds, Bucks, Berks, N. London or anyone interested! Meet at the **Chequers Inn**, Redbourn, AL3 7AD from 6:30pm. Please contact Mike or Sue Gahan on email mike@mgahan.demon.co.uk or on 07850 488636.
- Last Thursday. **Somerset Area** – Meet at **Windy Miller's Pie & Bar House** @ Haselbury Mill, nr. Crewkerne. TA18 7NY 7pm if eating, 8 to 8.30pm if not. Please contact Valerie Young 01460 391431 for further information. We may not always be there, especially in the Summer!
- Northern Ireland robertholmes25@hotmail.com. If enough interest, will arrange a meeting.
- 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: Wipers (which is case sensitive)

Also follow the Midget and Sprite Club on  [Find us on facebook.](#)

Area reps please make Gary Lazarus aware of any events already in your diaries for 2015, so that they can be added to this "Events" section of the magazine and the website.

For the magazine Gary can be contacted at editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

For the website Mike Bennett can be contacted at webmaster@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

4-7th June

10th Spridget Treffen 3 day event based in Westerwald, Germany For details, contact Heinz Shattner, heinz_schattner@hotmail.com or Geoff Hunter email: hunters360@btinternet.com tel: 01562 851544. See next month's *Mascot* for further information.

17-19th July

MASC NATIONAL WEEKEND SEE PAGES 20 & 21 of OCTOBER'S 2014 *MASCOT* for details or contact Stuart Watson email: membership@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

19th July

Dorset Area Club stand at Poole Bay Classics 'Extravaganza' at Breamore House. Contact John Gully 07876 334949 john.gully@btinternet.com

24th-26th July

The 25th Anniversary Silverstone Classic. For details, contact East Anglia Area Rep David Dixon e-dave@hotmail.co.uk tel: 01733 222810

26th July

Dorset Area's Annual Classics In The Park at Upton Country Park, Contact Ian Beaver 01722 326840 or ian.beaver@btinternet.com

30th August

Coventry Motoring Festival www.festival-of-motoring.co.uk. Contact (to be confirmed) Dave Colclough email david@colcloughsonline.co.uk

11th October

Midget & Sprite Club's AGM at the Haynes Museum, Sparkford, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7LH. Contact Club Secretary Jim Willis for details. Jim.sillis@tiscali.co.uk tel: 01527 402804

10th-27th Sept

(provisional dates) **Miglia Tour** organised by Kent Area Rep Alan Anstead alan.anstead@btopenworld.com

26-27th Sept

Sywell Classics Pistons & Props. For details, contact East Anglia Area Rep David Dixon e-dave@hotmail.co.uk tel: 01733 222810

24th October

National Restoration Show at Stoneleigh Contact and details TBA

13-15th November

Classic Car Show at the NEC Birmingham. Contact Alan Pritchett a.pritchett@btinternet.com

Send your events details to editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

Spridget Oil Tray

How to catch those drips



Specially cleaned for Mascot!

After reading about oil trays, I thought you could be interested in the tray I made from a sheet of aluminium (it's an old H&S sign just the correct thickness to flex into position).

It spring fits under the gearbox between the lower body struts with the extended lip reaching under the engine gearbox joint.

It catches most of the oil that still leaks, even after two attempts with aftermarket seals on the end of the crankshaft.

The joys of a 948 A series Frogeye. Someone did suggest a small pump could be fitted to take oil back to the rocker cover!

Alan Spiers 4415a/b



Do you have any neat ideas for Spridget enhancement or simple tips to rewrite the owner's manual?

How about this to start you off.

The Easier way to remove and replace a Frogeye bonnet

On a long trip last year on route to the Austin Healey Museum in Holland, I heard a vibration coming from the area of the left hand bulkhead, behind the dashboard. This was followed moments later by a large bolt dropping into the passenger side footwell.

It turned out to be the bolt which holds the nearside bonnet hinge in place. After a quick stop, I was able to simply relocate the bolt into its captive nut in the bulkhead, tighten it up and was soon back on my way. The whole refit of the hinge bolt took a couple of minutes at most.

This got me thinking, that when removing a Mk1 Sprite bonnet, rather than have a couple of friends supporting the very heavy bonnet, while I undid the eight bolts (four either side of the hinge to bonnet attachment). Why not simply undo the large hinge bolts (one on either side) on the inside of the car, behind the dash.

Although I've yet to try this method, I can't see any reason why it wouldn't work much better than the traditional way, which involves marking the exact location of the bonnet to hinge attachment while supporting the bonnet and undoing the eight bolts, also remembering exactly where the shorter and longer bolts relocate.

Refitting the bonnet can be no more complicated than having the bonnet in the closed position, with the hinges suitably supported with a small piece of wood, to allow the large hinge bolts to line up with the captive nuts in the bulkhead.

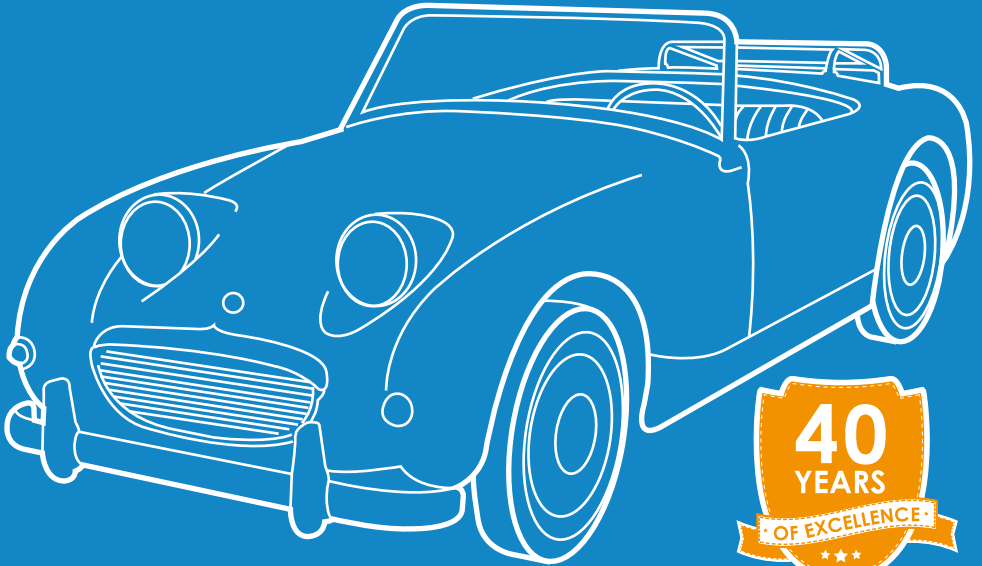
Somebody please tell me I've got this wrong!

I've since been told by Alan Anstead, that this is how he and John Clark have been doing it anyway!

Gary

If so, contact me,
editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

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Windscreen washer at a push of a button

On my Frogeye Sprite (seen on the front cover of the March edition of *Mascot*), I was having difficulties in getting the windscreen washer to pump out the water onto my windscreen. Even after changing the mechanical pump for a brand new one, it still needed a lot of effort for such a little squirt of water. In addition as the pump plunger is situated on the far left side of the dashboard, when being used, I had to lean to the left and try to pump hard which made trying to keep in the lane on the motorway a challenge, so there is a safety issue as well.

Many classic car owners have installed a windscreen washer motor to the plastic washer line and although I want to keep my Frogeye as original as possible, this is one upgrade that will not unduly affect the originality of the car, and at the same time will make it safer when operating the washer. The equipment for the upgrade was ordered from 'Car Builders Solutions' that included a universal 12v washer pump, a push button to make circuit switch, two reels of 17 amp cable, one black and one red and an in line non return valve.

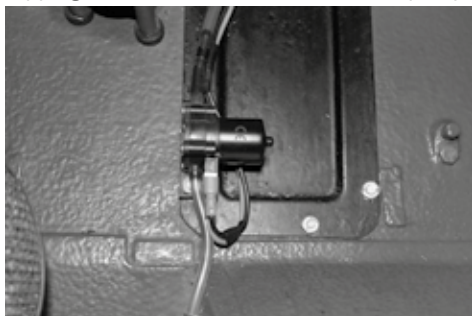
Installing the washer pump

Firstly disconnect a terminal from the battery (as Spridgets are normally negative earth, it is only the earth terminal that is needed to be disconnected) and it goes without saying if your car is positive earth just disconnect the positive terminal. The new washer pump



The compact pump

needs to be secured by two screws and in line with the window washer tube inside the engine bay. The position that I chose was utilising the bottom left bolt on the near side steering column plate and then drilling a small hole through that plate for a self tapping screw for the other side of the pump.





The push button switch has to fit a 22mm hole in the dashboard left by the removed mechanical pump and the one that I chose has a window washer emblem on the switch itself on a black background, this matches the other switches and buttons.

The feed to the washer pump I obtained by a circuit that I had already installed to a cigarette lighter socket behind the dashboard that is used for a sat nav, however, it is probably better to use the feed to the window wiper switch just 4 inches away from the new push switch.

If you use the window wiper switch you should use the feed side of the switch as you would then be able to use the window washer with the ignition on and without the need for the window wipers to be working. If you use the load side of the window wiper switch you would only be able to use the washer when the window wipers are actually working, this totally is your choice.

As my car is positive earth I used the black cable for the cabling the switches together and then running to a pump terminal and the red cable to earth the pump onto the other terminal. If the original plastic washer piping



Neatly fitted into the dash alongside the original switches

is in good condition it will be easier to utilise that and just cut the piping to accommodate the new pump, however, if you want to change the plastic tubing do not forget that there is a T piece behind the dashboard and the tubing from that T piece to the nibbles are a smaller gauge than the rest of the tubing. In addition the tubing from the washer bottle itself must not be too thick as it would not bend enough on entry in the cap. If you want to change all the plastic tubing it may be better to remove all of it and take it to a hardware shop to ensure that you have the correct gauge before installation.

It is not that important where you put the non return valve, however as the pump should not run dry it is probably better to install it just beneath the pump, just ensure that it is the right way round otherwise no water would ever come out of the nibbles.



Most non return valves like this one, have an arrow to show direction of flow

When I installed my pump I was initially disappointed that it didn't work properly and on investigation I found that the little plastic filter in the bottle at the end of the plastic tubing was bugged up and was restricting the flow of water through it. When I removed this filter and then tried the pump the water gushed out of the nipples so hard that it totally missed the windscreen and landed on the seats. It is believed that windscreen washer solution in time, damages the filter and cause it to be clogged, this was probably a factor why initially the mechanical pump was not operating properly.

The nipples were adjusted down so that the water coming out of them went onto the windscreen and after tidying up the new cables the job was done.

Bill Harding.
Home Counties North West Area

New Members

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

| | | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------|------------|--------|----------|
| 5071 | David Stuart | Wiltshire | Midget | Mk 3 |
| 5072 | Gavin & Julie Wolfenden | Norfolk | Sprite | Mk 1 |
| 5073 | Colin Britt | Cambs | Austin | Sprite |
| 5075 | Guy Coates | Staffs | Midget | 1500 |
| 5076 | Paul & Marilyn Duggins | Birmingham | Midget | 1500 |
| 5077 | Ian Thomas | Hampshire | Midget | Mk 1 |
| 5078 | Norman, Elizabeth & Charlotte McBride | Co. Antrim | Midget | Mk 3 RWA |
| 5079 | Iain Clark | London | Midget | 1500 |
| 5080 | Ian Solkin | Devon | Midget | 1500 |



Colin Britt with his 1970 Sprite Mark IV



From last month, Stephen McCormick's Mk1 Midget

Guy Coates and his 1500 Midget taken at Llangollan



Ian Thomas with his Mk1 Midget



April – May 2015



Gavin & Julie Wolfenden's Mk1 Sprite, taken by the editor at the Spridget 50 celebrations in 2008

Their other Frogeye seen here, was possibly photographed at the Goodwood Revival. However, it may now be in better condition



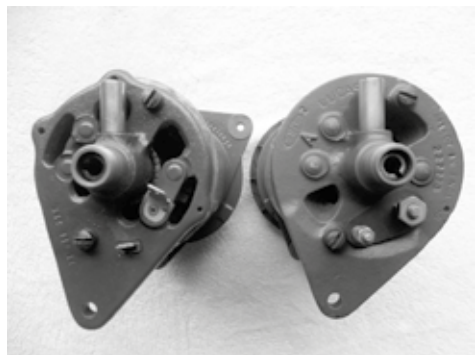
Early Dynamos

(or 'Tachometer gearboxes revisited')

When a component is worn or broken, it is tempting to just fix or replace it immediately and then declare 'job done'. While this strategy is often completely successful, it is not always so: the job is *not* done if another malfunction in a quite different component has caused the wearing or breakage. For example, it is no good continuing to buy new front tyres every few months if the problem is really bad tracking after an unfortunate encounter with a deep pothole.

I was reminded of this quite recently when my friend Jonny Garlick (Tartan red GAN1 Midget) asked me to recondition his little tachometer gearbox. After completing this job by re-sleeving the phosphor bronze bush¹, I was surprised to discover that the newly restored gearbox would not screw easily and properly into the end of Jonny's dynamo. The real problem – the problem that had effectively destroyed Jonny's little gearbox – was in the dynamo, not the gearbox!

The dynamos fitted to all early cars with mechanical tachometers (Sprites Mk1 and 2 and GAN1 Midget) were peculiar to these vehicles. They have an extended



Dynamos for Mk1 Sprites (right) have screw connectors, those for Mk2 Sprites and Mk1 Midgets (left) have Lucas connectors. The backplates of these two variants are quite different but both possess the same gearbox attachment and brass lubricator for the rear 'oilite' bush. They are often used interchangeably with suitably bodged connections.

¹ See MASCOT December 2013 page 11

armature spindle and a special back-plate to accommodate the reduction gearbox of the cable driven tachometer. Like all Lucas dynamos of the period they are extremely robust: with proper care and attention they will enjoy an extremely long service life.

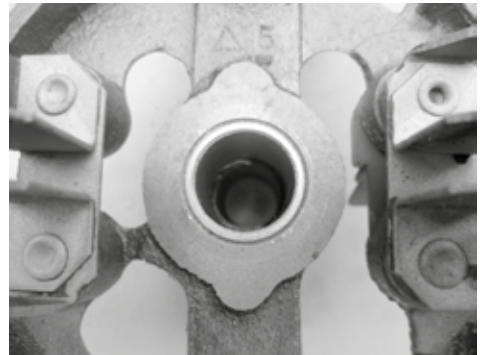
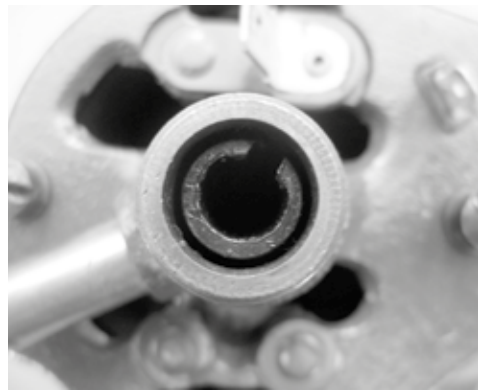
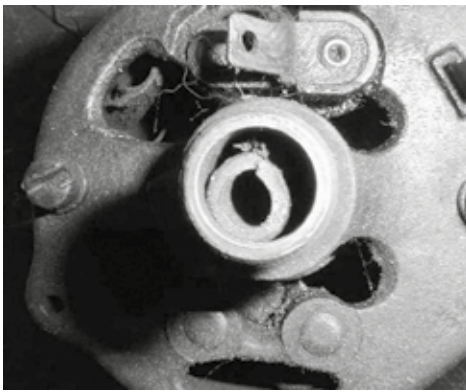
Routine maintenance of these dynamos is confined simply to lubricating the rear bush every 6,000 miles. The carbon brushes inside the dynamo will last on average 60,000 miles². After extremely long service the front bearing and rear bush will need to be replaced, when the whole unit is best fully reconditioned following the instructions in the workshop manual.

Paradoxically, the extremely robust nature of these dynamos may be the most common cause of their demise: they are so extremely reliable that many owners often ignore them completely, failing to give them any attention whatsoever until it is too late. Under bright-light interrogation, with techniques borrowed from the Spanish Inquisition and the threat of an injection of scopolamine, Jonny Garlick finally confessed that he had never lubricated his dynamo: it had attracted his attention only when it made socially unacceptable squealing noises after his tachometer gearbox had fallen to pieces.

Without lubrication, the rear bush of these dynamos will wear much more rapidly than usual and the armature spindle of the dynamo will begin to wobble. This in turn will damage the little gearbox which probably suffers catastrophic failure first (before the dynamo) because it is by far the more fragile component. Certainly this is what happened in Jonny's case. Despite Jonny's front bearing and rear bush being badly worn and despite some of those socially unacceptable squeals being associated with Jonny's armature grinding against his two hefty pole pieces, Jonny's dynamo was still bravely churning out plenty of amps before we finally put it out of its misery, treating it to new carbon brushes, a new front bearing and a new rear bush.

So far so good, but this is not the end of the story: the rear bush of these dynamos may yet fail prematurely, even if the cylindrical

² Source: Lucas Technical Documentation.



The effects of a worn bush (left top & bottom) compared with those of a brand new bush (right top and bottom). The armature spindle is present in the top (external) views, absent in the bottom (internal) views.

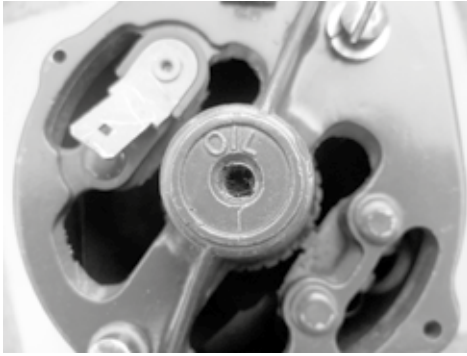
brass lubricator is topped up regularly with suitable lubricant. Firstly, before installing a new 'oilite' bush it should be soaked in engine oil for at least 24 hours to allow oil to seep into the pores of the sintered metal. In cases of extreme urgency this period may be shortened to two hours by heating the oil to 100°C. Once impregnated with oil, the idea is that the bush shouldn't need much more attention, but as Grahame Bristow³ has pointed out, this is a somewhat romantic notion. Without doubt, if a new bush is not first soaked in oil it will have an extremely

short life. Secondly, although the metal of the bush is porous, is not *that* porous. If one removes the cylindrical brass lubricator and peers down the hole, one should see a much smaller hole in the bush which allows

³ 'Restoring Sprites & Midgets: an enthusiast's guide' Grahame Bristow (Brooklands Books). Graham's illustrated step-by-step instructions for restoring our dynamos complement the instructions in the factory workshop manual and his photos are particularly helpful. Contrary to Grahame's advice however, a worn rear bush is best removed either by drifting it out (early dynamos) or by screwing it out with a suitable tap (standard C40 dynamos).



A small hole in the rear bush, visible when the cylindrical brass lubricator is removed, allows lubricant to reach the inner surface of the bush and the rotating spindle.



Later cars with standard C40 type dynamos have a quite different oiling hole for the rear bush.

lubricant to seep from the lubricator onto the inner surface of the bush and onto the rotating spindle. After dismantling and restoring fifteen of these dynamos I have seen this hole in only six of them (and Jonny's wasn't one of them). In another, the hole was present but useless because the bush had rotated in the back-plate.

Why this important little hole is sometimes missing is a mystery. The bush-manufacturer cannot be blamed because, for correct alignment, the hole should be drilled only after a new bush has been pushed into its backplate.

My own private theory is that, because almost all these dynamos have been reconditioned at least once, some reconditioning firms either forgot to drill the hole or (worse) never understood that a hole is required. This is perhaps not too surprising when one remembers that most reconditioned dynamos are the standard Lucas C39/40 type. These have a quite different lubricating hole on the axis of the armature and so have no need for a little hole in the bush.

Although the workshop manual recommends using *grease* to lubricate the rear bush of all early dynamos, this is almost certainly a mistake: it's hard to see how grease from the lubricator can ever permeate the bush. In contrast, engine oil is surely a better choice – as it is for the later C40 dynamos which possess exactly the same bush.

Also note: the cylindrical brass lubricator seems designed to contain oil because,

when it is installed in the car, it slopes *down*. I doubt this is an accident: if instead the lubricator sloped *up* then any oil would of course tend to fall out. The felt wick and spring inside the lubricator together ensure that oil will reach the right places.

It's your dynamo and your choice but Terry Horler and I both recommend that this bush should be lubricated with engine oil. It's a simple job: every 6,000 miles just make sure that your brass lubricator is half full of oil and that your bush has a little hole in the right place.

Annual checks of the two bushes (one in the dynamo, one in the little gearbox) and the dynamo's front bearing are also recommended. Also note: if the little gearbox fails then the dynamo should be checked (and vice versa). When my gearbox exploded in 1971 halfway between Melbourne and Adelaide⁴ I just replaced it and continued. Now – much older and just a little wiser – I wouldn't be so reckless.

These early original Lucas dynamos for mechanical tachometers are now very rare and we should all try to preserve the ones that remain. The value of our cars, particularly the Mk1 Sprites, is rising exponentially, particularly for those cars which retain all their original features.

Anyone prepared to pay more than £25,000 for a Frogeye is probably extremely well informed, likely to walk away immediately if they see a big shiny alternator when they open the bonnet. So, by all means fit an alternator if you really do need more than 22 amps but do not even *think* of discarding your original dynamo: it is rapidly becoming a highly valuable object.

I thank Jonny Garlick for drawing my attention to this matter. His dynamo and gearbox are now working perfectly and his recovery is complete. Thank goodness we didn't have to use the scopolamine. I also thank Terry Horler who read an early draft of this article and made several excellent suggestions for improvement.

John E. Davies

(Member 3443) jed2@cam.ac.uk

⁴ See MASCOT July 2007 page 24

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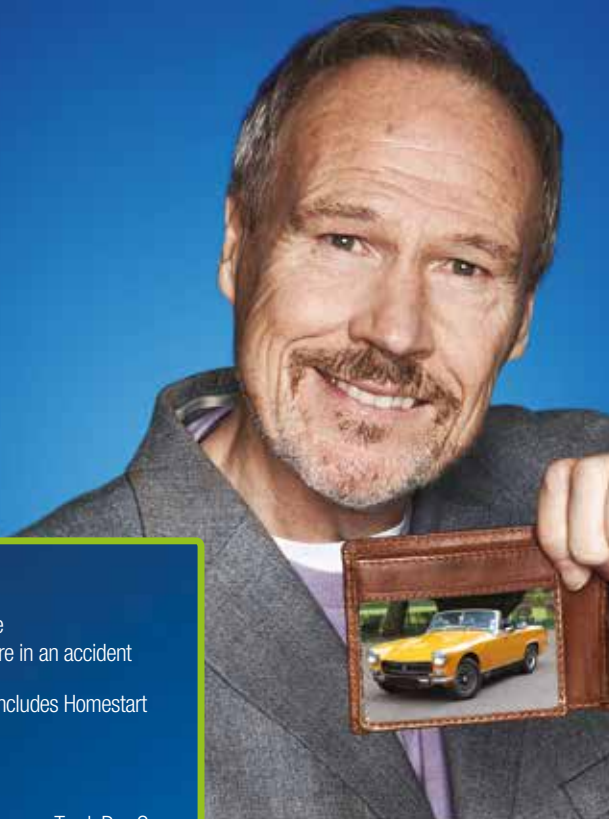
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Leaf Spring Lubricator (continued...)

I read with interest the article by Peter Fawcett on the leaf spring lubricator and decided to take up your challenge to fabricate one (yes you've guessed I need to go out more) so here goes,

1. I found an old steel G-clamp in my box of welding clamps, etc
2. Cut off the threaded portion on the G-clamp
3. Rethreaded the clamp with a 8mm tap
4. Drilled a 2mm hole completely through the length of a 8mm bolt
5. Tapped a BSP thread for a grease nipple on bolt head side
6. Cut the ends off two old large slotted screwdrivers
7. Welded one onto the none – threaded end of the G-clamp
8. Welded the other threaded v-section end onto an old large allen key, drilled to fit over bolt
9. Fit over the 8mm bolt using some P.F.T.E tape

JOB DONE

The reason a bolt was used was that it already has the head on it for screwing up to



the spring. The only bit that was a bit tricky was fitting the swiveling edge onto the bolt to allow the spring to open slightly and still turn the bolt.

I posted this topic on the Morris Minor forum for discussion purposes.

It would appear that there are varying opinions on how to go about this, ranging from, not greasing at all, a part diesel part grease (the diesel to assist spreading), a silicone grease and graphite grease mix. The same goes for using Denso tape to wrap round the springs, yes or no?

Graham Smith
Scottish Area Rep

Market Place

Adverts to Alan Lo, 23 Charnell Road, Staple Hill, Bristol, BS16 5NE
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Information wanted: Would like to find a 1974 MG Midget, RJN 137M, Harvest Gold, former owner 22 years. Please contact **Philip 01625 615145**

Area Odds & Sods

Somerset Area News

With our growing membership we have also found it necessary to move our home base to one which has much more parking space. This will come into effect from May's end of month meeting. The new venue is Windy Miller's Pie & Bar House @ Haselbury Mill, nr. Crewkerne. TA18 7NY. The day and time of meetings will remain the same. Val Young, MASC Somerset Area, **01460 391431, peteryoung81@aol.com**

Dorset Area News

The Dorset Area is now meeting on the 4th Monday of each month. John Gully, Dorset MASC, **07876 334949, john.gully@btinternet.com**

I Didn't Mean To Buy It

Part Five

Final Assembly.....

With the engine rebuild well on the way and a painted rolling body shell, I was starting to think that I would have this finished for the Summer 2012, BUT, there was still an awful lot of time consuming things to complete.

First, there was the dashboard. I had previously bought an early dashboard so that I could get rid of the plastic rocker switches and fit the earlier model toggle switches, I also needed to fit an oil temperature gauge but incorporate it into the panel so that it didn't look like an 'add on'. I also wanted, in my quest for the 'retro race' look, ignition and fuel pump 'race' switches and a pushbutton start. I would keep the original ignition switch/steering lock as a power switch only. The switches weren't a problem as the pushbutton start would fit where the old ignition switch went and the fuel pump and ignition switches would fit below just by drilling additional holes and also for an oil pressure warning light. I cut out one of the gauge apertures from the original dashboard and managed to weld it in between the oil pressure gauge and rev counter, it only just fits but looks like it is supposed to be there.

I then painted the panel in body colour, a much better finish on this, using the correct paint mix, see previous story!

Next, was the wiring loom, which fortunately, on Midgets there is not a lot of, but with the modifications made with additional switches and a Facet electric fuel pump fitted at the rear, meant running additional wires. I also



Engine bay with extra fusebox

fitted an additional fusebox on the opposite side to the original by the wiper motor. As the 1500 has hazard warning lights I needed to keep these operating but had already removed the rocker switch for them. I bought a two stage toggle switch and worked out a way of using two standard relays and the original flasher unit and connecting in such a way that they should work? The 1500 has a separate wiring loom for the dashboard connected by a block connector which made these changes a little easier. Before the engine went back in I also fitted a battery isolator switch and 12 volt socket in the bulkhead panel above the gearbox tunnel.

When I was happy that everything was connected it was time to connect the battery and see if everything worked before I wrapped the wiring loom in cloth tape. I seem to remember having a problem with something relatively minor but I do remember being very surprised that the hazard warning lights worked!



Dashboard in



Finished interior

Completed dashboard was fitted in, with recovered crash pad. MGOC Spares do not do a kit for the Midget so I bought an MGB kit and cut the sponge padding to fit and recover with the material supplied. There is quite a bit left over and was able to use this to recover the door cappings and the 'b' pillars behind the doors.

Engine and gearbox went in next without manifolds and started to methodically connect up wiring and oil cooler with brackets made for the pipes to keep engine bay tidy. I had bought an oil catch tank which just about squeezed into the corner above the starter motor. Inlet and exhaust manifolds fitted next after wrapping the tubular exhaust in heat absorbent webbing. Radiator next in, again with an aluminium header tank to replace the original plastic item which to my mind was always situated in too low a position. I saw this item on a stall at the Classic Car Show and thought it looked like it might fit and with a little bit of modification to the mountings it did, the radiator cap is now almost level with coolant level plug on top of the thermostat housing.

This new header tank feeds directly into the bottom hose with an adaptor kit from Demon Tweaks. I also had to change the route of the heater hoses as the Weber manifolds do not have the pipe running through them like the standard item. The only part, it seems, that is difficult to find is the heater valve, and mine was looking a little worse for wear so decided I could repair it with a piece of right angled 15mm central heating pipe. This seemed to work well. Cooling system sorted.

With the engine oil in, coolant in, fuel in and battery charged, it was time to start it up. It was the end of January 2013, a long way



Engine in



The Rolling shell

past summer! A bit sluggish turning over but eventually started and after setting the ignition timing and balancing the Webers was surprised how well it idled with those massive carburettors. I was also surprised as to how noisy the MGOC sports exhaust is, and that is VERY!

With the engine running and set up it was now starting a lot easier with a couple of pumps on the accelerator, and would idle smoothly virtually straight away. Next was to finish the interior with new carpets and Cobra bucket seats (you can order them in green with yellow piping). Window regulators into the doors and refitting doors to the car. Bonnet and front wings on and nearly ready for the road. MOT test was carried out in June 2013, so just over four years rebuilding. Not too bad really.

It has now been on the road for two years and covered 2600 miles and just passed its third MOT test since completing and is great fun to drive, if a little noisy. For longer runs, though, it desperately needs a fifth gear, but that is something to work out in the future. I took the car up to Peter Burgess's last year to see what sort of power it was producing and was very pleased with a final run of 99.8 BHP at the wheels, which is double what it would have had originally, torque was also doubled at 123 lbs.ft!

So now, to test its reliability, it's off to Le Mans, with (editor) Gary, Bill Mohan and MASC. Hope to see you out and about at club meetings. You are sure to recognise this colour scheme!!

Gary Hendon
Central MASC



MG Midget to



Reading the article in a previous month's *Practical Classic Magazine* has prompted me to send in details of my MG Midget/Frogeye conversion. I met one of the Midget & Sprite Club members on the stand at the recent NEC exhibition (I am sorry I don't remember his name), who is undertaking the same conversion and hopefully this may help with his project and anyone who intends to go down this route.

My project started because I wanted a genuine Frogeye Sprite. After much searching I realised that an original was out of my price league, so I looked at the option of building a replica. The Tifosi Rana seemed to be the best option so I bought a build manual and started looking for a suitable donor car on eBay. The rubber bumper model looked to be the way to go, I soon found one with missing front wings, but everything else intact and I won it for £200 (that should have given me a clue), got it home and started stripping it.

The more I took it apart the more apparent it became that the tub was beyond repair. So there I was with a completely stripped car and a rotten chassis. So I took the decision to scrap the tub and start again.



Back to eBay, I bid on another rubber bumper Midget (I went round and did a full inspection of the underneath this time). It had terrible bodywork but was sound underneath, fortunately I won it, put it through the MOT test and ran it for the summer as it came.

In the meantime having read the build manual many times, I decided to source all the parts for the conversion myself (what did we do before eBay?). I started on the front end that winter, stripping off the rubber bumpers first then the bonnet, wings and front bodywork. The first thing you notice is the car has lifted up on its springs with so much weight removed. Springs

of an earlier model and a lowering kit from Peter May dropped it down to the right level. I had found second hand fibre glass front and back ends and a set of original wheels and hub caps.



Fitting the fibre glass front end was fairly straightforward, I fabricated a front hinge myself but found the 1500cc engine was fouling the bonnet, so I lowered the engine by slotting the engine mounts and gained yet more room by cutting the bleed screw off the thermostat cover, welding up the hole and refitting it the opposite way. New hoses had to be made up but it did the trick.

The bonnet was sprayed with aerosols and Frogeye wheels fitted. I ran the car for the



Frogeye Conversion



next two summers like this travelling to France and Holland for the Easter holidays.

Last winter I tackled the back end. I wanted to retain the soft top mounting position and operating mechanism, so had to be very careful when cutting off the body work while retaining enough metal to form a box section behind the hood rear mounting to retain strength in this area. The fibre glass



back end was on and off many times, cutting and trimming before I was happy with the fit. The whole back end was then fibre glass bonded inside and out before much filling and sanding, then spraying with aerosols.

The car is very much a rolling restoration and having access to a second cars parts has proved to be a real bonus throughout the rebuild, as I can recondition the parts off the second car and simply swap them over as it suited me.

I have loads of photos of the build if people are interested. I'd love to get in touch with people from the North East as there is no club presence in the Newcastle upon Tyne area.

The only downside is that I do miss the opening boot when going abroad!

Dennis Tower

dennis.tower@btinternet.com

Tel 0191 2516172

If you are already in the North West, why not get in touch with Dennis. Perhaps it could evolve into a new area.



New member Roy



Pickard-Morrish

Sprite owner and Restorer

I recently became a member of the Midget and Sprite Club.

I have attached three photos of my Austin Healey Sprite Mk4 including one of myself with the car. Unfortunately these days I don't spend as much time as I'd like with my Sprite due to my disability.

I have been the proud owner of my Sprite for 12 years. It was in good condition when I originally purchased it. It had a new engine fitted when I bought it.

I sold my old Vauxhall 14 and a couple of months later I was walking along the road and a friend pulled up in the Sprite. I asked him if it was for sale and before he had a chance to advertise it I snapped it up!

The last owner used it for everyday use but I keep it for the warm summer months. In between my joy rides in the warm summer sun my three cats use it as their bed :-).

When I worked I spent a great deal of my time (a long time ago as I'm now 80 years old) restoring classic cars. I bought the bodywork back to life and helped give them a new lease of life.

I had a particular interest in working on Jaguars which I took a great amount of pride in doing.

These days when my health enables me to, I do volunteer work for the Dover Transport Museum. Undertaking all kinds of restoration work that others would stay well clear of.

Anything from old gypsy caravans to bath chairs. I also give talks to groups of local school children. All my work can be seen on display at the museum.

I would like to give a big shout out to the Museum which can be found on their website – www.dovertransportmuseum.org.uk

I have attached some photos of some of the work I have taken on.



Roy Pickard-Morrish



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Laon Historique, the biggest UK Classic Car pilgrimage into Europe celebrates its 25th Anniversary in 2016 and with over 1000 cars expected to attend, this is going to be an event you just won't want to miss!

So come on, join us on our 25th anniversary tour to the 'annual Laon Historique', a non competitive event dedicated to any type of vintage, classic and sports car. The city of Laon hosts this parade of classic and vintage cars from all over Europe. This closed street run is one of the few motoring events that you can actually participate in, instead of simply being a spectator.

On **Saturday** the fun begins! In the morning all participants will need to drive to the registration point in the old town to sign on for the weekends events, here you'll collect your rally plate, route book and joining instructions for Saturdays organised run in the local countryside with a 'packed lunch' included. Then on **Sunday** morning, all of the participating cars assemble in the old town ready for the highlight of the weekend, the 'closed street run'. As the name suggests all of the streets are closed to traffic. The route extends over 6kms and includes a hill climb with hairpin bends as you make your way to the old town centre. The whole town is amass with spectators lining the streets, who come to watch the biggest cavalcade of classic cars and sports cars in Europe.



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Scotland Area Report



In the Big Healey

Well my day's drive in the Healey 3000 was good fun; it was fast, noisy and thanks to the good weather, a windswept experience. The only thing that I found a little unexpected was it was extremely rattley but maybe this was just due to it being a hire car, anyway we had a good day driving around the Perthshire countryside.

Douglas has managed to source his boot-rack thanks to *Mascot* and Ian Watt a MASC member in England, so a result!

Work on the Rusty One has been a case of one step forward, two steps back. I welded the crossmember onto the transmission tunnel, was happy with the welding but had a few doubts over the alignment. I ground it off again, and then welded it back up along with H-Beam, offered the footwells up, so far so good. However, on offering up the front wing assembly, it seems to be way out, so I am doing the passengers side to see if it's my shambolic attempts, or whether the parts need a fair bit of fettling. I am also thinking of fitting the steering rack and column assembly to check the measurement of that.

The cylinder head has been taken to Blane Engineering to be converted to lead free, so in other areas things are moving forward. I still have not got round to fitting the new fuel pump to the Good Frog to see if this cures the fuel starvation problem I seem to experience on hot days. I'll get round to that soon because, after all, hot days are when you want to be using it.

Alan is also having problems with welding and fitting up the rear spring hangers and suspension to "Lancelot" and is going to pay

me a visit to take a few measurements from the good Frog, so both of us are not happy bunnies at the moment.

Colin had his first major outing of the season, I think, at the Berwick Classic, he came a creditable 9th and was featured in an article in *Classic Car Weekly* on May 13th. I had hoped to see Colin and his Midget at Knockhill Racing Circuit, but I am on holiday, so maybe I'll get to see him rallying sometime soon.

A couple of new members joined last month, Adam from Ayrshire, who has just finished a 4 year restoration of his Mk 3 Midget 1500 and very tidy it looks too. I am equally looking forward to meeting Adam and seeing his car in the near future, Adam has indicated he would be happy to do a *Mascot* article on his restoration, which although we have different models of car I may find very helpful. Also joining was Ronald from way up in the Highlands. I wonder if Ronald holds the record for the most northerly member of MASC? His Frogeye was pictured in the magazine last month (looks good) and as I am going up north on a week's nine hole golfing extravaganza in September, I hope to call on and see him. As we both own Frogs, we should have a good chat.

The list of cars on show at the Concours D'Elegance still has not been issued, despite their website stating it would be end of April so I guess this will have to be deferred for a month

Although it was a pleasant evening, both social and weather wise, on our last meeting, Peter was the only one of us who turned up in a Sprite/Midget. His car was immaculately turned out and got admiring if not jealous inspection from the rest of us, who were pouring over his car. Again he has just finished his restoration and has fitted an original Williams and Pritchard bonnet, which looked very smart and there were a few comments of being a mini E-Type. Unfortunately I did not take a picture but Peter has advised me he will be attending the "chase the Haggis run" so if you want to see his Midget there's your chance. Till next month,

Graham

Email: smith.graham@yahoo.co.uk

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Dorset Area Report

John's Jottings

Sitting down to enjoy 'a nice cup of tea' after my latest bout of Frogeye wrestling to try and cure the emission of liquids, such as water and oil. I relaxed and found myself watching an edition of 'Flog It'.

A few minutes in and Carole said "that's what's his name!" Looking up I realised that we have a TV star in our membership – none other than Peter Vallins.

I have always thought that Peter's cars go well and I think I know the secret now. Peter was selling a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine

plate. Given that one cylinder of a Merlin has a capacity of about 2.25 litres that should propel a Sprite or Midget quite well!

With the better weather it is good to get out and about in our classics. My driving seems to be mostly test runs following work on the car, and generally when on such a run I find that something else shows itself. But I feel that I am winning at last. After new hoses and a change of radiator the leaks there stopped but on returning from a run the water pump was leaking badly.

Everything you may have read about the quality and fit of water pumps currently being sold for our cars is true. After three I was so pleased with the third I bought a second as a spare! Further test run and on return I found that the rear section of the exhaust system had parted company from its mounting and so it continues.

You will see in the Dorset Area newsletter (if you receive it) further details of forthcoming Club events, the first of which is on Monday 22 June and is the next Club Night

During the past few weeks I and others have been trying to get the main MASC website updated and I'm pleased to report that the Events section is now complete and also the Regional section which describes our Dorset centre. If you have not looked at the site lately there is a lot of good stuff on there – go to

www.midgetandspriteclub.com/

Finally enjoy your motoring and I hope to see many of you at our events and others arranged by other clubs in the area. Clear roads ...

John Gully

Tel: 01202 880864

Email: john.gully@btinternet.com

If you wish to receive the Dorset Area's Newsletter by pdf, contact Ian beaver at ian.beaver@btinternet.com



Mascot cars recognised by their previous owners

Mascot was able to surprise two of its readers, when they noticed their old cars in the magazine. I think that both Guy and Pierre were surprised that their respective Midgets are still going strong,

Below is some of the correspondence after putting previous and present owners in touch:

MG Midget 1500 FPL69V

Hi Gary,

Just today received my copy of *Mascot*, and was amused to see my onetime owned car on page 14! Owned now by "Nicky and Eric".

I owned that car for around 10 years, selling it about 15 years ago, and have a lot of information about its past life which may be of interest to the new owners.

It was interesting, and rather pleasing to find that it is still in existence, though I suspect it may have gone through a reincarnation of some sort since I last saw it.

Regards

Guy Weller
Kendal, Cumbria

Hi Guy

Gary forwarded your email today and I was thrilled to hear from a previous owner.

I first saw the car about four years ago when a friend of my son had heard of my interest in classic cars and showed me one belonging



The image of Nicky with the Midget in last month's *Mascot*, which caught Guy's eye

to his Dad. The car had been off the road for about two years at that point and Kev (the dad) had all intentions of getting it back on the road. He had used it daily to go to work before that. I expressed an interest if he ever wanted to sell it. It actually got passed on to the son, but it wasn't really to his taste and gave it back to his Dad where it remained in the garage on a SORN.

During this time Eric and I had restored the Frogeye SAY190 to concours condition and I took it to a couple of shows where I really developed a passion for driving classic cars. The intention was always to restore the Frogeye and sell it, so Eric could buy his other dream car, a 1980's Corvette. I was heartbroken at the sale and began looking for a replacement.

We were at Whitley Bay car show last year when my son's friend and his Dad showed up. He mentioned that he was putting the Midget on e bay as he needed the room in the garage now. I asked how much and told him I would buy it from him. I got two pairs of sills, two gearboxes, two doors and various other bits and bobs thrown in.

Eric has postponed the restoration of his Healey 3000 and put in a new floor on the passenger side, a Frogeye sill we found in the loft, (just to get it through the MOT) and some repairs around the spring hanger. My Christmas present was a new hood!

The MOT went well but unfortunately not in time to get a place on the MG Cobweb Run due to a snapped wheel nut stud. This was probably a blessing as the next weekend I took him for a run down to the coast and the throttle linkage rod broke. I affected a repair but it only lasted another 300 yards so I had to call for help. I think we may have quite a few of the plastic/rubber bits to replace after him sitting so long! I have new sills, floors and full set of chrome sill lettering (my birthday present) ready to go on.

It is a work in progress and will get fully restored but I needed him road worthy for this year's shows, so the necessary work was done first. Sorry about 'war and peace' I'd love some history as there's quite a bit of non-standard stuff on there.

Best wishes and thanks

Nicky
MG Midget 1500 AYM546T



As it appeared in last month's Mascot

Hi Gary

You cannot imagine my surprise when I read the last *Mascot*. I was sitting in my study, comfortably in my armchair, turned to page 22 and could not help myself to scream "this is my car!".

Indeed I owned the Midget 1500 registered AYM 546T back in the early '90s. I did some work on it like lowering the suspension, adding a wooden steering wheel from Moss (who had a branch near Richmond at the time) and a few other small things, such as a luggage rack with wooden slats. Anyway not to say that it was the best car I ever had, as it indeed had its issues....

I bought the car from a chap who lived in Tooting Beck. He was selling it on behalf of his daughter or so he said at the time... anyhow despite being in poor condition (the gearbox was on its last legs and the bottom went in tatters, so I had to get an engine replacement ... so clearly it was already a money pit ... :))



A youthful Pierre working on the Midget on the streets of London, in the days when you could get away with that kind of thing!



Outside Pierre's flat, soon to be sold to buy a sofa!

I really enjoyed it and took it a few times to France. It was my first English sports car and it gave me the bug for Sprite ... and probably lead me to buy the ones I own now. Anyhow the end of the story is that I had to sell it at the time to buy a sofa for my flat ... Really glad to see it on the road, it brings back quite a few fond memories.

Kind regards

Pierre Lequeux
London SW19

Hi Pierre

Gary forwarded your email about AYM646T. I got a list of all previous owners from DVLA, and you are on that list, so I was aware you were a previous owner.

I got a load of receipts and invoices with the car, so I could see that you and other owners had spent quite a lot of money on it. It still has the wood rim steering wheel that you bought and also I think the gearbox is the one you had fitted (it's getting a bit noisy now).

It looked very good when I bought the car, but after a year it failed its MOT due to rust. Close inspection showed the body had been badly twisted in an accident that one of the owners who came after yourself had had (I have receipts for the not very good repair work).

I decided that it would be too risky to refurbish the existing body, so I completely rebuilt it using a Heritage shell. It took me a couple of years, but the result has been an excellent car that I enjoy driving. I've now done 23,000 miles since it was rebuilt.

It would be nice to see some photos of it in your ownership.

Cheers

John Harrison



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East Anglian MASC Report



Old Warden Easter Sunday

We are getting in to the most Spridget friendly season with a taste of what's to come in the way of hot sunny days, so with this in mind I took the Sprite to the village MOT station, and village shops being what they are, half an hour or so later emerged with a shiny new 13 month Certificate (rather than an appointment). As normal she sailed through, I did get an advisory on the nearside rear brake as due to the unexpected while you wait MOT, I had not done my usual pre-test brake adjusting (these cars don't really have much in the way of brakes so it's always best to tweak them up to optimum).

All this makes me appreciate this Sprite especially when I have been all over the country recently, looking for a new Chairman's chariot. I even drove most of the Tour de Yorkshire route just ahead of the bikes (very scenic) to look at ESJ, which turned out to be one of Jonathan Whitehouse-Bird's cast offs, but all to no avail.

The main event for this month was a trip to Old Warden, I wasn't able to attend but my spies sent me an intriguing photo of a slightly bemused member (we will call him Graham to protect his anonymity) however all soon became clear from the brief event report below.

We had a good turnout, mainly, Frogs, apart from Chris, Mary, Peter and his dad in Midgets. After a

damp start the rain held off for most of the day and the sun even made an appearance. The venue hosted a fantastic turnout of very nice rare cars which made for a brilliantly interesting and exciting day with plenty to see and do despite the weather.

We had a little amusement as we pulled away in turn at the end of the day, one Frogeye kept cutting out, after restarting the car a couple of times that became impossible too. It looked like it had run out of petrol, but even after the donation of a gallon, still no luck. So the toolkits came out and we started taking things apart. A few whacks to the fuel pump and adjustments to the carburettor later, the light bulb came on ... this car has an extra security feature, when the magic switch was thrown, all was well. If nothing else this was a demonstration of how these cut off systems can prevent our cars from being driven away!

The pub night fell on a less than perfect day weather-wise, hence not really a Sprite night. However, we had a good quality turn out and discussed a wide range of topics, including emissions requirements for classic car MOTs, planned events, Aston Martin suspension and fancy dress.

SYWELL PISTONS AND PROPS Saturday is now full, let me know if you want to go on Sunday.

See you all at the oldest Inn in England and beyond.

Dave Dixon
(AKA Red Leader)



Let's just call him Graham!

FROM THE BOWELS OF BRISTOL

The General Election circus is over – hooray! We shall have to wait five long years before the show comes to town again. But not for Pucklechurch, the common ground for Bristol Area members to meet up on the second Wednesday of each month at the Houses of the Rose & Crown. Yes, Pucklechurch did have a Polling Station, yes there were candidates and yes, all was conducted in accordance with the laws of the land.

However, the results were meaningless. Despite the respected few who were elected, or their political leanings, the Pucklechurch electorate have no doubt who really rules over the parish – The Village Elders. Unelected, the Elders take their place by birthright or bribery. All live within the parish, attended the local school, served a five year bell ringing apprenticeship under the presiding vicar, have read and remembered the contents of the operating instruction manual of the village ducking stool and know the location of all the doggie bins within the parish.

All knowing, all seeing (thanks to all the CCTV cameras they have installed), the Elders know their parishioners intimately (thanks to the strategic positioning of many of the cameras). So be warned when attending our gatherings – the Elders are watching you!

With this in mind, the Bowels of Bristol launched its first floater in April, I was hoping for a good turnout. As an addition to our usual Club night at the Rose and Crown, we held our first floater meeting at the Wishing Well, Codrington, a couple of weeks later. Holding this on a Monday rather than our



Pucklechurch undesirables caught on the village infrared camera. Do not approach these men

usual R & C night of Wednesday, we hoped to attract members who do not have a Wednesday page in their diaries.

So, did it work out that way? Well, sort of. Certainly, we welcomed around six members who we have not seen before at the R & C but in the main, it was the stalwart supporters that came along to this new venue. Maybe a Monday is not the day we need to try next time.

Anyway, it was great to see our 'new' members although it was only Chris Morgan who arrived by Spridgley thing power – and only just! His immaculate white Frogeye arrived screaming, thinking it might be supercharged; it was soon revealed that a dynamo bearing didn't like Mondays any more than Bob Geldolf. Chris told us that his Frogeye had only covered 360 miles in the last 25 years or so – could be a clue to the screams of protest there.

The manager at the Wishing Well was excited to see us, reserving a large area in the restaurant and cutting the grass in the large field for us to use – neither of which we took advantage of. Typically, we stood around in the car park for most of the evening, only retiring to the interior before hypothermia set in.

Now onto a more worrying subject. Our March R & C meeting saw a representative and advisor to the Club Chairman paying us a surprise visit. This was closely followed by the Club Membership Secretary paying us a visit at the April R & C meeting – but only after checking that I would not be there of course. So what is going on here then?

As the most ancient of all branches of the club, is this some sort of archaeological investigation by the hierarchy of the club to find out how we have survived for all these years? Do they think we have the secret of immortality?

A secret potion brewed by the wicked witch of Pucklechurch, or simply my brilliant leadership skills at keeping this show on the road? We can hardly wait to see who turns up for the May meeting!

Terry Horler
(Unelected branch supremo)

April's 'Old Boys' Midweek Run



Dave Chalk organised this month's run. Fifteen cars! A goodly turn out probably encouraged by the weather, it could not have been better. The run was to the Ramsgate Tunnels. To cater for members at both ends of the county we had two assembly points. At 0930hrs there was an assembly, and marking of the register, at the Oakdene Café Nr Brands Hatch. This Biker, transport Café is a regular start point.

We moved off at 0930hrs having been joined by members from other Area Groups. Col Carpenter came from Surrey, Michael Martin & Alan Walker crossed the Thames from Essex, and Vic Barker came from Sussex. Anyone in a Midget, Sprite, or derivative is welcome.

Richard Beer is currently without a suitable set of wheels as his car is in pieces so he hitched a ride. Ian Clifton was unable to make the run as his car's solenoid had burnt out a few days before. Mark Mathew's carbon thrust race had won the race to thrust its carbon into the universe and render his car undriveable so he sought sanctuary and a ride with John Clark from Herne Bay.

Most made a circuitous route to arrive at the second assembly, the Roadhouse Café, Lenham, at the allotted time but some lacked faith and turned off at the signpost to arrive early. No matter – fifteen cars gathered in the shell-cratered car park. Dave led off but one faltered. JC's car suffered a not uncommon problem when the SU needle valve digested some grit causing the carburettor to overflow. Richard Bowles was upon the carbs like a man possessed, soon sorting the problem.

A pub lunch now beckoned. Where better than a pub belonging to a MASC member?

The Rose Inn, Wickhambreaux the domain of Paul & Denise Villiers. Vic was complaining that he had no gherkins with his salad not knowing that Ron had helped himself to some of his chips perhaps to compensate for Vic's complaint that Ron, last month, had failed to affect a roadside repair on his car.

Mr Grumpy Barker had to be reminded that we still had a considerable mileage to our destination in which he might falter and again need Ron's aid. It should have been me complaining as having given Richard Beer my dinner money, he pocketed it whilst failing to order my dinner. I didn't notice him going hungry. With friends like this I don't need enemies! Meanwhile Dave was admonished for not giving forward notice of our arrival, and hunger, but the staff seemed to have the situation covered.

After all were replete, we moved on to Ramsgate for the Tunnel Visit. Last month it was lumps of concrete, apparently acoustic, this month dark and damp Victorian railway tunnel. We do pick them! So dark we were issued lanterns and torches or had they just not paid the lekky bill. Then we were asked to turn them off, presumably to save the torch batteries, whilst standing in darkness reminiscent of the Black Hole of Calcutta. I am sure that I had my wallet when I entered the tunnel but cannot find it subsequently.

So dangerous, are these tunnels, we were issued hard hats. We entered the tunnel which was a former Victorian Railway tunnel serving the new form of vacation at the sea side it was extended when first the Hun and then the Nazi decided to bomb civilian targets during the WW's. During bombing raids the extended tunnel complex was used as an air raid shelter and for temporarily housing those dispossessed by bomb strikes. After about an hour in the damp and dark, viewing graffiti, both ancient & modern, we emerged into the sunlight. A quick cuppa and we all went our various ways.

June's Old Boys Run – TBA – will be organised by John Clark.

Volunteers are required to organise runs on subsequent months.

Alan Anstead

Kent Area Report

French Connection

Francck Thibaud, of Spridget Club de France (formerly Amicale Spridget), has sent me pictures of his Frogeye taken by Sebastian Dewez. I think the photographer has ably captured the classic lines.



With thanks to and (C) Sebastian Dewez

Those of us participating in this year's Miglia Tour are hoping to have SCdF President Thierry Dupont along for a couple of days, on our route, and then meet with other members as Michel Lebigre usually organises a club event for them at Angouleme, for the Circuit des Remparts historic motor race, that we will visit on our route. The Alfa Romeo Museum, at Arese Italy, currently rumoured to be reopening in June.

Monthly meeting

Our monthly meet coincided with Drive it Day, 26th April. Not the best of days weather-wise I only saw one classic on the road, a Mk1 Cortina but then there was a Classic Ford event at Aylesford so perhaps that was where he was headed. Overcast, rain was forecast and at about 11:45hrs as we began to assemble in the car park of the Angel public house, waiting for the premises to open, the beginnings could be felt in the air.

Sprites and Midgets began to arrive. Thirteen in total! Many were noticeably absent their owners arriving by other means with the feeblest of excuses. Poor John Clark looked as if he was on his last legs, self inflicted I must add, as he had been boogying the night away, only 'hitting he sack' in the early hours of this morn', but he did not shrink from driving his Frogeye to the meeting, hood stowed.

Good to see new members attending. John Austin showed his car for the first time. Tony Jerome is still building his and was seeking advice from Chris Ricard on originality.

John & Jayne LeMar brought pictures to show of repairs to their fairly recent acquisition when finding that one man's restoration is another man's bodge and that their car sold as restored had in fact been bodged. A not unfamiliar story!

Gary & Vanessa came in a Lotus whilst 'Ratty' is prepared for paint. We'll have to find a new name for the car after the work is done. Many had stories to tell or artefacts to show. Martin Ingall brought along Morgan Sparrow and his father. Morgan has an Ashley GT that perhaps we will see at a future meet.

Landlord Lee had set aside the Stables restaurant for us to eat but as more and more turned up it was necessary for early eaters to give up seats for later arrivals. Our number must have almost touched forty.

Gavin Rowles gave notice that he is leaving Kent Area MASC as he is moving to Guildford, in Surrey, where he will transfer to the Surrey Area group. Gavin has been a regular attendee for many years, with his red Midget, so we hope that he keeps in touch.

By the time had arrived to leave the rain was steadily falling but undaunted both John Clark and I chose to retire with hoods still down for the homeward journey.



Does anyone have recollections of Pit Stop Accessories of Carlton Parade, Orpington, Kent? (pic supplied by Richard Beer) Richard Beer used to work there and we are hoping that he will share his reminiscences.

Alan Anstead
Kent Rep.
www.masckent.org



MASC Weekend 2015 July 17-19th 2015

Make sure that you are there at the MASC event of the year – and join the 80 club members who have already signed up.

Fri 17th July Optional Morgan Factory Tour and Meet Up

Sat 18th July Organised club run through Worcs, Herefs, and mid Wales
Evening Gala Dinner – free coach transport from Satellite Hotel

Sun 19th July Club visit to Classic Nostalgia at Shelsley Walsh Historic Hill Climb

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North West Area Report

Gawsworth Hall Monday 4th May 2015



Shelley and I ran through to Gawsworth Hall on Sunday, to see where our club stand was going to be and then set up our Display Stand, having never been to this event before we were not quite sure what to expect! As Bernie mentioned in his report from the Donington meeting, the weather was not very nice at all, pretty awful in fact! BUT! Thankfully Monday morning was a lovely sunny one and probably one of the reasons that hundreds of classic cars descended on Gawsworth Hall from Bentleys to Bond Bugs (I haven't seen one of them for years, Bond Bugs that is!)

We had a great turnout of 10 cars and met some new faces too, which is always encouraging. Brendon and his son arrived in a very nice dark blue Midget with a very interesting "Grab Handle" on the dashboard, he was debating whether to remove it or not. Another New Member was Wayne in a red Frogeye, Simon Atherton in his white Midget, and Pauline with Emrys in their beautifully prepared 'Frog', which had also been featured



in *Practical Classics*. We all had such a great day with many discussions taking place on all the modifications that had been done to our Cars i.e. 1275 engines, 5 speed gear boxes, and what and how far one can go to still keep them original!

After all, they are Drivers' Cars and coping with today's traffic improving brakes and safety features are a 'must, as quite a few of our members are making long distance routes this year, like visiting the Spa Classic next week and the Miglia Tour in September, they will need to have their cars as safe as possible.

But, I digress. Gawsworth Hall was a stunning venue with every car you could imagine including an original AC Cobra.

We were so lucky with the weather and we will certainly go back next year. So all in all, a great day had been had by all. You could also visit the House itself, which Shelley and Jan Thompson decided to do, and both agreed that it was beautiful inside! AND THAT IF OUR CARS SHONE AS MUCH AS THE WOODEN FURNITURE IN THE HOUSE DID, WE WOULD BE OK!

We are hoping that even more members will attend this event next year 2016!

Sunday April 26th 2015

How lucky were we? The Sundays run was going to be our "DRIVE IT DAY". Our North West MASC Club were going to join forces with another club for this event, the Casual Classic Club based in Penketh, which had been well organised by two of our members Karen and Mike Bennett, members of both clubs.

We had nine cars turn out including Robert and Janet Thompson in their Frogeye, which Robert had just fitted a 1275 cc engine and 5 speed gearbox. This run was its first venture out since the improvements, so would be a good test of Robert's "Mechanical Skills"!

We met up around 9am at the Conservative Club car park (this is not a political party bias I hasten to add!) with the Casual Classics, a nice friendly bunch with whom some of us were having a chat about our "Little darlings". Having obtained our route map, it wasn't long before we were on the picturesque

route taking us through some beautiful countryside, which would take us to our final destination of Southport. On route we stopped for coffee (or Tea or whatever!) at Inglenook Lavender Farm. Fortunately they possess a very large car park, which was just as well as by the time we arrived there, we had 40 cars. We were seemingly all together up to a point, with only the "odd straggler" that had temporarily gone the wrong way! We were all trying to improve our map reading skills. Well, most of us anyway! Perhaps a presentation cup might be awarded to the members who got lost the most, as a sign of encouragement!

The members of the North West MASC would like to thank the Casual Classic Club for inviting us to join them on an excellent run and organising the Sunshine that stayed with us all day. Perhaps slightly warmer temperatures would have been appreciated, but we certainly don't want to appear pickeeeee! And we did after all manage to keep our 'tops down'! We finally arrived at the Gelder Rose public house car park where fun and games started, trying to find parking spaces! It was obviously a very popular watering hole and the good weather was bringing out lots of people to have a bracing constitutional walk along the promenade!

The lunch was enjoyed by us all (I think) and we all had lots to chat about during the meal. Shelley and I had covered by this time 90 miles, as we along with Les came from Preston, a fair few miles from Penketh! I think by the time we reached home the mileage was 150 miles! We were all very happy to have "made it home" and arrive safe and sound! This was our first run of the season, but it certainly won't be our last, as we have a very busy season ahead with three events in May and three more in June, which I know all members cannot wait to enjoy and have fun at these forthcoming events! HAPPY MOTORING TO YOU ALL!

Neil and Shelley

North West Area Rep. Email neil_mcleod2@hotmail.co.uk Tel 10772 323 770.

PS. For the JUNE MEETING we'll move slightly north as it's normal for us to have one meeting away from the Kilton in June. This time it will be at the CORNER HOUSE, Wrightington WN6 9SE (not far from J28 M6) were for those of us that would like to arrive about 7pm, a short navigation run of the area will be set.



A few of the MASC Spridgets at the Donington Historic

Report on Donington Historic Festival

On the May bank holiday weekend, several of our members attended the Donington Historic Festival. Some went for all three days, others for just one.

Those present on Sunday 3rd May were myself, Alan, Steve, Ian and Peter. The weather travelling to the circuit was awful with steady rain and mist.

Thankfully it started to clear away for the first race which was for pre-'65 sports and GT cars. The E types and Cobras were a sight to behold coming through the chicane, with the cars wriggling and sliding on the still greasy track.

Later, the sun came out and we were treated to some great racing from single seaters, saloons and sports cars.

During the lunch break there were demonstration laps from '80s F1 cars, which sounded glorious compared to the modern versions.

Also a replica of a pre-war Mercedes W 125 gave us a taste of the era when German Grand Prix cars were all conquering.

It was nice to meet up with members from other areas and also to chat to our esteemed editor Gary who brought Gaps to the meeting.

There were lots of raised bonnets and who's got what carb and which is the best cam for this engine etc. A great day. Gladly, the Festival seems to go from strength to strength.

Bernie Higginson
NW Area

Notts & Derby Area Report

The Rocky Road ahead – Mel + Kev's Drive it Day experience

Those of you who didn't take part in the Notts and Derby Area Drive It Day ... missed out on a real driving challenge.

Ian Cooke as squadron leader is leading a growing and thriving group of enthusiasts and his efforts were well rewarded on the day itself with an impressive turn out of cars.

Thanks also to Peter and Eve for planning this truly stunning route ... next time maybe a few more toilet stops for the ladies Peter, as driving with crossed legs and avoiding pot holes can prove difficult ... either that or I need to tow a portaloos behind my Frog next time!

Initially, the weather didn't look positive especially with the forecast of snow and, I had visions of ringing into work on Monday with the line ... sorry, can't come into work today as I'm stuck on Holme Moss in a snow drift in my 1958 Frogey!

One of my work colleagues and his dad are regular fell runners in the Yorkshire Dales and, on the Monday, reported the worst ever running conditions in their weekend fell race, just a few miles from our route where they did actually have heavy snow falls on Drive It Day weekend!

Anyway ... Sunday arrived and so did the sun...the hardtop came off, the fleeces went on and off we set to meet everyone at the cafe at Calver Bridge. Fortified with good friends, sunshine, milky coffee and a huge slab of Rocky Road (in anticipation of what was to follow?) we set off in convoy and took the first turn incorrectly, taking us away from the leading group and splitting us into two separate groups.

We drove on and passed through Foolow, a beautiful Derbyshire village, then on to Bradwell (unable to stop for their famous ice cream for fear of losing the others) and on to Bamford passing the Lady Bower reservoir.

From here on to Low Bradfield and High Bradfield following some of the Tour De France 2014 route and, on one significant hill climb with a white knuckle left hand bend, my horn decided to lose the will to operate any more.



At this point the drive took on an Iron Man-like challenge and with fingers clenched around the wheel and muscles tensing with anticipation of what was around the next incline we carried on to Hepworth and the brilliant Oil Can site and cafe.

It took me a while to unclench my grip on the steering wheel and exit the Frog but more Rocky Road cake and coffee followed before everyone made their own ways home.

Our little group of three intrepid explorers returned via Holmfirth (where *Last of The Summer Wine* was filmed), climbing up Holme Moss and dropping down a steep descent to Glossop then Buxton.

I clocked 170 miles in my little car...still with its original engine and gearbox, but forgot to count the number of smiles and waves we received as we drove past walkers, people sat outside pubs and other classic car enthusiasts out for the day.

One of my friends once told me "you are a long time looking at the coffin lid ... live life" ... I certainly came home that evening feeling I had had a wonderful exhilarating day and that there was a lot more to come from Notts and Derby Area ... when's the next challenge Peter and don't forget the need for toilet stops!!

Mel and Kev

At the bottom of the twistin g descent into Holmfirth, The Oil Can Cafe , Hepworth

I thoroughly enjoyed it.
Geoff Mears



It was great fun having a convoy of Spridgets in my rear view mirror and we enjoyed the day enormously, particularly as my Midget performed faultlessly!
Peter F

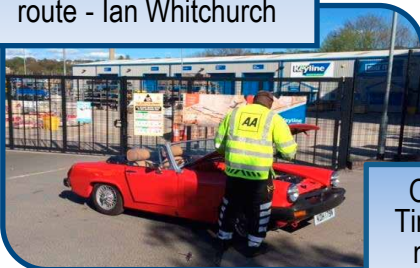
Fabulous! What a day and what a drive! I had to un curl my clenched fingers fr om the steering wheel as those hairpin bends were scary - Mel + Kev



Cracking tea Gromit!
Ian C.



Many thanks for organising the event and a special thanks to Peter for picking out a great route - Ian Whitchurch



DRIVE-IT DAY SHEET 1 26 08 15

On our way home through Sheffield City centre, Tim's throttle cable snapped. Glad it was then and not earlier in the drive up to Holmfirth - Richard



COME TO FRANCE... FOR A CLASSIC BRITISH WELCOME!



Every June for 14 years, the tiny village of Saint-Saturnin has opened its doors to welcome British classic car enthusiasts on their way to the Le Mans 24 hour race. Taking place on the Friday before the race, the event attracts a staggering 1,000 classic and sports cars and over 9,000 visitors for the one-day event!



THE SPECIAL GUEST

There is always a special guest of honour and we'll be announcing this year's guest in February.



THE TIME

In 2015, the 15th CBW will take place on **Friday 12th June**. It starts at 9am and we hope that all MGs arriving before 11am will get a spot in the main arena.

THE PLACE

Saint-Saturnin, is a village on the main approaches to Le Mans, approx 8 miles north of the Le Mans 24 hour circuit and less than 10 minutes from the city centre. It is only 2 ½ hours' drive from the North coast of France and an easy journey on fabulous roads in your Classic car.



THE COST

It costs exactly nothing! Entry, parking (even for non-classics), the roaming jazz band, the displays of stunning classic Le Mans racers and even the air-conditioned cinema is **FREE!**



THE THEME

Each year there's a theme, and this year it will be **MG** as 2015 marks the 60th anniversary of the launch of the MGA and 80 years since three MG cars finished 1st, 2nd and 3rd in their class at Le Mans.

THE ORGANISATION

120 volunteers ensure the event runs smoothly, so you can wander around the site, have a chat, a drink, and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere. We have now added Classic British motorbikes, there is something for everyone.



THE PARADE DES PILOTES

One of the highlights will be the departure at 4 pm of 12 MG cars, to take part in the "Grand Parade des Pilotes" - all the drivers in the Saturday race - around the centre of Le Mans. Another 30 cars will follow to Le Mans (with reserved parking) and will be escorted by around 40 Harley Davidsons...



FOR MORE DETAILS...

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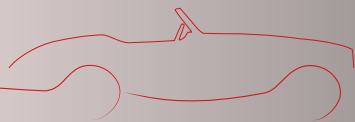
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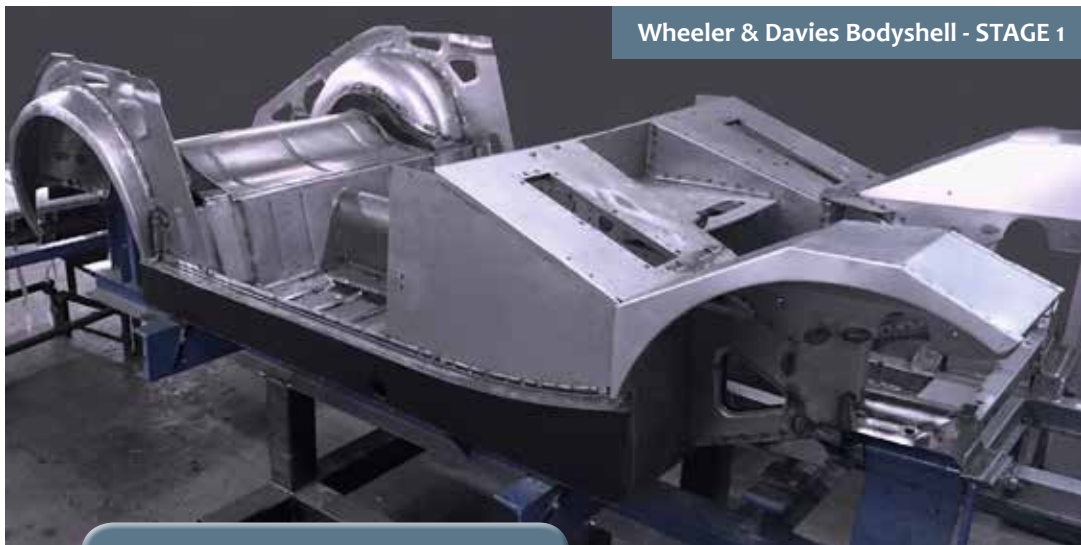
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