

# MASCOT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MIDGET & SPRITE CLUB

ISSUE 411  
JUNE 2018

£3

## MASC members on 'Drive it Day'



OUTSTANDING CLUB  
MAGAZINE OF  
THE YEAR 2018  
HIGHLY COMMENDED



LOOKS CAN BE DECEPTIVE  
BY NEIL GARDNER

YOUNG MEMBERS, RICKY RABOULD  
& OLIVER JONES TELL US ABOUT THEIR CARS

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: COMPETITION TIME • REMOTE BLEED • WISHBONES • TWO TEES DOWN THE HATCH

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# WELCOME

TO THE JUNE  
EDITION OF  
MASCOT

NEIL  
THOMAS

editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk



Activity on the Spridget front has really increased as this month's issue will testify, with Drive it Day making a major contribution. I try to present a balanced collection of articles each month, catering for everyone's interests and I do rely heavily on your contributions. These very much dictate the content of the magazine. Thank you for your contributions and please keep them coming. If you have any views on the content, I would welcome them. I would ask that everyone, including Area Reps, use my editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk email address for all correspondence as it keeps it all together for me. Thank you.

The club were delighted, this month, to receive the official certificate regarding our Practical Classics club magazine award. We should be very proud. It features within the front cover of this issue.

I received a great email from John Sprinzel this month with a fascinating insight into his exploits. Quite some solution to a problem. (see Dear MASCOT for details). Thank you John for continuing to support this great little club of ours.

I've also been contacted by stalwart MASC member and friend, Arie de Best from Holland. Arie has taken on board the young members' initiative and

is already training his son, Bram, for future Spridgetly activities. Bram loves the mag too.

You will also see in this issue a feature from HOE member, Steve Newton. Steve has set up a trackday for members to participate in. I urge you to register as described because the event will be opening on the 7th June and will fill quickly. This is your chance to give it a try in a really safe environment. Thanks to MGOT for offering us the opportunity to join you in this event.



## COMPETITION TIME

Dougal Cawley, of Longstone Tyres, has been a true gentleman and donated a fantastic prize for a competition open to our members only, namely a full set of 5 off 145R13 Pirelli Cinturato tyres. The best possible tyre for a Sprite or Midget. Delivered to your house (free delivery to UK only!) or you can go and get them fitted at Longstone Tyres. It will also include a set of inner tubes for wire wheels.

To win this fantastic prize, go to [www.longstonetyres.co.uk](http://www.longstonetyres.co.uk) and provide me with the answers to the two questions below. The answers are on the website.

1. What was the cost of the Austin Healey Sprite when first launched?
2. Where could a chap keep his Sprite?

Both answers must be correct to have a chance of winning the prize. All answers must be sent to me at editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk by Monday 18th June 2018 when the winner will be drawn out of a hat. No late entries will be accepted. The winner will be announced in July's issue.



**COVER IMAGE:**  
Drive it Day at  
Bletchley Park

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

**THURSDAY 14TH  
OF JUNE**

# EVENTS CALENDAR 2018

3rd June	Autokarna, Wollaton Park, Nottingham Contact - Ian Cooke at <a href="mailto:ilcooke@btinternet.com">ilcooke@btinternet.com</a>
23-24th June	Flywheel, Bicester Heritage - details at <a href="http://classicandsportscarshow.com">classicandsportscarshow.com</a>
20th-22nd July	Silverstone Classic
24-26th August	Spridget 60th, Wroxall Abbey Hotel, Warwick
13 October	MASC Open Day at Tifosi, Halls Garage, Bourne, Lincs



Send your events details to [editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto:webmaster@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk)

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# MIDGET AND SPRITE CLUB AND MGs ON TRACK



I'm very pleased and excited to announce that MASC has committed to a 25 car session at the MGs on Track event at Donington on Monday October 1st 2018. This will take the form of two levels of power and tune so that everyone who is interested will be able to have some fun on this historic circuit. Level one will be for standard tuned cars and beginners, and level two will be for more highly tuned cars and experienced track day drivers. These two levels will be separated into different sessions along with similar cars so that there is no problem with fast cars whizzing past beginners and making them nervous and in the same way there will be no slow cars hindering the more powerful vehicles so that everyone is catered for.

An exact cost for the day is not yet available but typically costs are between £150 and £195 but accurate information will follow. The only essential item is a helmet but if you are interested then you should look on the MGs on Track web site [www.mgs-on-track.com](http://www.mgs-on-track.com) and read the track

day FAQs section. Helmets are available for hire at the venue.

Below is an introductory text from the MGs on Track website welcoming MASC and giving a brief idea of the day.

*Donington, the fantastic Midlands circuit with the famous Craner Curves, is back to its usual place in our calendar this year. We hope to see 50 MGs of various models having safe fun on track. We extend a welcome to MASC who will be taking one of the sessions making the day up to 75 cars. This is a three session per hour day with 7 sessions each of 20 mins. We expect each car to have 2 hr 20 min of track time during the day assuming no stoppages. There will be plenty of space on track, running 25 cars on the two mile circuit will give each car an **average** of about 140 yards separation.*

If you are interested, the first thing that you need to do is register yourself and your car on the MGs on Track website. It would help if you quoted your BHP within the model detail of your car when registering so that the organisers can place you in the appropriate session. Once registered, you will receive e mail notification when booking for the event is open and then you need to move quickly and book yourself in on the website. There has been a lot of interest in this sort of event within MASC so react promptly to avoid disappointment!

**Steve Newton**



# YOUNG MEMBERS

## WE WANT YOU



### Young Members

Ricky says “I managed to make the most of the bank holiday sunshine and get out to a local show and grab a photo of me and my '63 MkII. She was originally my Father's car, which sat dormant outside our house for the best part of a decade. I picked up a spanner and started work when I was 15, and now 8 years later I am looking forward to making the most of my membership and getting some proper miles on the clock. I've recently started a little work on a 1500, hopefully not too far from now, it will look as smart as its green cousin.

Thank you to everyone for the warm welcomes.”

#### Ricky Raybould



**Editors Note** – see Ricky's journey on Page 21/22

Here is Isla McCheyne, one of our young members with her Frogeye, 388 UPA aka 'Donald'. The Sprite has been in the family since 1984 and Isla has adopted it from her father, **Andrew**



And this is what Oliver Jones has to tell us: “My Dad has always had a passion for old and classic cars, or anything with any sort of heritage. This is probably the reason that I began to fall in love with them a few years ago which happened to be about the same time that we began to discuss the possibility of owning one of our own, as my Dad had been contemplating it for years but never had anything to urge him to take the plunge. That is until I came along, providing him with a constant bombardment of encouragement, such as “imagine how good it would be” or even with some reverse psychology thrown in like “you'll never do it”.



After a while of searching for fairly inexpensive but fun classics, such as Midgets and Sprites, we came across what was to eventually be our very first (but hopefully not last) classic. An extremely pretty 1972 RWA Mark III Midget with the spritely 1275cc A-Series engine in harvest gold. At the time we were fairly apprehensive when visiting the seller



as there is a saying that you should never buy the first car you go and have a look at in the flesh, but for us it was too good to miss out on. We seized the opportunity and picked it up the following weekend. However now my Dad and I had a dilemma, where do we store it?

We didn't have a garage or even some sort of car port. For some strange reason, we believed that layering cover after cover over the top might save it from the summer rains but this just wasn't the case. After flooding twice it was clear that something had to be done. The plan was to always have a custom built garage, however at the time this was not an achievable goal before the approaching winter, so my Dad came up with the idea to buy a poly tunnel and build a custom wooden frame around it with breeze blocks in the centre, providing a sturdy floor and to prevent it from blowing away in gusty winds. You may think that these tunnels are primarily used for growing vegetables, such as

tomatoes or even strawberries during the summer, but it turns out they're fantastic for storing your favourite classics as well. However after the two years it had been stored there between uses, the tunnel began deteriorating meaning it was time for another renovation. Now the solution was to buy a huge piece of black tarpaulin and throw it over the frame of the tunnel. This along with what was left of the original material has kept our little Midget safe ever since. With the garage on the way, the future is looking bright."

**Oliver Jones**



# NEW MEMBERS

APRIL > MAY 2018

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

5658	Andrew Mcgee	West Yorkshire	Midget	Mk 3
5659	James Hadley	West Midlands	Sprite	Mk 3
5660	Andrew & Isla McCheyne	Northumberland	Sprite	Mk 1
5661	Colin Cane	Aberdeen City	Midget	None
5662	John Cave	Devon	IOW	Frogeye
5663	Paul Sharp	England	Sprite	Mk 4
5664	Andrew Mcdowall	Wiltshire	Sprite	Mk 1
5665	Barry Holmes & Julie Carter	Surrey	Sprite	Mk 1
5667	Steve Christiansen	California USA	Midget	Mk 3
5668	Danny Ruta	London	Sprite	Mk 1
5670	Ricky Raybould	Leicestershire	Midget	Mk 2
5671	Alex Mastin	Kent	Sprite	Mk 4
5672	Paul Stevens & Joanne Coleman	Leicestershire	Sprite	Mk 1
5673	David Raleigh	Somerset	Sprite	Mk 4
5674	John Kellagher	Fermanagh	Midget	1500
5675	Tim Bostock	Kent	Sprite	Mk 1

This is **Danny Ruta's** Frogeye. It's with Mark at Fisher Services at the moment having a lot of work done and will look a bit different when it's ready (aero screens, hard tonneau, stripes, but still leaf green!)



Here is **Simon Brien's** rather serious 200bhp Midget at Craiganlet Hillclimb. We hope to hear more about this car, with pics, in a future issue.



Here is new member **Alex Mastin's** Midget. The car is sadly off the road at the moment due to some restoration of the inner rear arches, but will be back on the tarmac soon.




Here is new member, **David Gray's** (5666) Midget.

New member **Paul Benson** tells us 'My project is a rust free North American import, returned to the UK in 1995 & kept in dry storage since. It was collected it




on the 25th of March and with a little persuasion it was started on the 26th, so that was really pleasing. It has Chassis no. AN5-L/17973, Eng no. 9C-U-H/17639, built May 29th 1959, date despatched 2nd June 1959, destination USA.



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# SNAP! OF THE MONTH

To submit your photo by email to [editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk](mailto:editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk) (jpeg, max file size 5MB)



Michael Upton Drive it Day



Photo by Andy b

# SNAP!



MASC drive it day



A very active Frog...



GWR Toddington

# FIRST IMPRESSIONS...

## ...CAN BE DECEIVING

Firstly let's start by saying that I am no purist, more a make do and mend sort of a chap.

It all began with a pub lunch one fine afternoon at the Pied Bull in Farningham, Kent. Sadly my friend had been diagnosed some months back with Parkinsons, so across the table we compiled a bucket list of things to do. The Le Mans classic was on that list.

John already had a suitable waggon for the journey, leaving me with a not so suitable 1937 Austin, so we browsed on the internet in between starters and main course began. By the time the sweet had arrived I had found a 74 RWA that wasn't too far away to go and have a look at that afternoon. Dinner finished and we were off to Essex to buy a car.

The Midget in question had been enthusiastically rebuilt by Eric, a well educated godly sort of chap, he had managed a stirring job of completely dismantling and re-assembling the car in a very tight for space single garage. I had a quick look around the car (clearly not well enough), there were things that weren't finished and it didn't run fantastically, but the hard work had been done, and I liked him. I priced up in my mind what needed doing to get it sorted, plus it was in the style that I was looking for. I bought the car.

On reflection, it soon became clear that Eric didn't have a fantastic grasp of some engineering basics, but hey ho.

I got the car home and started to open my can of worms. I should really have looked a little harder especially as I have an engineering background!



The car had been re-assembled with a modicum of new parts and a good amount of refurbished parts, refurbished meaning painted then bolted back on.

General tinkering began and very soon things started to come to light. Where do I start? Poor running, creaks and groans, oil leaks and so on were investigated, put right or replaced. The list really is quite long and has out-stripped my initial estimate by a country mile. Among the more dangerous finds were bottom arm fulcrum pins fitted the wrong way round, bottom arm chassis mounts ovaled and well beyond their sell by date, shock absorbers devoid of any purpose, welding of a dubious nature clearly carried out by various different owners who apparently carried out the repairs using a stick welder in a field, in the dark, with a bag on their head! Brake shoes fitted upside down, fractured brake drums, and wiring loom missing, this really is just a snippet of what I have had to sort out.

The engine however was in good shape considering, looking through the mountain of paperwork that came with the car it was clear that engine work had been carried out in the 90s by MED engineering, ported head, cam, lightened fly wheel etc.

Off with its head. Brand new SU carbs, Aldon dizzy, and a rolling road tune at BD engineering in Sittingbourne. Engine runs smooth and produces 80hp, 3/9 diff swapped for a 3/7 to give better motorway manners on the way down to Le Mans.

On an impromptu visit to the Stoneleigh spares day I came home with a windscreen to replace the scratched grinder splatter infested one adorning the car. This job I have been putting off for a while as I'm sure those of you who have carried this task out know only too well. Challenging is my description of windscreen replacement!

The car I hope is now set to go, Le Mans stickers are turning up in the post daily and camping equipment has been purchased. Traveling with us are two other relics of motoring history, a 90s fiddled with Mini and an un-molested '70s Camaro, one of which I hope is going to take some of my luggage.

So five Le Mans virgins are nearly ready to brake down, get sun burnt, get wet, and do a lot of walking and of course let's not forget the beer. Seems strange to be looking forward to a long journey in a car that's very thin in its structure, has no roof, noisy and uncomfortable.

All part of the appeal of the Midget I suppose.

**Neil**



# TWO TEAS DOWN THE HATCH...



Over the weekend of 28th/29th April it was the race weekend at Brands Hatch in Kent. The Lackford Engineering Midget and Sprite Challenge had two races, one each day with qualifying early Saturday morning.

With the early start needed the 5 hour drive down had to be undertaken on Friday, so with Motorhome loaded and race car on trailer we left home for an extremely wet drive South. The rain was coming down so hard that the bow waves from the trucks dwarfed the race car and even with the tonneau cover in place we had to bale the seat out by the time we arrived.

The only way the race car fits on the trailer with it being so low slung is to have it wearing the wets, so we were already well prepared for Saturday's qualifying. During the session immediately before us one of the cars had laid a full circuit long oil slick down so we were delayed whilst they tried to clean it up. Cement powder couldn't be used with the track being so wet so we were told afterward that a detergent was applied... soap, oil and water on track... yes it was slippery.

The greasy surface caught me out on the second lap round with a half spin on the exit of Druids and it also caught out several others with two cars unfortunately coming to grief as they made contact with the tyre wall on this inside of the track.

So after a tippy they keep it gentle session I was pleased to see I'd qualified 4th in Class and 4th overall. However one of the cars that hit the wall had qualified third so if he wasn't able to start then

I'd end up being promoted to third. It transpired that he wouldn't be able to fix it and the second place car had developed oil pressure problems so he was also out... oh my word I was on the front row for the race.

## First Down the Hatch!

Ten minutes before the assembly time and the car is still on wets though sat on axle stands and the soaking wet track had suddenly started to dry. The call was made to swap to slicks so a frenetic few minutes by the team saw the car touch down on slicks and off to the Assembly area I went.

Pulling up to Grid Spot 2 I felt calm, it was only the second time I'd been on the front row of a start (the only other time was at the Nordschleife). The track was still slippery but the right call was made to be on slicks. A short lap to warm everything up and



Photo: John Creech



then back to grid for the start. Engine revs rose, the red lights came on and the revs rose even more. . . . Then out went the reds and go. Launching the Class A car is a two stage affair, feed the clutch out, get it rolling and then dip the clutch, foot down on the gas and dump the clutch again. The car stepped sideways with the comparatively cold tyres and wet track and I thought I'd be swamped.

It then was obvious that we were all doing the same, sideways down the start. The car suddenly the car snapped straight and the slingshot effect of now warm tyres on track launched me into the lead. Unfortunately it wasn't long lived with the known exhaust problem I was soon passed into second place on Cooper Straight and then with the strangled power I was passed on either side into 4th place on the start finish straight. Feeling a nudge from behind I knew I'd been tagged and worked out who it was that had done so, only for it to be confirmed as we were brought round under safety car for the next few laps with a car buried into the tyre barrier. Fortunately the driver was okay if the car decidedly wasn't.

Several laps under the Safety car were completed then we were set free to race again. I'd noticed that my temp gauge had started to read high but thought we were near the end of the race so one more lap should suffice. . . . The head gasket didn't agree and decided to let go on the approach to Paddock Hill Bend and the resultant coolant dump onto my nearside rear side sent me into a fast very spin down the hill and also caused Pippa to spin out of her Class lead. I was more gutted for her than me.



## Late night/early morning.

I know my place, the lads set to changing the head gasket and I was sent off to make cups of tea and coffee and with the head all done by 8pm it was my shout to treat them to an evening meal at a local pub.

I woke early and decided at 6.30am to get a start on stripping out some of the aero ducting I'd installed over the winter to see if that had caused the overheating and I reverted the set up to last years. Time soon passes and by the time I'd finished there was only 20 minutes until assembly time.

I was starting 6th (class 2nd), but with the badly damaged car missing from 3rd and Pippa alongside me in 5th I had no intention of messing up her race again. The lights went out and a decent start was made but once again the strangled engine and resultant lack of power down the straights showed and after a pretty uneventful race I finished 7th overall and Class 4th. . . . so it's back to the drawing board on the cooling ducting and a replacement exhaust system will be installed which will hopefully find the missing horses once more. The full in-car video can be seen at <https://youtu.be/fNUPhtJolbg>

I've decided to withdraw from the Cadwell Park race so next time out for me will be Donington Park on 14th/15th July. . . . **Come say hello if you're there.**



# A VISIT TO AC DODD



Recently a small congregation met at AC Dodd's garage at M.L.Motorsport, Higham. Somebody posed the question 'What does M.L.Motorsport stand for? Apparently 'Mini Likes' but a major manufacturer did not like the 'Mini' mentioned, hence M.L.

With the regular attendance of Kent Area at the premises, perhaps a change of name to 'Midget & Sprite Likes' might be fitting?

The aim of the day was to let A-series Guru A.C.(Adrian) Dodd diagnose and tune some 'Club' cars as well as the regular Classic Mini fare. Four cars were to attend but Andy Liew had to drop out as he could not get an MOT appointment for his newly purchased Spridget. We hope to see Andy out and about with our group soon. Andy paid a fleeting visit to collect a part from me. Richard Bowles stepped in to maintain our number whilst Dave Chalk dropped by for a chat.

First up of our group, following a freshly painted Classic Mini Countryman with A.C.Dodd engine and then a stock 850cc Classic Mini, was Richard Bowles with his much travelled, white Austin-Healey 1275cc Sprite. Since the last visit the car had been fitted with K&N pancake filters that had affected the fuel mixture. A needle change had soothed the effect of the previous dichotic needles. Sorted!

John Wheatley presented his 1275cc RWA Midget. The car was tuned to the best of Adrian's ability in the time available and whilst the car sounded sweet the carburettors were 'not talking to the car' to Adrian's liking.

Ron Edwards had the Alexander Engineering 948cc engine in his Frogeye for today. Fuelling was by A.C.Dodd rebuilt twin S.U.s' rather than the Alexander twin Stromburg conversion - it was found that the dizzy needed re-curling with stronger springs, however the car in which I was a passenger, ran smoothly on the way home except for a hiccup that suggested a soon to fail petrol pump.

Last of our cars was John Clark's 1275cc Frogeye with stock engine, apart from an A.C.Dodd RT camshaft. During a recent 'engine out' to fix an oil leak John had accidentally moved the dizzy and with no marks to reset it he had tuned it by ear. John has amazing hearing as he had set his ignition pitch perfect when tested with a timing light.

Another successful day with A.C.Dodd. If there is enough interest I will arrange another 'Audience with A.C.Dodd' so that folks can question him with regards to tuning and modification of A-series engines and S.U. carburettors.



# KENT AT BLETCHLEY PARK



Derek Harris in his Iris Blue Frogeye had already travelled some fifty five miles from the Romney Marsh to meet with us at Costa Coffee, Greenhithe, at 0730hrs. This must have just beaten John Clark, in his red Frogeye, from Herne Bay on mileage. It was no wonder that Derek chose to overnight near our destination of Blechley Park, near Milton Keynes, leaving John, Dave Chalk in his Super Sprite, and I, in my leaf green Frogeye, to return home among the maniacal motorists and lumbering leviathans on the devils highway that is the M1/ M25. I swear two so called motorists attempted to murder me and when they failed, a leviathan had a go lunging at the rear of my car. Eventually we arrived home unmolested. But what of our day? Our departure from Costa Coffee was uneventful as was our journey north. Two of our number displayed 'Drive it Day' plaques in celebration of this day. At Toddington Services we met up with Steve & Kim Smith easily spotted amongst the 'moderns' their freshly painted Midget 1500's Vermillion paintwork drawing us to where they were parked, with a white Brighton resident MG Midget, like a beacon Buoy.

We arrived at our destination, Blechley Park, in good time. MASC cars were allocated their own car park with a guesstimate of about forty cars. Several Areas pennants fluttered in the breeze whilst Red Kites made good use of the thermals above. Lots to do and see and also to learn. Other makes of cars were displayed about the parkland, whilst guided tours gave an insight into the work of our codebreakers. Whilst codebreaking has existed for hundreds of years, from Henry V and the arrest & conviction and ultimate death sentence of Mary Queen of Scots, codebreaking as we know of it today, and helped so much throughout the two world wars of the last century, is more concerned with wireless telegraphy. If a guided tour did not appeal it was 'free to roam' in the house and outbuildings to view the paraphernalia and exhibits. The rain that had threatened stayed away. It was, for me a good day to meet with friends, old and new, acquaintances and some whose acquaintance I had only previously made via telephone or enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk.



# A DRIVE IT DAY EXPERIENCE



I was looking forward to the Bristol area 'Drive it Day' this year and this is my account from behind the steering wheel, so to speak.

12 Spridgely things (Bristol talk), including a classic mini agreed to meet up at the Cross Hands at Old Sodbury, north east of Bristol. As we set off we were led by none other than he who is all knowledgeable on all things Spridgely, Terry Horler, in his clockwork Frogeye!



Alex Gleed, one of the youngest members of MASC, arrived in his Spridget. Unfortunately he got stuck at the traffic lights as everyone moved off. He'd catch up.

The drive was going fine until just outside Dursley, when the Spridget I was following did a very delft left and right at a T junction and I thought what the? And as I got there, I've never seen so many potholes in one place. If there is an award for the most number of potholes along a road then I think that this road must be a contender for the award. Down the steep hill in to Dursley, lots of sweeping left and rights of varying degrees of angle and lots of use for gears for cars with drum brakes. Through Dursley and then through the Village of Cam and



then our leader pulled over to take a call from one of our members advising that the main road through Gloucester was closed. So we set off again and joined the main A38 north just before Gloucester we pulled off the main road and stopped for a break and to meet up with a few more members. Not long after we stopped, in drove Alex. It was cheers all round. We were joined by other cars and soon numbered 18. We had a chat about the closed road and the brave souls that we are, we decided to ignore it and see how far we could get. We handed the lead over to Sally in her black Sprite as being local to Gloucester she'd know which side roads to take and the plan worked. Off we drove through the city of Gloucester following the signs for Chepstow and then to Tintern and The Royal George Hotel.

We were now down to 11 Spridglets and a Morris Minor Traveller. The staff didn't seem at all phased by our numbers and were just polite and helpful. After an hour it was decided it was time to head home, but not before a group photo was taken. Thanks to Dave King for sorting that out (insert Smiles after lunch pic). We headed south towards the old Severn Bridge and soon after Spridgely things were heading off in all directions, just like homing pigeons returning to their roost.

I've since heard from Alex Gleed, who only past his driving test recently, that today was the longest drive he had ever done and he thoroughly enjoyed himself so I think we can safely say he will driving his Spridget for years to come.

## Mike



# MASC HEADS TO DONINGTON HISTORIC FESTIVAL



Start off with some advice. Don't programme your SatNav for the shortest route if you want to get somewhere quick. Usually a 40 minute trip in a modern car using motorways. Over 2 hours in a Frogeye going through places I'd never heard of and along lanes that only a bicycle would fit through !

But I arrived using the Post code on the ticket. Yes, main entrance at the other end of the circuit, I guessed that would happen so not surprised but the drive to the other end of the circuit along a newly tarmacked road through the grounds was a pleasure. Although I don't generally like monopolies, MSV the new owners of the circuit do seem to be investing and improving it. Having to pay to sit in the stand was a bit much though which may explain why the grandstand on the start / finish straight was empty most of the day when in the past, even in inclement weather, is usually full. The weather on Sunday was sunny and hot.

I found the MASC spot quite easily, very close to where I organised the first MASC visit back in 2011.

On Sunday there were a fine mixture of Sprites and Midgets which attracted a good number of interested punters aided by the nice sunshine. A couple of us made the track parade at lunchtime. Due to the marshals recovering a couple of Austin Healey's that had succumbed to malfunctions, the parade lap cars had to pass in single file , which allowed a bit of spirited driving to get back into two by two formation. If only I didn't have a big Mercedes in front of me who appeared to have no track positioning sense.

The event was up to it's usual excellent standard with easy access to the pits and the mostly,

priceless racing cars. The historic rally cars were impressive with their tyre smoke and handling but were somewhat restricted by the small portion of track they were allowed to perform on. The grand prix cars were great and the formula 5000 and F1 cars were noisy and fast. The saloon cars were very entertaining with little minis dicing with massive American Ford Falcons and British Lotus Ford Cortinas. My favourites were the formula junior single seaters, lots of them dicing for race victory. Question, what have they got in common with midgets and sprites? And we were treated to watching 3 of Ayrton Sennas F1 cars belting around the track, including his famous Camel Lotus car. Sunday brought the Battle of Britain Dakota to do a bit of a low level display in the clear blue sky as a bonus. The racing ended and I re-programmed the GPS to get me home the quickest way. All in all a grand day out.

ANSWER: some formula Junior cars are powered by A series engines of less than 1100cc capacity.



# GOOD QUALITY SUSPENSION WISHBONES



## The ongoing efforts to obtain good quality suspension wishbones

*(See also Mascot Jan 2018 page 7)*

The complaints continue with regard to front suspension wishbones. Non MASC Member Lawrence Slater, who is known to several Kent Area members; sometimes comes to a Kent meeting at the Angel and has submitted a couple of technical articles to Mascot, has been unsuccessfully trying to obtain good front suspension wishbones.

He apparently returned some to Rugby Classics as the kingpin would not even engage between the fulcrum bushes and then, subsequently, we have exchanged emails part of which he has given me permission to place in the pages of Mascot before you all as a warning to carefully check any purchase you make before accepting shoddy goods from whomever the manufacturer / re-conditioner is reputed to be.

“Recap. I bought new aftermarket Moss wishbones. My main concerns were the shape of the INNER bushes, and the lack of welding coverage.

I sent the wishbones back to Moss, and spoke with Mike Pratt (R&D/Technical at Moss). I also emailed him, and enclosed pictures.

Paraphrasing his reply to me, the upshot is this.

The company in the UK that make them have come back with a response inasmuch as an operation was missed off that swells the tube before welding. One side was done, the other was missed. Our stock is being returned to manufacturer to be rectified. The manufacturer has advised they will have new stock in around 2-3 weeks. It is doubtful that they will have rolled edges but they will try and continue the welding as far round as possible.

The OE spec ones from British Motor Heritage have an hour glass shaped tube inside that easily accommodates the coned bush but like the repro', the edge does not look rolled.



No external welding on bush.  
No rolled edges.



New Moss w/bone with incorrect shape inner bush.  
Too narrow left hand end. Wider at the right hand end.

I rang BMH to get the true picture of theirs from the horse's mouth.

Their inner bushes ARE rolled back at the edges, AND, whilst they are not welded fully around the whole circumference of the inner bush, the bushes do fill the hole in the wishbone frame completely, and hence the bush is supported in the frame properly. -- Unlike the moss aftermarket version, where the hole in the wishbone frame is clearly too large to begin with. BUT BMH wishbones are bloody expensive at 140 quid each! Are they worth it?

I also contacted Leacy. I explained the problem and sent them pictures. I asked them to look at the aftermarket wishbones they sell, as they say/think there are a few different suppliers and they think they use a different manufacturer.

Leacy replied today.

Leacy's aftermarket ones may or may not be made by the same supplier as Moss's are. BUT they have

the SAME issue, only worse. BOTH ends of the inner bush measure only 23.5/6mm, as opposed to the correct 25mm, and are NOT rolled edges. All they are doing is welding in parallel tubes with an internal dimension of 23/5/6 mm. The originals were 25mm and rolled back, there was a reason for that, but it's being ignored, or simply not understood in the aftermarket ones. Leacy also sell refurbished wishbones. They sent me a picture of an example. They don't look very good to me. You can see how rusty they are under the paint. I wouldn't want to give them my decent ones in exchange for those.

I suspect that ALL aftermarket makers are supplying the same thing. (Maybe there is ONLY one manufacturer?). Anyway, even if the OUTER threaded bushes are welded in properly, and aligned nicely, the inner bushes are still a problem, because they will destroy the rubber bushes as they are forced in and clamped by the inner fulcrum bolts. That leaves only the VERY expensive BMH items or refurbished wishbones". Lawrence Slater.



Gap in welding.



Original old w/bone with correct shape inner bush.

# REMOTE BLEED SYSTEM

Having endured a Hotel to match Basil Fawley's 'Fawley Towers', from Thursday 22nd to the morning of 26th and then the return journey, from NEC on the Monday, onto the worlds largest car park, being the M25: which did its best to maintain it's reputation, I was expecting a lie in on Tuesday morning. But no the phone was ringing and the iPad singing not quite a match for the unwanted / unrequested early morning TV alarm that had awoken JC, and I, in separate rooms at the aforementioned Fawley Towers. It appears that on the Monday evening preceding a discussion at the Wilts Area meet had been about Remote Bleed Valves. Now people wanted me to supply them. I can make them but they can also be made, easily, from Spridget parts and accessories. The subject has been covered before but a reminder on 'how to' with, Editor permitting, some pictures. I have in the past made a few brackets but it is easy to make it all yourself. Here is How:

You need a Spridget rear flexible brake hose. This can be substituted with a hard line copper brake pipe or a flexible 'Goodridge' type armoured flexible brake pipe to your liking.

A brass three way connector with fixing as used on the Spridget back axle brake line coupling.

A 3/8 x 24 UNF bolt and suitable copper washer.

A small piece of steel.

Prep the slave cylinder by removing the bleed nipple. Slot the top fixing hole vertically.



You now have a quick release slave so that when replacing you can screw the top, hard to access, bolt into the bell-housing leaving it proud enough so that the slave slides under it with only a nip, with a suitable spanner to lock in position. The bottom is left 'as is' and the bolt used as per the norm.

Fit the flexible to the slave by engaging the short coupling of one end. Use a copper washer to seal.

Screw the longer end of the flexible into the brass three way connector and lock on with nut and copper washer. Use some plumbers PTFE tape or Hylomar or thread-lock on the thread to seal.

Cut the 3/8 x 24 UNF bolt to suitable length and screw into the middle port on the three way to seal.

Seal the thread as before.

Screw the bleed nipple into the remaining port on the three way coupling.

All that is left is to make a bracket to attach your remote bleed to the top bolts on the gearbox bell-housing. B & Q is a good source of steel bar or 'bracketry'.

**Alan Anstead**



# A 1963 MIDGET



My 1963 Midget has been part of my family for 20 years now, I can't picture many things from 1998 but I remember very clearly sitting in the back of my Grandad's Cavalier, following my dad back in the little green car he had just purchased from the garage in the next village. The car was taxed and insured until 2002 (it may have occasionally ventured out after that) but afterwards sat in the garage, then eventually on a patch of grass outside our house until about 8 years ago. After persuading my parents not to sell the car and with my neighbour very kindly lending me the space in her garage, I set out to work to bring it back to working order. I was always very mechanically inquisitive, but had no experience on cars and learnt what I needed going along; taking things apart, consulting a Haynes manual and scouring internet forums. My grand plan was to spend a couple years on the car and to have something usable for when I was old enough to drive. Naturally, 8 years later I'm just now enjoying my second summer of using the car. I used this winter to complete a rebuild of the 1098 power plant and to refurbish the engine bay, both of which were still showing the damage from a mystery crash many years ago.





There's still lots to do; the car seems to have developed a taste for eating clutches, I'd like to replace the fibreglass bonnet (all I could afford when I was 17) and now that we are starting to get some decent mileage on the clock all the little issues 50 year old cars have are starting to come to the surface. I feel like I've been on quite a journey with the car. It certainly helped me to get my current job as a design engineer for Triumph motorcycles, 45 minutes of an hour and half interview was spent discussing the car. From learning on the Midget I've been taken under the wing of another local classic enthusiast and have since worked on more classics than I could have imagined when I started. Everything from Mustangs and Corvettes, to pre-war Lagondas and a 1904 steam car. Me and my dad now have a second Midget that I will shortly be starting work on. A yellow 1500 with an overdrive gearbox, wide rear axle and flared arches. I've got no idea of the history of the car before my dad owned it (other than that it used to be red, and had a crash), if any body recognises it from anywhere, I would love to hear about it.

## FBHVC PRESS RELEASE 4 MAY 2018

### Declaring your vehicle as exempt from an MOT Test



This is a new self-declaration process to be carried out as part of annual licensing by DVLA by a keeper of a qualifying vehicle who does not wish to submit the vehicle to an MOT test. By making this simple declaration you are confirming that your vehicle is at least 40 years old and has not been substantially changed in the previous 30 years.

For advice on the process you should consult the Legislation pages in recent Editions of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs Newsletter.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has published a set of guidelines to assist owners in deciding which if any more recent changes to their vehicle would be considered as 'substantial'.

The DfT understand that owners may feel they need to consult a specialist prior to making this declaration and have asked the Federation of British

Historic Vehicle Clubs to compile and publish on its website, a list of marque specialists who have indicated their willingness to advise owners unsure of their vehicle's status.

Before approaching a marque specialist you should study the DfT Guidelines carefully and make your own judgement concerning your vehicle if you can.

An expert or an organisation nominating an expert is entitled to reimbursement of any costs incurred in reaching or providing the opinion and may make a reasonable charge for the service provided, which may be different depending upon whether the keeper making the request is or is not a member. It is your responsibility to accurately describe your vehicle as no inspection will be made. Their advice is provided solely in relation to the declaration you will make regarding VHI.

If there is not a specialist listed here for your type of vehicle you may contact the FBHVC Secretary ([secretary@fbhvc.co.uk](mailto:secretary@fbhvc.co.uk)) who will advise you.

*Editors Note - Further guidance has been issued regarding the new MOT rules but space precludes it being included here. Please refer to the MASC website for details.*



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# FROM THE BOWELS OF BRISTOL



Here at the Bowels of Bristol, we are quite familiar with being out of our depth, more recently, we have been out of our territory too. In a rare moment of conformity, we dragged ourselves away from the safety and comfort of our sheds and armchairs, got into our small drafty little cars to go and make our mark, in the form of a very long oil stain, to celebrate the FBHVC Drive it Day. An 80 (plus) mile run from Old Sodbury, via Dursley, Gloucester, Forest of Dean, Monmouth, Wye Valley to Tintern and finally, home. Cars joined, and left, our convoy at various points, in all 12 cars completed the full route. Oddly, the usual fears of the weather and mechanical breakdowns, or indeed, nervous breakdowns, were all unfounded, if only we had considered all the road works and closures instead. Goodness knows how many sets of traffic lights and road cones we encountered. However, a major accident on the A38 near Gloucester closed the road to all traffic. Fortunately, Sally Hale knows the

area well, assumed the lead and conducted us on a superb country lane diversion. At the risk of writing a very boring report of our day, because we had no disasters, other than Alex who we almost left behind, I can only say, we had a great day out for national Drive it Day.

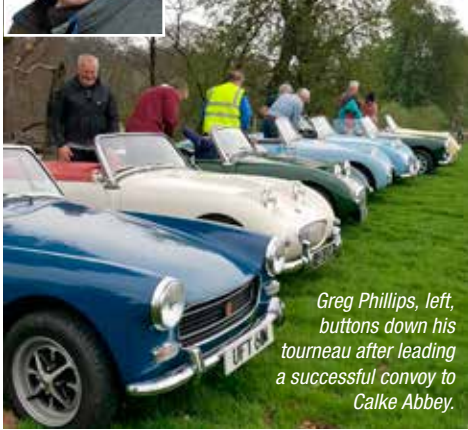
We have noted the Club's encouragement to welcome younger members into the fold. Moreover, we have a potential of 22 new young members in our region. This wasn't easy, we had to cut a hole in the fence of a local pre school play group at play time to actually get to speak to a worthwhile number of young people. We took along some pictures of Sprites and Midgets, which they could then colour in and read the technical specifications of. They were very enthusiastic, asking if Fisher Price make a mig welding set and if crayon would give a good, long lasting finish. We could have talked for ages, but then the police arrived and spoil everything. I just hope the jury will be more understanding. Hopefully, we will be available for our May meeting on the 9th at the Wishing Well, if all is well, we will be relocating to the play area to welcome the influx of our new younger members.



## Terry Horler

*Teacher calling the police*





*Greg Phillips, left, buttons down his touneau after leading a successful convoy to Calke Abbey.*

## In All Directions

Central members were out in force on Drive it Day. Not only did a contingent drive down to Bletchley Park Museum to meet up with other MASC member groups organized by Kent member Richard Bowles but other Central members decided to organize an alternative Drive it Day run to Calke Abbey in Derbyshire.

Let's start with the Bletchley Park run first. Meeting at Tamworth Services, Dave Clarkson, Andy Bird, Gary Hendon, John Clarke and I set off in convoy down the A5. Calling in at Rugby Truck Stop we added Geoff Mears to our party eventually meeting up with John Wragg who had made his own way to Bletchley Park.

The journey down was going well until we tried navigating the notorious Milton Keynes' islands. Leading, I made the mistake of turning right at the second island instead of the third island and we all found ourselves making U turns in very heavy traffic. Sorry folks! I think this may have affected John Clarke's car which stalled only five minutes



*A good turnout of Midgets and Sprites plus one Triumph motorbike at Calke Abbey*

away from the final destination. Andy and Dave stopped to help but unfortunately it refused to re-start and the rescue services had to be called. After waiting for an hour,

John decided to turn the key again and his car miraculously came back to life. Rather than risk further problems he chose to head home. Just before arriving home the same problem occurred again but after another wait he managed to get going and made it back safely home under his own power. The rest of us had now arrived at Bletchley Park and were enjoying meeting other MASC members in between talking to visitors and touring the excellent museum site. A good turn out from quite a few different regions saw lots of different coloured MASC flags blowing in the gentle breeze. A great day was had by all and we decided to make our way home just as the doors were closing.

Meanwhile, in another part of the Country Anita and Greg Phillips were meeting other Central members Bill Mohan and Keith Jewkes at the Royal Redgate Pub near Nuneaton. This run was also not without incident as Keith had decided to take part on his Triumph motorbike because his Midget would not start. They were joined at the meeting venue by Heart of England members who had driven over from South Warwickshire. Making their way towards Calke Abbey they were then joined by Notts/Derby members who were sadly one man down due to an alternator problem. After a sunny drive along country lanes over twenty Midgets and Sprites arrived at the Abbey, along with one Triumph motorbike. Local pies and the odd glass of beer were downed while enjoying the countryside walks and views. It was only a year ago that Anita and Greg arrived at the Drive it Day event in their Ford Kuga whilst their Sprite was being restored and here they were not only taking part in their Sprite this year but leading the convoy. Well done to them. A few showers on the way home couldn't deter what had been another great Drive it Day out for us all.

## Dave Warren

Central MASC - Email to [central.masc@live.com](mailto:central.masc@live.com)



*Central members & their cars at Bletchley*



## Saturday 21st April

Our Jersey adventure commenced 3 Sprites, Frogeye with Jane & Dave Clarkson, Mk1V in B.R.G Jane & Bob Pearce, Mk111 Rivera Blue Gill & Chris Wood. We all met at Newton Abbot on the A380 for a 100 mile journey in convoy, as it happened it was a wise choice as Bob in his Mk1V suffered total electric power loss due to the dynamo not charging. This is when you need breakdown cover, AA were there within ½ an hour, replaced the battery which at least got us on our way to Poole.

However, Chris in his Mk111 suffered overheating, it was a really hot day and on the hills the gauge was up to 212 F, not good, but coasting down hills brought the temperature down to 190 F. Finely we arrived at our hotel in Poole ready to catch the fast ferry in the morning.

Sunday we all arrived at the ferry port and got loaded almost straight away leaving Poole at 09.00 with a 4 hour sail to Jersey including a pit stop in Guernsey. A very calm and comfortable crossing with a bonus of sunshine ! we disembarked , checked in to the Hotel, chilled out and had dinner in our hotel which was very good.

Monday, I organised to take Bob's car to a Classic Car Garage to sort out the charging problem. Very accommodating, "bring the car around and we will

sort it" you don't hear that very often, so off we went to Trinity to the Riche Automobile Restorers (CI) Ltd where we met Joe one of the partners who was really helpful. Leaving the Mk1V there Bob went back to the hotel with Dave in his Frogeye. A phone call later to tell us the Mk1V was ready for collection, the problem was Bob had been over enthusiastic with the oil top up & had over filled it, the oil had sprayed out of the dip stick aperture & contaminated the dynamo connections, a good clean-up problem solved.

Dave & Chris went over to collect car but in the meantime the starter motor on the Mk111 failed to engage. The overheating problem found that the thermostat was only partially opening so that was discarded which cured the heating problem. Then the starter motor came off, lubricated the Bendix, test, re install & hey presto ! all working again.





Tuesday, previously I had contacted Damien Horn, who owns the Channel Island Occupational Military Museum to arrange for us to have a visit, this is probably the best Military Museum on Jersey second to none & is situated opposite Jersey Pearl at St Ouen on the five mile road. We were all made very welcome & thoroughly enjoyed the visit it really brought it home to you what it was really like, amazing, well worth a visit if you are over there. We then made our way to Greve de Lecq a fabulous beach with lovely yellow fine sand. Our final call was to St. Brelade's Bay & the Smugglers Inn, a quaint little pub on the water front with a great selection of real Ales, I understand this is one of the few free houses on the Island.

The highlight of our visit to Le Riche was when Joe invited us to tour the restoration area of his business.

The first car he showed us was a 1967 Honda 600, being totally restored for Honda to put in their historical museum in Japan.

This will give you some idea of the quality of their work. There really was too much to put to paper but another worthwhile mention is Amelia Earhart's



SS100 being totally restored for showing at Pebble Beach Florida. The remade front wings alone costing £30,000

I never realised such a place existed in Jersey, absolutely amazing. Thank you again Joe for such a fantastic time at your establishment.



Wednesday, our last complete day before we return, the weather had been very kind to us apart from a small shower we had seen some sunshine. We finished our day up at Corbiere where a very impressive lighthouse stands built in 1874, in the evening we had a meal to celebrate Jane Pearce's birthday at the Corbiere Phare Restaurant overlooking the lighthouse with fantastic views as the sun was setting over the sea, after an excellent meal we returned to St Helier to our hotel tired but happy we had a great day.

Thursday, we had to vacate our rooms by 10:30 with the ferry departing at 15:00, after packing the cars we went for a final drive around, filling up with petrol ready for the drive back to the West Country. We were also able to find a farm at Les Landes with bags of freshly dug Jersey Royal's to bring back, we left the money for the potatoes in the honesty box.

An uneventful ferry trip back to Poole arriving at 19:00, we had a good drive back with hoods down if a bit chilly, tired but enthused & ready to do it all again, any takers for next year ?!

I must add if you are over in Jersey a visit to the Le Riche Automobile Restorers is well worth a visit, to arrange call 01534 864073 & ask for Joe.

**Chris Wood 5130**

My problem this month, rather than trying to find something to write about, is how to fit it all in to my allotted space!

Firstly a few of us received an invitation from HTJ to take part (with our Spridgets) in his latest movie. We arrived at location HQ on a carefully selected sunny day John fitted up the camera car with front and rear cameras and after a short briefing we were off creating mayhem around some of Cambridgeshire's nicest thatched villages and lanes. Three retired guys with technical equipment and a slightly madcap plan, it all put me in mind of Last of the Summer Wine. We did the filming, although one of us was a bit rubbish at taking direction, however the cutting room sorted that out a bit and the film will premier at our next pub meeting. When we arrived back at HQ Graham's Frog decided to break down (fortunately we had finished filming), so we spent the rest of the afternoon sorting out a fuel pump problem (quote of the day "Bring me the head of the person who positioned the fuel pump under the back of the car").



Next up was the Brilliant Bletchley park, Stuart and I met up at the Norman cross eagle with our boots full of good EastAnglian sunshine to export to Bletchley, and travelled tops down, down the A1 to Wyboston McDonald's to meet up with the rest of our group. After a cup of coffee (McDonalds do make excellent coffee) I set off leading the group (relying on my ancient and out of date sat nav), I did have a few anxious moments driving on roads my sat nav didn't know about (a bit embarrassing when you have a tail of classic cars) and she directed me to Bletchley station, however Chris had spotted the entrance on the opposite side of the road a bit further on and lead us in. We opened our boots and

let out the sunshine which shone down on the 39 assembled MASC Spridgets all day. It was brilliant to catch up with so many old friends and MASC personalities and see such a good selection of club cars (although Bluebell was the only MKII Sprite in attendance) we need more of this sort of event.



Bletchley park is a fascinating place to visit, and is a relic from a fascinating and very significant bit of British history, I particularly enjoyed the demonstration of the replica Bomb machine which was used to solve the enigma codes, although I do take issue with being told that the odds against solving each coded letter were 159,000,000,000 to one. The enigma code is a letter substitution code and as it never codes a letter as itself there are surely only 25 possibilities. I think the huge number is just the inscription stages the machine goes through to reach an answer.

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

### Drive it Day

Sunday 22nd April dawned bright and breezy as a bunch of doughty Heart of Englanders set out towards Chez Lara and Alan in Stretton on Dunsmore. As we arrived, car by car, we were greeted by the welcome aroma of bacon and veggie sausage already cooking and tea and coffee was already brewed. A great start to the day and thanks to (chef) Alan and also to Lara who had sorted the route map to Calke Abbey in Derbyshire. Fortified by hot butties we set out towards Nuneaton in unbroken convoy.

In due course we arrived at the Royal Redgate pub on the A5 near Nuneaton in order to meet up with the Central phalanx led by Greg Phillips where we compared notes and cars and agreed on a route towards Calke Abbey and Derbyshire. The idea was to meet up with the Notts and Derby contingent at the Chequers Pub near to Calke and arrive en masse. After arriving at said Ale House waiting about 20 mins it became clear that no one else was arriving, so we decided to press on. All of us, that is except Bill Mohan who had ordered a pint to break the journey; when he had carefully considered the choice of arriving at Calke in a convoy of one, and abandoning his partially consumed perfectly good pint, he sensibly chose to stick with his ale and enjoy it to the full. A man of admirable and redoubtable character!

We arrived at Calke in a sizable convoy and pressed on to the huts at the gate which relieved all cars and their occupants of the appropriate amount of cash. As we queued, most of us sans roof it began to rain quite persistently, so imagine our delight when all Spridgets were waved through at speed without being relieved of the requisite £3.80 per person for entry to the extensive grounds.

A splendid day was had and we wandered homeward by various routes.

### MASC Track day

If all goes to plan, you will see on another page of this edition of Mascot, details of how to be involved in the MGs on Track / MASC track day. If you have been inspired by our esteemed editor's tales of members' previous exploits into the world of Sprints, Hill Climbs and Track Days then NOW is the time to act.

Once you have read this and / or the separate page giving full details, and fancy giving it a go, then register on the MGs on Track web site quickly because the event will most likely be released for booking shortly after the arrival of your Mascot. Those registered will receive an e mail from MGs on Track announcing the opening of booking for places at Donington on Oct 1st and then it will be first come first served. Quite a few members have asked about having a MASC track day so I hope that it will be a success and we can repeat the exercise!

### Steve



## AREA REPORT

# KENT



Dave Chalk reports that 13 members and partners and 5 Spridgets attended the east Kent meeting at the Crown at Sarre. Mel reports his engine is running well. John and Bethany made the 180 Mile round trip again and must be due a long distance good attendance award! Mike and Anita swear they did an extra few miles trying to avoid the potholes. Richard and Linda are still slumming it in their Broadstairs holiday home but Richard was able to report that his rebuilt Frog is back from 'Fishers' and awaits carbs, seats etc. We look forward to seeing it soon. Phil and Liz had news of a house move nearer our favourite pub and updates for our upcoming Horse and Dragon tour in May.

Then on a wet and misty morning in April, we met at our regular meeting place - The Oakdene Cafe, Wrotham where a good mug of tea and bacon butty's are assured.

Ron, in his Frogeye, led us away. We had just turned off Seven Mile Lane and driven in to Yalding when it was noticed that Bryan was not with us. He remained absent until we met up again at Rye. The 'official' route taken by Ron took our little group through lanes where Daffodils and Primrose heralded the coming of spring. We drove some super roads bending this way and that before arriving at the popular Rye Harbour. Is it possible to go to the seaside and not have Fish-n-chips - at

least a couple of us thought not. We walked off the calories after the meal through the churchyard and out to the estuary of the river that flows into Rye Harbour. No one felt brave enough to dip a toe in the water.

Graeme Williams reports that whilst some went to Bletchley, for Drive it Day, five other members attended the West Kent meeting at the Angel, Addington. Mick and Monica drove across from Essex, although without their IOW Frog which is suffering from running difficulties. Some time was spent diagnosing at a distance although Mick had already decided to replace the distributor. The car is currently in the hands of the repair man. The other three members turned out in their cars as befitted the sunny weather. Mark Mathews explained how he was eventually going to replace his engine with a Ford Zetec unit, although we got the impression it wouldn't be imminent. A job for the Winter perhaps but which winter? The dedicated meeting room at the back of the Angel was comfortable despite the very warm temperatures outside. However the run home with wind in the hair (or what's left of it) was a welcome respite from the warmth of the day (oh don't we complain when it gets hot!)."

**Alan Anstead**

## AREA REPORT

# YORKSHIRE



Hello all, and greetings from Jenni and me.

You may have noticed things are a bit slow and erratic up here with respect to MASC activities. I've now come to realise that being the Area Rep probably requires more time than I am able to give at the moment. Yorkshire is a huge area to cover and I am not able to devote the time that the area and the club needs as it progresses and grows in membership.

I am therefore looking to hand the area over to some willing volunteers - perhaps in Yorkshire we need to split the area up - there are a lot of you around. In the past the meetings moved around the

county, from East to West and taking in the edges of Cumbria and North Lincolnshire. When I put out a membership survey previously, there was a mix of requirements that people wanted, some evenings, some weekends.

If you are at all interested in helping out then please do get in touch, even if it's just to host one per quarter. In the meantime, we'll be present at the Chequers Pub in Bilton in Ainsty (which is just to the West of York) on the third Thursday evening of every month - I hope to see you there.

**Thanks, Rob**

# NORTH WEST AREA REPORT



On the 22nd April (Drive it Day), we had sixteen cars meet at the Kilton Pub for a coffee break before starting our run to Amerton Railway. This was going to take us on a fifty nine mile run, which had been planned by Fraser who is proving very good at doing routes and maps "Tulip Style". Happily we did not lose anyone on route and all of us arrived safely to board the train for the one mile journey around the specially built track which was looked after by a group of specially trained train volunteers and enthusiasts.

This was followed by a tour of the engine sheds, which we enjoyed, there being great attention to detail of the descriptions and



history of all the small trains and their restoration which was ongoing (very much as we have in the Classic Car World!). Some of the ladies, felt compelled to forgo the pleasure of the engine sheds and went to inspect the art & craft sections which had looked very interesting. Leslie wanted to renew her friendship with a male peacock which she had seen parading around in full plumage!!! However we gave up after an intensive search of the surroundings as he was no where to be seen and had probably gone off to find somewhere peaceful for his after lunch nap !!!! Tide and time waits for no man, so we sped off on the second part of our route calling in to the Reform Inn for a very nice late lunch. Amazingly enough NO ONE broke down on this trip, run out of petrol or had any problems at all, so all in all a very good start to the year !!

7th May 2018 will see 12 of our car members going to Gawsorth Hall in Cheshire, this is one of

our clubs favourite places to visit, a lovely venue to enjoy viewing some wonderful classics and we always receive a very warm welcome from Rupert and The Richards Family.



20th May 2018 We have 10 cars chugging off to Shelsely Walsh for the Sprite 60th Birthday celebrations. Some of our club members have found accommodation and so will be spending some interesting time enjoying viewing all the great classics this venue always attracts.

With the assistance of Mike Bennett we have organised Midget and Sprite Club Logo Umbrellas on the Regalia List of the MASC Club Website, with either a two or four printed logo design, in various colours to suit your car colour. They measure 120 cms and can be ordered and posted to you!



We were very lucky to find a company without any "set up charges " and who would sell us on a one at a time basis! Hope you will all find the umbrellas a useful addition to carry with you in your Sprite. Until next month do have some very,

## HAPPY MOTORING

Shelley and Neil North West Reps

# NOTTS/DERBY BORDER

The weather started as a lovely sunny Sunday morning with a 9.30am rendezvous at The Hutt in Ravenshead, with 5 cars. Sadly Tommi Cluley was due to join us too but the day before had an issue with his clutch so couldn't make it.



We headed out across the River Trent at Gunthorpe Bridge, and once we cleared the delay in road works on the bridge we continued our journey towards Harby across the Vale of Belvoir. A slight detour found us on some very narrow country lanes well suited to Spridgets! We soon got back on track and continued onto Wymeswold, where Tim Kirby was standing by the roadside to film us driving by. We passed through Rempstone towards Kegworth, then on to Donington services where we met new member Gary Martin. After a short break we continued to Calke Abbey, but not before misfortune hit one of the Midgeteers (Ian Whitchurch – see below) as his dynamo pulley sheared off. He thankfully did a temporary repair and limped home safely.

The rest of the group then proceeded on to Calke Abbey where we were met by MASC members from



Heart of England and Central areas. The weather at this point had turned chilly but soon cleared away to leave a bright, dry if somewhat breezy afternoon. There was a good turnout of 21 cars from the three areas.

**Richard Wharmby**

MASC Facebook Coordinator

**In Ian's own words....**

On our Drive it Day experience, 50 miles in my dynamo pulley suffered fatigue and disintegrated leaving me with no water pump drive. An emergency roadside repair was required to avoid the embarrassment of returning home on the tow truck....



After a few moments head scratching we decided that if we detached the bottom bracket from the dynamo, fixed some rubber tape to the spindle and raised the dynamo up to tension the drive belt we may get home ! With the smell of burning rubber and some gentle driving the Midget got us the 14 miles home where we relaxed with a Pimms and the picnic. A special thanks to Richard Wharmby for his assistance on getting us home.



**Ian Whitchurch**

Notts + Derby area member

**Meanwhile, heading for Bletchley Park....**

In order to avoid an early morning start on Drive it Day for the run to Bletchley Park, some of us had decided to book an overnight stay in Milton Keynes, from where we could set out at a leisurely pace on the Sunday morning.

We joined up with John and Elspeth in their MGB on Saturday morning, just north of Nottingham, and headed out into the countryside, avoiding major routes where feasible and making the most of the weather. We skirted around the east of Nottingham and Leicester across the Vale of Belvoir. A keen navigator spot by Elspeth took us to a garden centre tea room near Kirby Bellars on the outskirts of Melton Mowbray, where we enjoyed some rather large portions of cake. Suitably refreshed, we continued south through Northamptonshire to the canal museum at Stoke Bruerne, where despite a

brief shower, we watched the canal boats passing through the lock whilst enjoying another beverage.

A short run along the old Watling Street took us to the overnight halt on the outskirts of Milton Keynes.

Heavy rain with thunder and lightning overnight meant John was up early to leather down his MGB in preparation for the display at Bletchley Park, where our seven cars from Notts + Derby joined other MASC members in our dedicated parking area.

By the time the venue opened to the public, we had seven area flags hoisted around the paddock showing our clubs national presence. A great tribute to all the hard work and planning put in by Richard Bowles, for which many thanks.

**Ian Cooke**

Notts + Derby  
area rep.



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# SCOTLAND

## AREA REPORT



By the time you will be reading this the Easter weekend will seem a long time ago, but the time lines for completing the report is well in advance of the thump on the door mat indicating your copy of Mascot has arrived.

Because our day in the local college is a Friday it meant we were 3 weeks away from our sheet metalwork course. The apprentices have completed their course qualifications and have left the college early and returned to work. This has left just the tutor and the "two old farts", Jim and myself. As Jim and I have no interest in achieving any certificates we work away at our own pace and on our own projects .

As well as missing the the work on the projects we are doing, I equally missed the camaraderie and patter we have.

The tutor is busy making a copper candlestick and holder plus being available to assist us with any problems we might encounter. I am working away on a project, which if it works you will hear more of in future issues; and if it doesn't will fade into the realms of obscurity.

Jim, my "classmate" is making copper navigation lights for his 1/3 scale Clyde Puffer, which he built with his friend, and he is currently restoring a Triumph Herald at home. Jim also owned a traction engine at one point and regales us with numerous stories and anecdotes.

The Clyde Puffer was the workhouse of the River Clyde and the Western Isles carrying coal, timber

and general cargo. Along with other things they brought back whisky to Glasgow for export around the world. The Puffers were mainly built inland on the canal and launched sideways into it. They were limited initially to 60 foot long which was the maximum length to fit in a Forth & Clyde canal lock and got the name Puffer from the distinctive noise of the steam coming out the funnel.

Jim called his boat the Wee Spark after the Vital Spark of Para Handy fame the book by Neil Munro and later made into an acclaimed television series by the B,B,C.

I think that a day trip to the Inverary Maritime Museum by club members to view

one of few remaining Puffers may be a consideration.

After the embarrassment of seeing how others were proceeding with their Frogeye restorations I have given myself a good kick up the backside and welded the cross-member onto the transmission tunnel and also welded the H- Beam onto the cross-member, so it will shortly be put on the rotisserie and it should be all systems go.

**Graham**



# SOMERSET HAPPENINGS

## AREA REPORT



At last some pleasant weather and a chance to get the car out for a run in the dry. The Easter weekend was pretty miserable however some did manage to get out to the meeting at Weston-Super-Mare. A couple of weeks later we had 7 cars venture out to Haselbury Mill for the annual show in aid of the MND, but a few decided to give it a miss as the weather forecast was not too bright.

The Drive it Day run was organised by Jeremy and Debbie and followed a route to the north of Ilminster and over the Blackdowns, the Quantocks and parts of Exmoor. A suitable break for lunch at the Withypool Tea Rooms was enthusiastically welcomed by the owners who took photos of the cars parked outside for their own picture board. With no planned end of month run 4 cars ventured to Swanage instead for an annual show in aid of local charities. An interesting event but bitterly cold, and it appeared that several stall holders who normally support the event decided to give it a miss. We took the opportunity to take a ride on the Swanage Railway pulled by steam loco 80104, a BR4/3 standard class loco built at Brighton in 1955, and withdrawn from service 10 years later. Returning to Swanage we had lunch in one of the town restaurants before heading back to the cars via the esplanade.



The early May bank holiday was spent at Yeovil for the Abbey Hill Steam Festival. This is a 4 day event with classes for all conceivable road transport, from hand carts, cycles to cars, tractors and HGVs to Showman's steam engines. The two arenas were busy all day with demonstrations including country pursuits, gymnastics and vehicle displays. With plenty of exhibitors and craft displays and cooked food galore there was sufficient to keep ones attention throughout the weekend.

Bank holiday Monday 7 cars descended on the village of Uffculm in Devon for the annual village charity 'family and fun day'. Another new event for us (although it has run for 32 years) and one which we will certainly be attending again. Lots of interesting cars, amusements for all generations, donkey rides and plenty of hot food available to purchase.

**Peter Young**





After a period of inactivity, we arranged a run over the Preseli Hills to end up at Fishguard Lower Town and then we went on to Pwllgwaelod for a coffee or beer. The weather was superb for the three cars on the run, namely Richard and Katy Sheen in their Frogeye Sprite, Tony and Liz Burrows also in their Frogeye Sprite and David and Andrea Hill in their Mk 3 Midget. For those who do not know the Preseli Hills, they are superb. The highest hill is 536m (1,758 ft) and there is moorland, rocky outcrops

and of course, wonderful views. Above all, it is not crowded, at least out of the summer holidays.

The three of us agreed that it would be good to arrange another run at the end of the summer or early autumn, hopefully with the same wonderful weather that we enjoyed on this run.

**David Hill**



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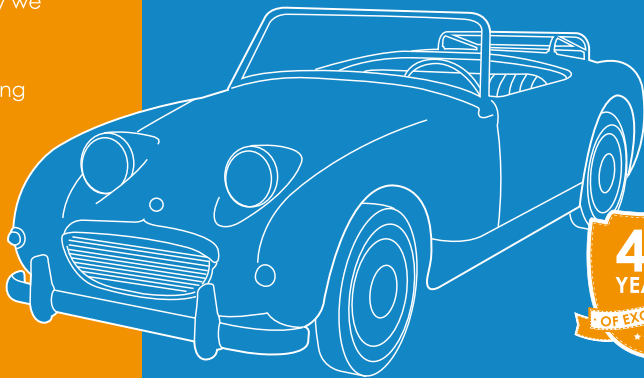
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# DEAR MASCOT...

HI NEIL,

I have found a local company that can produce replica badges (not identical).

Matthew Thomas email: [m\\_n\\_thomas@msn.com](mailto:m_n_thomas@msn.com)

**MATTHEW THOMAS**



HI NEIL,

I am just back from a motoring holiday with friends in New Zealand and on our travels just by chance we came across the "British Car Museum" close to Napier what a place hundreds of motors BMC/FORD/JAGUAR/VAUXHALL.

Interesting door bell in the shape of a steering wheel, met by a fascinating guy Ian Hope, who showed us around, most motors on an overhead frame system. I could have spent all day in there but time was short.

Elaine the wife called me over and said look at this and it was a Sprite in a dusty corner, I



asked Ian if I could take the cover back, "help yourself". The plate shows 1963, but I think it is an older model.



He has some good story's to tell. If you are passing, here is the site, [www.britishcarmuseum.co.nz](http://www.britishcarmuseum.co.nz)

**LES & ELAINE JEANS MEM 4534/AB**

HI NEIL,

Reference the Rotisserie that was offered for loan a while back, I delivered it to Jim Myers in Stourbridge at the time of the NEC Restoration show. He now has it in use for his Froggye. I suspect will keep it for some good while so I just suggested that when he was finished with it the post an ad in Mascot as I did. It's not the sort of thing that moves very fast though!

Technically, it has been donated (by Mark Boldry) to the club. But with no-where to store it, it just needs to be passed direct from one member to the next.

**GUY**

HI NEIL,

Interesting to read about my Pirelli days. Back then, of course, there was no advertising allowed on cars or overalls, so sponsors were not exactly plentiful. But I "drove" for Pirelli for some years, and really liked the softer Cinturatos compared to the harsh steel banded Michelin X and Dunlop Duraband radials. For one of the Monte Carlo Rallies, the organizers, always ready to find a way to stop the Mini Coopers, put in a regulation which restricted the use of tires to only those branded with a number and carried on the car. Just imagine trying to carry all your alternative tires in a Mini or a Spridget!



Pirelli already had a rather special tire, which had a very tough base, and to which different treads could be fitted - rather like a rubber band into a channel. In this way we could just have the five casings, and at service points the Pirelli guys could fit a studded ice tread, a chunky snow tread, or a racing type tread for dry hills and the final circuit. This sounds strange, but actually worked quite well. I think I retired near the end, while leading the class in my Midget, when a core plug blew out and left me out of water in the radiator.

Your magazine just keeps getting better and better. Cheers. **JOHN**



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

## COMMITTEE

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**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 RENOVATION:

If you experience 'MASCOT' problems upon renewal, please contact the membership secretary or the treasurer straight away.

# CLUB NIGHTS



- 1st Saturday **YORKSHIRE AREA.** Now meet at Chequers Pub in Bilton in Ainsty (which is just to the West of York) on the third Thursday evening of every month from around 7PM – 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.com](mailto:garyfrogeye@gmail.com)
- 2nd Wednesday **DEVON AREA.** Meet at Court Farm, Abbotskerswell, TQ125 NY Devon. Michael Ellis [Michael\\_Ellis@live.co.uk](mailto:Michael_Ellis@live.co.uk) and telephone: 07414 279074
- 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.anstead@btopenworld.com](mailto:alan.anstead@btopenworld.com) or John Clark group co-ordinator [jrclark@sky.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:david@hill.be)

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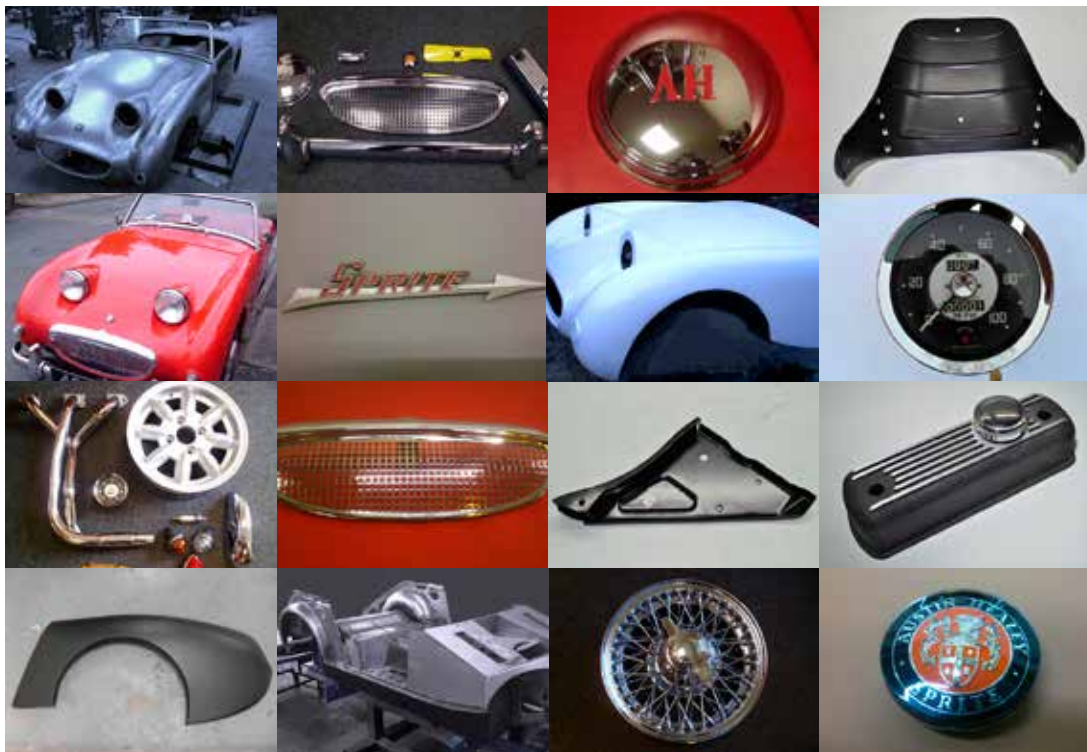
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