

North Kent Lotus Group



Editorial

Yet another, again slightly odd, year has passed, seemingly very quickly. It's at this point that we tend to look back over the year that's just passed, and in spite of the difficulties presented by the ongoing pandemic, 2021 been a pretty good year for the North Kent Lotus Group.

You will be reading this after the NKLG Christmas meal at which I said a few words covering the same subject, so my apologies to those of you who've already heard all this, but it's important that the Membership as a whole gets all the news!

Whilst the number of events has remained relatively low, the turn-out for the events that have taken place has been very good, and similarly, once we'd got back into the routine of attending 'real' club nights, turn-out for these too has generally been good. Numbers have been bolstered by the addition of some new members this year, so on behalf of the whole Membership, welcome to all of you.

One notable event was the four-day British Car Show at Farnborough in August. A lot of members put in an appearance at one or other of those days, but special mention to Neil C for attending all four, and to Jon, Michelle and Jazmine for not only attending every day but also for organising NKLG's attendance at the event. Jon & Michelle are responsible for organising the majority of the Group's activities over the year, so again on behalf of the Membership I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for that, and note that organising the Farnborough event took far more effort (and personal expense!) than usual, so special thanks for that too.

One of the many who attended Farnborough was Mark B, who has very kindly provided an article for the newsletter, which you will see below, this may seem rather late for this, it is!

Mark did provide the article in a timely manner, but I forgot he'd done so when the previous newsletter was prepared, so apologies to him for that, but many thanks for the article.

One significant event of the year that was highlighted at the Christmas meal was that of John Underhay stepping down from the role of treasurer for the Group. John has been performing this essential role, on behalf of absolutely everyone in the Group, for more years than anyone seems able to establish, so this was marked with the presentation of an engraved glass plaque to him, as a mark of thanks and appreciation from the whole membership.

As is usual, the final formal act of the Christmas get-together was the presentation of the NKLG Cup, which is presented in recognition of particular service or benefit to the Group. This year it went to Ron R for his ongoing work on the Group website, continuing the task started by Richard C a couple of years ago. To date the website has been built using free software, which renders it difficult to manage and improve, however the Group has just purchased suitable software to take the improvement forward. It was noted that there are a number of members who regularly use Facebook, but it is notable too that there are a number of members who definitely do not use it. In order to make the website more relevant and 'personal' to all of us, a request was made that, on occasion, when uploading Facebook material, perhaps this could be duplicated and sent to Ron to include on the website.



To repeat an earlier request, we could certainly do with more 'members' cars' featured on the website, so if nothing else, please put a few words together with photos of your cars, and get them over to Ron. Aside from club-nights, the next NKLG event will be the AGM on the evening of the March club-night.

That will be upon us before we know it, so please give some thought to anything you would like to have discussed, or suggestions for any events or get-togethers you may have. You may recall that we had a very brief 'AGM update' as a prelude to the barbeque back in the summer, the main purpose of which was to formalise Chrissie's R appointment as Treasurer to replace John U, and the interim re-election of the rest of the Steering Group members because we'd been unable to hold the formal AGM last March. If anyone would like to be considered for election to any of the Steering Group positions, please make yourselves known, but note that these declarations must be submitted at least one month before the AGM.

This appears to have developed into a bumper Christmas edition, so I'll sign-off by wishing you all best wishes for the season, and a very happy, healthy and restriction, worry-free New Year.

Finally, thanks again to Mark for the British Car show article, and although we don't have space for the usual article from Vaughn in this edition, we nonetheless need to thank him, as ever, for putting the newsletter together for us all.

See you all in 2022! Don't forget we have the January & February club-nights before the AGM.

Roger D

Reflecting on my day at the British Motor Show

Well, it was 'touch-n- go' whether I'd be able to attend. The Monday before I was suffering terrible toothache!

By Tuesday evening it had eased enough to be at least manageable. I considered attending Thursday and Friday but home commitments limited me to just one day, so I organised myself to join the group for Thursday. As I've only been doing short local trips, I was apprehensive of driving to Farnborough and back home in the same day.

Travelling up on Wednesday afternoon the sat nav on my phone seemed to take me all over the place! Some of the route I recognised from my days travelling in my original Elise when I worked in Guildford/Leatherhead area. My route took me onto the M25, not what I wanted to do but my Ruby (Elise S1) coped admirably although she did communicate the concrete/tarmac joins/ridges a little too well!

Roof off it was a lovely drive in the sunshine Happily, I found a guest house which had availability for Wednesday night. It turned out to be a short walk from the Holiday Inn. I also learned - too late - that there was also a short cut to the exhibition centre which would have saved some shoe leather and my knees. I checked into the guest house around 4pm and then set off to meet Jazmine, Jon, Michelle and Neil at CB16 - our plot designation. Jon took charge of ensuring our cars were lined up tidily and on learning that we weren't allowed to use camping pins, he and Michelle set off to find bottled water that could be used as weights. Pure Lotus ingenuity! I imagine Chapman would have expected no less.

I'm not sure Chapman would have been too amused that we nearly got locked in the site! Time seemed to fly by and before we knew it, we were the only ones left there. There was some frantic walk-about to various gates that we were directed to only to find them locked!

A sigh of relief, we eventually made our way to the pedestrian gate but with tiring legs we still had to make our way back to the hotel. Walking through the foyer we saw "Wheeler Dealer" Mike Brewer on the blower.

I have enjoyed the episodes where he and Ed China had restored an Elan, an Esprit and an Elise. Perhaps there is something in "never meeting your heroes"?

Off to the bar for a well-earned beer! Now, what is the point of a bright shiny lager or beer tap that has no beverage attached!? Let alone 4 taps! Whilst waiting to be served we sparked up conversation with a chap who helped to bring over a Metro 6R4 from Ireland - the very same Group B rally car restored by Tim and Fuzz during Car SOS, and on Friday briefly helmed by our very own Michelle.

After wetting the whistle and enjoying Jon's and Neil's fine company it was time to set off for the guest house and rest up.

Next morning a full "English breky" set me up for the day ... and the long walk to the exhibition site.

You'll see from the photos that our marvellous team had everything set up. Dan, Mark, Paul and Trevor had also arrived and our collection looked fabulous, Paul had made contact through TLF. Mark, like me, is a new member - perhaps our newest! It was a slow start to the day but it gave me an opportunity to investigate and make some discoveries/observations:



Though electric cars may be the future and there are companies offering conversions they just "don't do it" for the die-hard petrolhead

- Supercars lined up together somehow just don't look so super?
- A lime green Lamborghini with wings will make you want to sell all your possessions!
- So too, will an unpainted carbon fibre-bodied one!
- There was no need for Rolls Royce to build an SUV! Just because you can do a thing doesn't mean you should!
- Apparently Range Rovers don't go off road!
- The smell of burning rubber from power sliding Caterham Sevens isn't pleasant but the sight and sound is intoxicating!
- Ford loaned a super yellow GT to the GT40 Club! I'd love to give feedback to "new" Lotus re their apparent lack of interest in our endeavour!
- I'd like to think that Julian Thomson took inspiration from the Europa, the GT40 and the Dino when he styled the beautiful Elise S1
- One of the earliest car manufacturers, Panhard, built innovative and delightful cars in their day
- A Jenson C-V8 can be boosted to near 1200 bhp!
- The elusive Bugatti Chiron and Ferrari 288 GTO appeared to be hidden from the view of us mere mortals
- The tidal wave of show goers heading towards the classics/club's area was a bit overwhelming but great to see!
- The site is a long, long walk end to end, my legs are still sore!
- Well-done to Dan and Jazmine for elevating our celebrity status
- Teasing aside, Neil certainly knows how to make a Lotus shine!
- M&S make delicious sausage rolls! Thanks Neil
- Petrolheads come in all shapes and sizes and often are jolly nice to chat with!

Unlike previous British Motor Shows which were an A-Z catalogue of Manufacturers' stands crowded together and bursting with their latest offerings, this show was different. In many ways a celebration of the diversity of what make cars so attractive and endearing to so many people, fans and enthusiasts. It also offered an optimistic electric future ...

I was disappointed that Lotus chose not to attend. I think they missed an opportunity to re-engage with car fans. Going to Goodwood, Monterey and Dubai are the opportunities for Lotus to secure new income for sure. I would have liked to see Lotus here celebrating their successful history as well as their optimistic future, engaging with the masses and exciting youngsters to becoming future owners.

As I bring my jottings to a close, I hope that you will join me in thanking everyone that was able to attend our club stand. I hope too that they all enjoyed being part of this year's motor show.

May we also give special recognition and appreciation to Jon and Michelle for their investment in preparation, planning and support to everyone over the 4 days. So too Jazmine and Neil for their fine supporting roles!

It was a fabulous day and I feel privileged to be part of such a delightful group of people that share the passion for our fabulous cars. Oh, it would be remis of me not to mention my Ruby. Quite simply, she was fab! Got me there and back, safe and sound and never missed a beat! Bless her, I love her to bits!

Best wishes

Mark





Contacts

Regalia & Clothing: www.arktrading.com

Meetings: 2nd Wednesday each month, The Moody Mare, Seven Mile Lane, ME18 5QY

Web Site: www.Northkentlotusgroup.org