

North Kent Lotus Group



Editorial.

I hope you will forgive me, but the end of the year has slipped away rather quickly, so I have combined the November and December newsletters into one. I shall endeavour to ramble on more than usual to compensate.

As the month passes I try to think what will be going into the newsletter and I had it in mind that November would be very short of potential material, but this is really not the case. There is the past year to look back on and the next to look forward to and, as in this case, it's left long enough there's the NKLG Christmas gathering to report on too.

Some of you will be aware that I've been largely consumed by garage-building this year and I have missed a few events as a result. (Nearly there, doors and window to be fitted imminently, in case you were wondering!) The BBQ was dry and bright but chilly at times, but good nonetheless, and since the Lotus Festival was compressed into one day this year we had a particularly good turn-out of cars from the Group. That event is also good since we can often meet members there who we otherwise don't see much of over the year. Other highlights for me was the Brooklands Lotus day (in spite of the very early Sunday morning start), Motors by the Moat at Leeds Castle (in spite of the temperature!) and I also had an excellent run to Le Mans in the Elise. I hope you all have other good Lotus-related memories of the year.

As I mentioned in my very brief speech at the Christmas meal, (more about that in a moment) I feel that the Group is run for the Members by the Members, but it runs all the more smoothly because of the input of the Steering Group, and more particularly John U for looking after the finances for us, and John P, supported by Jon & Michelle, for arranging events throughout the year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them on behalf of the whole Group.

The Christmas meal at The Harrow Inn in Knockholt appeared to go well. It was unfortunate that those who had the fish felt that it was a little dry, otherwise everyone said the food was excellent. The size of the venue was perfect for us (which is one of the more significant difficulties in finding a suitable location) and the service was quick and efficient. Overall I believe it was an enjoyable evening for all.

Also as I mentioned when I spoke at the meal, it has become a tradition that half of those assembled can't hear what I'm saying, usually as a result of the shape of the room or the booming disco in the next room (although in some instances, perhaps too much high-speed open-top motoring has contributed to the problem!). This year, in perfect acoustic conditions, I continued the tradition by losing my voice the previous day. I therefore kept it short, but apart from touching on the items above I was also able to report that Howard Emes had called earlier in the evening. He was sorry not to be able to attend in person, but asked that I pass on his best wishes for the season to the Group, and to remind everyone that if they find themselves in Norfolk they would be very welcome to call in on him.

One of the few 'formal' acts of the evening is the presentation of the NKLG Cup to a worthy recipient who, it is felt, has made a notable contribution to the Group over the year. Unbeknown to me, it was decided that it should be directed at me this year. I am very honoured to have been presented with this, although; as noted above, in my view it is the Membership at large, with some help from the Steering Group, that makes the NKLG what it is, I'm really not sure I do that much to help. If there is any particularly worthwhile input that I make I think that it is keeping the newsletter running since, in my opinion, this is a vital element in keeping the Membership informed of the Group's activities. My 'temporary' posting to that position does now feel rather permanent, so please, if someone fancies taking this on, please let me know! You will note that, having just been awarded a prize for turning the newsletter out each month, I immediately fail miserably by having to combine two into one month.

Moving briskly on to looking forward to next year we already have one event firmed-up in the form of the film evening at Brasted in February. This was a good event last year and well attended, so book your places now! Thanks are due to Chrissie and Roger for organising this.

The events list for 2018 is being compiled, with the usual events and a few 'new' items already in place, but as ever, if you are aware of any events, or suitable potential destinations for runs etc., do please flag them up. The greater the mix of activities the more likelihood there is of everyone finding something to suit their taste.

Thanks again are due to Vaughn for yet another contribution to the newsletter this month. Between the two of them, Vaughn and Richard L have provided me with the greater part of the newsletter content this year. (Since they both live there, I'm thinking of changing that name of the newsletter to The Chipstead Park Chronicle). My thanks to both of them for this, and may it be an inspiration to everyone else out there to see if they can compete with them, everything's gratefully received.

I already have a further update from Richard on the restoration, but I will hold that over until the January issue. If all goes well I shall have the garage finished and my own restoration to report on next year, but it's not going to be anywhere near as fast-paced as Richard's. It will probably provide me with newsletter material for the next five years, so you'll be sick & tired of the subject by the time it's finished!

Finally I'll take this opportunity to thank everyone for their continued support and friendship and for the contributions and input that makes the Group the success that it is, and to wish you alla very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

How to Build a Car

As I reported in my February 2017 NKLK newsletter contribution, I am always pleased to receive a motoring related book as a present and the more motor racing or Lotus biased the better.

Last month I received a rather large "tome" for my birthday, consisting of some 390 pages, with the intriguing title shown above. It turned out to be all about Adrian Newey, the current F1 Red Bull car designer, published by Harper Collins under ISBN 978-0-000819680 in 2017 at a cost of £20.

Upon opening the book, the chapter index listed a wide range of F1 cars eg. March 83G, Williams FW14, McLaren MP4, and then onto the Red Bull RB series etc. so I started to wonder just how easy or interesting this book would be to read. Now we all know he can design World Championship F1 cars BUT can he write I wondered. But buried in the credits in the back of the book the name of Andrew Holmes appeared as his professional "ghost writer" – relief!!!

The early chapters described Adrian's early life and how being left handed he was forced by his teachers to use his right hand to write and hence he struggled at school. He was not considered to be a conscientious student and copies of his school reports in the book paint an interesting image of him and NOT what you would expect. Together with Jeremy Clarkson, he was actually expelled from Repton boarding school but you need to read the book to find out why.

Following completion of his Aeronautics degree at Southampton he attempted to gain work in various racing car teams but was rejected by many, including Lotus, who's facilities at the time he described as a "pig sty". Eventually he gained a job with the then new Fittipaldi F1 team under Dr Harvey Postlethwaite but a lack of sponsorship money caused it to soon close but by then he had become known in the F1 design business. He then re-gained employment with firstly Layton House followed by March, McLaren, Williams and now Red Bull.

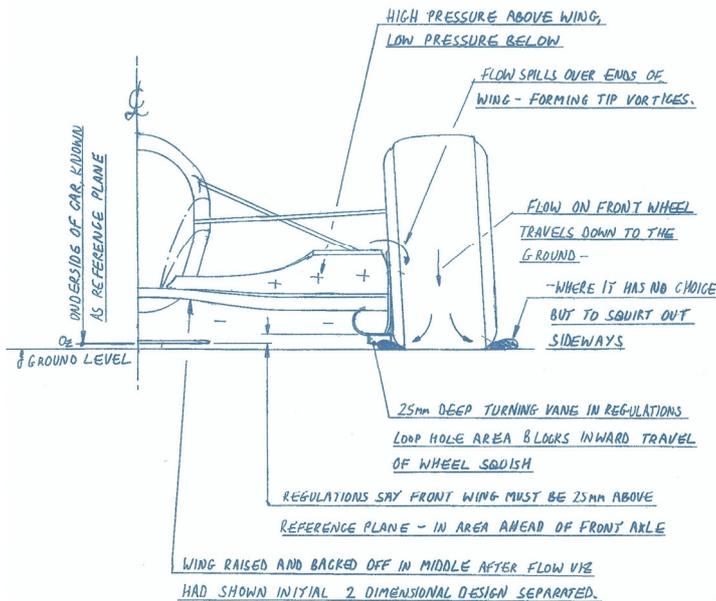
The various chapters in the book oscillate between himself/family/children/divorces etc., his involvement with the various F1 team's management and drivers (Senna, Mansell, Coulthard, Hakkinen and Hill) together with significant events including Ayton Senna's death and the aftermath.

He mentions that in addition to now owning and racing a Ford GT40 and Jaguar E Type he also owns a Lotus Gold Leaf type 49 which he drove in a Monte Carlo historic race (all benefits from being very well paid I expect).

How to Build a Car, continued

I found that I needed to read some sections twice in order to get to grips with some concepts as they are so far divorced from real life and can be difficult to understand the first time around eg. "blown exhaust diffusers. Do you know how they keep the Renault engine turbo's running when off throttle in order to employ the blown exhaust diffuser? the book tells you.

This book includes many technical drawings and explanations with drawings of wings/aerofoils, diffusers, wing tip vortex, flow separation, turning vanes and underbody venturi designs and an example is shown below:-



If YOU would like to know more about, KERS, Active suspension, Ground effect, Double Diffusers, Turning vanes, Blown Exhausts and Vortex cancellation techniques etc. then read this book.

I think that I have a better understanding of some of these principles now???

Overall a really interesting and up-to-date book, even a possible Christmas present to yourself ?

Vaughn

Contacts

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www.northkentlotusgroup.org