



# North Kent Lotus Group



August 2008

Dear Enthusiast

Well, what an eventful month we've had. The Barbecue; Summer Picnic; Classic Le Mans; Leeds Castle; Silverstone Classic and the launch of the Evora. People-wise we have two new members; Magnus has acquired a "Fisher Fury" Joan has stood down from the SG and last but certainly not least, Howard has decided also, to stand down. It was a bit of a thunderbolt but fourteen plus years running the group is no mean feat.

The two new members I mentioned are Paul Sewell from Biggin Hill who has a lovely baby Elan which he's just restored for the second time - it's the way I like to see a Lotus used, drive it hard and enjoy it and when it gets a bit tatty restore it back to its former glory!

Mike Crabtree from Surrey is our other member who has an Elan Sprint and is a motorsport celebrity. I hope to get a chance to have a chat some time.

So back to the eventful month, I've been lucky and had two things covered by Valerie and Roger, so a big thank you for those. And as Valerie will tell you, our first outing to the Leeds Castle show proved to be very successful and we were lucky as we chose the dry day. So thanks to Neil for putting it all together.

The other big success was the barbecue, so thanks to Magnus Julie and Sue for doing the cooking; Joan, Pauline, John U and John C for all the preparation and Howard for rescuing

the barbecue! It was nice to get a phone call from Tim and Lorraine afterwards thanking all of us for the day and judging by some comments on the day everybody seemed to enjoy themselves.



We put on a mini show at the barbecue and Magnus bought his new Fisher Fury, picked up the day before, ok, not a Lotus but it looks like a lot of track fun!

Sixteen cars lined up so there was plenty to chat around so "Bat & Trap" took second place this year due to the car line-up We did manage a few games and Lorraine pointed out that the Ladies did win again!! by one point!! Tim's enthusiasm to find a new car was rekindled after seeing Richard P's lovely orange Exige in the line up. Incidentally, Richard was telling me about the R500 Caterham he is currently preparing - he hopes to bring it to a club night when it's finished.

I must just mention that it was good to see Judy at the bbq - her first NKLK event since the accident.



The Fisher Fury

A few of us made it to the Silverstone Classic thanks to an invitation from the Historic Lotus Club via John U. Sue and I made the Sunday - it was a scorching hot day and we had a nice spot along with the historic's and John Oakley was very welcoming and friendly. We tracked down Robin in the paddock, he's moved up a notch this year to the Porsche Carrera Cup and he says he's having a whale of a time - lucky devil!! Not a bad days racing but I couldn't help thinking after the umpteenth time the safety car came out, how can the safety car problem be solved? and then I thought what's needed is a race

## Lotus breeze around the castle

Neil's organisation of the NKLK's involvement in the Leeds Castle Classic Car Weekend on the 10th included, apparently, organising the write up for the club newsletter so, in return for a day out in one of my favourite settings in Kent, I was volunteered. However, before I go any further, special thanks must go to Chris and Judy for providing the support vehicle, etc. We definitely picked the right day as Saturday proved to be a complete wash out with, according to the two Caterham guys who were there on both days, only 100 or so cars pitching up. Sunday's weather invoked a bigger turn out with numbers approaching the 500 maximum capacity. The Lotus area had one of the best locations and the best turnout of the single make stands with 19 cars: 7 Espirits (including 4 from the Cambridge Group), 3 M100s and 2 baby Elans, 3 Elises, one each of the Europa, Excel and Elite models plus a Cortina Lotus Mk2 from the Lotus Cortina Register.

Apart from the cars there was plenty else to enjoy as there was free entry to the castle, dog collar museum, aviaries and gardens, and not to forget the maze. For us lunch was al fresco but this gave me a chance to test my picnic making skills (and Barry his picnic table assembly skills). The tour of the castle added a touch of culture missing from events such as the Bromley pageant and included a brief spell at chapel, from which there was no escape from the live music. It also provided plenty of chances to take photos of the cars surrounding the castle moat.



Unfortunately the tethered balloon was not flying on Sunday so that particular photo opportunity was lost but there was plenty of individual and group posing in front of the castle towards the end of the day for photos for Christmas cards or (in my case) the PC desktop. The only slight downer on the day was the incessant wind and some very annoying wasps, but if you could avoid the flying chairs and at one stage the NKLK gazebo, it was all in all a most enjoyable event and one that will definitely be in the diary for next year.

Valerie

series just for safety cars, then they wouldn't need to call out a safety car if there was an incident (or they could bring back waved yellows!!!)

So the Eagle (I won't say has landed) has arrived. It looks pretty good although the full-size clay model at the Silverstone Classic did it no justice at all (it should have been left back at the factory). Tim saw it in the flesh at the Motor Show and liked it very much. The press are giving it good write-ups, so it's keep fingers crossed time that Lotus get it right. For a bit of fun, Evora obviously doesn't mean anything (does it?) so it must stand for something. I reckon it's "Even Vauxhall Owners Run Away" so if you add the old chestnut "Lots Of Trouble Usually Serious" (and) Even Vauxhall Owners Run Away, we get the Lotus Evora - it works for me.

Anyway, we're giving away a years annual subs to the person who submits the best meaning for EVORA. Please send your entry to info@northkentlotusgroup.org

## NKLG On Tour!

As some of you may know, Chrissie and I were in France for a month, with four weeks just outside La Roche Bernard before our trip to the Le Mans Classic. During that time, our M100 behaved perfectly, as we've now come to expect for those of you thinking of investing in perhaps what is an under-rated dare I say modern classic – and a few of you are, judging by the number of conversations Mick and I had at the barbeque!

We were nearly washed away by the torrential rain, which followed us all the way from Brittany on Thursday but the weather stayed dry and warm and even sunny sometimes, over the weekend. As Friday was practice day, we spent some time looking at the various trade stalls and wandering around the paddocks while the cars underwent their final preparations.



As racing was scheduled to start at 4pm on Saturday, we were able to spend the morning walking round mile after mile of car club displays of which the Club

Lotus displays were the best, which is not just my opinion as they won 'Best of Show' prize for the best club stand. I didn't count them but the programme says there were 412 Lotuses from the four Lotus clubs represented, although I reckon that was supplemented by about 40 Caterhams but, still, 370 was more than they got on the Brands Hatch track last year. The Historic Lotus Register put on an excellent show with a Mark 3 and several Sixes and Elites and NKLG was well represented with Mike Peck's Seven S1 and Simon Davies' Elite.



NKLG was also well represented elsewhere as David Luery (Elite S1) and Roger Gray (OK, E Type) were both on our campsite to help us try to create a French wine shortage. Apologies if you were there and we didn't meet up with you to give you a mention.

I admit to spending a disproportionate amount of time on the Lotus display but a lot of that was taken up in conversation with the owner of a unique special bodied Six, who is only the second owner having bought the car in 1990

after it had spent almost all of its life in a barn having completed only 500 miles since 1954. He has the complete history of the car in a binder, which made fascinating reading and should be turned into an interesting book. The original owner, a Chelsea based surgeon, designed the body himself, taking ideas from various contemporary car magazine articles and it was interesting to find in the folder, quotes from Tuner Cars and one A C B Chapman, Director, of Lotus for the car.



In the morning before racing started, there would also the opportunity to drive a couple of laps of the track. See David and Roger G for details! The racing is run over 24 hours by six grids of cars, each in three heats, with cars arranged in periods 1923 to 1939, 1949 to 1956, 1957 to 1961, 1962 to 1965, 1966 to 1971 and 1972 to 1979, so there are 18 races overall. The cars that dominated their respective periods dominated again and a detailed knowledge of calculus was required to understand the final team positions but it was great to be able to move easily around the circuit to watch the racing from

various points on the track including all of those evocative historic names Porsche Curves, Dunlop Curve and Tertre Rouge. David told me he walked all the way down to the bottom of Mulsanne Straight and enjoyed watching some of the racing from there in complete isolation.

It was also great to see the first four races get underway with the traditional Le Mans start and to watch a Lotus 15 keep the flag flying with an overall third place after the weekend's racing in the 1957 to 1961 grid with some exciting tussles against the big Jags.



This was our second visit to the Classic and we are already considering a third in two years' time. For anyone with an interest in classic sports cars and Le Mans, and there might be one or two in NKLG, the trip is a must and it would be great to see if we could get an NKLG group together for next time to keep Mike's and Simon's cars company on the Lotus displays next time.

Roger

Now it just remains for me to mention the up and coming events.

Firstly the mid-week run. Please meet up at 9.30 at the usual starting point - the Moat at Wrotham this coming Wednesday 26th. It will include a morning coffee stop and pub lunch; there's the Goodwood track day on the 6th September - give me a ring if you want to go down in convoy; just a gentle reminder re the photographic competition, please pass your pictures to Pauline, you've got until the end of September; there's the Lotus Factory celebrations - please see Roger's email. Lastly, the Komosa Cup treasure hunt which is on the 28th September, will soon be upon us. John H is looking after this. Please let him know if you're going to take part as we will need to have an idea of numbers - we've got the next club night to finalise things so let us know then. Full details will be in next months letter.

Reports on the Picnic and Chrissie's day at the factory next month so if I don't see you at Goodwood or at the mid-week run I'll see you at the White Rock on 10th September.

John