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March 2020

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Welcome to Sprite Torque

Welcome to the this edition of Sprite Torque for the year. In time of much uncertainty, I hope you enjoy the read. And sorry for the delay, a broken ankle and some family health issues have pulled me in another direction, so this month has been rather hastily thrown together.

Thank you so much to our members who have sent me some wonderful articles.. Please feel free to show us your restorations and projects, or maybe even just send me a photo of your pride and joy and a little story about how she came to be in your possession and the adventures you've had together?.

You will note up coming events have been removed due to our current health crisis.

If you have anything to share, please send



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Life Members

1975 Bob Owers

2015 Brian Walton, Ian Gibbs, Wendy Gibbs, Graham Wells,

Avis Fowler, Greg Holden, Alan Barlow, Dave Lawrence, Colin Dodds

2016 Barry Taylor

Ian Jenson, Barry Cockayne, Les Payne, Bill McLennan

2019 Eileen Barlow

Marque Mentors

Mk 1 Sprite Greg Holden 0408777936, Colin Dodds 0414 789 263

Mk 2 Sprite Neil Scott 0409 326 021

Mk 3 Sprite Greg Strange 02 93192299,

Mk 3 Midget Mk 3 Midget Colin Dodds 0414 789 263

1500 Midget Greg Prunster 0428 169 931

S.C.C.A

PO Box 696 Kingswood NSW 2747

Magazine contributions to: editor@spriteclub.com

Snail Mail to : PO Box 696 Kingswood NSW 2747

(magazine contributions close 20th of each month)

Monthly Meetings

The Hills Club—2 -6 Jenner Street Baulkham Hills

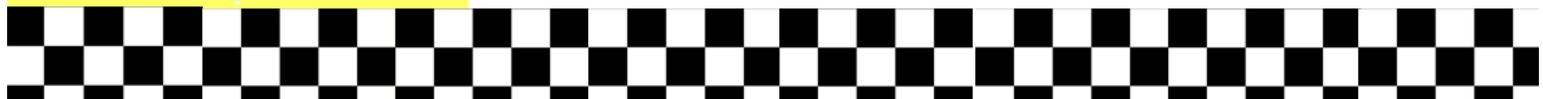
2nd Tuesday of each month starting at 7:30pm—Lachlan Room

S.C.C.A. WEBSITE: www.spriteclub.com

(View Sprite Torque in colour in the MEMBERS ONLY section)

S.C.C.A. Email List: <http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/spridgets-aus>

PLEASE NOTE: The Committee positions are all honorary and are undertaken by private individuals in their spare time. Please contact them at sensible times and accept that they may prefer to call you back at a time more convenient for themselves. The Sprite Car Club of Australia Inc. accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or reliability of articles, correspondence, opinions or advertisements contained herein.



PRESIDENTS REPORT



As you would expect, April has been a quiet month for the club with no events taking place due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Writing this piece towards the end of the month, things do seem a lot more hopeful than they were at the start of the month, but as we have all learnt, things can change very rapidly dealing with this virus. For now, we all need to stay home as much as possible and make use of the time as best we can, I know that my list of jobs around the house has been drastically reduced.

We did manage to hold our monthly committee meeting using the wonders of modern technology and a ZOOM video meeting which was 95% successful. I cant say it was fully successful as we weren't able to connect with all of the committee but we were pretty close. We will continue to use this method of meeting until the restrictions are lifted and we can all meet safely in the one location. Really that was the highlight of the month from a club perspective. One major decision made at the committee meeting was to postpone our 60th Birthday celebrations. You can read about this elsewhere in the magazine, but really we had no options as the venue is currently closed and we do not know when it will reopen.

On a personal front I have been using the quiet time to work on my road car which I am slowly converting to a Group S race spec car. I replaced the engine & gearbox at Christmas but have not really touched the car until the Easter Break. In the past few weeks I have completed the engine installation, checked that I have got oil pressure and then refitted all the ancillaries in the engine bay. The engine now runs but I am still doing a lot of tidying up in the engine bay and relocating items to suit the intended future use of the car. One job that I have been putting off for years (yes I mean years) was replacing the bonnet hinge on the passenger side. This hinge was damaged back in the 1980's and bashed back into shape. Many years later and after a couple of more 'incidents' the hinge had split most of the way through. About 3 years ago, I had a go at removing the hinge bolt which is up under the dash. To my consternation, the bolt snapped leaving 2/3rds of it in place, screwed into the captive nut in the body. I gave up. So now 3 years later I have actually dealt with this properly, first I had to drop the dash out the way, which if you have done this task, you will know it is really awkward. Then I had to remove the demister duct for the first time in 48 years. Then I cut off the captive nut off the body with a cutting disk in the Dremmel. All up this job took about 1 hour – after 3 years of procrastination.

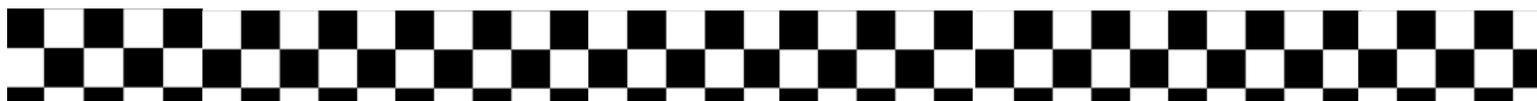
At the same time my race car has been away at Bob Rowntree's for some TLC after I discovered a crack in the lower wishbone. The front suspension is a custom set up, based on a Sprite lower wishbone, MGB uprights, hubs & brakes along with a custom fabricated upper arms which was copied from a similar set up that Bob has on his current racing Bugeye. Apparently Bob built 3 or 4 of these suspension set ups in the past. When we do eventually get back to racing, I will be a lot happier knowing that there is no crack in the front suspension – I am not sure how long it was there as it was pretty difficult to spot.

Depending how long this lockdown goes, I may even pull the Mk11A Sprite out of storage and recommence what is going to be a significant structural rebuild.

I am sure that many of you have been using the time to work on your cars too. Steve Rivett is coming to the end of a long restoration process on his Sprite and from what I have seen to date, the results are very impressive. Our membership secretary, Ross has been working on his TR6, which although not a Sprite, is still a lovely car to have in anyone's stable. If anyone has an interesting story of a restoration or work they are doing on their car, now is the time to put pen to paper and send in a write up to our editor Bron at editor@spritedclub.com for inclusion in future editions of SpriteTorque.

Well that's all from me this month, please stay safe and look after yourselves, family & friends. This difficult time will pass and we can all get back to fun motoring and enjoying our cars.

Regards
David Baigent



**Minutes of the Meeting of the
SPRITE CAR CLUB OF AUSTRALIA Inc
held on Tuesday 14th April 2020
Commencing at 7.32pm**

Venue – the meeting had been arranged for conduct via electronic means using Zoom

Members Participating – David Baigent (President), Barry Cockayne, Carol Dodds, Avis Fowler, Greg Holden, Leah Holden, Les Payne, Rod Pringle, Ross Reichardt, Steve Rivett, Anne Smith, Peter Smith, and from 7.45pm during consideration of item 9, Paul Barbara.

Other Members – Harley Pringle and Mary Barbara

Apologies – Rob Howes and Graham Wells

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 10th March 2020 had been circulated in draft to all Committee Members and to all Members via Sprite Torque.

The Committee confirmed the Minutes on motion of Rod Pringle/Steve Rivett.

2. Business arising from Minutes

No items were raised.

3. Protocols for EMeetings

The President advised that the Club's Constitution does not provide for 'virtual' Committee Meetings as have now become necessary due to the Covid-19 virus and the relevant Health Regulations in NSW (ie if more than 2 members attend it is ultra vires the Regs and if less than 8 attend there is no quorum!!).

Accordingly he recommended that –

- i) Clause 22 of the Regulation under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 relating to the use of technology at meetings be applied to the Committee's dealings, and
- ii) when an opportunity presents, an amendment to the Club's Constitution be initiated to formalise that practice.

The Committee adopted the recommendations i) and ii) as above on motion of the President/Rod Pringle.

4. Delegation to the President re Urgent Determinations and Email Communications

The Committee noted that there have been circumstances in the past when an urgent determination on matters outside the Committee's Regular Meetings had been proposed to Committee Members via email.

The Club's Constitution does not however provide for such determination of an issue – decisions must be dealt with at a formal Committee meeting.

Accordingly to enable urgent matters to be determined when necessary it was recommended that—

- i) a delegation be given to the President to determine any urgent matter, after consultation if so desired, by email or whatever other means, with as many members of the Cttee as he wishes.
- ii) any decisions made under that delegation to be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee resolved on motion of Barry Cockayne/Greg Holden to adopt the recommendations i) and ii) as above

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer Les Payne had reported as follows –

Report March 2020

General account 1000 4231

		\$
Opening Balance		15,652.32
Deposit		800.00
Chq 255991 presented		500.00
Chq 255994 presented		500.00
Chq 255987 presented	RPringle AGM catering	22.00
Chq 255990 presented		190.80
Chq 255993 presented	Transfer to debit acct	<u>2,500.00</u>
		<u>\$ 12,739.52</u>

Closing balance

Savings Account 10373086

Opening Balance		\$ 46,072.32
Credit interest		<u>3.66</u>
Closing balance		<u>46,075.98</u>

Transaction account 10228025

Opening Balance		\$ 3,638.37
Deposit		1,450.32
Acct fee		<u>10.00</u>
Closing balance		<u>5,078.69</u>

<u>Debit account 10525483</u>		\$
Opening balance		858.0
		7
Deposit	Transfer from ch acct	2,500.00
	Transfer to other Bank NetBank B Sutton refund	192.00
	Transfer to CBAA/c NetBank SSrefund Rudd	188.16
	Transfer to CBAA/c NetBank SSrefund	188.50
	Transfer to other Bank NetBank Rosstamps	110.00
	Transfer to xx6758 NetBank STpost Feb staty to LF	<u>99.46</u>
Closing Balance		<u>2,579.95</u>
Total in Bank		<u>66,474.14</u>

The Committee resolved on motion of the President/Greg Holden to receive the report.

6. Secretary's Report

The Secretary (Graham Wells) had reported as follows -

Mail In:

- Various Emails from Motorsport Australia which have been circulated.
- Council of Motoring Clubs via emails re minutes & new members
- Email from Leah Holden re Gazebo.
- Association of British Car Clubs meeting minutes. Circulated to all committee members.
- Email from Editor Bron Wray re Sprite Torque advising no saving from going to A5 as the magazine would need re-formatting & more pages. Offer to get quotes if we want to look at another printer.
- Brochure from Forty Horses Print Shop re printing of T shirts.
- Mascot, Australian Austin Healey, Goblins Gazette magazines.

Mail Out:

- The Hills Club advising of meeting suspensions for 3 months and payment for March.

The Committee resolved on motion of Rod Pringle/Greg Holden to receive the Secretary's Report and further to note that no action was warranted re Sprite Torque format.

7. Coming Events

The Committee noted that due to the COVID-19 and the resultant Health Regulations it had been necessary to cancel or postpone virtually all events for foreseeable future.

The Committee received the information.

8. Reports by Delegate

Barry Cockayne advised that both the Council of Motoring Clubs and Motorsport Australia had cancelled their scheduled meetings in March due to issues re Covid-19 and were in effective recess until the health situation improved.

The Committee received the information.

9. New Members

The Membership Officer (Ross Reichardt) had reported that 5 new Membership Applications had been received as follows from –

Edwin Robertson	Leyland Mini 1978 Blue
Alicia Campbell	VW Kombi 1972 White/blue
Moustafa Zreika	Morris Moke 1973 Green

Terry Cavendish and Chad Cavendish AHSprite 1961 BRG and Ford Falcon 1965 Blue

The Committee resolved on motion of Barry Cockayne/Steve Rivett to approve of the five applications for membership as above and noted further that those members joining now, would effectively be receiving 15 months membership to 30th June 2021.

10. Competition Report

The President advised that the CSCA had deferred or cancelled the 2020 competition Rounds and similarly open race meetings had been abandoned due to the COVID-19 Virus issues and that all competition was therefore virtually on hold pending a change in the health situation.

The Committee received the information.

11. Regalia

Avis Fowler advised that there were no matters of note for report to the Meeting.

The Committee received the information.

12. Sprite Torque

The President referred to the Committee's previous considerations re a possible change of the format of the magazine to A5 size and to the advice from the Editor that there would be no savings from that.

The Committee resolved on motion of Leah Holden/Greg Holden to take no further action re possible format changes to Sprite Torque.

13. Technical Meetings

Rod Pringle advised that he was to follow up with Hi- Tec Oils re a possible Technical Day and it was noted that such events were not practical under the current circumstances re social isolation.

The Committee noted that the matter of Technical Days had to be deferred for further consideration after the lifting of restrictions on social gatherings.

14. Web Page and Facebook Site

The President advised that action re the above had been reduced due to the effects of the COVID-19 virus. Harley Pringle advised further that the Facebook site had received many new members recently and now had approximately 400 followers.

The Committee received the information.

15. Membership Renewals for 20/21 Year

The matter of membership fees and renewal notices had been listed for consideration. Brief discussion ensued on issues such as what benefits members would receive over the expected minimal activity due to the COVID-19 restrictions and how alternate Club activity might be promoted via Facebook and Sprite Torque.

The Committee resolved on motion of Barry Cockayne/Greg Holden to-

- i) Set the Membership Fees for the 20/21 Year as the same as for the current 19/20 Year, and
- ii) Request the Membership Officer to arrange for Notices to be issued forthwith for the renewal of membership for the new year.

16. Club's 60th Birthday Celebrations

The President advised that it had become obvious that the abovementioned function scheduled for 26th July had to be cancelled due to the restrictions arising from the COVID-19 virus likely extending past that date. Accordingly negotiations had been pursued with the Q-Station Manly to redeem any costs and to secure a booking for 25th July 2021 for an alternative function.

Additionally it had become necessary to cancel the Club's Supersprint Event of 19th April for the same reason.

The Committee resolved on motion of Barry Cockayne/Leah Holden to formally endorse the President's action following the restrictions arising from the COVID-19 virus as follows-

- i) Deferment from 26th July 2020 of the Club's proposed 60th Birthday function at the Q Station Manly and the rescheduling of the event to **Sunday 25th July 2021, hence a 61st Birthday celebration.**
- ii) The notation that this is currently a TENTATIVE booking, and that the SCCA will not lose its deposit or incur any additional costs for this rescheduling.
- iii) The cancellation of the SCCA Supersprint scheduled for 19th April and the rejection of an offer of alternative date by SMP of 19th December 2020.
- iv) The notation that refunds had been received or no financial costs had been incurred re Track Hire, Timing, Ambulance & Fire/Recovery, nor Motorsport Australia Permit fee and that refunds were to be made to the eight entrants who had paid.

17. Purchase of Gazebo

The President reported that at the last meeting Greg & Leah Holden had offered to investigate a new Marquee for the club. He expressed thanks to them for that and advised that it was now proposed to purchase a new 6m x 3m X6 Velocity marquee from Extreme Marquees

It was to include a print package being the club name & website on the 4 sides of the Valence, and the proposed colour was yellow with black writing.

He sought the decision of the committee on the acceptance of the cost, the colour/print detail and the timing for its acquisition.

The Committee resolved on motion of Barry Cockayne/Greg Holden that –

- i) Approval be given for the purchase of a X6 Velocity 6mx3m Marquee from Extreme Marquees at the quoted price of \$1595.00, plus any incidental costs for freight or such, and
- ii) The colour and Club identification be left for final determination by the President.

18. Drive to Survive Project

The committee had the abovementioned matter for consideration and it noted that action for the current year was possibly dependent on the lifting of restrictions related to the COVID-19 virus.

The Committee resolved on motion of Greg Holden/Barry Cockayne that notwithstanding possible effects later in the year from the COVID-19 virus, Anthony Barbara be requested to update the necessary notices and brochure so as to action the Drive to Survive project.

19. General Business

- a) Brief discussion ensued re the possible effects on the usage of CVS/HVS registered vehicles due to the travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 virus.

The Committee noted that it was not in a position to determine the extent of those restrictions.

b) Passing of the Late Sir Stirling Moss

Anne Smith referred to the death on 12th April 2020 of sir Stirling Moss and commented that he had significant association with the Austin Healey Sprite marquee, particularly the Sebring variant.

The Committee noted the information and requested further that she provide any photographic records available to the Editor for inclusion in Sprite Torque.

The meeting ended at 8.15pm

The Treasurer was away from his post. Part 1

TASMANIA MARCH/APRIL 2020

Statistics, Mileage 5440kms, 13.5litres /100km.

Summary, we allowed 5.5 weeks to see Tassie, the first time we have even set out an itinerary. Sadly the virus hit, sadder for those affected, for us after only 2 weeks the Tassie Government started shutting down lookouts, beaches, info centres, free camp grounds and finally caravan parks, we were then told to go home. We will have nearly the same kms to travel to see the bottom half of the Island at some time in the future.

Wednesday 11th March

We left home around midday, following the final packing, setting the house in order and checking all was well. Travelled the Northern Road and stopped at Narellan for lunch at maccas. Continued on to the freeway and headed south. By 4.30pm it was time to find a place to call home for the night and we chose Gunning which had a super free camp at the swimming pool. There was a river with a weir beside where the vans parked and it was very picturesque. We even had access to the pool's showers, toilets and bins.

Thursday 12th March

We headed towards Melbourne after a great breakfast at "The Hume" in Gunning. Travelled past the dog on the tuckerbox and went to the Woollen mills at Wangaratta as we had many years before with Sue and Barry. The selection was poor and we promptly moved on without purchasing anything. We camped at the Brook crossing near Yea. Nice spot and left us within striking distance of Melbourne for Friday.

Friday 13th March

Our noisy neighbours had packed and left early, so all was quiet in the morning. We set off for Mount Waverly via the Yarra valley. The valley is beautiful, full of grape vines and other produce providing us with a very scenic drive. The flowering gums were loaded with buds about to bloom in red, pink and orange. They will look superb when they are in full bloom. We drove to my old school friend's house and had an enjoyable lunch with her and her husband. It was nice to catch up in person instead of by phone. We left them and headed through peak hour traffic to board the Spirit of Tasmania. We parked nearby and made our final organisation before boarding the boat.

Once on board we purchased our National Park ticket and managed to collect brochures on many areas and attractions. We had some pizza, listened to a lady sing before heading to our room for the night. Initially went to sleep but were woken up by the rough seas during the night. We were obviously awake at different times as we could both hear each other snoring during our awake time and were amazed that someone could sleep during the heavy seas and the crashing waves on the bow of the ship.



Saturday 14th March

Les woke at 4.45am at the ship announcement and got up and dressed etc. I remained asleep and had to rush to get ready to leave the boat at 5.30am. We were the second car in our row to



drive off the boat in the dark and we headed straight to Sheffield where we managed to have an early breakfast at the only cafe in Sheffield that was open. After breakfast we wandered the streets of the town admiring the beautiful murals that have been painted on the walls of the shops and buildings in the lovely town. It was very pretty with the mountains in the

background. We travelled towards Stanley, famous for the huge rock, known as the Nut, calling in at Penguin, Burney, Wynyard picking up shopping, preparing us for the ensuing trip. We followed the coastline to Stanley, really beautiful. In Stanley we caught up with my daughter's friend Jo and her family, the last time we caught up my grandson then 7 found a red button on the bridge of a naval ship and sounded the horn, sailors came running from all directions. We purchased fish at the local fish shop and travelled out to Montague for the night camping on the North west coast of Tasmania.



Sunday 15th March

After breakfast we explored the North West, beautiful coastline, dairy farms and wind farms. We dropped the van at Smithton and explored Pit falls and the big tree.



After lunch we travelled the Tarkine drive, along the way we saw Trowutta Arch, sink hole several lookouts and the oldest rainforests ever. Walking into the rain forest to see the arch was very eerie with moss covering nearly all the ground and every tree. Fallen moss covered trunks were hosting other trees it was amazing! Such a beautiful state, with scenery I have never seen in my travels

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so far in Australia. Saw my first Tassie Devil, unfortunately it was road kill. We returned to Smithton for a fish dinner.

Monday 16th March

Today we head for Arthur River down the west side of the Tarkine Drive. We were amazed at the number of dairy cows in this corner of Tassie. On arrival at Arthurs River Dianne secured 2 seats on the Red boat which took us for 5 hours up and back on the Arthur River till it meets the Franklin River for a BBQ lunch. Along the way we saw several eagles that swooped down and retrieved fish thrown out to them. The landscape from the water up the hills has not been touched by fire for at least 600 years. However, the trees on the top of the hills were burnt out in the last 60, but these later fires did not come down through the lower rainforest. The lower rainforest is very spectacular where we had lunch. We then enjoyed the trip back on the Arthur River and drove to the Edge of the World lookout, so called as the next landfall is South America 15000miles away.



The next port of call was Corinna and we travelled the Explorersway, all dirt sharp turns mostly up or down. Along the way we came across two young Italians who had



run off the road into the only mud on the entire road, front axle deep. We have carried our rescue ropes for 50000klms, today we finally used it. He shovelled the mud from behind the wheels while I secured the rope from his tow bar to the front of the Dmax. 4WD in reverse with the caravan still attached we hauled them out and bid them farewell.

Stirling Moss and (Sebring) Sprites

Following the sad recent passing of Stirling Moss I was prompted whilst at home (like many) to look for images of Sprite cars related to the great man that we have had contact with over the years and came across some images of S221 that some members may be interested in. S221 is one of the ex-works Sebring cars driven by Stirling and his sister Pat shown in the historic photo below taken at Sebring in March 1961. The beautiful shape of these cars was the inspiration for Brian Archer of Archers Garage UK to produce fibreglass panels to enable a limited no of modern replicas to be built. The images below of S221 were taken at the now closed Archers Garage back in 2010 whilst I was there to discuss the sourcing of panels and parts for my fastback Sebring replica finally completed in 2016. The works prepared cars although clearly based upon a standard Bugeye featured several differences from the road going version including specially crafted lightweight aluminium panel work to save weight. Two cars featured below were entered for the 1961 Sebring race in a 4 hour event held the day before the 12 hour event for both Moss and sister Pat (already an accomplished international rally driver for BMC) with the plan to enter a single car on the second day the idea being to “rebuild the best bits of the two cars into a single entry”# for the 12 hr race the next day. However, and interestingly, Moss experienced clutch slip during preparation for the 4 hour race due to oil leakage from the rear of the crankshaft at high engine speeds (still a problem today(?)) and his sister very sportingly offered him her car (PMO200) for the race. Unfortunately both cars suffered the same fate during the race finishing in 5th and 7th places. Both of the Moss’s during their careers drove on many occasion either a small (Sprite) Healey or large (3000) Healey in both races and rallies showing their skills with some giant killing results on ridiculously small team budgets by today’s standards and also demonstrating the durability of these great cars. As members of our club maybe we should all recognise the contribution that this brother and sister team made to the development of our marque cars in racing many years ago in a way that is sadly very different to how this is now achieved in today’s corporate high budget environment.



PMO200 and S221 at Sebring March 1961

Courtesy of “Spritley Years” written by John Sprinzel and Tom Coulthard 1994





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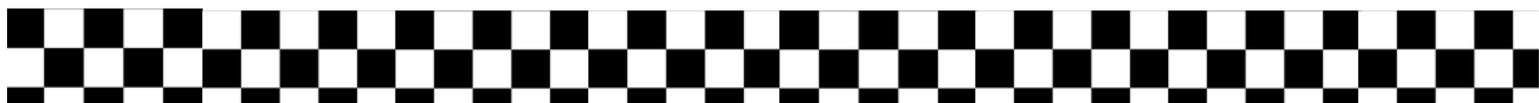
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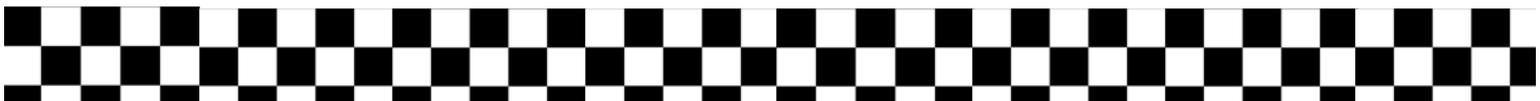
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SPRITE CAR CLUB

DRIVE TO SURVIVE PROGRAM



DRIVERS WANTED

The Sprite Car Club of Australia will be sponsoring two people to attend Ian Luff's "P Plate Drive to Survive". Ian has been a driver education pioneer since 1972. Over 150,000 people have attended his Drive to Survive courses designed to improve driver behaviour as well as developing existing skills, increasing a driver's knowledge and awareness. Who better could the Sprite Car Club team up with to provide this opportunity to members, family, friends, neighbours and associates? See here for more details of Ian Luff's P-Plate Drive to Survive Course:

<http://www.drive-to-survive.com.au/p-plate-driving-program>

The criteria:

- The recommendation must come from a Sprite Car Club member.
- We need the recommendation in writing (up to half A4 page) explaining why you are nominating the person.
- Your suggested participant needs to have a current Provisional Licence (red or green P plates)
- If you are a Club member on a Provisional Licence, then yes, you can nominate yourself!
- Age is no barrier.

From the nominations, the Committee will select one member of the Sprite Car Club, and one non-member. Nominations are required by the end of July and be announced in the August edition of Sprite Torque.

The attendees can choose the appropriate available time that suits them.

SEND NOMINATIONS TO:

Sprite Car Club Drive to Survive Program
PO Box 696
Kingswood
NSW 2747

or via email:
drivetosurvive@spriteclub.com



Don't forget to include your name, phone number, email address, and the relationship between you and your nominee – eg: self, daughter, nephew, friend, neighbour, workmate.

Mk4 Sprite Restoration

Are you interested in the journey or the destination?



I was planning to retire and needed a project to help me ease into this phase of my life. I already owned a Mk3 Midget but being a Healey fan, I wanted to restore a Sprite, but with an attached roof, wind up windows and 1275cc engine

- Part 1

- Search for a Mk4 Sprite

- As most Spridget owners would know the last model Sprite assembled in Australia was the Mk3a which came with a 1098cc motor and a retractable hood which was stored in the boot. As I wanted a Sprite with a 1275cc engine and an attached roof, a Mk4 Sprite was what I had to search for. As this model was never built or sold new in Australia, the only options were to find one that had been privately imported from the UK., the U.S. or to import one myself.
- I had got to know Colin Dodds fairly well since my Son bought a Bugeye from Colin a couple of years earlier and whilst chatting over a coffee, Colin asked me "are you interested in the journey or the destination". As I was planning to retire in a couple of years, I would need a project to keep me busy and Colin very generously



offered his expertise to guide me through the restoration process.

Disassembly

After about a year searching, I found a Mk4 Sprite in country Victoria and eventually bought it sight unseen except for photos and documentation, which is something I would never normally do, but as this was going to be a complete nut and bolt restoration I figured it was worth the risk. The Sprite was purchased in August 2017 and trucked to my place in Sydney where it was driven until restoration began in January 2019.

When disassembling a car you soon discover the good the bad and the ugly. This car was no exception!



Being a 1969 Sprite, there were a few things which were unique to this year model when compared to previous models, like the horizontal pleating on the seat covers which came only in black and a new round-bodied wiper motor which was still single speed on home market (UK) cars. As I intended to try for a concours restoration, it was fortunate for me this car had a number of the original features still intact and serviceable.

As the disassembly process progressed, it became more obvious that a previous part restoration completed in the UK in 1987 just prior to shipment to Australia, was less than ideal.





Alkaline Electrolytic Bath

With the disassembly process complete it was off to Redi-Strip for an Alkaline Electrolytic Immersion to remove all rust. I must admit, this process whilst expensive, is worth the cost as it will remove all rust hidden in every crevice and does away with abrasive blasting, chipping, scraping and other destructive procedures for de-rusting a vehicle.

While the car body went to Redi-Strip, the body panels were taken to The Classic Factory to begin the panel work.



Panel Work





Panel Work

When Darryl at The Classic Factory started the panel work on the bonnet, boot, doors and front guards, it soon became obvious rust had gained a strong foothold. The passenger door in particular had a lot rust and a decision was made to source a good second hand door from Colin at Sprite Parts as it would be more economical than fixing the original and ultimately would provide a better outcome.



I also delivered the bits I wanted to be painted in black (2 pack). These included items like the Fuel Tank, Diff Housing, Air Cleaner Housings, Road Springs, Bumper Spring Bars and Steering Rack to name a few. It was very satisfying to see all the panels being restored back to original condition.

While all this was happening, I commenced the long process of bead blasting, painting and restoring the rest of the car.

The car body eventually arrived at the Classic Factory from Redi-Strip and the 8 month process began to bring her back to life.





Shortly after the the car body arrived, I received a call from Darryl with some bad news. The car had significant areas of rust and some questionable previous body repairs which would need rectifying and he needed me to come over to decide a way forward. The plan was always to do a concourse restoration, but I had a budget in mind which was



about to be blown out of the water. The good news was the car hadn't been in a bad prang and was straight.

A decision to continue as planned, to restore to a lesser standard or to abandon the restoration altogether needed to be made. To restore to a lesser standard was out of the question. After much deliberation, I decided to proceed as planned. The body was painted in primer to prevent rust reappearing and the restoration process began.

Part 2 of the Mk4 Restoration in next month's SpriteTorque.



Well, well,

Before winter sets in we though we had best stretch the legs of our Sprites and Midgets again.

Forget Covid-19 and lets forget social distancing,

So we arranged to meet at the Carpark opposite Richmond RAAF Base, 6am start to bet the traffic.

We set out to run through the Low Lands at Richmond, past all the horse studs and millions of dollars in real Estate.

You could still see the damage from the floods throughout the area and some of those fillies still had wet feet. Both Leah and I lead the convoy in our Pre-Production Bugeye that has just finished it full nut and bolt resto, the old girl would owe us in excess of \$85,000 without the cost of the car in the first place. But we were comfortable being the bug catcher at the front of the pack.

From the low lands we head out through historic Pitt Town and then enjoyed some nice country driving. Our location was still not disclosed to all that attended. In the old days we would call this a MYSTERY RUN.

With 27 cars and almost 26 people coming along for the ride, we were in for a great time. After heading through the back of Kenthurst we end up out the back of Dural, we had lost a car by the time we got to the lookout overlooking Wiseman's Ferry and the great Nepean River. This River looks so majestic in flood.

We squeezed all 29 cars into the lookout and a lovely Japanese couple on their honey moon wanted shots with Brian Pennington's original Bugeye Sprite. Brian was tickled pink when he got to join the photo shoot, growing up in Nagasaki (not Brian, the bride and groom) they had never seen a Bugeye Sprite before.

the interaction with some knock about Aussies and Karma from Nepal saw them really enjoy their day.

The Darling in drought really opened their eyes to the hardship we can go through in Australia from time to time.

After some photos and a cheese platter enjoyed by all we were off down the hill. Wisemans Ferry being our next destination.

We crossed the new bridge and jumped on the ferry, then headed due west and some of our members were getting a little toey. One said to me on the ferry, "do you know what time I had to get up to be at Richmond". "its alright for you and the grand kids, you are only 5 minutes away".

After a quick beer on the ferry, he had settled down.

The location was still to be revealed but the dirt track really got under the skin of the guys and gals with concourse cars. The RTA were in presence at a rock spill which saw a 3' narrowing to get the cars through, Leah is afraid of heights and was having kittens as the steep slope on her side exposed all the rocks above her. Meanwhile the Turon River was a drop of 150m below me on my left hand side.

The dirt turned to bitumen again and we were almost there.

The pub on the McDonald River.

That's right the "Settlers Arms", established in 1836 the bar man looked all of the 194 years old. I am sure he came out on a ship, or boat or old dingy.

Made from convict stone from the Boral factory at Stone Cutters Ridge, the place looked so inviting. The old Landy (a Favourite of BC and GH) and the old model A tourer cut back to a ute were standing proud out the back on the main road

The beer was cold, the company was great and all 23 cars had made it safely,

A quick schooie and Leah and I were off, we took the shortest route home via the Hunter Valley and then down the Putty Road.

all for grand children enjoyed the run although the bugeye was a little tight for room with all on board.

Fortunately for us the officers in charge are policing social isolation and 6 people in a 2 seater in low on there hit list at the moment.

It was a great run enjoyed by all and I would like to thank Christopher, Kimberley and Michael for putting the run together

Greg Holden



Letter to the editor.

I am always amazed at what a small world we live in. How often does something surface from our past? I read Dick McCaughey's article in January Sprite Torque with much interest. I do, however, wish to make a small correction to his information. It was Bernie Breen not Bob Breen driving the Sprite which fell over that day. How do I know? I was the pit crew for the car & I had a good view of the incident from the pits. It was on the inside of turn 12 & the infield was very wet & soft. The car slid off sideways & the left side wheels dug in & over it went. As Dick says Bernie was unhurt & the car was still driveable once it was tipped back on its wheels. To continue the story: After a bit of panel work the bug-eye was repainted black over the original red. Bernie raced it a few times in 1963 when it was black, then converted it back to a road car & sold it. The hot bits went into a Morris Minor 1000. The search started for a new car. In 1964 we went to Elfin in Adelaide in the hot Morris Minor to look at the new Elfin Clubman but the budget would not go that far. Bernie then bought a near new Katoomba Grey Mk 2A Sprite from well-known BMC exponent Laurie Stewart. Bernie raced the 2A for a number of years including the Rothmans 12 hour race in 1967 when the drive was shared with Renault racer, Dave Frazer. Once again I was part of the pit crew. Bernie died in June 2001 and I still have the Katoomba Grey 2A Sprite.

Graham Wells

The advertisement features a central graphic with a blue Sprite on the left and a green Sprite on the right. Above the cars is a circular logo with a lion and the text 'MOTOR MECHANIC'. The background is a light, textured pattern.

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