

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS 1994-2014

NORTH KENT LOTUS GROUP

Nov/Dec 2014 northkentlotusgroup.org No. 227

Dear Enthusiast

Well, I hope you had a nice Christmas and New Year and you managed to get the Lotus out - if it isn't sorn.

Sorry about the lack of a November letter but the news was so thin it didn't warrant the postage! So this is a combined Nov/Dec one.

Firstly, I must apologise. I don't know where I got Evoke in last month's newsletter from but Richard rightly reprimanded me! I must have been getting mixed up with something I read about a new off roader that Lotus is developing - a cross between an Evora and a Mini Moke. And if you saw the Top Gear Christmas special, they were testing the chassis mule. Anyway, to put the record straight, Richard is the proud owner of a Toyota Evoque.

The one item that would have been included last month if the letter had been produced was a mention of the Forest Row gathering. Nice weather and good display made it a worthwhile trip. Something for everyone to look at and refreshments available if you're feeling peckish. I recommend it if you're at a loose end on the second Sunday of the month. It's the first time we've been and we'd arranged to meet Ian and Heather there but we also bumped into Bill. Nice to catch up with him - he's still learning to live with his medical problem at the moment but he's enjoying himself and he'd brought along a rather splendid E-Type which is part of a nice collection he's assembled.

So a good morning and worth the trip. Matt and Trudi also paid a visit around lunchtime but we must have missed them by a whisker. Have a look at the www.riverviewcafe.co.uk for more info.

Two rather important announcements this month. Firstly, Howard has announced that he's standing aside from the Planning Group as from the March AGM. Twenty years is a long time so he probably feels it's time to enjoy the group without the pressure of looking after it. So March could possibly see a few changes.

Secondly, Terry has closed the Blog on the Website. He cited a lack of input but with the group being relatively small, there was always a chance that participation would be low. He'll continue looking after the website - have you seen his festive home page?

The Christmas meal had a good turnout, although slightly down on numbers compared to past years. The conservatory at Bartellas is a very nice venue but as I wasn't able to be at the December club night, I wasn't able to pick up any comments regarding the food. A big thanks must go to the Planning Group, particularly Trudi - with Michelle and Jasmine's help - for organising the raffle and also all those

that supplied extra raffle prizes. Unfortunately, Howard wasn't able to make it on the night as he was feeling unwell but I'm sure he would have made his announcement then.

I had rather a nice surprise at the meal - being chosen as the first recipient of the new annual award of Simons Cup. Much appreciated and thanks to all who put my name forward. I shall keep it in pride of place for the year.

Is anybody going to the new London Classic Car show at the Excel? I fancy giving it a go. Not quite sure what to expect but probably nothing like the annual NEC one. It's on during the week before the next club night, so we won't have much chance to discuss the options - there is a group booking discount of 10 or more. Would we get that number?

As I've said earlier in the year, the Lotus Factory news and gossip has been very sadly lacking (oh to the heady days of announcing six new models!). Although the latest is that Matt Becker is leaving for Aston Martin. He's been Chief Engineer of Vehicle Test and Development after more than a quarter of a century. And he's being replaced by Dave Marler, who's been with Lotus for 17 years. Furthermore, Lotus has reassigned Gavan Kershaw 'additional responsibilities for dynamic attributes and evaluation'. Kershaw is currently Technical Manager for Lotus Motorsport and has also developed

road cars including the original Exige and S2 Elise. Between them they have a huge amount of experience with Lotus cars and Lotus Engineering's wider OEM projects. The only "new" cars has been the Elise Cup which does look pretty nice and an automatic Exige - which incidentally was quicker around the Hethel circuit than the manual version! But other than that it's pretty much business as usual up in Norfolk.

I'm hoping there'll be more to report in the New Year but please email any articles or tips etc - anything is welcome.

If I don't see you at the Excel show, I'll see you at the Plough on the 14th January.

John