



## Midge Owners and Builders Club Christmas 2014

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*Dear Members,*

The Christmas season is now in full swing, but I'm taking a break from these duties to update you on Club matters and a few other items of general interest. If this magazine is briefer than usual then I plead overwork with festive activities.

There is no doubt that we have had another good year, with thirteen members joining our ranks. We have lost a few friends as well who are no longer Midge Owners, but if they're reading this on the Club Website then I wish all current and past members good health in 2015. Our Club remains solvent mainly because our communications are largely email and internet based, so there will be no subscriptions due for the forthcoming year. I am always grateful to those of you who have taken the trouble to write in with articles, diagrams, photographs and anecdotes for our magazine which continues to be well received and always contains something of interest.

**Neil Russell has continued for another year as our Club Webmaster** and we offer a sincere thanks to him from all of us. Neil has updated the site and it still remains the primary point of contact for a number of enthusiasts worldwide making their first enquiries about the MOBC. At the time of writing we have achieved over 27000 hits of which 4000 occurred over the last year, and that is a wonderful response to Neil's hard work.

Another initiative to bring in new members has been to set up a **Group on Facebook**. This is proving to be very popular and a number of regular contributors (should that be 'posters'?) make the site both interesting and informative. If you haven't seen our Facebook page then please check it out. You will be amazed at the scope of our discussions!

*John*



Find us on Facebook

### A CONTINENTAL RACE MEETING

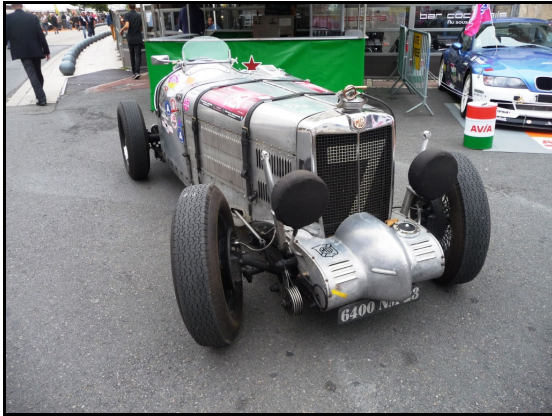
*Nick Jolly, spent some time in Spain during the autumn and had a fascinating day at a classic car meeting in Angouleme on his homeward journey. Here, Nick recounts his experiences*

On returning from Spain and staying with friends in Cognac I was able to attend the Circuit des Remparts at Angouleme on the 21st September. For a lover of vintage and classic cars this is sublime. First held in 1939 the 1½ km track provides 3 hairpins, 3 tightish corners and 2 straights with stiff climbs and descents, snaking around the 'ancient city' walls using public roads. These have Armco barriers with 5 grandstands for the weekend, all being removed overnight Sunday for Monday business as usual, a very slick operation.



142 cars registered this year albeit not all made it to the starting line. M.G., Wolseley Hornet specials of the 1930's together with 1907 Mors/Curtis (Curtis being the engine From an American aircraft), 1913 Theophile-Schneider and ranging up to a 2008 Morgan roadster. They compete in different classes culminating in two final races to include the fastest of the vintage and of the more

"modern" classes, a Triumph GT6 MK2 featuring in the latter.



There was open access to the "paddock" where drivers of many nationalities were happy to discuss their cars. The highlight for me was the race where 22 Bugattis were entered ranging from a 1929 35B to the most modern a 1946 Type 73C.



To watch these cars race, many to their limits drifting the corners on such a tight circuit, was enthralling. The sheer fact that Angouleme has survived when similar street races at Albi, Reims and Rouen were banned in 1955 is to the credit of the Angouleme inhabitants and Mayor who fought to get it revived in 1978.

Since attending the above I found that there is a similar racing event held in mid-May at the City of Pau close to the Pyrenees. It's already in my diary! Both Angouleme and Pau have informative sites including video footage on the web.

*Many thanks for this fascinating report Nick. Will you be entering your Midge in the event next year?*

***If the builder of Nick's Midge, Mr. M. N. Bush of Nottingham, sees this magazine or anyone has his contact details, Nick would like to get in touch with him for more information on his car.***

**WE ALL LOVE OUR MIDGES AND I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF ONE OF OUR CARS BEING STOLEN, BUT THIS GENERAL ADVICE IS USEFUL FOR PROTECTING OUR PRIDE AND JOY.**

A police expert is urging classic car clubs to lead the battle against historic vehicle theft by sharing crime prevention tips with their members and friends.

PC Simon Barrett, crime prevention design adviser for West Midlands Police, told club representatives at the FBHVC's annual meeting that while classic theft is still a growing problem, there were plenty of things club members can still do to protect their classics.

He told clubs: 'Classic car theft, unfortunately, happens all too regularly. Only last week someone's beautiful Lotus Cortina had been stolen from their driveway because it had no security on it, and we think in that case somebody had been watching it. 'People are watching it, so wherever you leave it just take a little bit more care to protect it, whether it's a lock over your steering wheel or a folding metal bracket over your garage door at home. You guys have got some lovely things locked away in barns and sheds - please make sure you keep an eye on them, get into the habit of making sure they're actually there, and take care to make sure you secure them, because people are watching you and will come after you.'

PC Barrett pointed to the surge in classic values as being the main reason behind the current spate of thefts. He said that the single biggest problem he faced was owners not doing enough to protect their vehicles' identities, and that with thieves easily able to remove registration numbers and VIN plates to graft new identities onto vehicles he encouraged clubs to back vehicle identity products such as the Selecta DNA fluid currently endorsed by the FBHVC.

He also wanted clubs to spur on members to report instances of V5C registration documents being sold fraudulently, and said that not only is it illegal to sell them privately, but that transferring the documents made it easier for criminal gangs to change the identities of stolen vehicles.

*Ideas for protecting your Midge against thieves would be most welcome. Please send in any tips to me. Removal of the rotor arm in the distributor is a tried and tested method of avoiding theft of a classic vehicle, but how many of us take the trouble?*



**THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT MEMBER DAVID HARVEY** holds the record for the longest distance travelled in a Midge, having been to Greece and back in his car on an extended charity run (see our previous magazine) I was delighted to hear from David who has brought us up to date as follows:

'Since my trip to Greece I have covered some further miles about 3500 in the EU then I had an enforced break for surgery on my aorta and femoral arteries (3 stents) I am not usually that greedy but I was very ill. Magdalene nursed me for nearly 6 months and then had to return home to Germany. I returned to Germany at the end of July and went to 3 old timer car shows, and then a camping, caravan and mobile home show the biggest I have ever seen, and bought a superb mini caravan teardrop design which tows extremely well behind my Midge. Since then we have covered 600 miles towing, fully loaded 2 adults 1 dog and luggage, still raising funds for various charities.'



**David, Midge and mini caravan**

*Many thanks for this, David. We all hope that your good health is maintained so that you can continue your fund raising activities and enjoy your camping.*

**EDDIE DALY** has completed the restoration of his Midge, obtained an MOT and is enjoying the experience of open top motoring (but probably not in December!).



**Eddie's pride and joy, looking superb and ready to go**

## **MIDGE MK11 NEWS - AN UPDATE FROM JC**



I have not advertised the plans for nine months because of the revised laws which require the car to be complete, tested and insured before the documentation is sent off to DVLA. At this point they can request the car be presented at a VOSA testing station for an 8 point check but this may not happen if everything seems to be in order with the paperwork.

Previously the car could be trailered to the local DVLA office for the 8 point check with just a bare body bolted on and bits of chassis sticking out which could then be hacked off later by the unscrupulous! I think the new system will have finished off some Herald based cars as they appeared to me to be blatantly taking advantage of this loophole.

However since DVLA closed all the local offices and we have to follow the new route that means that my MK11 had to be completely finished in order to get it tested. Previously, once I had complied with the 8 point check the MK11 could have resided unfinished in my garage for ever as a static example of the build as a project. After all, because I don't drive anymore there didn't seem any need to finish mine off to roadworthy completion once I had proved that it complied with the 8 point check regulations. It has taken me nearly a year to sort out the wiring and electrical systems, brake pipes etc but it is now ready for its MOT.

I decided I would not be happy continuing to sell plans for people to spend time and money building the car in case there was some technicality I had missed. This meant that I had to stop selling the plans and follow the new route myself before recommending others to follow. It has been hard to sort out because of my compromised vision, but I'm getting there at last!

*Those Club members who are already building the MK11 Midge will be pleased to know that these changes are not retrospective.*

## LOCAL GROUPS

I've had a note from Stan Marriner concerning the setting up of local Groups, as has already happened in the Norfolk area. This is an excellent idea but it would be up to members in each area to contact each other and make this happen. The Membership List (revised copy soon!) should make this easier. If there is no one near to you, why not join a local classic car club, where your Midge would be the centre of attention!



Stan's Midge with a friendly welcome on the doormat!

## NEW MEMBERS

Since our autumn magazine went into print, we have been delighted to welcome **Simon Partridge from Swanwick, Southampton**.

Simon was born in Birmingham and trained as a motor mechanic. He moved to Southampton in 1993 and has a car wash and valeting business.

He found his Midge on eBay, won the auction and bought it unseen for £620. He took a chance but at that price he felt he could recoup his money for spares.

Simon is very pleased with his Midge and feels it was a bargain as it's now a runner with the brakes replaced. The next job is to free the clutch and make it movable.



Simon's Midge - Work in progress!



**And Finally,** If you can't get used to the idea of being without a tax disc on your Midge, you can always go to eBay at <http://r.ebay.com/fKboSj> and get a Historic Data Disc for Christmas. Thanks to Terry Brown for finding this, but I can't show an example for copyright reasons!

With best wishes to all members for a Happy Christmas and a year of great Midge motoring in 2015. Do keep the articles and pictures coming in for your magazine.

*John*