

MASCOT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MIDGET & SPRITE CLUB

ISSUE 408 MARCH 2018

£3

Track Day's can
be addictive.
Ask Geoff Goddard.



42 YEARS ON
STILL LIVING WITH BRACKEN

HYDRAULICS, SPARKS AND INDICATORS
BY ALAN ANSTEAD

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: PRACTICAL CLASSICS PREVIEW • JOHN SPRINZEL PART 2 • MARKET PLACE

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WELCOME TO THE MARCH EDITION OF MASCOT

NEIL
THOMAS

editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk



I've been overwhelmed this month with articles sent in by members of MASC, so much so, that regrettably I have been unable to include everything in this issue. Fear not however, I have put them in a safe place and will use them in future issues. But thank you for this material, I am over the moon that you send it in to me and please keep it up.

I was delighted to hear that the Stoneleigh Spares Day was a success (see inset pic), with lots of engagement with members and non members during the day. The club also signed up another young member called Chris who is currently restoring his Midget. Welcome Chris. Indeed, one of our recently joined young members, Liam Murphy, has offered his assistance to the club by being a contact point for young members. Please make contact with Liam at: biddysingh@gmail.com and make yourself known to him. As I reported last month, the Club is committed to supporting our young members. This could be the start of something good.

Over recent years, having developed an interest in using my car in a more enthusiastic way, I am in turn keen to promote this form of activity with MASC members. So this month, I was delighted to see that Geoff Goddard had sent in an article



regarding his experience of a Track Day in his Frogeye at Blyton Park. Geoff tells me he is 75. That is superb Geoff and goes to prove you're never too late to try new experiences. And it is on this note that Steve Newton from HOE has been liaising with MG's On Track to share a slot on one of their Trackdays later in the year. Steve is the man to contact for details. I'll be there with you.

In this issue (page 23) you will see an advert for a voluntary MASC Marketing Officer. If you have the skills required, contact our Chairman, Mark Hall. It is a non committee role. We would just like to draw upon any experience you may have to help the club develop.

Please note the deadline for discounted tickets at the Silverstone Classic. The clock is ticking.

Lastly, MASC members, Angie and Chris Davis, have organised an AHC 60th celebration weekend of the Sprite in Suffolk on the weekend of 31st Sept to 2nd August. If interested, contact them at: canda3000@hotmail.com

See you at the Practical Classic Show at the NEC. Neil

**COVER IMAGE:
PHOTO GEOFF
GODDARD
ON TRACK AT
BLYTON**

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THE DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES
AND REPORTS TO BE
INCLUDED IN **APRIL'S**
EDITION OF MASCOT IS...

**FRIDAY 9TH
OF MARCH**



EVENTS CALENDAR 2018

- 23rd-25th March Practical Classics Show, NEC (see flyer)
- 22nd April Drive it Day to Bletchley Park
(contact Richard Bowles at: richjbowles@gmail.com)
- 4th-6th May Donington Historic Festival (see website for details)
- 20th May Dorset 60th Celebration 20th May
(contact Ian Beaver at : ian.beaver@btinternet.com)
- 3rd June Autokarna, Wollaton Park, Nottingham
(see flyer on page Page 23 of this issue)
- 23-24th June Flywheel, Bicester Heritage - see page 6
- 20th-22nd July Silverstone Classic – early bird discount ends 31st March
- 24-26th August Spridget 60th, Wroxall Abbey Hotel, Warwick



Send your events details to editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
Area Reps, Please remember that you can now add your monthly events on the Club's website.
Please contact Mike webmaster@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

CLUB WEBSITE

WWW.MIDGETANDSPRITECLUB.CO.UK

Members Only Pages: Go to the members area and select 'website registration' from the drop down menu. Follow the instructions on the screen.



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WANTED TECHNICAL ARTICLES



EVENTS DETAILS NEEDED FOR 2018

Area reps please make Neil Thomas aware of any events already in your diaries and any that are planned for 2018 so that they can be added to this section of the magazine and the website.

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



MIDGET &
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JANUARY > FEBRUARY 2018

NEW MEMBERS

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

5585	Mike Parker	Oxfordshire	Sprite	MI 1
5586	Anthony Burke	Bedfordshire	Midget	Mk 3
5587	Jenifer & John Britten	Nottinghamshire	Sprite	Mk 1
5588	David Pearce	Hertfordshire	Midget	Mk 3
5589	Chris Waters	Bedfordshire	Midget	Mk 3
5590	David Hindson	Dorset	Midget	Mk 3
5591	Andy Liew	Kent	Midget	Mk 3
5592	Derek Ralls	Dorset	Midget	Mk 3 RWA
5593	Richard & Richard & Marcus Feather	Somerset	Sprite	Mk 1
5594	Jason Sheehan	Yorkshire	Midget	Mk 3
5595	David Hudson	Kent	Sprite	Mk 1
5596	Matthew Pearl	West Sussex	Sprite	Mk 4
5597	Bill Postins	Warwickshire	none	None
5598	Iain & Fiona McWilliams	Northants	Sprite	Mk 1
5599	John Foster	Dumfries And Galloway	Midget	1500
5600	Bob Clarkson	West Midlands	Sprite	Mk 2
5601	Chris Goymer	East Yotkshire	Midget	Mk 1
5602	Bruce Acton	South Africa	Sprite	MI 1
5603	Roger Payn	Oxfordshire	Midget	Mk 3

Hi I have recently joined the club with my Mk3 Midget, finished in Bedouin. It has only covered 54,000 miles. It has featured on the front cover of Sprites and Midgets by Ditlev Clausenrger and other books.

Dave Hindson 5590



Meet Syd. Purchased from a lady in Sidmouth (Devon). Not sure whether the grill is original and the minilites were a replacement for wires, retaining the spinners.

Derek Ralls 5592



Here is a photo of my Sprite, 96DWT Body 8AE 46080, Chassis AN5 46487. Date of manufacture believed to be 1960 (re-registered 1963 when re-imported)

David Hudson 5595



I am delighted to have at last rejoined MASC, which I was last a member of in the late 1980's when I acquired FXD949J. The photos attached show me when I was 20 and on my 50th birthday earlier this month!

Regards. Alex McKinlay 5558



SNAP! OF THE MONTH

To submit your photo by email to editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk (jpeg, max file size 5meg)



It doesn't always go to plan



Welsh Spridgets on Epynt Range



Colin Gale's bright green racer and a Sebring at Shelsley Walsh in 2015



Rob Armstrong at Loton Park Hillclimb




Danielle Berry's Midget 1500 on the ascent



Rob Newton in action


SNAP!



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TRACK DAY ANYONE? BY GEOFF GODDARD

Track days at Blyton Park

Having owned my 1959 Frog for 4 years I began to wonder about doing a track day. I found out that Blyton Park offered events run by Javelin Track Days so I popped along for a look see last summer, as it's only 15 miles from my home

Blyton Park is owned by Ginetta Cars. On an old airfield, the main track is 1.5 miles long with an interesting variety of corners and an excellent surface. It has the advantage of wide grassy runoff areas with only one place where there is a chance to meet Armco if you get it wrong!

So last September I booked a day there, including for an extra £20, a twenty minute session with an instructor. So off I toddled in pouring rain feeling very apprehensive as I had never done a track day before. After signing in, we had a very comprehensive safety briefing outlining the dangers of the circuit and the various flag signals to watch out for. As my Frog was probably the slowest car there blue flags were going to be very important.

The actual driving began with three sighting laps to see which way the anticlockwise circuit went. Then, after a short break I met Tim my instructor whose first question to me was 'What do you know about trail braking?' Not much! 'Well that's' what you are going to learn' Out on the circuit he sat beside me showing me the lines round the corners. Gradually he encouraged me to go faster and brake later and soon he was telling me to brake up to apex of the bend. It is hard to convince yourself if that's OK but eventually I began to get the hang of it.

On my own I had an absolute blast getting quicker and keeping up with some other drivers who had not had any instruction. One chap in a Caterham followed me for several laps just to find the lines. Returning to the paddock area with warm tyres and the smell of hot brakes I felt quite pleased with myself. I had several sessions of a few laps at a time and thoroughly enjoyed the day.

I went home thinking 'I've got that out my system'. No chance, I was hankering after a dry track day sometime!

On the last day of January this year I was back again with the promise of a track that was going to dry out through the day. At this point I must say that I had to get the gearbox rebuild after it failed last autumn. It's now got a straight cut close ratio



gear set and I've upgraded from inch and a quarter SUs to a 45DCOE Weber so all 1330 cc are pulling their weight.

Out on the circuit for the first session it was clear that it was still damp and slippery. However my new Yokohama 539s were settling in well and grip was coming. As the day wore on the track dried out and in the afternoon I had a ball. We covered 60 miles over several short sessions and used nearly 4 gallons of fuel but it was worth it. Suffice it to say I was completely knackered.

The whole session cost me £89 plus £10 for the hire of a helmet. Excellent value! I recommend it to other members of MASC.

Would I do it again? You can be sure of that. Cadwell is not far away from where I live...

Note the MASC badge on the grille!



HYDRAULICS, SPARKS & INDICATORS

Hydraulic systems maintenance on Sprite and Midget (Speed Bleeders)

Sometimes called 'Automatic brake bleeders' or 'Speed Bleeders' (see picture) they can be the perfect solution for eliminating the tedious, time consuming and repetitive job of bleeding hydraulic brake and clutch systems. (insert image of speed bleeder) By replacing your existing bleed nipples with these 'Speed Bleeder' nipples, bleeding the hydraulic brake or clutch system becomes easy and it also allows for a one man operation if you are working alone without an assistant. At around £10 each it can be argued that the well known Gunsons 'Easibleed' bleeding system is cheaper (£15-£20), which it is: however some people, but not all, have difficulty obtaining a seal either at the Easibleed reservoir (bottle) neck or at the master cylinder connection allowing for an egress of fluid under pressure.



The 'Speed Bleeder' design is such that they incorporate a one way valve preventing air entering back into the system and eliminates the repetitive process of tightening and un-tightening. Simply un-tighten the 'Speed Bleeder' 1/4 of a turn and pump the hydraulic brake or clutch lever / pedal, depending upon which hydraulic system is receiving attention, until the system is free of air and tighten! Of course you will have to affix a tube to the bleed valve whilst 'bleeding' so that the hydraulic fluid being emitted, from your car's hydraulic brake or clutch system can be directed into, and collected in, a jar, jug, pan or similar receptacle.



Dry joints and a lack of spark anyone?

This can affect many of us, of a certain age, over the winter months but can also affect our Sprites and Midgets at any time of the year. This information has been broadcast before but the problems still arise and may not be known by newer members. The continuing problem was highlighted last year when our Chairman's Frogeye was brought to a standstill on the road to the Club AGM. That breakdown was quickly sorted by a nearby member but you may not be so lucky! In this case the brass contact on top of the rotor arm had broken loose: when did you last check yours?

Firms such as Aldon Automotive and Distributor Doctor are able to provide better quality alternatives to the commonly available reproduction rotor arms which routinely fail and leave people stranded.

Electronic ignition can be fitted concealed in the distributor and replacing the contact breaker and unreliable condensers but the rotor arm, depending upon which sort of electronic ignition is used, will still remain. My own choice has been the Aldon / Pertronix 'Hall effect' system that has proven reliable over many years and many miles at home and abroad.

Apparently, recently manufactured rotor arms have been failing because the typical 'mix' used in the injection moulding process now contains more carbon blacking than of old and is more conductive to electricity. It has been found that the rivet which holds the brass contact inlay into the moulding, on reproduction rotors, is slightly longer than the original bringing it too close to the spring clip on the underside. The High Tension (HT) current, averaging

30,000 volts, is always looking for the easiest route to earth and shorts out, from the tip of the over length rivet, through the reduced thickness of the more conductive plastic and the spring clip on the underside of the rotor arm to earth out down the distributor shaft. This results in no spark at the sparking plug and a 'failure to proceed' from your Sprite or Midget. The system sometimes rectifies itself on cooling but then repeats itself with increasing frequency until the rotor permanently short circuits.

Distributor Doctor offers 'Lucas red rotor arms' which are modelled on the original 1960s design but made from modern materials on the latest machinery to very close tolerances and have achieved a good reputation for reliability. The integrally moulded brass inlay dispenses with the troublesome rivet. The increased insulation properties of the body makes them suitable for use with high voltage ignition coils and electronic ignition kits. The spring clip on the underside, in conjunction with a revised internal tolerance assures a really snug fit upon the distributor spindle even on old and slightly reduced diameter mountings.

Even with the uprated rotor arms it is worth being vigilant and occasionally checking the security of the brass contact.

When fitting a rotor arm consider applying some petroleum jelly to the distributor drive shaft rotor arm seating to eliminate moisture as I have been called upon to work on a car where the distributor drive seat rusted such that it grew so much in size that it cracked the rotor arm that had to be chiselled off. I also tend to use petroleum jelly on most electrical joints to stop them being effected by damp and corrosion.

Part number for Sprite / Midget 25D distributors is DRB101

Part number for alternative 45D type distributors is DRB104

Distributor Doctor can be found at www.distributordoctor.com and Aldon Automotive at www.aldonauto.co.uk.

Electronic ignition systems are easily fitted to Sprite and Midgets and are available for both Positive and Negative earth configurations fitting inside a vehicle's distributor with no outward sign of conversion. It is easy to carry a spare distributor base plate set up with points and condenser in case of the rare, but not unknown, instance of the electronic system failing at the roadside. Why not also consider carrying a spare coil, for they are relatively cheaply purchased at the car shows and

can be affixed to a suitable bolt under the bolt there being no need to clutter the boot.

Early Sprite Indicator warning.

How many owners of Sprites Mk 1 & 2, and Midget Mk1's, admit to having failed to cancel the direction indicator switch, after a vehicle manoeuvre, and driven some distance with the indicators lamps flashing a turning signal.

For those unaccustomed with the earlier models there is an indicator switch top centre of the dashboard. Switch left for left hand indication and switch right for right hand indication. Switch to centre to cancel. There is no automatic cancelling feature. Warning that the indicator lamps are flashing is given by a green flashing lamp on the dashboard before the driver noticeable at night-time but often missed in daylight. If the vehicle is fitted with an original indicator relay upon the bulkhead, under the bonnet, then there is the clicking of the opening and closing contacts to be heard if the vehicles speed, and top down motoring, does not have the wind whistling in the drivers ears. Modern relays being electronic, unlike modern SU, or copy, electronic fuel pumps do not have this feature.



What I have done is to fit a 12 volt 85DB buzzer, obtained for about £3 from Maplin, to my Sprites indicator relays securing them with a cable ties. The buzzer has two wires - a red feed and black earth. The black earth I trimmed to length and soldered to a brass washer made from some shim. This joined several earth leads on the relay mounting screw that attaches the relay to the bulkhead. The red lead was soldered 'pick-a-back' to the 'Lucar' terminal attached to the 'P' terminal on the relay.

Some of the 85Db's are lost through the bulkhead but I now have clear warning that the indicators are in operation.

Alan Anstead

Kent Area Rep & Reps Rep to National Committee
enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
T:01322-384050 (answer-phone)

42 YEARS LIVING WITH A MIDGET ... CALLED "BRACKEN"



The story of "Bracken" the Midget started in 1976 because of a Morris 1100 christened the Fred Flintstone car by my girlfriend, now my wife, Jane. This was my first car and although reliable the hole in the passenger side floor was getting big enough for Jane to put her feet through and assist with acceleration or braking – thus the name.

As much as I liked the 1100, I liked Jane even more and did not want to lose her through the floor, so the car had to go. My friend Peter had a Spitfire at the time, so I was already attracted to the joys of open air motoring (not to mention that I was a little jealous of the street cred that the car was giving him) so decided that the replacement had to be a sports car.

A quick look at the local papers soon unearthed a nice looking Midget at a nearby dealer. It was a 1974 (1275cc) car in Bracken, the same colour as the "Your Mother wouldn't like it" MG Midget adverts from the 70's. As I could (then) match

the "driver" in the advert for long hair and flared jeans, I decided it was ideal to compete with Peter's Spitfire. A cursory look around, the offer of a few pounds for my 1100 and the deal was done. To be honest, once I had set my eyes on "Bracken", I was not going to leave the showroom without buying her. So Jane and I had moved on from the floorless car to the roofless car. Little did we know at the time the infectious nature of the MG bug and that we would still be driving various MG's, including Bracken, in 42 years time.

Probably not the most practical purchase that I have ever made given that I had no garage to keep it and had to commute across London most days, but practical did not seem to be a priority when in your early twenties. Being great fun to drive was far more important. And as for that MG advert Mother loved it – it was Dad that didn't like it!

Within 4 weeks of buying Bracken we were off on our first adventure. Jane's family had booked

a holiday house in the South of France and her Dad invited me to join them (probably safe in the knowledge that I had my degree finals when they left so would not be able to make it and in any event that little car would not make it all that way). He underestimated the attraction of making such a trip in a Midget (or was it the thought of not seeing Jane for two weeks?). So the last exam was on the Tuesday, on the ferry next morning and Bracken and I pulled up in the drive of their holiday home at 10:00 Thursday, much to everyone's surprise (no mobile phones to warn of my arrival in those days).



up the hill of course but we managed to limp back to London OK.

For the next few years Bracken was our only car for and as such had a hard life: daily commuting across London from Kent to Middlesex (pre M25) and frequent trips to Devon with tents and everything you need for two weeks camping stowed away in every nook and cranny.

The only repairs needed in the first few years were a new clutch after the French trip and a gearbox rebuild at about 80K after it developed a habit of jumping out of first gear. I was not really sure what the problem was but a new layshaft and 1st/2nd hub were put in as the originals looked worn and pitted on 1st gear. I am not sure if it was through luck or judgement but it was as good as new when I put it all back together.

Jane and I were married in 1980 and of course Bracken was our wedding car.



A few fantastic days followed of excursions into the Alps and Monte Carlo, it is what the car was made for. Of course a two seater car could seem a little unsocial especially as Jane had two sisters and a brother who wanted to join in the fun. No problem as we all fitted in the car for the daily 2 mile drive down the hill to the beach – who says that a Midget has no room in the back? There is plenty of space for three to sit on the lowered hood. Bracken behaved faultlessly until we decided to take a detour into Paris on the way home and the clutch started slipping going round the Arc de Triumph. Nothing to do with the heavily loaded trips



I don't know if it was because Bracken was jealous of now having to compete for my attention with Jane but it chose this day for its first and only time when I have needed breakdown assistance. Driving away from our wedding venue down the M11, we could smell petrol. After overtaking the car in front assuming it was them we stopped to find petrol pouring out of both carburetter float chambers straight onto the exhaust manifold! I





still suspect sabotage but at least we got a room upgrade when the police who stopped to help rang our hotel to say we were going to be late arriving. The hotel took pity on us and upgraded us to a suite which was bigger than our flat at the time.

Bracken's next adventure started in 1982 when work took us out to live in what was then West Germany. Bracken was still our regular transport and created quite a bit of interest with the Germans. However when the family started to grow (with two of our sons being born in Germany) something bigger was needed. Our fellow Brits in Germany all seemed to take great delight in buying Mercs, BMW's and of course if you wanted a hot hatch the GTi Golf was the only way to go. I of course was determined to wave the flag and thus the second MG came into our lives in the form of a Flame Red MG Maestro 2.0EFI. This was a brilliant car that could also be described as practical and (much to their frustration) could beat my colleagues GTi's off the line.

On our return to the UK in 1987 Bracken was starting to show signs of her hard life with over

100K on the clock and some rust appearing in the usual places. With a busy work life and a growing family we had little spare time to get on with a restoration so she was retired until I could free up some time to get on with the work – which as it turned out would not be for another 27 years!

Roll on 27 years that saw the Maestro replaced by evermore practical cars we get to my retirement. I am ashamed to say that Bracken was looking a little forlorn by this time as it was covered in junk in the garage. However two events galvanized me into action. Jane had bought a MGZR which rekindled the MG spirit that had been dormant within us, and then my son decided to buy a 1971 Midget through Ebay. Only problem was that it was 300 miles away and he had not seen it in the flesh. However it had an MOT (not sure how) so we set off on the train to drive it home. Somehow we got it back, which is a story in itself. Tinkering with my son's car however completely reignited my enthusiasm and the restoration of Bracken finally began.

The restoration is a separate story but in essence I stripped the car to a bare shell. The bodyshell was entrusted to the MGOC workshop and the engine was rebuilt by Cambridge Rebores (who advertize in MASC). Both did a superb job and delivered me back a pristine bodyshell and engine for me to put it all back together (without scratching anything!) Bracken's first MOT in 28 years was obtained a year to the day after removing the first bolt.

And so a new era for Bracken began with a much more pampered life than before. 3 years on we have covered nearly 5000 miles and it as much fun to drive now as when I drove it out of the showroom 42 years ago although the flares and long hair have now gone! The MG bug though is as strong as ever with an MGZTT 260 and an MG3 in the fleet to keep Bracken company.



PRACTICAL CLASSICS CLASSIC CAR

It hardly seems any time at all since I was last writing about the Classic Motor Show back in November, but here we are in February (March by the time you read this) talking about the forthcoming Practical Classics Classic Car and Restoration Show coming up towards the end of March. How time flies and I still have a long list of jobs to be done on the Midget, well I suppose it has been rather cold recently.

We have 6 cars lined up for the show and you will be able to read about four of them here.

This show is becoming more popular each year and it does become more difficult each year to come up with something a bit different and unusual, including the cars. So if you have any thoughts or suggestions I would be pleased to hear from you, please drop me a line.

Discounted tickets for Saturday and Sunday are available using the club discount code which is printed in the magazine, if you take a advantage of the discount (if not, why not?) please be sure to visit the club stand and leave us with the ticket stub or print at home voucher some the club can offset some of the costs involved. Please come and see us we are in hall 5 stand 540. We will be having the 'for sale' board up again so this is an ideal opportunity to move some of the unwanted spare parts you might have, it is free and reaches a large number of potential buyers.

This year sees 2 anniversaries, which I am sure you are all aware off, the 60th birthday of the Frogeye and the 35th year since the club was formed, quite some achievement on both counts. You should also make a note of the 26th August for the Frogeye birthday bash at Wroxall Abbey. An event not to be missed.

Looking forward to seeing you there

Alan Pritchett

a.pritchett@btinternet.com 07720 238810

MG Midget 1500 – SYD 248W

Owner : Alan Couch

Syd the Midget was bought in 2012 to be used alongside the owners Frogeye, but to be used on longer distance events. It is a late production car manufactured in 1979 with a chassis number 220 before the end of production. The mileage is believed to be 251,000.



One week after purchase Syd was successfully taken to the Spridgetreffen event in Bremen, Germany, and has attended the event at different locations in Germany on a number of occasions since then.

The car is standard with the only changes being the fitting of chrome bumpers, and comfortable MX5 seats, which are great on the long distance events.

Austin Healey Mk1 Sprite – 909 MUY

Owner: Dave Colclough



The Car was manufactured in October 1958 just after the 9-stud screen was stopped and registered and sold in Jan 1959 in Worcester.

The car still has 948cc 'A' series engine and drum brakes all round,

Not much is known about the car prior to 1984 however, I do know it had been de-seamed and a cut out added behind the seats to gain easier access to the boot (it's really useful and I have no intention of ever turning it back) in the 60's. It then

AND RESTORATION SHOW

was in a field for many years rotting away during the 1970's. In its life it has been restored at least twice and went to Le Mans a couple of times in the 90's.

I have had the car for about 14 years. I spent the first year or so working on the upper body, removing the badly crazed paint and re-spraying it with the original GN12 Dark Green colour. Other than that it I had a couple of years of the usual issues with old cars, fuel, mixture, ignition etc. All now seems to be fixed and we have had some fantastic trips around the Cotswolds and the West Country, with the Heart of England Midget and Sprite Club.

AH Sprite Mk1 – 846 FKK

Owner: John Clark



The Frog and I first met some 45 years ago at the back of a local garage in 1973 where it had lain since a coming together with a stationary fence post. The repairers had given up since rot had long since taken over. Thirty quid and the car was mine. A lot of DIY metal work and frequent visits to the local welder and to breakers yards (there were so many interesting bits in those gold mines in those days) and the car was whole again. It was another 25 odd years though before the Frog hit the lanes of Kent and did local shows. First time out it won a prize! A bit later it crossed paths with Alan Anstead and joined the MASC fold.

Over the following years the car has changed from completely standard to something else. First a 1275 engine and box, then Ford Type 9 and a 3.9 diff all contributing to more adventurous trips out including Le Mans, Angouleme and various Miglia Tours. Italy and the Stelvio – a piece of cake.

MG Midget 1500 – UHO 467V

Owner: Liam Murphy



Ably assisted by our spanner-stealing spaniel, Beth and I have dismantled most of the car. To name a few winter jobs: The clutch needed replacing, so we pulled the engine and gearbox, painted them up, did a variety of engine upgrades; we've fitted MX-5 Mk1 seats, and a hidden audio system; we've refurbished the dashboard with a new laser-cut gauge and switch panel I designed in CAD; all of the beige interior panels have been re-trimmed in black PVC vinyl; rebuilt the steering column and rack; new carpets, brake lines, wiring system, horns, indicator lenses...

It's been quite a busy winter, working in our cold little workshop near Walsall! We'll be reassembling the car on the stand at the NEC, hoping to MOT it soon after for a summer of fun. You can follow our progress in the run-up to the show at www.LittleBlueMG.co.uk and on Instagram @LittleBlueMG. We're looking forward to meeting more club members there, so please come by and say hello!

**AH Sprite
Mk1 – OAS
907
Owner: Alan
East-Jones**



THE BIG BRIEF INTERVIEW

WITH RALLY AND RACING LEGEND, JOHN SPRINZEL – PART 2



John then turned his back on the fickle European climate and moved to a tiny Hawaiian island to pursue a career in his other passions - wind surfing and yachting, which he continues to this day blissfully happy with his family. John published three volumes of memoirs, 'Sleepless Knights' (1962), 'Spritely Years' (1994) and 'Lucky John' (2013) and also a tuning manual for BMC cars called 'Modified Motoring' (1959 & 1961).

The name John Sprinzel is also one of the exclusive 'Who's Who' of names among 23 listed on the prestigious British Sportscar Hall of Fame with a citation reading, 'John Sprinzel won the British Rally Championship and his class at the 12-Hours of Sebring behind the wheel of an Austin Healey Sprite and is one of the best known racing and rally drivers of his era'. Peer recognition doesn't get any better than that!

Enjoy our Big Interview with one of the great personalities of International Rallying and Racing ...

We begin our interview with an easy question, how did you make your start in motor sport?

I grass tracked my Ariel Red Hunter while in the RAF in 1949 and then borrowed my mother's Austin A 30 to take part in the 1955 RAC Rally

What has been the best moment in your motor sport career?

I think third overall on the 1960 Liege-Rome-Liege Marathon in a steel bodied Sprite or fourth overall on the 1965 Safari with a bog-standard Mercedes 190 saloon

What has been the worst moment?

The stub axle breaking when leading the Private owners on the 1968 London to Sydney in an MG Midget with Roy Fidler





Which event did/do you most look forward to?

The Liege Rally

Congratulations, you've won the lottery, what car do you rush out to buy?

Almost any version of the 911 Porsche

What are your future motor sport plans?

Watching it all on TV

Which competition car & driver has impressed you most?

Probably Vic Elford's drives in 911's with David Stone

What's the most entertaining event you've ever been involved in?

Running the 1970 London to Mexico World Cup Rally with John Brown - and finally realizing how much work there is in Organizing a big event

What would you say is your most effective or personal asset?

My lovely wife Caryl, who I met when I sold her a Marcos 47 years ago



What advice would you offer the aspiring driver or co-driver entering the sport?

Do every possible event in all types of competition in as many different cars as you can. Then decide which is your best and concentrate on that

Who has been your greatest motoring inspiration?

Originally Jimmy Ray and Goff Imhoff, names you've probably have never heard of but who were very successful drivers of the early fifties - in Triumph and Allard

Tell us something surprising about yourself?

My passion was always sailing - either crewing on Ocean Racers or representing Greece for three years in the World Windsurfing Championships

Just one extra question please John ... What will we find on the Sprinzel car CD or iPlayer?

A lot of varied Pop. Cold Play, Beatles and in between

Our thanks to John Sprinzel for being a great sport and taking part in our interview for MASCOT and we extend our good luck wishes to him for the future.



Years of experience as a rally star John Sprinzel choose the Pirelli Roadstar.



all about driving in all kinds of
which he was an international star,
and 30 top rallies, and was British
Racing, ten garages and a

And a set of Pirelli Roadstars.
And he knows all about driving in all

A unique 70 Series low profile
y thousands of miles of unusually
deter's wheel stays open and flat
ing. But being wider, it has a
h the road than a conventional
has a better grip on the road. So
y slip, and the tyres respond
more immediate and positive

in further contact area to more

effective braking. And because there's more tread to
support the car, there's less work for each part to
perform. And less work means less wear.
Some 70 Series tyres have a tendency to cause steering
match. Roadstar's rounded tread, plus the built-in
safety shoulder, takes you across ridges and through
deep puddles with little effect on the steering.
And the block pattern with its multiple grooving
ensures cooler running, a must for several hours of high
speed motorway driving.

All of which is precisely what every motorist enthusiast
wants. Which is why John Sprinzel drives on them. And
why the Pirelli Roadstar is now available to you.



PIRELLI
CINTURATO
ROADSTAR



Piston broke? No, actually, crankshaft snapped! PMO still made it around the Monaco circuit on the two rear cylinders, at the end of the 1962 Monte Carlo Rally.

HERE'S A TALE FROM LONG AGO:



I bought my first Sprite, a 1969 MkIV painted in various shades of British Racing Green, while studying at Cambridgeshire Tech (Now Anglia Ruskin University). That was back in 1979. I loved that car; it was much used and abused for a year, until one Saturday night it was stolen: of course, it lived on the street, and I had forgotten to fit the essential Krooklock.

Well, the police found it in a dodgy part of town: it seems that the thief had stolen it just to get home, but unfortunately he'd set fire to the parcel shelf to cover his tracks, and the result was a burned out wiring loom, which wrote the car off.

With encouragement from my dad, I bought the car back from the insurance company, and my dad towed me home, all the way from Cambridge to Hampshire, behind his Cortina (a 2.3 XL in Miami Blue: nice!).

No doubt many members will know that the snag with being towed, when you are in a Spridget, is you can't see beyond the tail lights of the car in front - no matter what sort of car it is (unless it is another Spridget). So started a terrifying 4 hour drive, with me in a freezing cold car (not even the radio worked, dammit) with my eyes glued to my Dad's brakelights. Three times he braked, and three times I ran over that tow rope before could brake, and three times that tow rope snapped under my wheel. That meant, of course, that it got shorter every time, so that by the time we drove through

Newbury it was about twelve feet long. We were going downhill, about to turn right into a lane when my dad braked again and I ran over the rope for the fourth and final time.

Except that this time, the rope went right round the front suspension, and when I hit the brakes hard, the rope yanked right through the front brake hose!

There is nothing quite like going downhill about two feet from the back of your dad's pride and joy, when your brake pedal goes straight to the floor. It really focuses the attention. Luckily I had the presence of mind to grab the handbrake and yank it just in time. The last few miles home I had to rely on the handbrake alone, and when we finally made it (at about 4pm) I had to go and lie down for an hour: I was totally shattered!

I'm pleased to say that a couple of weeks later I had fitted a new loom, some second-hand instruments (yes, they were cheap then), repainted the dash, and used aerosols to respray the scuttle and the back half of the bonnet, where the fire had blistered the paint. So the Sprite had yet another shade of green. But it still went just as fast, and still looked great outside the pub on a dark night.

I'm sure other members have shameful tales of Spridget abuse they can at last be tempted to share with us?

**Regards,
Peter Crook**



John Collins lifts the bonnet to show Geoff Mears the engine bay of an imported Midget.

February's club evening saw the arrival of new MASC member Paul Bottrill.

Not unusual to see a new member, but, unusual because Paul doesn't actually own a Midget or Sprite. Paul has hankered after one of our little cars from a younger age after seeing them in a car showroom in Birmingham opposite where he had worked. Paul, who now lives in Shropshire, had made the hour's drive over to see us to ask questions on what and how was the best way to buy a Midget or Sprite. Paul having already owned another classic car I'm not allowed to mention here (hint, I believe it helped win the Battle of Britain in the air), has a good knowledge of mechanics but Central members were soon offering extra advice and friendly banter on what and what not to buy. The club monthly meetings also turned into a game of hide and seek. The heating had broken in our usual meeting room so they had offered us an alternative, which I can only describe as a snug (older members will remember these). Once the usual chatter had begun we forgot other members arriving later would not know where we were. Luckily Justin Bates realized the predicament and went into the bar area to welcome in Andy Bird standing at the bar on his own. Sorry Andy, I hope no one else went home thinking we were not there. Ops!

A highlight of last month was the opening of Little British Sports Cars' new showroom. The business is run by Central MASC members John Collins and Rich Weaver. They had kindly invited us to their new premises to look around and view the



Rich Weaver, centre, talking with guests during the open day.

cars and spares they had imported from the USA. John Wragg, Steve Roberts and I were soon taking an interest in a rust free original Frogeye when we heard a commotion outside. Geoff Mears had arrived on the coldest day of the year, top down on his Midget and it had started to rain. As sometimes happens in cold weather the roof was not going to go up easily. Members were soon outside helping to pull and stretch the hood into place with frozen fingers. Job done and Geoff was able to drive home without soggy trousers. Once back inside there was a warm welcome from John's wife Pom who was making sure everyone had a hot drink and something to eat on a very wintery day. John's son Austin (8) was also on hand to lift up bonnets and open doors. A real family affair! I understand from speaking to John at the club meeting that they have already sold all of the cars except one. However fear not, more cars are on the way from America as we speak. If you are in the market for a rust free restoration project or parts you know where to go. We wish Rich and John all the best with their new venture.

Dave Warren Central MASC
Email to central.masc@live.com

Our club meeting this month has fallen on February 14th, Valentines Day, so several members will celebrate with a “romantic dinner” with their wives and partners before the meeting, making an enjoyable evening even more memorable. Our venue Court Farm Abbotskerswell (see photo) does extremely good food and ale, so expectations are high.

We have not done any run outs in our little cars yet this year but as soon as the good weather arrives we will be away !

I will include entry forms for 2018 shows in future MASC magazines so hopefully other members can join us.

My advert in Market Place, Wire Wheels sold as soon as the magazine was out, so thanks again Neil.

Chris Wood 5130 a/b



VOLUNTARY MARKETING OFFICER WANTED FOR MASC

Might you be a member of MASC with an existing or previous marketing background and willing to assist the club by helping it to promote its club activities and membership? Could you advise on a marketing plan, assist in its creation, advise on objectives (such as recruiting young members), be mindful of budget limitations and be objective in interpreting how we are performing as a club? If you think you can help and more importantly would like to offer your experience to MASC, then please contact our club Chairman, Mark Hall, on 01296 660103 or by email at: chairman@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk for further details.

Such is the gap between the Mascot deadline and publication date that I am writing this just a couple of days after my February Mascot dropped through my letterbox. In the February issue you can still read about area Christmas gatherings and celebratory meals which is another result of this necessary lead-time. This is a sort of time machine, that at this time of year, is a good thing since I am writing this in the coldest week of the winter and you will be reading it in early March. March is a great month full of promise, the really cold weather is behind us, the days are starting to pull out a bit, the salt is gone from the roads and everything is on the mend. It is definitely time to get the Sprite (or Midget) out on the road, the start of the season that just gets better and better from now on.



The only real event this month was Sprite night at the FBI, which fell on a cold dark winters night, fortunately a relatively new member, Geoff who is restoring a Frogeye, (see photos) had contacted me earlier in the week about attending the meeting and

as I was between him and the FBI, he picked me up on his way. It is always brilliant to welcome new members (especially those with technical skills and equipment).

On arrival at the FBI (after honing my chauffeur's Sat Nav skills) there were only a few cars in the vast car park and I started to wonder if anyone else had turned out on such an inhospitable night, however I needn't have worried as it turned out most of them belonged to our guys! We had a good turn out (for a winters night) with a couple of new faces including Simon (a fugitive from the MG owner's club), and it was especially good to see David Maskell again, who we hadn't seen for quite a long time (for very understandable reasons, see David's article in February Mascot). It will be great to see David and James's car on the road possibly at some of our events this year. I am a big fan of the MKII Sprite, having a 1962 example myself, I always think they manage to combine all the best bits of the frogeye with the practicality of the later body style. When I bought my MKII a couple of years ago there were only about 200 left on the road in the UK so they are not only brilliant little cars but also quite rare!

The meeting was lively, with a great variety of topics discussed including Bletchley Park, Aston Martins, Old film locations, restoration projects and James Bond, sadly it was soon time to leave before I had a chance to chat with all the guys at the far end of our table (King Arthur did have a point).

Dave Dixon (AKA Red and sometimes blue Leader)
e-dave@hotmail.co.uk





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The programme for the 2018 season has now been finalised as follows:

23rd April - Drive it Day - Owen & Lucy

20th May - Tim & Linda

24th June - David & Anne

3rd July - Mid week run/Dinner - Tony & Pat

22nd July - Graham/Doug/Geoff - run including driving tests at finish. Combined with South Essex MGOC

7th August - Mid week run/dinner - Francis & Coleen

26th August (possible weekend away) - Diane & Gary

4th September - Mid week run/Dinner - TBA

23rd September - Paul & Helen

2nd October - Quiz including Fish & Chip supper at Tuesday meet - Owen & Lucy

21st October (if weather holds) Dave & Anita

2nd December - Famous santa run - Jane & John

7th December - Christmas dinner - Tim & Linda

All dates subject to change.

Workshop Tip 1 - Paint repair by Paul Mutton

An update on the repairing of two stonechips on his white RWA Midget:

I visited another paintshop to get a 3rd (or 4th) opinion. It would be even more expensive here as the paint on my Midget was so thick they would have to rub down both panels and repaint to get a match. They then advised me to visit a local company to get an opinion on the paint colour (WT4??).

I went to Halstead Refinishing Services (01787 275388) near Colchester and met John (TR4 driver) the owner. Ever so helpful, he scanned the paint with an imaging device, sent it to his PC and this gave him a recipe for an exact, and I mean exact, match. Minimum order is 250ml and you will need a small amount of hardener for the paint.

He then delivered useful advice on how to repair – use a rolled up piece of masking tape rather than a brush or cocktail stick to deliver the paint. Gradually build it up every 2 hours. Leave for 24hrs and then use a piece of flexible plastic wrapped with 2000 grade wet and dry and feather the paint away from the centre to the edges. You need to bend the plastic and use a curved not flat face. Finish off with a quality finishing paste.

It's not paintshop perfect but I'm happy with it for £30 [paint, hardener and finishing paste] and £300 to the good.

Workshop Tip 2 - Gearbox repair by Tim Wyman

Having almost lost reverse gear in our ribbed gearbox it was decided to see what the problem was.....so after stripping it down, the first and reverse gears were found to be badly worn. A quick evaluation of the prices of the replacement parts made buying an exchange gearbox the best long term solution. Heathrow Transmissions were found to be very knowledgeable and happy to assist and they had a recon box on the shelf and ready for collection.

During discussions about gearboxes and diff's which they also supply, the conversation turned to gear levers. Evidently the smooth case gear lever is 4mm shorter in length than the ribbed gear box and this in turn causes issues long term with gear selection if used in the later ribbed box. The photo shows the subtle difference, between the two.

Following discussions with fellow club member Doug Plumb, who knew someone who had a spare, the correct replacement was sourced. However the question is; how many other ribbed gearboxes are fitted with the wrong gear lever? Maybe worth checking, if you are not sure; the correct length from the base of the ball to the "O" ring groove is 20mm.

Doug Plumb





Sprite Mk1V vs Midget Mk111

MG and Triumph Spares Day Stoneleigh

As usual all stands at the MG and Triumph Spares Day at Stoneleigh on February 11th were all the same size, designed to accommodate 3 cars.

Stuart Watson was showing his Tartan Red Mk IV Sprite which was looking really good and flying the flag for Midget 1500s was Keith Jewkes and son Ewan. The third car was originally going to be Alan East Jones's Frogeye but a trip to Canada ruled him out so hero of the hour was Barrie Smithson who, despite still battling the tail end of a bout of Aussie Flu, stepped up to the plate and agreed to show his fantastic Midget Mk III in Old English White with Red interior. Flags and banners were installed on the afternoon of Saturday the 10th along with Stuart's Sprite which left the two remaining cars to be installed at 8 am on the Sunday morning prior to the public being allowed in. Once we had installed the two remaining cars, we quickly realised three things. Firstly we were immediately adjacent to an eight metre square doorway. Secondly, it was blowing an icy gale directly through the door and thirdly, the organisers were intending to keep it open! After an hour, we had some idea of how Scott of the Antarctic felt and when Stuart told us that he was "going outside and may be some time"

in Captain Oates fashion, I decided to complain. I succeeded in getting the goods doors closed by a couple of metres but the benefit was minimal. When I asked why the brand new super heating system wasn't switched on, I was told by the organisers that it would be a waste of time and money as all the heat would escape through the open doors?!!

Dear old MASC pals began to appear, including Steve Kiel with his finely adjustable tilting apparatus for attaching to your engine hoist in order to remove and replace your engine and gearbox with ease. We all agreed that this was indeed a good thing.

A brace of Mascot editors soon appeared: current editor, Neil Thomas did a whistlestop visit, hot foot from his son's wedding in Miami where he delivered his speech in Spanish (do this man's talents have no bounds!) quickly followed by Gary "the legend" Lazarus on his annual mooch for parts.

Neil and I also had a chat with Nigel Silman who is a MASC member, but was manning the MGs on Track stand in his capacity as Deputy Chairman. The idea of a MASC track day for members ranging from unmodified cars through to K series versions, in conjunction with MGs on Track was floated. We all agreed that this was definitely do able and further details will hopefully follow.



2018 German Eurovision entry Berndt, Gitti, Henning and Ziggy

Treffen Comes to Stoneleigh

German friends of MASC, Bernd and Gitti plus Henning and Ziggi (isn't that a 70s band?) came on their annual pilgrimage to Stoneleigh on their hunt for Spridget parts and it was great to see them. They were residing at Hotel Hunter and being very well looked after. I know this because I asked them what they were doing in the evening after the Show. "We are going to a Whisky tasting", they replied enthusiastically. "Fantastic! Which Pub is that in?" I enquired. "Oh no, it's not a Pub – it's at Geoff's House!"



M type Midget

Car of the Show

My car of the Show would have to be the 5 owner, unrestored M type midget on the Triple M stand. Cracking car.

M type Midget

Steve

AREA REPORT

HOME COUNTIES NORTH

Upcoming Events

25 March Home Counties North West - Turweston Airfield – Classic Car Meeting, nr Silverstone

22 April Home Counties North West - Drive It Day – Bletchley Park

20 May Home Counties North West - Hambledon Classic Car Meet, @Stag & Huntsman (nr Marlow)

17 June Home Counties North West - Classics & Steam, Marsworth, Nr Tring

14 July Home Counties North West - Stowe School, Concours d'Ordinaire (Festival of the unexceptional)

5 August Home Counties North West - Classics & Fete, Higham Ferrers, Nr Bedford

9 September Home Counties North West - Classics & Village Show, Amersham Old Town

Mark Hall

Chairman MASC and HCN



On 20th January 2018, the National Committee met at the venue chosen for August's Spridget 60th (Wroxall Abbey Hotel) allowing some a preview of this superb venue in Warwickshire.

Also present were some of Stuart Watson's Heart of England area group 'Spridget 60th' organising team.

Chairman Mark Hall assured us that 'by hook or by crook' Areas will receive their Coleman shelters this year. The delay has been caused by problems finding someone to print the Club logo onto the tent material.

Mascot Editor Neil Thomas will begin to supply 'Long Haul' oversees members 'Mascot' in low resolution digital form so that they will no longer have to wait several months for their copy. If you consider yourself to be a 'Long Haul' oversees member and would like to take up this offer contact Neil by means shown in the Magazine.

Membership Secretary Stuart Watson reported that membership is now over 1000 souls touching 1400 if family memberships are taken in to account. If membership is, in future, done by way of Direct Debit not only will there be a saving of £2 but also the £5 joining fee will be waived.

Treasurer Dave King informed Committee that the Club's finances are good with sufficient reserves.

The subject of Spridget 60 / Masc weekend was then discussed. 136 rooms at Wroxall Abbey have been taken and also six others locally.

Sixty Six Austin-Healey Sprites, M.G. Midgets, and derivatives have so far signed up for the Saturday drive out which will probably be around the Cotswolds.

For the Sunday 'Spridget 60' event entry will be by Rally Plaque sent to participants beforehand as this means of entry was proven at Spridget 50 and allows Marshall's to usher cars along quickly without causing 'tailbacks'. It will also be possible to pay for entry 'on the gate' on the day.

Significant cars i.e. those with period 'Works' or race / rally history may be considered for free entry. If you own, or know of an owner of such a car, please contact the organising Committee to make arrangements before the event.

Plaque and window sticker design was selected from several that were exhibited.

There was no enthusiasm for the manufacture of a Sprite Arrow badge with 60 years although these are available, in limited edition, from Australia at 60 Aus Dollars + 35 Au.d p & p.

On the day, volunteers will be required for the marshalling of cars into and on the event field. Please do not be shy and offer your services. Many hands make light work and if a rota is produced such shared tasks should only be for a short duration.

FBHVC Drive it Day April 22nd 2018. Masc members have been invited to display their cars in the grounds of Bletchley Park the home of the WW2 Codebreakers. Entry is free. Having contacted all area reps information from Richard Bowles, who is co-ordinating the event, is that forty Midgets, Sprites, and derivatives are attending. Richard (richjbowles@gmail.com), at the behest of the organisers, has now had to restrict the number to forty cars accepting no further applications to attend..

East Kent Meeting January 14th 2018

Someone out there must be looking out for non hibernating Spridgets in East Kent. The weather of late has not exactly been for topless motoring but one week earlier those of us who ventured up to the London Bridges Run were suitably rewarded with sunshine and so it was seven days later for our Sunday meet. The main problem with Kent is that it is a long thin County and distances across Kent to meet up are not inconsiderable hence two meeting



places (Crown PH - Sarre - 2nd Sunday & Angel PH - Addington Green - 4th Sunday). Travelling to either meets can involve boring (M2) motorway driving hence variation is sought.

A last minute decision saw me drive west, to Brenley Corner, and meet up with those from the West. We then took in part our Cote de Kent Run first checking that there is sea at Seasalter (the tide is always out and water half a mile away when we pass) then taking in Whitstable High Street where the Sprite exhaust is especially good. Herne Bay passing the Pier followed before the final sprint to the Crown.

(John Clark. East Coast Co-ordinator)

Support Your Club with a New Years Resolution

Whether it's getting out there and attending meetings, tours, runs and / or shows in your Sprite, Midget, or derivative, whatever its condition, or just being there in person it is easy to forget that your Club needs you. It takes a lot of hard work making a Club 'tick' so make a resolution this year to get out there and support your National & Regional Club events.

Kent Area Meeting 28th January 2018.

Twenty nine people attended January's meeting. Not all came in Sprites, Midgets, or derivatives for Darren Tyre arrived in a Chevrolet sports. We did however grace the car park with eleven of our sort of cars.

Six new members came perhaps of a result of a new policy of asking an established member to contact a new member to 'break the ice' so that they at least know someone when first meeting



the crowd. I shall be seeking feedback on this policy later in the year. We still have room for more members in our Conservatory Clubhouse and welcome visits from members in other areas.

Our new members were Richard & Janet Carrison in a yellow Mk3 Midget who were escorted to the meeting by John Clark. Dawn & Steve West in a damask Mk3 Midget. Tim & Sarah Robinson and son Tom whose Sprite sat at home with a flat battery. Where would Tom have sat in the Sprite.

Steve & Kath Everest drove over from Sussex to say 'Hello' and meet the gang as they will join our Group for the April 22nd Drive-it-Day run to Bletchley Park.

After a couple of hours people drifted to the car park seemingly reluctant to leave.

I 'pulled the gate shut' on the car park at 1500hrs.

Alan Anstead

Kent Rep
Reps Rep to National Committee.
enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
01322-384050 (answer-phone)





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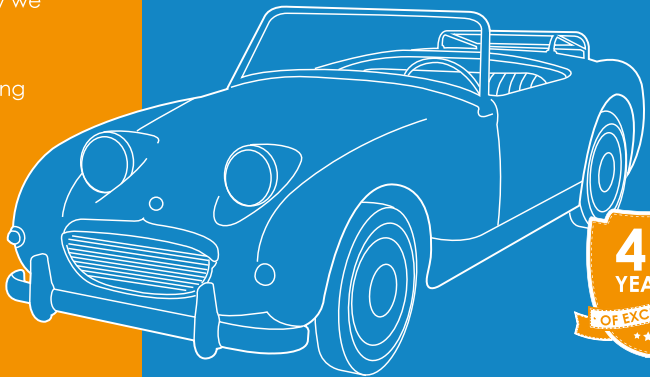
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We in the North West area are busy putting together a very active year of events for our Spritgeteers,

Last year we started a Cars and Coffee meeting at the Kilton Inn on the 3rd Sunday of each month. The first date for this meeting in 2018 will be 18th March , @ 10am – 1pm, All cars of any Marque and also Classic Car owners are welcome, This proved to be a very popular meeting, and it also helps out those members that cannot always make it to our monthly evening meetings because of other commitments,

On the 18th February we will be having our Valentines Day Run again!!We will be starting at the Kilton Inn the run has been organised by Mike and Karen Bennett so we are in good hands! (thank you both very much) We will be following a tulip map

(Hopefully anyway !!) to The British Ironworks which I have been told contains some very interesting artefacts at Oswestry and after that visit, it will be All Back to The Blue Cap restaurant on the way home, no cooking you tonight Girls !!

We have 19 car taking to the roads, so we are hoping that the weather will decide to be really kind to us on this day!

Neil has asked us to submit any photos of all the clubs representatives and of course we are sorry that we are having to inflict this on the membership, but this could help all members that want to avoid us on sight should the need arise!!!!

Our very best wishes to you all

Shelley and Neil McLeod



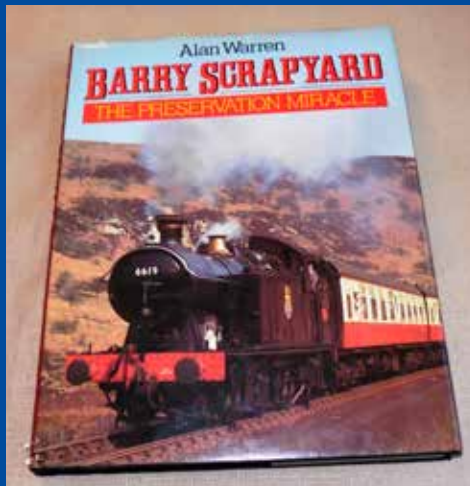
Well that's January out of the way! I always find it such a long and melancholy month. However it always gives me some time to sit by the fire sipping a single malt and reading a good book, always a pleasurable pastime.

The recent books in question are *Spritley Years* by John Sprinzel and Tom Coulthard and the *Barry Scrapyard* (the preservation miracle) by Alan Warren. I am sure *Spritley Years* is well known among M.A.S.C. members and it was fascinating to read the colourful racing and rallying stories of John Sprinzel. If I had to pick 4 dinner guests he would certainly be one of them. The second part was more about the history of the Sebring Sprites and that whetted my appetite to delve into this subject a bit further. Martin Ingall's website 'Sebring Sprite' is going to provide months of interesting searching. Indeed a trawl through some old issues of *Mascot* uncovered an article titled "a bit of detective work" by the same person and it also makes good reading.

At the end of December my wife and I went to a local pantomime. It is termed, a Pie a Pint and a Panto and that is exactly what you get! On leaving the theatre we went for a wee stroll down Byres Road, a main cosmopolitan thoroughfare in Glasgow's West End and paid a visit into Oxfam's charity bookshop. Browsing the transport section, I discovered a book on the *Barry Scrapyard*. M.A.S.C/ members in South Wales will probably be well aware of this place. It tells the story when

British Railways were accelerating the conversion from steam to diesel engines and their own yards could not cope with the volume of steam engines waiting to be scrapped. So they enlisted the help of places like the Barry Scrapyard. Although a good number of engines were scrapped, it soon became a haven for railway preservation and nearly 200 engines were saved. The book is a really good read.

Staying on the railway theme for a moment longer, although not an avid television viewer, Sunday nights during January were brightened by a gem of a programme entitled "The Biggest Little Railway In The World". It told the story of a group of model railway enthusiasts and their efforts to build a model railway and drive a model train from Fort William to Inverness; up the Great Glen - a trip of about 80 miles. It held special interest for me as I had walked it a couple of years ago with my dog and could relate well to issues that the group encountered.



On the car front, Good Frog should painted by the time you read this and be ready for the summer, and I can hear the groans already - its full steam ahead on welding the Rusty One, Again !!

Graham

Editors Note: I have a good friend living in Barry and I will be asking him what he knows about these old engines.



January is always a month of few events when I suspect a number of us are recovering from the festivities and perhaps planning summer holidays and arranging trips abroad with our cars. For many the idea of venturing out for a run in cold and often wet conditions is not on their radar, and the cars are secreted in garages away from the extremes of the winter. Others are being fettled or even restored to their former glory by enthusiastic owners having recently acquired their childhood desire or because the car really does need to be readied for the spring of even to ensure its last? officially required MOT.

The area has acquired several new members during the last few months; Marc Watters, Ben & Andrew Webb, Darren Bowler, Paul Batts & Richard & Marcus Feather. An email received from Richard Feather included a few photos of the Mk I Sprite

having just completed the metalwork restoration, and Ben Webb's Midget was featured in the Feb. issue of MASCOT.

Only 12 members turned out in January for the monthly meet/eat evening and the end of month run was supported with 5 cars, the low numbers being mainly as a consequence of illness. The chosen route was a mystery tour led by Peter and Valerie starting at the Barleymow's Farm Shop, Chard for breakfast. We then headed south through the villages of Tatworth, Thorncombe, Birdsmoorgate and Marshwood before heading towards Axminster. Yet more villages of Kilmington and Southleigh via Colyton finishing at Ottery St. Mary Nurseries. With much browsing, one pot plant purchased and a bite to eat we headed home before the light faded.

Peter Young



It's that time of year when I empathise with creatures that hibernate. To curl up indoors and do nothing. There's little incentive to take a Spridget out on a run, or drag ourselves out into a cold garage.

WILTSHIRE

But that's exactly what we must do. Wake up, dormouse! We need to keep the momentum up, literally, if we are to enjoy our little cars at their best in a few months. It may have been an interminable wet Winter here in Wiltshire, but it's a special birthday year for Spridgets, and there is plenty to look forward to. Let's get planning!

March

5th. Visit to British Motor Heritage at Witney. With Bath Motor Club. An interesting visit to the manufacturer of repair panels and bodyshells.

17th - 18th, Goodwood Members Meeting. Great historic race event, superbly presented but rather less razzamatazz than the Revival.

23 - 25th. Practical Classics Classic Car and Restoration Show, The NEC, Birmingham. Very big Classic Car show, with practical activities!

26th. MASC Wiltshire club night at The Barge, Seend.

April

7th. Midget and Sprite Challenge Races, Silverstone National Circuit

15th. The Corinium Run, Cirencester Car Club's scenic Cotswolds tour and economy run, often enjoyed by MASC members.

19th. Visit to Prodrive in Banbury. Possibly already full, as only 12 are allowed, but I will ask if you are very keen.

22nd. "Drive it day", and MASC have a visit to Bletchley Park, the World War 2 codebreakers museum. A good run for us, and a display area is reserved. Please let me know if you want to join this. Details are in MASCOT.

30th, MASC Wiltshire club night at The Barge, Seend.

May

4 - 6th, Donington Historic Festival. Great racing with Historic race cars of all eras. MASC will be there, along with many other car clubs.

20th, Dorset Spridget 60. Our great little cars hit sixty years in 2018! MASC Dorset have an event to celebrate, at the Holme Bush Inn, Wimborne, and I hope to lead a Wiltshire convoy down to Wimborne. Should be a lovely drive. Speak to me and see MASCOT.

Also on the 20th, The Mendip Meander. A Bath Motor Club relaxed navigational drive/treasure hunt over wonderful roads, always an excellent run.

26 - 27th. Prescott Hill Climb's "La Vie En Bleu and "La Vita Rossa". The French and Italian themed events at Prescott are wonderful early summer days, and a whole lot of fun.

28th, MASC Wiltshire club night at The Barge, Seend.

June

1st - 3rd. Vintage Nostalgia, Stockton Park, Wylve. Vintage cars, style and music. A fun, family event I've missed till now.

16 - 17th, Le Mans! Always unpredictable as a race, unique as an experience, and well attended by Sprite and Midget folk. A mass pilgrimage for Brits.

25th, MASC Wiltshire club night at The Barge, Seend.

July

6th - 8th. Le Mans Classic. A "must do" trip, once at least. I spent a week there with my Sprite and fellow MASC members in 2012. Must go again!

8th, The Aquae Sulis Classic Tour. Our friends at Bath Motor Club encourage us to join this super event, which is starting at the Royal Crescent in Bath this year, progressing via Wilton House for lunch and to Orchardleigh to finish, via the most wonderful roads we have. Don't miss it!

7th - 8th. Chateau Impney Hill Climb. The third "not to be missed" event in the same weekend, darn it!

14th, Atwell Wilson Road Run. Run from the car museum in Calne. The annual classic vehicle show is on the next day, the 15th.

20 - 22nd, Silverstone Classic. The biggest classic motor racing festival in the world. Meet Spridget drivers from all over, car clubs of every type, great entertainment, and see some superb racing too.

30th, MASC Wiltshire club night at The Barge, Seend.

August

26th. MASC Weekend and Spridget 60th Birthday. Wroxall Abbey, Warwickshire. A great celebration event is planned, and all details are on the website.

27th. Midget and Sprite Challenge Races, Castle Combe. Great Bank Holiday racing! Also....

27th. MASC Wiltshire club night at The Barge, Seend.

OK, so that will do for now. I will update you with more as the year opens up.

So that's my personal wake-up call! I've updated my diary, and made an achievable list of the next weeks tasks on my Sprite. I'm out to get some heat into my frozen garage now, and start to puzzle out the dashboard wiring again. Then the brake pipes. I need to finish my restoration before the Spring arrives! All best wishes to everyone, and please get in touch if you need inspiration yourself, or if there's anything you need a hand with. Just give me a call or mail.

See you at the Barge. Happy Spridgeting everyone!

Andy

01225 743554, 07776 171251

PS. Attached picture of how my Sprite spent most of the winter, hibernating.

DEAR MASCOT...

DEAR NEIL,

Battery cutouts for +ve earth cars

After reading John E Davies' excellent article on battery cut-outs for positive earth cars I'd thought I'd send in details of an alternate cutout that I use which may be of interest to other members. It's FAE part 98401 and is an 'isolatable' (is that a word?) terminal pillar for the earth lead that can be easily used from inside the car. It's compatible with both positive and negative earth cars and is very simple to fit on early cars as the 'spare hole' John mentions happens to be almost exactly the correct size (although clear off any paint around



the hole first to ensure a good metal to metal contact). Simply tighten in place and then move the earth lead from its original position to the new

terminal pillar instead - very simple!

When the wheel is unscrewed from the terminal pillar it totally isolates the earth lead from the chassis, and as the wheel can also be completely removed from the car it provides some added security. Unfortunately they are very hard to find in the UK, my recent purchases have all been from a Spanish ebay seller (search 'FAE 98401') at about £13 including postage.

CLIVE SEAGER
MEMBER 5003

HI NEIL,

I read with interest the article on page 12 of this month's magazine regarding battery cut-out.

It mentioned that positive earth battery cut-out switches are not available.

I replaced the faulty original cut-out switch on my Austin Healey 100/6 which is positive earth with an aftermarket switch.

The switch has been fitted in the same place as the original between the positive earth terminal and the earth to chassis cable.

Electrical Car Services supplied the switch at a cost of £20.50 plus vat.

I have attached the relevant page from their website.

<https://www.electricalcarservices.com/battery-isolator-switch/c-p-0-0-3>

I hope this may help someone.

KIND REGARDS ERIC BOOTH.

HI, NEIL

Just got back from a short break in Madeira and thought I'd share this with you. Look what greeted us in the Arrivals hall at Funchal Airport!

It's real and appears to be all there but couldn't find out anything about it, either what it was doing or how it got there.

Apologies for the picture quality, it was a bit dark and I only had my phone with me.



Best wishes,

JOHN GIBBONS



MUSINGS

I was interested in 'Musings' in the December MASCOT. I would imagine the Sprite, Terry mentions in the February issue, is the one in the agricultural display shed at Bicton Gardens. It has a nine stud windscreen and is plastered in unnecessary paraphernalia. Pretty gruesome for the purist but a Sprite all the same! Nothing a couple of weekends wouldn't put right.

PETER VALLINS



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HOE member Steve Newton, has been approached by David Manners of DMG in Oldbury, West Midlands and offered a discount on parts to MASC members upon production of their membership number. Whilst DMG don't advertise with us, as it is a discount offered for the benefit of all members, I feel it appropriate to include this one off flyer in this month's magazine. In future, should space allow, DMG may wish to formally advertise in MASCOT.

Neil



Editors Note: Whilst recently flying with American Airlines, I watched a film called Atomic Blond and in it I spotted a Midget. I took a photo of the screen on the back of the seat in front. I plan to publish more information on Spridgets in TV and film, if you know of any let me know.

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

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NOTTS/DERBY Ian Cooke, T: 0115 938 3838 E: ilcooke@btinternet.com

NORTH NOTTS John Austerfield, T: 07778 636070 E: austerfield.07@btinternet.com

& SOUTH YORKS

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SOMERSET Valerie Young, T: 01460 391431 E: peteryoung81@aol.com

SOUTH WEST WALES David Hill, T: 01239 811307 E: david@hill.be

SURREY Mike Gorman, T: 01737-552256 E: gorman698@btinternet.com

SUSSEX Chris Harding, T: 01342 718860 E: harding.cm@btinternet.com

WILTSHIRE Andy Cross, T: 01225 743554 E: andyspeedbox@gmail.com

YORKSHIRE Rob Armstrong, T: 07889 090411 E: mascyorkshire@gmail.com



**ALSO SEE THE CLUB
NIGHTS SECTION FOR NEW
AREAS AND CONTACTS**

Compiled by Neil Thomas.
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.

CLUB NIGHTS

- 1st 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/>
- 1st Tuesday **ESSEX AREA.** Now meet at The Green Man, Green Man Lane, Kelvedon Road, Little Braxted, Essex CM8 3LB. For further details contact Gary Knight, Tel: 01376 562172 Mob: 07932 077305 email: gknights@live.co.uk
- 1st Wednesday **CENTRAL AREA.** Now meet each month 8.30pm onwards at the Tame Otter, Lichfield Road, Hopwas, Tamworth, B78 3AF, 8.30 pm onwards 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.** Meet at Court Farm, Abbotskerswell, TQ125 NY Devon. Michael Ellis Michael_Ellis@live.co.uk and telephone: 07527 598091
- 2nd Wednesday **HEART OF ENGLAND.** All welcome at the Green Dragon, Sambourne, Redditch B96 6NU for 8.30 start. To check "what's on" please email Steve Newton on newton-gemini@sky.com
- 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@outlook.com Tel 01772 466648 Mobile 07921 089680
- 2nd Wednesday **BRISTOL AREA** will meet at Wishing Well, Wapley Road, Codrington, Bristol BS37 6RY. From 8.00pm – or earlier for a Curry enjoyed in peace! Contact Terry Horler 01454 881770 rebelwithasprite@hotmail.com
- 2nd Thursday **NOTTS/DERBY BORDER AREA.** The Hunters Arms at Kilburn, DE56 0LU (just off the A38) from 7.30. Venues may change through the summer months for country runs. Ian Cooke 0115 938 3838 ilcooke@btinternet.com
- 2nd Thursday **EAST ANGLIAN AREA.** Previously the Cambridgeshire Area meet at The Ferry Boat, at Holywell, 8pm
- 2nd Sunday **EAST KENT GROUP.** Meet at the Crown Inn, Sarre, CT7 0LF from 12.30hrs Contact Area Rep alan.instead@btopenworld.com or John Clark group co-ordinator jrclark@sky.com
- 3rd Tuesday **SCOTLAND.** Meet at Houstoun House Hotel, Broxburn, EH52 6JS. Meetings start at 7.30pm. Graham Smith 0141 954 8276 email: smith.grahamf@yahoo.com
- 3rd Tuesday **SURREY.** Meet at The Blue Ball, Deans Lane, Walton-on-the-Hill, Tadworth Surrey KT20 7UE. 7.30pm onwards. Contact Mike Gorman, gorman698@btinternet.com Tel: 01737 552256
- 3rd Sunday **NORTH NOTTS & SOUTH YORKS GROUP** meeting is from 10am. The Courtyard Tea Room, Womersley, north of Doncaster DN6 9BH. Contact: John Austerfield austerfield.07@btinternet.com 07778 636070
- 4th Monday **DORSET.** New Venue: Holme Bush Inn, Old Wareham Road, Wimborne, BH21 3RZ, 01202 659420 Contact John Gully. Tel: 07876 334 949 email: john.gully@btinternet.com
- 4th Thursday **SUSSEX.** Meet at Bolney Stage, Bolney, RH17 5RL from 19:00.
- 4th Thursday **HAMPSHIRE.** Meets at The Golden Pot, Old Odiham Road, Shalden, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 4DJ. Please ring Terry or Harriet Langridge on 01252 626063 for details.
- 4th Sunday **KENT AREA.** Back at The Angel, Addington Green, Kent until further notice. Contact Alan Anstead enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.com
- Last Monday **WILTSHIRE.** Meet at The Barge Inn, Seend, Nr. Devizes, about 7pm. Contact Andy Cross on 01225 743554 or email andyspeedbox@gmail.com
- 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 Stonemasons Pub & Restaurant, Ilminster TA19 9DJ. 7pm if eating, 8 to 8.30pm if not. Please contact Valerie Young on 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

MARKET PLACE

FOR SALE - Windscreen with surround , stamped 7-11-1973 £30
2 door shells and boot lid , need work £15 LCB exhaust manifold £20 Rear roll cage with centre support £25 MG badge for boot lid , 3 piece octagon , new £10 Midget badge for boot lid , very good used £5 MELCO 1 7/8" tube spanner for rear hub nut £30 clutch centring tool £5 Front bumper without over riders '67 mk3 , usable £15 Rear bumper with over riders '67 mk3 , reasonable £40 BL workshop manual , blue ring binder , 1970 , £20 Practical Classics glove box size manual £10 For details call Tony Reeve, 01531 630086 or a.reeve@tiscali.co.uk (Ledbury)

FOR SALE - 1973 MG Midget.Reg 12/6/1973. Off road since 2002, V5 in my name, SORN.

Bought by myself 2015 but on a back burner now as opportunity arose to repurchase an ex race Midget I had previously owned in 1983 and this is my 'true love' ! White but originally blaze red as can be seen making a reappearance. Runs and is complete apart from clutch slave cylinder.



With a slog you could be out for this year's celebrations but I won't get it done and need cash to put into my old racer with a view to attending.
£1500, 07542 755599 . Car is in Warrington Cheshire.

WANTED - Midget heater control cable with working switch to operate the blower fan.Contact Geoff on 01785 613189 or email geoff1@virginmedia.com

FOR SALE - Various publications for sale. Some of these go back decades and include full runs.

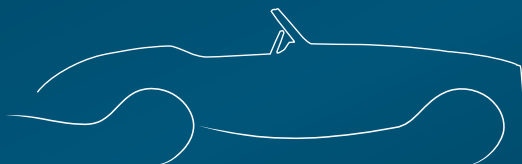
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Classic tractor
Car
There are also various car brochures. Open to offers on all.

Email: matthewlomas@gogglemail.com



FOR LOAN

Rotisserie, consisting of two stands and rotating frames for attaching to a Spridget body. It enables the shell to be rotated through 360 degrees for welding and other work on the body. This is available to MASC members on loan from Mark Boldry. It is currently in south Cumbria. If interested please contact Guy Weller guy@weller-lakes.co.uk for further details.



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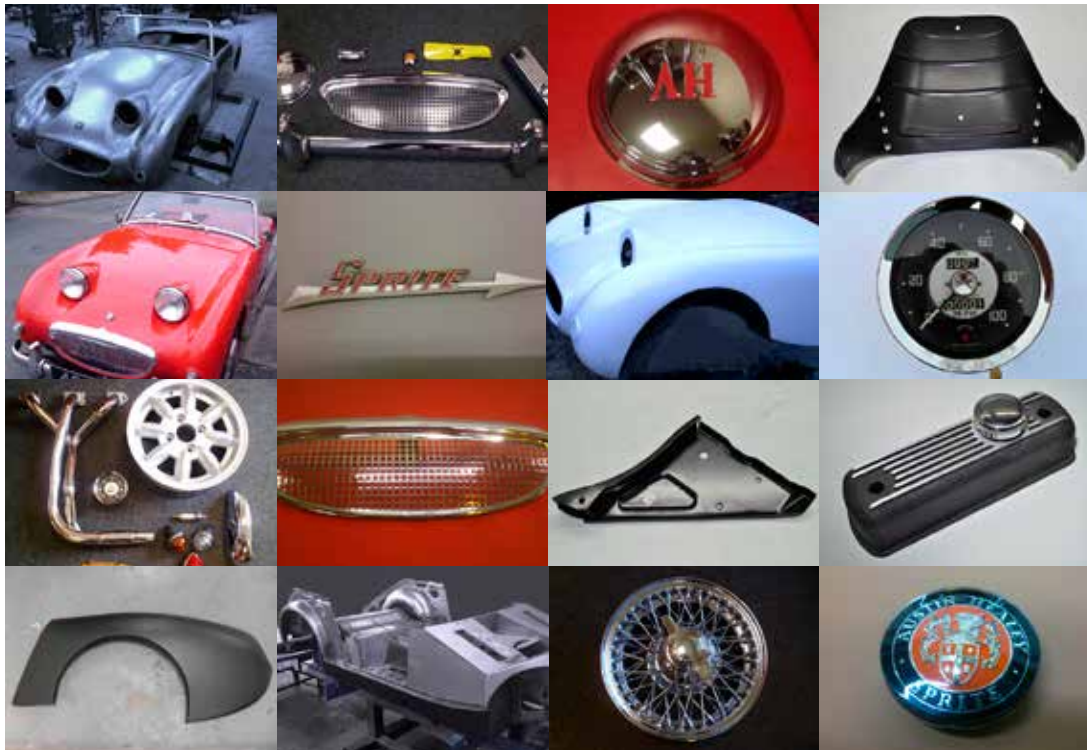
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