

North Kent Lotus Group



Editorial

The big news this month was the announcement of our new meeting venue. Hopefully you will have seen the email that was circulated with the details, but if not we're now at The Rose Revived, located between Hadlow and Tonbridge, just off the A26. Second Wednesday of the month, as always.

The other important point on that email was about speed cameras near to the pub. Beware!

The Rose Revived also hosted this year's barbeque. Compared with previous years our turn-out was relatively low, but this time of year we are of course competing with holidays, and circumstances dictated that this year's event was convened at relatively short notice. In addition to holidays, we were also competing with racing events and for others some ill-health. Best wishes to all concerned for good results and speedy and full recoveries.

Those that did attend the BBQ did, I believe, have an enjoyable day, and although threatening at times, the weather was warm and dry, although we had the use of a marquee so a bit of rain would probably have been quite welcome after this long, hot, spell.

My thanks to Roger R for his report on the Jim Clark museum below, and to Vaughn for scraping the barrel yet again. Vaughn tells me he has his 'Lotus Story' up his sleeve, and I'm aware of at least one other 'Lotus Story' in the pipeline, so keep those coming. For my part, I've done a track day since the last newsletter, so I'll put something together about that for a future edition.

Without giving too much of the story away, I'm sure you're not supposed to spin on the sighting lap, which is what I managed to do!

Hopefully we'll have a good turn-out for our next club night at our new venue. The pub has been very welcoming, so a good show from ourselves would be good for all concerned. I hope to see you there.

Roger D.

The Jim Clark Museum

If you're ever driving to Scotland or even to Northumbria, a detour to the Jim Clark Museum in Duns is well worthwhile.

We had the museum to ourselves when we arrived but it was fairly busy by the time we left so, as it's fairly small, advanced booking via their website would be a good precaution. The museum has been recently refurbished and all of the material is very well presented, which includes graphics panels, artefacts and audio recordings in a timeline of his career.

All of his trophies are displayed in a separate room and there are three documentary films to watch. There is a gallery for temporary exhibitions, which is currently displaying a collection of photographs by Eric Bryce, professional photographer and Jim Clark's close friend. Unfortunately, the driving simulator was out of action on our visit otherwise we probably would have been there for longer than two hours.

There are always three cars on loan on display and, when we were there, these were the 25 raced by Clark in 1963 and 1964, on loan from the Tinguely Museum in Basle; the yellow fixed lead Elan that Clark gave to Jabby Crombac before he flew to Hockenheim in April 1968; and a 26 raced by Clark in 1963.

The museum is a great tribute to Clark's life and career and not to be missed. In fact, why not plan a driving holiday to Scotland so you can visit the museum?

You can find out more and book advance tickets for the museum by going to <https://jimclarktrust.com/jim-clark-motorsport-museum/>

Roger R

Note. This article had to be held over from the June issue due to space limitations



Scraping the Barrel.

With no other Newsletter contributions, I have yet again had to scrape the preverbal barrel to fill the pages. I have always had a particular interest in John Miles after watching him race his Lotus 26R at Brands Hatch in the mid 1960's.



John Miles was born in 1942 to actors Bernard and Josephine Wilson Miles (of London's Mermaid Theatre fame).

John began racing his first car, an Austin 7, which he bought at the age of 16 and meticulously rebuilt the engine himself.

He would think nothing of driving it 200 miles to Oulton Park to race before driving back home again.

In 1963, whilst working for Diva in Camberwell, London, he won the Redex Sports Car Championship driving a Diva GT.

The Diva GT was front engined car with a fibreglass body wrapped around a spaceframe chassis. The car had front disc brakes and independent suspension all round and could be fitted with a Ford based engine between 998cc and 1650 cc. It was designed for track use only and just thirteen were ever built.

This led John, at the age of 20, gaining an entry in the 1964 Nürburgring 1000Kms, co-driven by John Peterson, winning the 1000cc GT class. A second season found him still driving the Diva, but by now supported by the John Willment racing team and he was equally successful.

Then in 1966, again with Willment's support, he acquired a Lotus Elan 26R and that enabled him to win that years Autosport Championship with 15 outright wins from 17 races. His dominance in his Lotus Elan caught the eye of Lotus sales director Graham Arnold, who promptly told Colin Chapman to keep an eye on John. Chapman gave John his chance that year driving a works Lotus Cortina in the Oulton Park Gold Cup, as Jim Clark did not turn up.



The race I most remember seeing him in was at the 1966 Brands Hatch Easter meeting where his Lotus 26R bonnet became partially detached and started lifting up in one corner which obstructed his view. He was forced to stop at the pits for it to be removed. (this photo is an example of a 26R).

Minus his bonnet, he then chased down Bernard Unett's leading lightweight Sunbeam Tiger Le Mans Coupe, passing the 260-cu inch V8 (4261 cc) Tiger on the last lap to win the race.

Racing without a bonnet infringed the race rules but Unett declined to protest in admiration of John's incredible drive. John's Miles 26R was never beaten until the advent of mid engine competitors such as the Chevron. At the Boxing Day Brands race in 1966 he debuted the Lotus Europa (type 47) shown below.



Subsequently he raced the works F3 Lotus 41 in 1967 and 1968 – winning four international F3 events and also became a Lotus F1 test driver.

According to the BRDC web site, after Graham Hill sustained serious leg injuries in the 1969 US Grand Prix, John was given the opportunity to drive alongside Jochen Rindt.

Initially he was given the un-successful four wheeled Lotus type 63 to drive and finished in 10th in the British GP but also had four retirements that year.

According to Wikipedia, John raced the older Type 49C in the South African Grand Prix, finishing 5th, then drove a type 72 and later a 72c with a 7th and 8th place but yet another four retirements.

Wikipedia web site also reports that John said in an interview that Chapman regarded him 'as a sort of grease monkey' and paid him a mere £300 per race, out of which he had to pay his own travel expenses, occasionally this was supplemented by a roll of bank notes from Chapman's back pocket so that John could get back to England.

It would seem Chapman had his favourites and other drivers made up the numbers.

At Monza in 1970, Jochen Rindt ran his car without its front and rear wings, as the Ferraris were some 10 mph faster and he reported that his car had gained an extra 800rpm on the long straights. Chapman apparently ordered John to follow Rindt's car. He reluctantly complied but was concerned by the wingless 72's handling on the straights, reporting that the car would not run straight and was unstable.

Jochen Rindt was killed during practice for that race when it is suspected that one of the inboard disc brake shafts failed and the car veered off the track ploughing into a steel barrier. Rindt's death was too much for Miles, who it was reported to be too sensitive to fit Chapman's idea of a racing driver and he was dropped by Chapman and John left the team.

In total John Miles spent 18 years as a qualified engineer with Lotus Engineering before moving on to Aston Martin where he helped to develop the DB7 GT and the Vanquish but died in 2018 at the age of 76.

Vaughn

NKLG BBQ Photos

On the 31st July, the annual NKLG BBQ was held at "The Rose Revived" pub in Hadlow, Tonbridge, which is conveniently located on the corner of the A26 - Maidstone Road, and Ashes Lane, TN11 0AN.

As can be seen from the photographs there is a large grass parking area at the rear which we have been told we can use during our meetings rather than parking with other pub users. Adjacent to the pub is the normal hard standing car park which would be used in inclement weather.



The general opinion of those who attended the BBQ was the pub was a significant improvement over the Moody Mare and they would be happy to use the pub for future monthly meetings (See editorial).

Vaughn

Photos attributed to RR and VR

Bexhill-on-Sea Car Show

The Bexhill car show is again to be held on the 29th August and the show ground gates will be open to entrants at 7am. The cost to entrants' is £5 per car. The on-line entry form states that there will be **NO LATE ENTRIES ON THE DAY** so there is a risk, unlike previous years, that our entry into the ground may be blocked unless each car is pre-booked.

The entry form is available at: <https://www.bexhill100mc.co.uk/PolegroveEntryForm2021>.

Cheques should be made payable to "Bexhill 100 Motoring Club" and sent to:-

PO Box 159, Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex, TN39 3XE

Those members wishing to attend should meet up on the promenade near the Sovereign Lighthouse café (unfortunately not open until 10 am) no later than 8 am so that the group can enter and park together.

Vaughn

Contacts

Regalia & Clothing: www.arktrading.com

Meetings: 2nd Wednesday each month @ The Rose Revived, Ashes Lane, Hadlow, Nr Tonbridge, TN11 0AN

Web Site: www.NorthkentLotusgroup.org

2022 Group Activities & Events

	Date	Event
August	18 th to 21 st	The British Motor Show
	26 th to 28 th	Silverstone Classic
	Monday 29 th	Bexhill Car Show
September	Saturday 3 rd	Salon Privé Club Trophy
	Sunday 11 th	Kent's Classic Car Show, Aylesford
	Sunday 11 th	Edenbridge Car Show
	Friday 16 th to 18 th	Goodwood Revival
October	Saturday 29 th	Halloween run (Proposed)
December	Saturday 3 rd	Christmas Meal *
* Organised by NKLG		