



*A fine summer day well spend at MOTAT Galaxy of Cars.  
More about this inside.*

## IN THIS MONTHS ISSUE:

Photo's and results of the Concourse d'Elegance  
A write up of the Coromandel overnight trip.  
A contribution by Lee Norman all about Mini variants.  
And much more.

APRIL 2003

# Mini Car Club of Auckland Inc.

## Club Executive

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### **Secretary:**

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Lee Norman (09) 302-2686

Kevin Patrick

Susan Russell (09) 817-5816

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## **Clubrooms**

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The Deadline for the next issue is: **15 May 2003**

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# **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

What a fabulous month February was for the MCCA.

February 2<sup>nd</sup> - Galaxy of Cars at Motat.

We had 16 really nice Minis competing for the club Show'n'Shine. A great day was had by all.

(Results for this, elsewhere in this mag)

February 9<sup>th</sup> - Concourse D'Elegance.

A selection of 7 of the clubs best Minis put on a display at the Concourse D'Elegance. We completed in the Club Display, but were unplaced. Moves are under way for a proper display next year.

February 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> – Coromandel Trip.

13 of our club Minis left Papakura and were joined by 4 Hamilton and 1 Kapiti Mini at Thames. A beautiful trip up the Coromandel West Coast to Coromandel for lunch. Then over the hill to Whitianga for a display in town which generated a lot of interest. Unfortunately Sunday had a few showers on the way home.

A fabulous weekend. Lots of thanks must go to Les Gubb for all the organization.

El Presidento

**Warwick Robinson**

## **CLUB CAPTAIN'S REPORT**

For those in the club who have not heard, Anita and Nathan have moved to Havelock North to manage an apple orchard. This left the club in a bit of a dilemma with no club captain, so Catherine and I have volunteered to fill the gap. On behalf of the club I would like to thank Anita and Nathan for all the work they have put in and wish them all the best for the future.

The Club has had 3 events this year; the first was the Galaxy of Cars Show at MOTAT. This show was also the Club's show and shine. We had 17 cars on show and the standard of presentation was awesome. I think a special mention should be made that Lee Norman got 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the people's choice, what a great achievement!! Show and Shine results can be found elsewhere in the magazine.

The next event on the calendar was the Concourse at Ellerslie. The Club display consisted of 7 cars and created interest for most of the day. The third event was a Convoy run to Coromandel Peninsula organised by Les Gubb. We had 18 cars in the convoy and 30 people at the BBQ on Saturday night. It was a brilliant weekend, well done Les! Full report elsewhere in the magazine.

What a great way to start the year! 3 brilliant events, that have been well supported by our Club. I hope this is a sign of things to come and the rest of the year's Club activities are just as well supported. With this level of commitment and enthusiasm, it is a pleasure to organise events. Well done to everybody who was involved.

**GARY & CATHERINE ASHTON**

# **Results from Club Show-n-Shine**

## **@ Motat – Galaxy of Cars**

### **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2003**

Overall winner – Kevin Patrick – 1970 Morris Cooper S Mk2.

This year it was divided into 3 categories and we used professional judges.

#### Original Class:

#### Points:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Aidan Hill	508	Mini Cooper
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Andrew Honore	503	Cooper S
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Raewyn McGrigor	482	Austin Mini
4 <sup>th</sup>	George Brown	469	Mini Clubman GT
5 <sup>th</sup>	Lynda Biffen	463	Rover Cooper 1.3
6 <sup>th</sup>	Gavin Agnew	347	Mini Clubman GT

#### Restored Class:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Kevin Patrick	582	Morris Cooper S
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Jeff Milne	481	Leyland Clubman
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Anthony Marks	397	Leyland Mini

#### Variant Class:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Paul Leahy	550	Leyland H.L.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Les Gubb	549	Clubman Estate
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Warwick Robinson	500	De Joux Cooper
4 <sup>th</sup>	Lee Norman	463	Austin Mayfair
5 <sup>th</sup>	Susan Russell	450	Riley Elf
6 <sup>th</sup>	Graham Crispe	419	Mini Moke

The judges commented that they were surprised at the very high standard of all the Minis on display. We all really enjoyed the day and this is one of the better events we attend.

Warwick Robinson



*Pop the bonnet please.*



*Plenty of interest.*





*A Mini, an Elf, a De Joux, a Moke.... what a nice mix.*



*Lee Norman showing off his Mini Mayfair and proud of it too.*

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The thing that has always fascinated me the most about Mini is the way people personalise their own cars. You very rarely see two the same, which is part of the charm for me. So, being no purist you can imagine that some of my favourite variants have strayed off the beaten path a bit so I thought I would cover a few models in this mag and share with you all what I have found.

To get the ball rolling I'm going to start with my all time favourite.....the Minisprint.

The Minisprint story started in '65 when saloon car racer Neville Trickett decided to build a chopped mini for the '66 season. The idea behind this was to reduce the frontal area of the car, in turn saving weight and reducing drag. Chopping the roof pillars and removing 2" as well as taking a horizontal 2" slice out of the body between the waist and the sills gave the required drop. On the original



*Roger Hunt's Hawk GRP shelled car*

car the roof above the gutter was also trimmed back giving a very low-slung look. A total de-seam finishes off the job, as the cuts made to do the lowering mean that the seams no longer line up. Unfortunately, after all this work, the regulations were changed during the off season and the car ended up competing as a GT where it was out classed by larger and more powerful machinery.

The decision was made to commission some bodies that could be sold to the public, so partnered by Geoff Thomas, a garage was purchased from a Rob Walker who at the time was running a Formula 1 team alongside John Cooper. The duo was given naming rights and marketed the cars as the "Minisprint Rob Walker GTS", which as you can imagine at the time was quite a coup.



*"Pick on someone your own size"*

*Sportspack and Minisprint nose to nose*

The duo was given naming rights and marketed the cars as the "Minisprint Rob Walker GTS", which as you can imagine at the time was quite a coup.

The cars were based on new Cooper S donor cars or customer supplied vehicles. It soon became apparent that due to the time involved doing the chop and the lack



of consistency in quality, that the project was not going to be viable.

BMC dealer Stuart and Ardern, the largest dealer in London at the time, stepped in and took over the project. They had the resources to invest in marketing, with glossy brochures and a stand at the London motor show. In

order to make the cars meet road regulations of the time it was necessary to raise the headlights to get the minimum allowable ground clearance. Squaring off the front wings and fitting oval lights resolved this problem. This small change is a dead give away that the car is a Stuart & Ardern example. However, by '68 the lack of profit in the conversions lead to the project being shelved. The original Minisprint had come to the end of the road.

Over the years there have been several attempts to resurrect the Minisprint, some more successful than others. The following two companies produce some interesting examples using quite different methods of construction. This list is not exclusive as there are several more I know of as well as a few keen individuals who have built their own.

*Stuart & Ardern brochure (top)*  
*Walker GTS (below)*



Church Green engineering in the UK have been tackling the conversion for the last 10 years and were marketing the final product under the original Walker GTS name. They were quoting up to 250 hours to perform the roof and body chop and paint and refit the vehicle. The bread and butter of their business is hand built bodies for some of the worlds most famous marquees, so as you can imagine the quality is next to none.....and so is the price. Last I heard you would be lucky to see change from 10,000 pounds if the donor car was in good shape. If you want a MK1 that needs restoring you can triple that figure! As well as the sprint they also build fantastic replicas of the Broadspeed GT in steel, which I will cover in the next magazine.

Hawk Cars is another company who have embraced the Minisprint idea, only they decided to build their shells from GRP. They first did the chop on a steel shell with

internal hinges, and then once perfected, a set of moulds were made from the shell. The replicas are constructed in glass fibre with steel reinforcement in key areas. The finished product looks fantastic and is hard to tell from a steel shell. Unfortunately production was halted by an injunction by Rover/BMW during their little hissy fit about companies using the “mini” name and image. Let’s hope this gets sorted out.

Like most body modifications the proof is in the pudding and for my money the Minisprint is how a mini should look. Side by side a standard car looks tall and awkward..... but I’ll let you make up your own mind.

Now, where did I put that hacksaw.....



*A couple of bonus pictures from Lee. This is how Jap Minis look like.*





## COROMANDEL CAMP TRIP

### FEBRUARY 22-23, 2003



*Assembly at BP Takanini*



*Kawakawa bay*



*Coromandel lunch stop*

At 9.00am on Saturday 22 February, 9 Minis and 2 Service Vehicles departed from the BP service station in Takanini for a fun filled trip to the Coromandel Peninsula. Travelling in convoy, we passed Ardmore Airfield, through to Clevedon and had our first pit stop at Kawakawa Bay.

We then traversed over the ridge to Orere Point, before heading down the coast through Miranda, Waharau and Kaiaua then turned left onto State Highway 25 to cruise into Thames, stopping at the Goldfields Shopping Centre.

At this point, we met up with other members of the Auckland Mini Car Club, as well as members from the Cooper Enthusiasts Club of Hamilton and Graham Strang from Kapiti Coast Minis.

We then cruised up the West Coast of the Coromandel Peninsula to the Coromandel Township for lunch. At Coromandel, we were met by Auckland Mini Car Club members that live in the area. After lunch we made our way to Whitianga Township for our overnight stop. On arriving in Whitianga, we made our way to our accommodation and unpacked the cars.

We then proceeded back into town to put our cars on display for the locals. After the car display, the 30 members on the trip retired to Graham & Lisa Strang's accommodation for a BBQ and a couple of cold ones. Incidentally, Graham Strang's convertible Mini was the only vehicle to require remedial attention. Bloody typical



isn't it? It's always a mechanics' car that breaks down. A quick head gasket change and some anti freeze cured the problems.

In stark contrast to Saturday's glorious sunshine, we awoke on Sunday to misty rain. We mossied into town and commandeered a small café for brunch. After brunch a couple of hours were killed wandering around Whitianga's shopping centre. At 12.30pm, the entourage departed Whitianga and made their way back to Auckland.

This was a very enjoyable weekend. The sight of 18 Mini's weaving their way through the Coromandel's on a sunny Saturday afternoon was absolutely fabulous. The time and effort Les Gubb put in to organise this fabulous event should be applauded. I also feel that the large number of participants should be thanked for helping make this trip the success it was.

Maybe, this should become an annual event, if so, you can put my name down for next year's trip.

**GARY ASHTON**



*Just blocking the road*



*What a view!*



*Nice riley*



# EVENTS

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## APRIL

**Tuesday 1** - Club Night - Guest speaker from Castrol or Agip Oils.

**Sunday 6** - Convoy run to Cooks Landing Winery for lunch.

**9 - 13**- Rally New Zealand

## MAY

**Tuesday 6** - Club Night.

**Sunday 12** - East Tamaki Cris Cross, fun run in the East Tamaki industrial estate, starting from the Northern Sports Car Clubrooms, at 12.30 p.m.

**Saturday 17**- Mini Fun Day, Taupo

## JUNE

**Sunday 1**- Queens Birthday Weekend - Bay Prestige Classic Car Show - Venue: Compass Community Village, Tauranga. We will organise a convoy. Details to follow.

**Tuesday 3** - Club Night.

**Saturday 14** - Night Trial starting at Karaka Bloodstocks, Hingaia Road, Papakura at 6.30pm. 2 hours of fun in the country, finishing at Bazza's Steak Out for dinner. Navigator and torch are highly recommended.

## JULY

**Tuesday 1** - Club night.

**Sunday 13** - Italian Job. Annual madness in the city. Total chaos, awesome fun! Join the madness at Mikano restaurant, Solent Street, 12.30 p.m.

## AUGUST

**Tuesday 5** - Clubnight. AGM

## SEPTEMBER

**Tuesday 2** - Club Night

**SUNDAY 14** - Garage Bash. Meet at clubrooms at 10.00AM. Bring your own lunch, BBQ at the completion of the run mid to late afternoon. Cover charge may apply. Further details as they come to hand.

## OCTOBER

**Tuesday 7** - Clubnight

**Sunday 12** - Bathurst 1000

**LABOUR WEEKEND, 25, 26, 27** - Mini Nationals in Palmerston North

**27 OCTOBER - 1 NOVEMBER**- Dunlop Tyres Targa, Auckland to Wellington

## NOVEMBER

**Tuesday 4** - Clubnight.

**Friday..Sunday 7 - 9** - V8 Supercars, Pukekohe Park Raceway.

## DECEMBER

**Tuesday 2** - Club Night

**Sunday 7** - Economy run.

Concourse D'Elegance 2003

