

MASCOT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MIDGET & SPRITE CLUB

ISSUE 419 JANUARY 2019

£3

Happy New Year



**OUTSTANDING CLUB
MAGAZINE OF
THE YEAR 2018**
HIGHLY COMMENDED



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SECURITY - PART 1 BY ANTHONY CUTLER

A MASC VOLUNTEER BY STEVE GOODCHILD

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: **STARTER MOTOR REBUILD • SPEED BLEEDERS • GAS STRUTS • HORNS PT2**

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WELCOME

TO THE JANUARY EDITION OF MASCOT

NEIL THOMAS

editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk



Can you believe that twelve months have passed since the new look MASCOT was launched and it has evolved even more since then? Our members have been so complimentary about it that I am delighted that it has been received so well. I've said this before, but the quality of the content has been down to those members that send me material each month to publish. It is very gratifying when our Publishers tell me that the quality of the material in MASCOT matches that of some very well known national professional publications. Without your contributions I'd be stumped, so thank you very much.

Of course the winter period is a quieter time for Spridget use so please, all members, send me anything Spridget related for the magazine and this includes photos for Snap of the Month. Let me have them. Also which member this year has had the most unusual Christmas present? It doesn't have to be Spridget related. It can be anything. Share it with us and make us jealous.

Whilst there won't be another major Spridget celebration in 2019, there will still be plenty of



events to join in on so make full use of your cars this year. They were made to drive. Some of the flyers for national events are appearing now in MASCOT so you can start planning. Also please send me your own local events for me to include in MASCOT. I know you are planning them now. I know that Steve Newton is excited about arranging another Track Day this year for MASC members, so make sure you read the HOE report as it contains various options and he would like to hear from you what you think.

I have a few plans for my Spridgets over the winter but whether I get around to them is another matter. I might be retired but I am busier than I have ever been. The difference is of course I am doing the things that I like doing and that's what counts.

Thinking ahead to the Spring and Summer, this month I've included a photo of my Frogeye looking over Caldey Island, near my home in Tenby. Have you visited Pembrokeshire?

For now I'd like to wish you all and your families a very Happy and Healthy New Year. Neil



*What happens when a frog breaks down?
... It gets toad away!*



**COVER IMAGE:
GUY WELLER'S
MIDGET - VIEW
DOWN TO
BROTHERSWATER
FROM KIRKSTONE
PASS, LAKE
DISTRICT.**

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

**FRIDAY 11TH
OF JANUARY**

CHAIRMAN'S THOUGHTS FOR 2019



It is traditional at the end of a year to relive what has happened in the last 12 months (as you will have seen from the TV schedules over Christmas I am sure). Well I have just reread my last 12 months' worth of MASCOTs and 2018 was a great year!

A quick recap of activities reveals a successful London bridges run in early January with 20 cars from far and wide joining in. In February we received a highly commended award for MASCOT at the National Car Club Awards. April included another successful Practical classics show at the NEC for the club and a brilliant turnout for Drive it Day at Bletchley Park with 7 areas represented on a lovely sunny spring day – I love to see events that include a number of areas getting together. We also saw Neil's zebra wrapped Frogeye for the first time :-)

May saw the 60th anniversary of the Frogeye celebrations starting; Dorset's celebrations were well attended and some members attended the AH club event at Shelsley Walsh. June and July were lovely warm months perfect for top down driving in our great cars.

The Silverstone classic was the best attended that I can remember and culminated with 30 MASC cars taking to the track for a high speed parade lap. A highlight for me as my Father drove me around in my Frogeye; only the second time he had driven the car!

August bank holiday was the highlight of the year with our 60th celebrations at Wroxall Abbey. What a superb weekend! Great drive on Saturday and despite the horrendous weather on Sunday we still had a great display of cars. Members from around the country and the world attended and everyone had a great weekend with nothing but praise for our organisers. A weekend to remember and you can watch the DVD.

Looking back through MASCOT you realise how much goes on around the country. Road runs and tours at home and abroad, a few track days and hill climb events, lots of showing of cars at shows and talking about how to fix them when they are broken. Our areas finally received their new branded shelters this year and even won awards at shows with them – I am sure the cars helped too. There really is something for everyone, what a great club!

So 2019 might feel like the day after a wedding, but from talking to a number of members I know there are lots of events and activities planned and I hope you will all get the chance to take part in something this year. If you haven't been along to an event before why not give it a go this year? You will always be welcomed.

We now have a bumper committee and I hope we will be able to take the club forward and continue to grow and improve it. It is your club so why not get involved?

Mark

EVENTS CALENDAR 2019

- 10 Feb MG & Triumph Spares Day, Stoneleigh
- 22-24 March Practical Classics and Restoration Show, NEC 2019
- 28 April Drive it Day - Notts + Derby area are looking to link up with neighbouring MASC areas at an appropriate destination, possibly for the weekend.
- 3-5 May Donington Historic Festival
- May/June (tbc) Wollaton Park "Autokarna" - Nottingham's largest classic car event of the year at which MASC will have their own paddock area.
- 26-38 July Silverstone Classic

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

EVENTS DETAILS NEEDED FOR 2019

Area reps please make Neil Thomas aware of any events already in your diaries and any that are planned for 2019 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

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- 3) You'll then be presented with a page showing the conditions for displaying a vehicle - click the box at the bottom to say that you agree, then you'll be taken to a page that asks 'who are you displaying with?' Select 'With a club' then select our club name from the list that appears and press 'Continue'
- 4) Select the day or days that you wish to attend and press 'Continue'
- 5) **CAR DETAILS:** Add the details of the vehicle/s you will be bringing* to display on the club stand.
- 6) **TICKET SELECTION:** Follow the process through to ticket selection. **IMPORTANT** - the online club ordering system automatically puts one adult entry ticket for your chosen day/days into your shopping basket before you get to the ticket selection area. So please only select any additional entry tickets that you may need when you get to ticket selection.

- 7) In the shopping basket you will see any additional tickets you have chosen showing as entry tickets and your driver entry ticket will show as a vehicle display pass (shown at the price for your entry ticket).
- 8) At this stage everything will still be shown at full price - press to go through to checkout, then enter our unique club code

DHF_PD26PRY

in the Promotion/Voucher Codes box, which will apply the 50% club discount.

All entry tickets, including the driver ticket, will be sent out immediately but the vehicle pass (which is only a parking pass this year) will be sent out separately, two weeks before the event.

TO ORDER BY PHONE

Call the MSV ticket hotline 0843 453 9000, give the club name and booking code **DHF_PD26PRY** and you should receive the 50% club discount. Please also request a display parking pass if you are planning on bringing a vehicle to display on the club stand (note, the parking pass will be sent out two weeks before the event. Entry tickets will be sent out immediately.) *Calls cost 7 pence per minute plus your phone company's access charge."



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NEW MEMBERS

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

5811	Michael & Leslie Hoole & Natasha Edgington	Derbyshire	Sprite	Mk 4
5812	Ken Austin	Surrey	Sprite	Mk 1
5813	Sophie Pugh	Yorkshire	Midget	Mk 3
5814	Ken Hall	Oxfordshire	Midget	Mk 3

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

- SO WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THESE TWO CARS?



SNAP! OF THE MONTH

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



Above - drive it day not walkies



K's on tour in North Wales



Petrolheads examining Andy Hide's Supersprite




Taking it lying down



The naughty boys


SNAP!



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GETTING STUCK IN AS A MASC MEMBER



It's my second year in MASC since owning my K-series Frogeye 'PYG' and have enjoyed

many events in that time. I have met some great people and so when the request came in from MASC, through John Egan, asking for helpers for the NEC Classic show I was more than pleased to offer help.

I had slightly mixed feelings as to whether I would have enough experience of Spridgets to help a great deal, but none the less I offered my services. Knowing that MASC needed all the help they could get, I put out a request to the guys in the K/Z forum to see if anyone would like to help cover any of the three days Friday to Sunday for minimum of 2 hours. I'm pleased to say three of the guys, John Faux, Simon Wilson and Pete Adamson were quick to offer help. Between us we felt our combined knowledge might just deserve the opportunity to help MASC at the show. Pete and Simon had experience of modifying Midgets particularly with



Turbo K-Series and John Faux with classic racing. With me it was limited to just the two years of Spridget ownership.

Anyway in return for helping, MASC offered us free entry into the show and even allowed us to share parking access courtesy of Alan Pritchett who coordinated the event for MASC and managed to get many other helpers to.

The Saturday was our chosen day and Alan duly sent us the tickets for the show in the form of wrist bands. The plan was to meet with Alan first thing which we did and go through proceedings, which was simply to meet and greet prospective and existing members and help them with their queries or requests.

Come the day and sporting my MASC Shirt, John and I drove up to the NEC, grabbed a quick coffee with breakfast and set off within the NEC to find the MASC stand and to meet with Alan and the other helpers for our induction.

It was good to see Pete and Simon had arrived and even better when they agreed to do the first rota stint. It meant that John and I could enjoy the show for the early part of the day. This suited Pete and Simon as they had other commitments later that day.

The induction itself was mainly spent on how to log new member requests and transactions together with how to work the credit card machine for merchandise purchases. The rest was just really to be friendly and helpful with who ever showed an interest on the stand with the Spridgets.

I can only speak about the Saturday really but fair to say we found it really enjoyable dealing with the many Spridget fans who came into the stand. Majority of them were families where Dad was either doing up a Midget or Sprite, but there were exceptions where Mum or the kids showed the interest. Pleased to say that there were several young Spridget enthusiasts who were either undertaking "garage" restoration projects or owning and driving their Spridgets.

We did our best to help with many questions that were asked, many of them were centred around where to find spare parts to preserve originality or the other end of the scale, especially from the younger kids on how to modify the cars.

Fair to say that Dad or Mum would have got them into these cars but nonetheless they were fans at such a young age. Of course there were some kids that just hovered around whilst their Dad or Mum engaged with us. That said we did make a point of trying to engage with the kids and it was

interesting to hear their responses as most saw these cars as unaffordable and really had an incorrect perception of what Spridgets might cost. We did our best to set the right expectation in the hope that they might show more interest, even sharing photos of our cars to try stimulate this. Who knows it might happen and they get into the classic car scene.

I had a great time but like all good things they do come to an end, but I couldn't leave without buying a Spridget CD and Austin Healey Sprite pin badge. This rounded off what was a great day, but eventually it was time to go although not without having to bother Alan unfortunately, who had already agreed the job of escorting us out of the NEC car park as we were all sharing the car park exit pass.

On a final note we would all like to thank Alan Pritchett and his team of helpers for a great day and a real experience working the MASC stand without whose help the stand would not have been possible.

Maybe next year we could have some K/Z representation and even a Turbo equipped car.



SECURING YOUR SPRIDGET PT-1



Introduction

Recent thefts of Midgets/ Sprites, usually without recovery, has brought the issue of securing our cars again to the fore. The increase in value of the rarer models has been one of the drivers behind this trend; the other is that the causal thief will undoubtedly (with a little knowledge of 1950s vehicle electrics) find our cars easier to break in and start compared with their 90s equivalents.

There are two main strategies to making our cars less easy to remove from our possession (I'm discounting the third way – making them appear to be unfit to drive...): deny the thief the possibility of starting the engine; and physically making it more difficult to drive the car away.

For obvious reasons, I shan't discuss how any of the methods described herein may be defeated.

Discourage Driving

This is the classic and most common method – normally using a physical device. There are a number of proven ideas, with varying convenience for the owner and immunity to being overcome:

Krooklock and similar devices prevent steering wheel movement: these devices reply on their visibility, and are effective without any modifications; they are also applied in the comfort of the vehicle. In 1978 BRB was 'saved' by the Krooklock that's still in service today; use the

brake-pedal to secure the 'other' end of these devices.

Gear-lever restraints: I've seen cars with small welded structures on the transmission tunnel that lock the gear-lever in a low gear (1st or reverse) using a moveable-arm and padlock; these rely on the ingenuity of the owner. They are relatively hard to defeat and are relatively visible to the would-be criminal.

External chain between wheel and axle: simply buy a length of strong chain and a quality padlock. Secure the vehicle by looping the chain through the wheel-spokes, around the rear spring, and close with the padlock. This may be less visible to the driver compared with the above methods, but are hard to defeat and don't need any modifications – except probably a change to a Minilite-style wheel to allow the chain to have large links for good physical strength. On wet and/or cold nights, remember to tell your passenger that they are responsible for applying and removing these devices.

Finally – if you have a later car with a steering lock, don't forget to make sure the standard steering lock is applied by rotating the wheel; it's convenient and easy-to-use. If you want to add a 'START' button to your car, make sure that it can only be used when the ignition key is in the 'ignition on' position.



Deny the Engine Life

This is a more subtle method of theft prevention, and again, there are proven techniques which will be described briefly below; if you're not sure how to implement these ideas, ask a knowledgeable friend:

Short-out the coil-points wire (white, black tracer) with a switch (toggle, or better-still, with a key); if done carefully, this 'upgrade' can be hard to spot and is confusing to the uninitiated, as the ignition-light comes on, the fuel-pump ticks away (1098 and 1275s), the engine turns over but just won't start; it won't even bump-start. The convenience and security is largely determined by the position/visibility of the switch.

Remove the rotor-arm: effective, but not convenient; maybe easier on the 1500 engine. As above, the car behaves perfectly, but will not start.

Interrupt the wiring to the fuel-pump: this applies to those cars with electric pumps, i.e. not the 948s

and 1500s. This allows the engine to start, and you might even move the car a short distance, then all goes quiet upfront – very annoying to the would-be thief... the car's position on the road or car-park may bring it unwanted attention. There are a number of places where the wire to the pump (white) may be interrupted by a 'hidden' switch – again, the visibility of the switch determines the convenience and effectiveness.

That's enough for now... save to say your car should make sure your car has at least one of the above techniques; preferably a combination of 2 or more. If you have further ideas, why not send a letter to the Editor? (Remember, too much detail can assist the thief... so send the outline, not a detailed description.)

Next month, we will look at what action you can take after your car has been stolen, i.e. vehicle trackers.

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AN INSIGHT INTO A PROFESSIONAL SPRIDGET MODIFIER

In this issue we are featuring the activities of 'JLH Minor Restorations', near Southam in the Midlands. I'll let the owner, Jonathon Heap, tell you a bit about himself:

"I started in Napton, Warwickshire, 26 years ago, building standard and modified Morris Minors. The business became well known for its innovative modifications and engine conversions, along with its bodyshop work.

We began working with Midgets and Sprites 5 years ago with an adaption of our Minor disc kit to suit the Spridget. From these beginnings we now offer a comprehensive range of upgrades for the Spridget.

Development car

This is one of our own Midgets that we have been developing. It is a test bed for designs and testing.

This Midget now features a 170bhp Ford 2.0L Zetec engine and a Ford Type 9, 5 speed gearbox. The clutch is a concentric hydraulic unit, which is light in use.

At the rear is a narrowed MK2 Escort axle with Quaife half shafts and 4.4 ATB LSD diff. Rear axle

is located by 4 parallel links and a Watts link with our coil over turreted rear springs. Rear brakes are Fiesta solid discs and Hi Spec rear callipers with cable operated handbrake.

Up front we have fitted our front double wishbone with coil overs and a new billet alloy upright using ball joints as opposed to trunnions.

Both arms are fully adjustable for caster and camber. Track can be decreased by 9mm or increased by 20mm. Front brakes are 260mm vented and cross drilled / grooved discs with 4 pot alloy callipers and Mintex 1144 pads. A servo has been added too.

A custom roll cage has been fabricated, with location bars for the 4 point harnesses.

Fuel tank is an 8 gallon pumped tank, with baffles, foam filled and with an internal swirlpot.

Some of you may have seen this car at Spridget 60 in August."



Customer cars - Paul Morris

This is a customer's Midget, one belonging to Paul Morris (an ex Lola LeMans race driver) and built by himself.

Paul had built and purchased most of the car and mechanicals, but called us in to finish it off for him due to his house move.

Engine is a 1340cc block with SC Components alloy cross flow head, AT throttle bodies and ECU. Runs a Ford Type 9 5 speed and uprated rear axle.

We have fitted our coil over kit and front 240mm 4 pot disc kit, and alloy radiator and cowl along with our combined alloy expansion tank.



Customer car - Steve Naish

Originally an A series based racer Steve wanted more power so it was decided that a 200bhp Zetec and type 9, 5 speed would do the job. Into the project went our 260mm 4 pot disc kit, our full Zetec fitting kit and ancillaries such as alloy radiator and cowl, joint expansion and catch tank, new wiring loom and Concept racing sumped and baffled, foam filled fuel tank.

We are now about to embark on our MGB project, which hopefully will be launched late 2019 or 2020. MASC members are always welcome to call and see my workshop and the work we are currently undertaking.



HILLCLIMBING & SPRINTING BETTY



Arriving at 7am on the 5th May in the paddock of Shelsley Walsh, the oldest motorsport venue in the world, was the right move as it allowed me to get the Midget off the trailer without interruption. This was a two day event for some, with 130 cars competing each day, so it would get very busy in a very short while. It was also one of those mornings where it made you happy to be alive. It was absolutely gorgeous. Whilst the mist was lying low in the Teme Valley, above the river was a clear bright blue sky, albeit with a nip in the air at this early hour.

Scrutineering happened quickly and by a man who has done it before at events for me. He is a Midget fan and dreams of owning one.

I was doing the 270 mile round trip to compete in the MGCC Speed Championship and this was my first competitive event of 2018. The two morning

Practice runs up the 1000 yd course, rising by 328 feet sometimes by as much as 1 in 6, was challenging. My times were alright, but I knew I had more in me and the car. During my first afternoon timed run my car was hitting the rev limiter and then started missing. Why now? I did at least equal my last year's best previous run of 37.79 secs. My second timed run repeated the misfire and my time was slightly slower. I was disappointed. Nevertheless, out of a field of 20 MG's, there was just 0.5 of a second between us all in the top five. That is very close racing.

The following weekend was a fairly local event for me. Just an 80 mile trip to get me to Llandow, near Cowbridge and back for a Sprint in the same Championship. Sadly, in 1950, Llandow was the scene of the world's worst air disaster when an Avro Tudor V80, carrying 80 Rugby supporters, crashed as it returned from an international game in Ireland.

On this day's competition, eleven MG's were competing, with a mixture of Spridgets, B's, ZR's and F's. Again the weather was perfect. Dry and sunny. My car ran well in the first two practices and then the intermittent misfire started again. However a wiggle of some wires during the last run saw me get the fastest time in the group and gained me a first in class. I was over the moon.

The following weekend, 20th May, I was on the road again. This time a 485 mile round trip to Scammonden Dam in the Pennines. The Dam was constructed in the 70's at the same time as this section of the M62 and the Hillclimb section uses



Betty at Gurston Down

the 550 yd long Service road that runs from the base of the dam to the top, rising by some 200 feet. It's steep! Out of 17 competitors I came 5th and was third in my class, so not too bad.

Saturday 26th May saw me at Prescott, a 340 mile round trip. I was surrounded by exotica there. Bugatti's, Ferrari's, other Midgets of course! Worth going though as I had a second in class and this was with that blessed misfire again. My time was 54.97 secs.

My next event then wasn't until the 5th August at Curborough. You will be glad to know that in the meantime I had located the electrical gremlin and the car was now running like a swiss clock again. No other cars in my class there and so technically I was first, although I know it receives no formal recognition. A modest 420 mile round trip this time.

I missed Loton Park as it clashed with Spridget 60, but the 8th September saw me down at Wiscombe and the following day as Gurston Down. Both of these were new venues to me and I loved them both. I managed a time of 49.58 secs at Wiscombe which I was delighted at for a first visit. It is a tricky hill and lots can go wrong. At Gurston Down, with its fast downhill start and its challenging uphill carousel, I posted a time of 40.94 and had a third in class. I was over the moon. For both events I loved being supported by local MASC members who

came along to watch the racing. Another 400 miles round trip.

The 20th October saw my last event of the season for me and this was at Castle Coombe, a circuit reasonably well known to me from numerous previous visits there. The car ran like a song albeit I was placed in the Sports Libre class against the likes of a modified Audi R8, a couple of single seaters and a race Midget. However, the Midget had the fastest time of all of the other MG's present on the day with a time of 90.48 secs. I was delighted. A round trip of 280 miles saw me home safely.

So, 2018 saw me take part in 8 events made up of 5 Hillclimbs and 3 Sprints. I picked up a few trophies for my troubles on the way and I clocked up 2,385 miles towing Betty to and from the events. It is a very sociable past time and I've got to make some good friends along the way. I must thank Sharon, my wife, who enjoys coming along to support me. She is very patient.

I already have plans over the next couple of months to try and eek a few more revs out of the Midget and really can't wait to be behind the steering wheel again, held tightly in position by the 6 point harness and Hans device. Hope to see some of you at the events. Oh, by the way, still had time to edit MASCOT.



Photos: top left & middle, bottom left & middle, Stuart Santos Wing and Ian Mellor

Photos: top & bottom right Tony Price

“YOUR STARTER FOR TEN!”

The Reality of Classic Car Maintenance (or “How to remove and repair a starter motor if you’ve never seen one before”)

For the novices amongst you with only a Haynes manual for light reading, the starter motor is located in the bowels of the engine bay and its sole use is to turn the engine to enable it to fire up.



As the Haynes manual often says, simply remove the two bolts securing the starter to the gearbox housing. That may be “simply” put for the top bolt, but have you ever tried getting the bottom one out in situ? Not a problem if the engine and box are being removed together, as the starter remains attached and can be removed thereafter.

Tips for working in comfort:- 1)use a lift; 2)dig a pit; 3)pay a mechanic while you enjoy a cuppa.

Option 4 was only available on the day = lie on the floor.

Access is required from the side of the car under the right hand sill, for A-Series engines.

So there I was with arms stretched under the car, one holding a 9/16th spanner on the nut, the other with a very long ratchet extension on a corresponding socket, which is necessary to reach the top bolt over the starter motor, and my legs pointing skywards up the garage wall. Those fortunate to have a wide garage or a dry day will not need to be practiced in the art of yoga. With a small foam pad to rest the head on, many hours can be comfortably passed in this position, so long as you don't give it away by snoring.

Once the two bolts are eventually removed and you have managed to straighten up again, you

will discover that the unit can only be lifted out from above. Obviously you should have taken the distributor out beforehand!

Assuming this stage is reached without too much blood rushing to the head, have a cup of tea to celebrate while the unit is inspected on the: a) bench; b) kitchen table; c) living room floor whilst watching a good comedy like Wheeler Dealers.

First impressions with mine were not good (see photo 2 below). A rather chewed set of teeth on the pinion or Bendix as it is correctly called (the sticky-out bit which looks like a socket with a toothed crown). If it does look like a socket, then the teeth have definitely worn away.



Note: check for corresponding damage on the flywheel starter ring, as mine had one missing tooth.

Acquiring a new Bendix mechanism with its associated washers and springs is easily done from all good retailers for a modest sum, as the book says, and highly recommended.

Now comes the easy bit – ha ha! Remove the thingy that holds the Bendix in place on the shaft.

The early Lucas M35G starter motor has a split pin holding it on the shaft which is easily removed. Apparently. The engineers who designed it clearly felt this was not enough of a challenge, so later Lucas 35J models use a “jump ring”, which requires a “suitable clamping device” for removal, better known as a Bendix Spring Compressor Tool (according to all good Workshop manuals) which of course we all keep handy for such an occasion.or not.

So how to compress the spring to get access to the top of the shaft in order to remove the jump ring? Note: Consider why it's called a jump ring.



My first attempt at making a compression tool with 2 plates from my “might come in useful one day” pile failed, as the metal bent. **Note:** use thicker plates to that shown in photo 3 above.

Searching around the garage I chanced upon some welding clamps which appeared to fit over the pinion. Now we’re getting somewhere. But no! The clamps only partly compressed the spring, insufficient to remove the jump ring. Thinking cap on – have another cup of tea.

I found some large thick washers placed under the clamp created more compression in order for the jump ring to be exposed.



As I then had nothing better to do for the next half hour I proceeded to chase the ring around in circles with an assortment of small screwdrivers, a drawing compass point, panel pins, toothpick (not recommended) and anything else which came to hand and looked like it might fit into the groove in the end of the shaft, until I eventually managed to prise the ring out. Actually it jumped – right across the garage! **Note:** Read earlier Note.

So a stronger cup of tea, and a hobnob later...

You know how a visit to your friendly neighbourhood hardware store usually results in a purchase you thought might come in useful one day? This is that day! You know that extending magnetic thingy tool disguised with a cluster of metal filings at the end resembling a dandelion clock? Well once cleaned up you can now go fishing down the back of the workbench where the jump ring disappeared.



Fortunately the engineers had the foresight to make the ring of metal for just such a retrieval.

Attention can now be brought back to the pinion itself, which simply slides off the shaft.

The main spring lifts off to reveal yet another retaining ring holding in the 4-winged “control nut”. On mine this had broken into 4 pieces, but somehow had continued to work ok.

Fortunately this comes as part of the new Bendix mechanism so needs no further stripping down.

Cleaning the parts with petrol to remove all traces of oil and dirt is essential before refitting, as the Bendix should slide freely on the “screwed sleeve”. Checking that it all works using jump leads from a battery is an option – has a hell of a kick to it though so ideally secure in a workbench to stop it flying across the garage.

“Installation is the reversal of the removal procedure” the book says. Well almost. I found a suitably sized socket placed over the end of the shaft and jump ring can be struck sharply with a hammer in order to relocate the jump ring. **Note to self:** keep thumb away from top of the socket. **Note 2:** The jump ring still jumps!

Have a cup of tea and a slice of walnut cake, sit back and admire handiwork.



All you have to do now is put it back on the engine!

Top bolt first then a nice lie down on the floor to get the bottom bolt in.

Note: Please do not try this at home without suitable safety equipment – and copious amounts of tea.

Ian Cooke

SPEED BLEEDERS

Automatic bleed valves (Nipples)

Automatic bleed valves (Nipples) or 'Speed bleeders' are not a new invention, by any means, but they are a solution to a tedious, time consuming & repetitive task of bleeding hydraulic brake & clutch systems. They are a direct replacement for standard bleed nipples and are available in sizes to suit A.H.Sprites and M.G.Midgets.

Available many years ago: then the steel springs inside tended to rust so that the item's ability to operate correctly if at all, after a few years, was negated. For many years I bled hydraulic with the popular 'Easibled' kit but not everyone can 'get on' with that 'tool' because it is sometimes difficult to maintain sealing at several points.

The design of a 'Speed Bleeder' incorporates a one way valve preventing air entering back into the brake, or clutch system and eliminates the repetitive process of tightening and undoing the valve / nipple as occurs under the normal process of bleeding hydraulic systems. Bleeding becomes a one man operation.

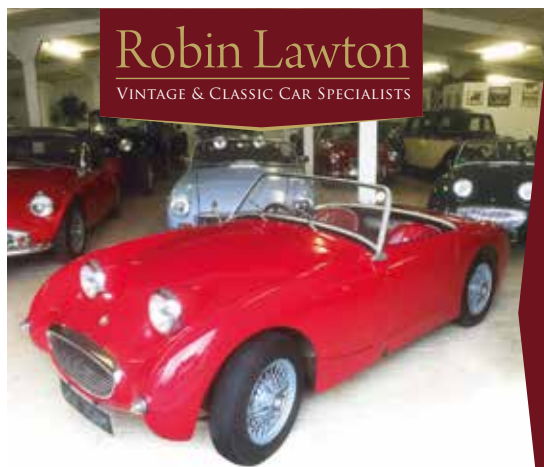
With a Speed Bleeder all one has to do is undo the 'Speedbleeder' one quarter turn, pump the brake or clutch pedal until the system is free of air and tighten. Job done!

Having fitted such 'Speedbleeders', of the Goodridge Brand, to my Frogeye I asked a Goodridge Representative about the construction starting with the material used in the spring: having assumed (correctly) that the questionable internal spring of old would be nowadays replaced by a stainless component.

The detailed response that I received by e-mail was thus:

Speed Features of the speed bleeder:

- Stainless steel spring
- Stainless steel ball
- Brass retainer
- The threads are roll formed. This process results in a stronger and smoother thread than one that is cut.
- The chamber for the ball and spring is precision reamed and the seat for the stainless steel ball is machined to exacting tolerances.
- Patented thread sealing system seals the threads when the bleeding operation is performed, preventing air from being sucked back into the system.
- The pre-applied thread sealant also displaces air and moisture during thread engagement helping to prevent rust.



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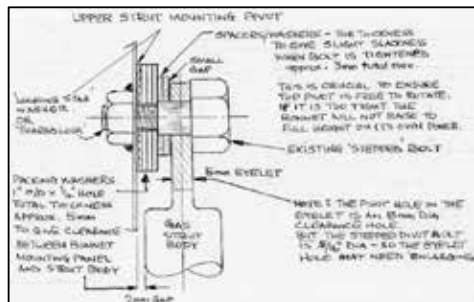
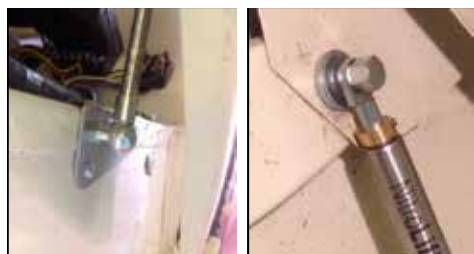
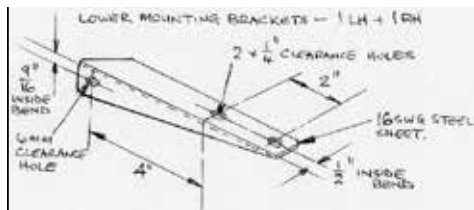
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mounting point, but also the existing 'stepped' bolt. This eyelet is 5mm thick and 22mm long, with a 6mm thread and 8.1mm hole (No E4*). A Ball Stud on the lower rod end allowed minimum modification to the cars structure. This ball stud has a 10mm ball, 6mm thread and is 19mm long on the rod (No T3*). The attached drawings show what I mean. I should say at this point that it is crucial that the top 'eyelet' on the strut body (5mm thick) is free to move (rotate) on the mounting bolt and not pinched up when tightening the bolt on the spacers. A 'locking washer' or 'Lockthread' ensures the bolt stays tight. I made new mounting brackets for the lower mounting such that I could utilise the existing mounting position and their bolts. I only needed to

choice included in the price, whereas the stainless ones were supplied with stainless end fittings at a significant cost increase. The supplier and I reached a compromise in that I purchased stainless struts with 'standard' end fittings included. The difference in cost therefore much more acceptable being only about £10 extra per side. So, the final cost for stainless adjustable gas struts, with standard end fittings, was just over £70. And I knew the strut loads could be adjusted to suit my application and preference.....job done. I ordered two 550mm long - 250m stroke adjustable force stainless gas struts, with standard end fittings as described, which extended the total length to 591mm 50 - 700N force range*.



drill one hole in the footwell side panel each side for the lower ball stud.

I sourced a supplier that supplied either the standard 'black steel' struts or stainless ones. I liked the idea of the stainless, simply based on appearance.....not unlike the existing silver struts. That did however leave me a cost consideration. The standard ones came with end fittings of your

Having made the lower brackets to fit the existing mountings and painting them silver, fitting the struts was really quite easy. I had supported the bonnet in the fully open position prior to removing the old struts, so I knew that the new struts, that were fully extended, fitted perfectly. I then had to release gas from the top of the new struts a little at a time (full instructions were supplied with the struts) until I

could lower the bonnet by applying an acceptable force, until the bonnet catch clicked in.

What a fantastic feeling it was, when I released the bonnet catch and the whole bonnet just lifted up on its own, finishing in the fully up position. Better than I imagined, worked first time and it looked great.



BUT: Then I noticed two factors that were disappointing!

First was the fact that the existing bonnet safety stay would not fit in its location, the bonnet did not rise-up enough! How could that be? Well I concluded that a combination of tolerances, clearances and a certain amount of deflection of the bonnet, made all the difference. I only had to lift the lower strut mounting point just over $\frac{1}{2}$ " and it lifted the front of the bonnet by the inch or so that I needed. So that is why my installation photo shows an additional fixing below the ball stud. Doing it

again I would manufacture a bracket with just the ball stud fixing alone, as per my drawing.

The second factor however was not going to be so easy to solve. After fitting the gas struts and closing the bonnet, the gaps between the bonnet and body had increased a little, but also the rear of the bonnet was higher than before. See photos. This happened because the gas strut, when in the closed position, was exerting an upward and forward load on the bonnet. With the previous existing design, there are no loads at all on the strut...the bonnet sits down under its own weight... which is very heavy. I was able to improve these gaps a little by 'sliding' the bonnet rearwards on the hinge brackets a fraction. I guess we have to live with this small, but annoying, factor because the problem of lifting that heavy bonnet has gone away. These last few photos show how the gaps have ended up.....maybe not too bad!

PS I have a video of it all working, just ask.

Dave Sewell – MASC Member No 4880 Central

Note:* refers to parts supplied by SGS Engineering UK Ltd

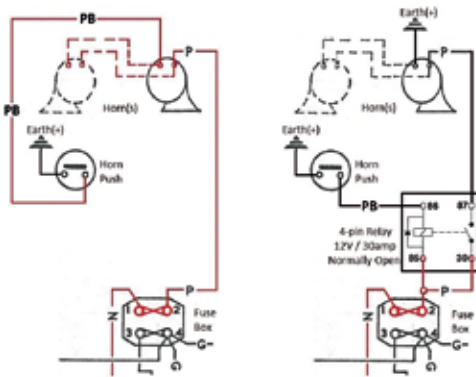
ON IMPROVING THE HORN CIRCUIT:

PART 2

For the reasons set out in Part1 of this article¹, the horn(s) of any Sprite or Midget are best operated with a relay, particularly if twin 'windtone' horns are installed. These cars were designed to be cheap and cheerful but the factory did push this philosophy a little far with the horn circuit: the primitive horn-push was always a too-cheap and never-cheerful solution to the problem of how to allow currents approaching 30 amps to flow through a horn switch.

a small current (ca. 150mA) flows from the fuse box through relay terminals 85 and 86 to earth.

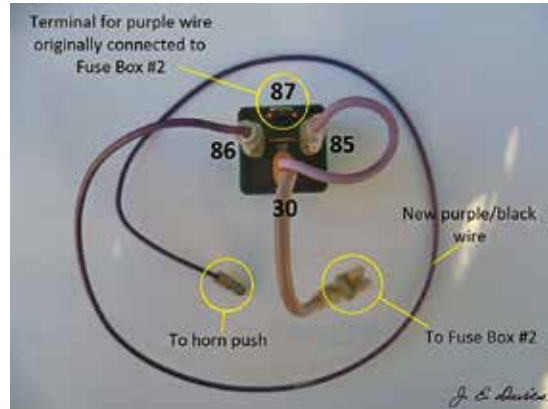
This closes the main contact inside the relay which in turn allows the main current to flow through the horns to earth via relay terminals 30 and 87.



The original horn circuit of a Mk2 Sprite (left) may be adjusted to operate with a relay (right). In both diagrams, the normally 'live' part of the circuit is coloured red. The relay terminals 85 and 86 should be reversed if the car is wired with negative earth.

On a Spridget, a horn relay may be installed conveniently either right next to the fuse box or right next to the horns. Any 'normally open' (NO) relay with four pins numbered 30, 85, 86, 87 and rated 12V / 30amp will do but, as with the brake light relay², the best choice is probably one with an internal diode. Note that a micro relay (rated only 20 amps) is not a good choice for this application.

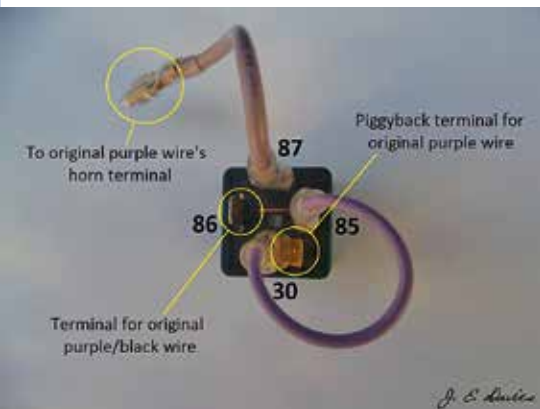
The relay's action is the same no matter where it is placed and is best described with reference to the circuit diagram³. When the horn button is pushed,



A relay wired for installation near the fuse box of a Mk2 Sprite. The bullet connector at the end of the new purple/black wire must be pushed through the bulkhead and connected to the wire serving the horn-push. With this option the original purple/black wire is redundant (disconnected both ends).

If the relay is placed next to the fuse box then the relay is well protected from the weather and the normally 'live' part of the circuit is just a few inches of wire between fuse box and relay. The only disadvantage of this option is that it requires access to the behind-dashboard area: the wire serving the horn-push must be disconnected from its (now redundant) purple/black wire and then re-connected to a new wire from relay terminal 86. This access is relatively easy with the early cars but may be more difficult with the later ones, particularly those where the horn-push is on an indicator stalk.

1 See MASCOT Dec 2018 pages 21-22.
 2 See MASCOT November 2018 pages 20-21.
 3 This diagram is for a Mk2 Sprite but the circuit is basically the same for all Spridgets, save that the purple and purple/black wires are brown/green and brown/black respectively on a Frogeye.



Looking much less complicated than the circuit diagram: a relay wired for installation next to the horn(s) of a Mk2 Sprite. Exceedingly easy to wire at the bench, the only real problem may be removing the front grille in order to install it.

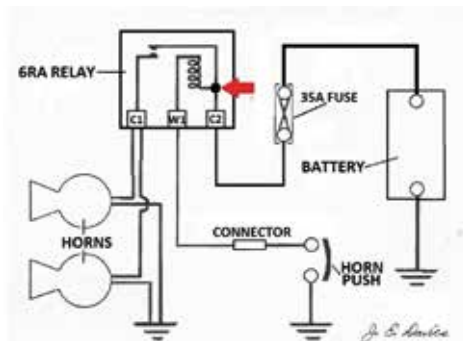
In contrast, if the relay is placed next to the horn(s) then installation is extremely easy. Two slight disadvantages of this option are (a) a little more of the circuit - the purple wire to relay terminal 30 - is always 'live' and (b) the relay is more exposed to the weather.

No matter where the relay is placed, the horn(s) must be securely earthed. On most Spridgets this can be accomplished by running a short piece of strong wire (rated 30 amps) from one of the horn support brackets to the horn terminal which was connected to the purple/black wire.



View into the front valence of a Mk2 Sprite with twin 9H horns and horn relay at the fuse box. Note that the original purple/black wire to the horn push is disconnected.

Note that the wires carrying the main horn current need to be rated 30amps. The short wire connecting relay terminals 30 and 85 and the new purple/black wire from terminal 86 to the horn-push (if the relay is installed near the fuse box) can be much thinner because they will carry only a very small current. For a proper job, use correctly rated wires with the correct colours, use cable ties or 'Velcro' to keep everything neat and tidy and document the changes for future owners of the vehicle. Frogeye owners who wish to preserve as much originality as possible can install an original style Lucas 6RA relay next to the horns rather than a modern relay.



On an original 3-pin Lucas 6RA relay, pins C1, W1 and C2 mimic modern pins 87, 86 and 30: an internal connection (arrowed red) makes a 4th pin (85) unnecessary. On a 4-pin Lucas 6RA relay, pins C1, W1, C2 and W2 exactly mimic modern pins 87, 86, 30 and 85.

Summing up: fitting a relay at either the fuse box or the horn(s) solves all four of the problems mentioned in Part1 of this article: the normally 'live' part of the horn circuit is much reduced, the length of wire carrying the main current to the horns is halved (reduced to the minimum possible) and the fragile horn push and the dodgy earth connection via the steering column carry nothing but a tiny non-destructive (150mA) current. A welcome bonus is that the horn will be much more likely to sound in a real emergency than it ever was before the addition of the relay. For less than the cost of a pint, is a horn relay worth it? I think so.

Finally: for legal reasons and to reduce the possibility of me being prosecuted, please do remember to disconnect the battery before making any changes to your electrical system. Thank you.

John E. Davies (Member 3443)

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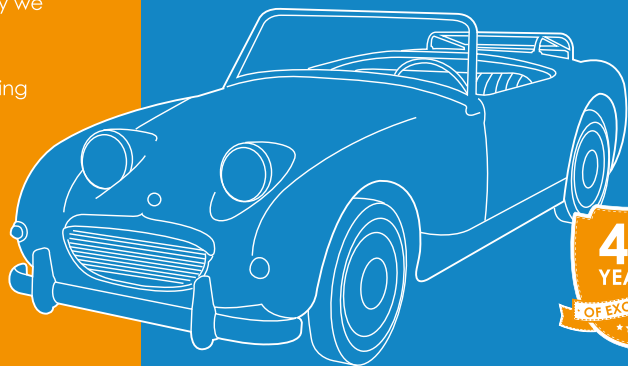
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On behalf of our area members may we thank our outgoing Red Leader Dave Dixon for all of his efforts for the last 18 years both at club level and time on the national committee, as he and Pat are moving South to the Plymouth area and wish them good luck for the future and maybe establishing a new club area there. (no prizes Terry for suggesting a name for that possible new area being south of the Bowels Of England)

We have decided to revert to our original area name as CAMBRIDGESHIRE AREA is more relevant, and whilst still welcome members from adjoining Norfolk and Suffolk we understandably do not expect them to have travelled from their centres to attend our meets.

We will also seek a more convenient location for monthly meetings, currently being 'sampled by the management'.



Whilst motoring events are somewhat limited at this time, we can however report on our very successful social tenpin bowling event at St Neots Cams where a dozen of us displayed our various levels of skill or more likely miss-spent youth, this followed by a convivial meal in a good real ale pub.

Nigel narrowly beating Mick on countback, with 'keep it in the family' Diane outscoring Jo as best lady bowler. (photo' of our group ready for action)

After persevering with his somewhat disfunctional midget gearbox throughout the summer Peter Chase enterprisingly decided to replace it himself with a new unit from Heathrow Transmissions together with an Alan Anstead roller clutch release bearing, both of which are working gratifyingly well he says. Good work Peter and with other parts having been replaced you should get to see your classic race meetings travelling in full confidence with a greater understanding of your motor.

Doubtless many members will be undertaking works and any upgrades to their spridgets over this winter to keep them rolling on the road as they should be, so let me know of any projects suitable for inclusion in the diary.

Personally I have been looking to switch to LED lights on the frog, with the benefit of amber indicating front lights for additional safety also reduced power use, following on from HTJ's article in November diary. However, one supplier mentions that LED lights are not strictly legal for road use, can anyone shed light (pun not intended) on this point, as I have not knowingly broken the law for quite some time?

Graham Kirkup '59 Frogeye



Peter carrying out the work in his home garage



Midget and Sprite owners are used to squeezing into small spaces, so, it was not a problem when space was tight at our Christmas meal. Our usual meeting area at the Tame Otter had been transformed into a Christmas dining area resplendent with table decorations, tinsel and crackers. If you hadn't seen other Central members during the year then this was a good way to get together and I hope meet new friends. It was also good to see some new faces too. Paul, Jean and Denis who joined this year had decided to come along and fingers crossed the friendly banter and chatter ensured they had a good time.

As in previous years, we decided to hold a small raffle with the proceeds going to the Air Ambulance. It was very much appreciated when John, Martin and Elaine brought extra prizes along to supplement the raffle table. Thank you. We found the Tame Otter staff helpful and friendly especially considering they had to juggle hot plates in small spaces whilst also having to remember everyone's order. This is mainly due to Jenni who has taken to looking after us at monthly meetings and has become part of the Central family. When she heard we were booked in for our Christmas party, she changed shifts so she could be on duty that evening. Therefore I felt it only right that after a round of applause for her service I asked her to

pick the first raffle ticket. John's ticket was first out of the hat so rather than take home his own raffle prize he decided to go for the Panettone cake. Justin chose the mystery prize and he was relieved to find it was chocolate money and biscuits rather than an embarrassing party hat. There's always next year Justin.....

With the meal over, members took the time to talk over their plans for Christmas and the the New Year. Keith had braved the rain and come in his Midget putting us all to shame. After a gearbox change earlier in the year and a fuel leak that could have spelt disaster his car was now running well and he was making the most of the mild weather before Christmas and enjoying his car to the full. Martin and Elaine were already planning events for the start of the year and the Classic Retro show at Stoneleigh in February looks like one they will be putting in their diary. Paul mentioned that after looking all year for a car he may have seen the car that could turn out to be his Christmas present. We will all have to wait until the New Year to find out if Santa managed to fit a Frogeye Sprite down his chimney.

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



A happy new year to Sprite and Midget owners everywhere! As I write this in early December many of us in Dorset have tucked our cars up for the winter and some well-earned maintenance.

Looking back over our year we had a successful show to celebrate the Frogeye's 60th birthday, our first weekend away, in Guernsey, with 18 cars and several 'regular' events. Our annual BBQ saw, again, fine weather and this along with an evening road run were well supported.



In November Peter Vallins raided his parts store and bagged up 20 of his spares so that members could try to identify those by feel only! Some interesting answers and it just shows how well members know their cars. Fortunately Peter did not put a large sausage in one of the bags as he had threatened but a bag of sweets did fool some people.

Speaking of our Guernsey trip we plan a similar venture to Jersey next year to coincide with the Jersey International Motoring Festival at the end of May. Dave Stebbing is currently planning this

and we will need deposits in early January.

Our Committee in the run up to our AGM early next year 'will meet again' as Vera Lynn sang, and we will be working hard to encourage members to participate in events and also to actually organise some of these (hint).

I started by talking about maintenance and apart from my Frogeye I know of at least two other member's cars which will need work to get them going once again. One of those will not be Peter Vallins who has completed the restoration of a second Frogeye in just about a year.

This is a yellow 'twin' to go with his blue one. With a year to rebuild and seven months to get it registered in UK running concurrently. It was originally registered in Dusseldorf, then taken to California and last used in 1968. Peter is preparing a story for the Mascot magazine.

We look forward to welcoming any Spridget owners who may venture down to darkest Dorset and also plan to try and visit some of the adjoining MASC Areas – you have been warned!

**John Gully
Dorset Area Representative.**

Editor's Note – We would like to see a pic of those Longstone Pirelli Cinturato's that he won in the MASCOT competition, on the Frog too.



Peter's Frogeye

Christmas Came Early to Essex

Jane & John kindly offered to organise this year's 'Santa Run' which took us to the north of the County close to where they live. We were also joined by their son Ollie, who attends each year as Tim's co-driver.

To the amusement of festive shoppers seven cars and their drivers clad in Christmas fancy dress met at Fillpots Nursery, Boxted. We seemed to have a surplus of traditional naughty elves, snowmen and Santa's and Tim in some bizarre two-tiered creation with a snowman appearing to be giving him a 'piggy back'. Very novel!

Some members made a huge effort decorating their cars and making outfits which each year get better and better. Francis who starts planning for the event in the summer also came equipped with soft and bouncy snowballs which allowed an impromptu snowball fight to take place in the car park before the run began.

Fun over we set off in the drizzle for a drive through some of the most beautiful countryside in Essex

passing through the villages of Nayland, Higham, Startford St Mary and into Dedham and Constable country. The weather improved throughout the afternoon and there were glimpses of blue sky, but most importantly it was mild and remained dry. We then made our way through Lawford to Manningtree to our final destination of the picturesque estuarine village of Mistley.

Over coffee and cake Jane judged the cars and outfits and for the third year running the best dressed car prize went to Francis for his snow covered Frog, laden with authentic presents for the year that his car was made. Runner up went to Tim. Best costume went to Gill the mad snowman, who throughout the run bombarded innocent passers by with snowballs. The runner up prize went to Tim in his twist on the traditional snowman costume. Our thanks to Jane, John and Ollie for organising a very amusing afternoon.

Anyway Merry Christmas and a Happy & Healthy New year to you and your families.



Tracks Days 2019

With the New Year approaching, my thoughts are turning to what could be organised in terms of a follow up to the successful MGs on Track / MASC event at Donington this October. Things to consider are whether we want a change of location or not and are we happy with one event for the year or is there sufficient interest for two?

The MGs on Track programme for 2019 currently looks like this.

Bedford	Sat 26th Jan
Goodwood	Sat 23rd Feb
Silverstone	Mon 18th Mar
Cadwell Pk	Mon 15th Apr
Snetterton	Mon 20th May
Castle Combe	Mon 24th June
Blyton Park	TBC July
Croft	Fri 12th July
Brands Hatch GP	Thurs 1st Aug
Anglesey	Mon 12th Aug
North Weald	TBC Aug
Castle Combe	Mon 9th Sept
Donington	TBC Oct
Goodwood	Mon 28th Oct
Brands Hatch	Mon 2nd Dec



North Weald (just off the M11) is an interesting option as this will be run as a genuine novice event, helmets not required as there are wide run off areas. This could give some people who want to just dip their toes into the world of Track Days an opportunity, because as well as being very safe it will be probably cheaper than the typical £170 / £180 cost. At the other end of the scale, there are two dates for Goodwood which is clearly an iconic track and venue. This would probably be around £200 but always sells out quickly. The other consideration is a central location but that would probably mean a return to Donington as that is the most centrally located event. Its early days yet so if you have any thoughts about this maybe drop a line to our track day guru Neil Thomas via the letters page.

Invalid Carriage Status

My mention last month of Les Jean's 1500 Midget having the status of an Invalid Carriage with the DVLA seems to have prompted evidence supporting the DVLA's position. Notts and Derby Area Rep Ian Cooke was at Goodwood Revival in 2016 and happened to photograph the Starting Grid of the All Comers Race and is of the opinion that the driver nearest to the camera is Les! (See picture) The evidence is mounting!

Happy New Year!
Steve





Old Boys Run, 5th November by Alan Anstead

Mike Pearson arranged the November 5th Old Boys run. Our group assembled sixteen Sprites, Midgets, and derivatives in the car park at Swiftune Engineering Ltd. Those persons that move in BMC Classic Mini 'circles' or frequent historic events such as Goodwood Revival will probably have heard of Swiftune who provide engines for so many of the A-Series engine cars. Some may have Swiftune parts or engineering in and upon their Spridgets for the SW07 camshaft is popular.

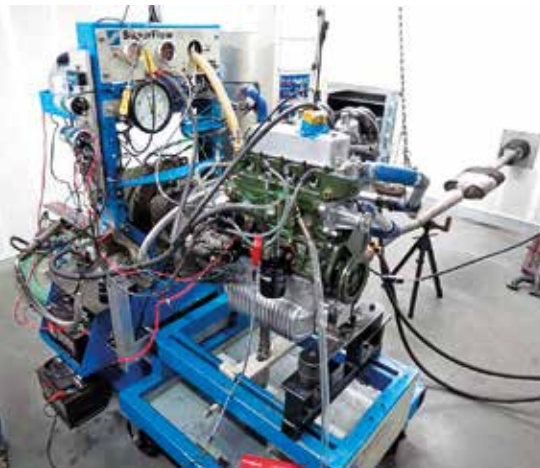
Nick Swift was awaiting our arrival with refreshments all ready. Nick has inherited the lead of the business from his father Glynn. Glynn was apparently a Ford employee many moons ago.

Asked to leave as he was taking too many mini engines to the Ford workshop to build during 'down time'. Glynn started his business in Essex before a move to Kent.

Our tour started with a look at two mini shells being built for racing. Then came the well equipped machine shop where our host explained the various processes that the machines were used for whilst answering the many questions being asked. Next the soundproofed Dynamometer room where engines are tested, developed, and run in to achieve the ultimate available for the purpose they are to serve be it Road, Race or Rally.

In the engine building room Nick demonstrated the 'timing in' of a camshaft fitted to a customer engine. A few words on the event cannot convey how much was shown nor how long we stayed but after two and one half hours Mike was summoning us away as lunch was booked at The Bull in Bennenden.

The day did not end with lunch. Again Mike was summoning. We left the pub to travel but a mile to Scotty's Garage. Kent Member Brian Scott is trying to get youngsters involved in engineering through the Classic Car. Brian is trying to attract those academically challenged and teach them mechanics so that they eventually will have something to place on their CV when seeking employment when the time and age are right. So far there are two classes on a Saturday. He is seeking sponsorship and assistance but hopefully he will write, in Mascot, of his aims and achievements so far.





“East Kent meeting at Sarre 18th November 2018 by John Clark

The meeting this month was delayed due to the NEC get together the previous weekend.

Just as well I think as that one would have been wet and this Sunday provided a splendid sunny but cold day just right for Spridgeting.

And what a start to the day when our own Richard Jenness appeared in the car park driving his own Austin 1300 having been granted a driving licence again after illness and an enforced break from driving. Congratulations Richard.

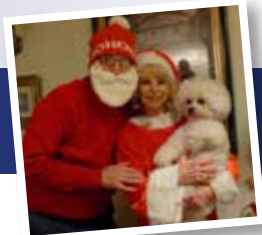
In addition to the Farina styled A series engine, 9 Spridgets in multiple colours graced the car park. Just to balance the mix a classic Ford from the Anstead stable provided him heated transport. A good turn out with 20 sitting down to lunch. We welcomed Gary Lazarus with Gapless all the way down from North London apparently covering the distance in 90 minutes and keeping speeds down to less than 80! Well done Gary. With MASC visitors from the Midlands over recent months I think that these visits can only be beaten if Santa calls into our Christmas Dinner get together next month.

We have nearly filled the pub for our Christmas do which will replace our normal get together. A drive out later in December is planned if the weather stays as good as today.

Kent Meeting at Angel P.H. Addington Green 25th November 2018 by Alan Anstead

I was surprised to see even one Midget or Sprite on such a miserable and overcast day. Undeterred by the weather Mel & Barb came in their 1500 Midget. Good banter and good company but not really much else to be reported. Time to start planning for our 2019 diary.





We had a very interesting meeting in November, as one of our members Ian Jones had managed to arrange for a Photographer by the name of Alan Cox to come along and give us a show on the many photographs he had taken on his travels when visiting car races at Oulton Park etc over quite a long period of time. Our club room was fit to bursting as along with Alan turning up so did twenty or so guests that had wanted to come along and listen to his talk!! But I think the on the plus side were the bar takings certainly had a boost that evening!!

On the 2nd December u2018 Mike and Karen Bennett, Shelley and myself motored up to take part in the famous 'MG Cumbria Christmas Cracker Run. We were encouraged to decorate our cars, and ourselves in anything we thought were pertaining to the run, so a few walking 'Christmas Crackers' duly arrived, Father and Mother Christmas's and a fair sprinkling of Christmas jumper and Father Christmas hats were to be seen. Nice to see so many members be so enthusiastic! Possibly encouraged by prizes which would be given for the winners of the competitions!!! but all good fun! The weather we 'endured' during the run was awful but undeterred we motored on enjoying the trip despite the inclementness !!!!Might have made that word up but you know what I mean! Mike Karen Bennett, Shelley and I agreed to re run it when the sun was shining! It ran from the Rheged centre near Penrith just off M6 junction 40, so a good 70 miles before the start. Mike & Karen did the wise thing and drove there the day before staying overnight in a Travel Lodge, Shelley and I set off early to arrive at 9am ready for the start. I have to say it never stopped raining. We arrived in good time choosing to go in our MGB GT (Bridget) as she does not get out much these day, shame for the old girl!., Shelley is always on her side and reminding me we do have Bridget as well as (Mandy) our 1959 Frogey!!! who needs to enjoy the joys of speeding through country lanes, and not just stuck in a barn!!!! HmMMMM! Anyway moving on, we arrived to book in at the first control stop and try to answer a few car questions whilst the rain stopped, but this was short lived and continued the entire route of 70+ miles of single track roads and deep floods in parts, good job we were in the 'B'!!!

We finished at Braithwaite Victory Memorial Institute Hall where a very nice late lunch was provided. All in all we had covered 220miles and had a brilliant time, 49 cars took part and to my

knowledge no one broke down, quite something given the weather. I must also add at this point that after the run, we came back to the village to enjoy a great lunch of Steak Pie, peas carrots and mash, followed by a choice of 3 delicious desserts always difficult to decide on one. Everything was home cooked and the female staff must be congratulated not only on making our lunch, but with the almost military fashion it was served, cleared away and tea or coffee repeatedly offered. We were as always very impressed and look forward to our return visit next year!

So its just time now to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful but full of motoring events, without too many breakdowns New Year! from Neil and Shelley - North West Reps

He had quite a following as he brought with 20+ guests, which was great as we just about managed to squeeze everyone in our club meeting room at the Kilton Inn. Big thanks to Ian and Alan.

On the 2nd December Mike & Karen Bennett, Shelley & I took part in The Famous Christmas Cracker Run which started at the Rheged Centre, just off M6 junction 40 Penrith, so a good 70 miles before the start, Mike & Karen did the wise thing and drive there the day before staying overnight in a Travel Lodge, Shelley & I set off early dors to arrive at 9am ready for the start & I have to say it never stopped raining. We arrived in good time choosing to go in our MGBGT (Bridget) as she do'snt get out much these day, shame for the old girl!!!. As we arrived to book in the rain did stop but this was short lived and continued the entire route of 70+ miles of single track roads and deep floods in parts, good job we were in the B.

We finished at Braithwaite Victory Memorial Institute Hall where a very nice late lunch was provided. All in all we had covered 220miles and had a brilliant time, 49 cars took part and to my knowledge no one broke down quite something given the weather.

Happy new year and good motoring for 2019 from Neil, Shelley and all our North West Area Members.

Neil & Shelley Area Reps.



Well the past few weeks have been quite interesting. The stripdown of the bubble

car chassis is almost there however, “muggins” didn’t realise that one end of the brake adjusting rod was a left hand thread and managed to shear it off. No problem, thought I, I will just cut the head off a left hand bolt and weld the threaded part on to the rod. All I needed was an 8mm left hand bolt. I tried the local technical college for help, no luck there. I tried local suppliers, no luck there. I went on the internet, got loads of nut and bolt suppliers, phoned them all up, negative reply from them all. One or two said they could manufacture a quantity but I only want two, so no luck there.

Eventually I ordered them from China, they will take around four weeks to deliver.

The postmen take a keen interest my cars and I provide them with some amusement in my restoration skills; so when I bumped into them whilst walking the dog and they said my bolts had arrived from China, I expressed more than a little cynicism. Four days from order to delivery from China? The packet did feel like it had bolts in it however, it was addressed to my wife and I would not dare open her mail, credit me with some sense, so I rushed home full of eager anticipation. Presenting the package I was informed, ‘oh you open it, it’s for you anyway’. Inside was a variety of male and female threaded pieces in metric, unf and unc threads on a wire, a quite classy style of thread gauge, it will be useful for the Rusty One and the Bubbler.

It was an early Christmas present from Mrs Santa. After reading last months magazine I caught her looking up lathes on the internet, although I would love a lathe, I quickly dispelled her of this idea as presently I have nowhere to put one, but it was a lovely thought.

I am not the only one beavering away. I got a request from Peter, if I could bring along a brake and clutch pedals and a steering column to our next beer & blether night, as he required measurements to fabricate ones for his frogeye restoration. Dave

Curle also took the brake shoes, master and wheel cylinders of the Bubbler to check if he had some in his vast stock of parts; he has gone over and above the call of duty and I am really indebted to Dave for his efforts. Dave used to have a car accessory business and still has a load of parts, so if you are looking for something, not just sprite or midget send Dave an e-mail. Eric Knowles way further north is changing wheel bearings so a number of cars are being worked on to prepare them for the 2019 season.





Another year has sped past, and we have seen busy folk in our Wiltshire crowd. You will have read of the success of Colin Gale last month in his bright green hillclimbing Sprite, winning the Healeysport Sprint and Hillclimb Championship outright, as well as the Sprite class. Colin's confidence and outright speed seem to have taken a step up this year. Fantastic driving, well done mate! Our other Hillclimbing member, Keith Wilson, had been getting on pretty well himself at the start of the year, but then, unfortunately, Keith had a major engine failure. The good news is that his new engine is now built and ready for installation, and he should be back in high speed action next year.

It's been such a pleasure to get my Sprite, Mildred, back out this year, and sorting all the teething niggles out. I've used her constantly over the summer, and only reluctantly pulled her into the garage for a few jobs. (pic of my son Edward, sitting on her above our village, Box.)

Over the last few months, with other members, we've enjoyed the classic car and restoration shows at the Bath and West Showground, and at the NEC, and watching typical autumn competitive events, such as the Rally of the Tests and the Allen Trial. (Pics of cars on the Allen Trial).

Meanwhile, I'm again looking into a big hole in my Sprite (pic) where the "leak-free" 1098 engine and "slick-changing" ribbed case gearbox will shortly be. Incidentally, I just found the Gold Seal factory reconditioned smooth case gearbox I'd almost forgotten I had! Should I try that instead? (Pic) Is it actually a Sprite one? I must check.

Despite the up and down weather keeping many peoples' cars at home, I'm so pleased we are still getting a great team of Spridgetters turning out for our Monthly meets at the Barge. Thank you to all of you, and especially to the regulars for making the more recent members so welcome. We have new managers there, Julian and Jo, doing a fine job, and we have finally decided that our cosy spot at the front of the pub is not big enough, so we will try moving into the restaurant next year. We have the delights of our Christmas Sunday lunch before that, but will miss out on the December meet, as it is due on the 31st, so is cancelled. Monday 28th January will therefore be the next meeting at The Barge. See you there!

For 2019, I hope we can get some fine driving days out. We have been talking for some time about



reviving one of the excellent tours that were part of the old Great Western rallies of the eighties, and I have also been idly planning an epic round-county drive, "a lap of Wiltshire" or "100 villages" perhaps, so will be looking for feedback on that idea over a few drinks. Please let me know what you'd like, and if you need any help with sorting out your car don't hesitate to bend my ear!

All the best, Happy New Year, and Happy Sprigetting!

Andy
Box, Wiltshire - 07776 121251

DEAR MASCOT...

DEAR NEIL

I was really chuffed to find a reply, in the current MASCOT, to the query about my hardtop.

Interestingly, it came from Pride and Clarke, who were based in Stockwell SW9 and in their heyday when I first became interested in anything with an internal combustion engine. I started motorcycling in 1960, driving in 1961, and grew up in south London. Consequently I knew P&C very well and went there many times.

Could you forward this email to Ray Pattenden (member 5404), or let me have his email address? I'm very grateful that he's solved this mystery.

I've also discovered that my Midget had an infamous MP as a previous owner, but that's another story!

Seasonal good wishes,

John Carter

Member 5557

HELLO NEIL

Hopefully you can include this in your "Dear MASCOT" section, as I've just read Ray Pattenden's letter on Pride and Clarke hardtops.

The good news is that the tooling for these Pride and Clarke hardtops is owned by www.frogeyespares.co.uk and we still make and sell quite a few each year. They're made by our sister company, Honeybourne Mouldings, www.honeybournemouldings.co.uk so can be bought through either supply route.

I've got one on my Frogeye, 500BU0, and it looks great!

We're also looking at remanufacturing Shelsley bodysells at Honeybourne Mouldings. Please see attached images of my Shelsley Frogeye BSE793. If anybody wants to write to me showing some interest, we can gauge whether to go ahead and make these very special bodies. I understand they were last made in the mid 80's.

All the best. Love the "Once, Twice, Three Times a Midget" line on the front page. Somehow Lionel Ritchie's words have now been permanently changed in my head!

MIKE

MIKE MARCZYNSKI



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

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Mark Hall, T: 01296 660103 E: chairman@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
Glyn Polly, T: 07544 302 575 E: glyn.polly@gmail.com
David King, T: 01453 544202 E: djs.king46@gmail.com
Neil Thomas, T: 07891 684435
E: editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
John Collins, E: green_mx5@hotmail.com
Stuart Watson, "Staddlestones", Thicknall Lane, Clent, Stourbridge, West Midlands. DY9 0HX.
T: 01562 883076 E: membership@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk
Alan Pritchett, T: 07720 238810 E: a.pritchett@btinternet.com
Gary Lazarus, E: garyfrogeye@gmail.com T: 020 7700 5696
Anthony Cutler, E: anthony.cutler@btinternet.com
Richard Weaver, E: fsam1983@hotmail.com
Liam Murphy, E: biddysingh@gmail.com
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ENQUIRIES

Terry Horler, 63 Littledean, Yate, Bristol, BS37 8UQ. T: 01454 881770
E: rebelwithasprite@hotmail.com
Alan Lo, E: alan@mobuzzing.net T: 0117 9572617 Mob: 07474 343643

Stuart Watson, E: stuart@thewatsonz.com T: 01562 883 076

Gary Lazarus, garyfrogeye@gmail.com T: 020 7700 5696
Mike Grout, 55 Park Road, Spixworth, Norwich, NR10 3PJ. T: 01603 890211
E: miketg54@hotmail.com
Mark Boldry, E: mark26r@hotmail.com
Mike Bennett, webmaster@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk T: 01925 727479
Gary Lazarus, garyfrogeye@gmail.com T: 020 7700 5696
E: enquiries@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk / alan.anstead@btopenworld.com

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Terry Horler, T: 01454 881770 E: rebelwithasprite@hotmail.com
Graham Kirkup, T: 01223 511835 E: gramag.kirkup@ntlworld.com
Dave Warren, T: 07831 101850 E: central.masc@live.com
Michael Ellis, T: 07414 279074 E: michael_ellis@live.co.uk
John Gully, T: 07876 334949 email john.gully@btinternet.com
Gary Knights, T: 01376 562172 Mob: 07932 077305 E: gknights@live.co.uk
Terry Langridge, T: 01252 626063 E: friendlyfolk@midgetandsprite-hampshire.info
Steve Newton, E: newton-gemini@sky.com
Mark Hall, T: 01296 660103 E: markdhall@aol.com

Alan Anstead, T: 01322 384050 E: alan.anstead@btopenworld.com
Currently vacant
Gary Lazarus, T: 020 7700 5696 E: garyfrogeye@gmail.com
Neil McLeod, T: 01772 466648 Mob: 07921 089 680 E: neil_mcleod2@outlook.com
Ian Cooke, T: 0115 938 3838 E: ilcooke@btinternet.com
John Austerfield, T: 07778 636070 E: austerfield.07@btinternet.com

Grahame Gibbins, T: 01235 530456 E: grahame_gibbins@hotmail.com
Graham Smith, T: 0141 954 8276 E: smith.grahamf@yahoo.co.uk
CURRENTLY VACANT
David Hill, T: 01239 811307 E: david@hill.be
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Chris Harding, T: 01342 718860 E: harding.cm@btinternet.com
Andy Cross, T: 01225 743554 E: andyspeedbox@gmail.com
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.** 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
- 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.com
- 2nd Wednesday **DEVON AREA.** Meet at Court Farm, Abbotskerswell, TQ125 NY Devon. 7.30pm Michael Ellis 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
- 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 **CAMBRIDGESHIRE AREA.** Meet at Ferry Boat Inn, Holywell. PE24 4TG from 8pm
- 2nd Sunday **EAST KENT GROUP.** Meet at the Crown Inn, Sarre, CT7 0LF from 12.30hrs Contact Area Rep alan.anstead@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: Charlton Inn, Bournemouth Road, Charlton Marshall, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 9NH about 7.30pm
- 4th Thursday **SUSSEX.** Meet at Bolney Stage, Bolney, RH17 5RL from 19:00.
- 4th Thursday **HAMPSHIRE.** Meets at Lasham Gliding Club, The Avenue, Alton, GU34 5SS. 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.** Non-regular and occasional meetings and runs arranged throughout the year. 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 - Frogeye 1958 speedwell blue all steel no rust. 1380 tuned engine. Many Peter May & Frontline parts. Alloy wheels Yokohama tyres. Sebring pedal box, 5speed. Ali rad, Oil cooler. Receipts, History file. Can e-mail more pics if interested. Peter 01843 832899 Margate area £14750



FOR SALE - the perfect present for yourself or someone special with a Round Wheel Arch Midget. REG No RWA 267, on retention and ready to transfer. £800 : 00 ono. Please phone Pete on 01543 481683 OR 07517277798 mob. OR peter.neachell@btinternet.com

FOR SALE - 1500cc engine out of my '78 Midget. I was going to rebuild it but managed to get my hands on a rebuilt unit with no mileage on it. It was a runner when we took it out 3 years ago and it has been dry stored ever since. I've just degreased it apart from the bottom of the sump. Engine no. YC 64042H. £120. Buyer collects. Call Gary on 07803 833089.

FOR SALE - 1974 Harvest Gold MG BGT; dry stored since 2000. Mostly original car, requires restoration £2,500 ono. Contact Alan Lo - 07474 343643 (Bristol). Selling on behalf of the owner.

FOR SALE - A pair of new old stock Lucas spotlights covers in almost new condition. The diameter is about 5.5" across the back, should fits most Lucas spot lights, I think it is for FT/LR14 or similar side Lucas lights; £30. Contact Alan Lo - 07474 343643 (Bristol).



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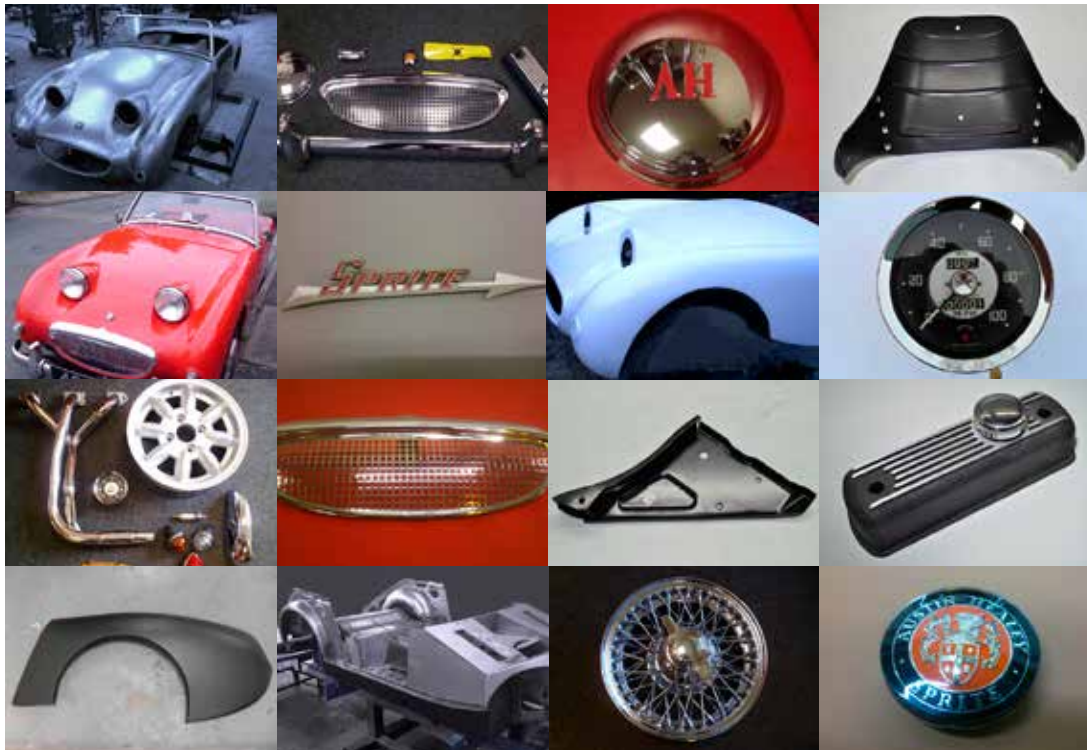
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