﻿

AGM 8

**MGCC SE Centre Events Secretary Report – Andrew Mitchell**

Very few years will be as memorable, in our lifetime, as most of last year and the beginning of this…

Thankfully, this year’s 2021 SE Centre events have felt like we are finally getting “back to normal” after having nearly a year and a half of being in total lockdown, scaled down events…. or being just stuck on Zoom…!

On a more positive note; Our cars have been much-improved, I’m sure, whilst sitting in our garages - even if just polished more, like mine!

The enthusiasm of our members, as well as having such an enthusiastic committee with everything to do with MG within the SE Centre, has meant we used the earlier “down-time” to improve on how we get our information (including all our events) to our members out there.

This was via improving our emailed newsletter as well as promoting Facebook, Twitter and Instagram …

In addition; We have also attracted a few new team members to help with the SE Centre, who have actively helped us immensely with events this past year and are now helping us with new events for 2022 and also for our centenary year, in 2023..

From a personal view; The delayed MGF 25th anniversary at the British Motor museum at Gaydon, held on Saturday 24th July, which I attended in my MGF with my son, Lewis, cumulated in over 600 MGF & TF’s attending on the day – which just shows to me the strong enthusiasm and popularity, in this country for everything MG….and, in particular, MG events..!

The start of the years SE Centre events was still tough, though - And after 2020, none of us (including our Government experts!) really knew whether 2021 would be as bad as last year (if that’s possible?) and there was still a lot of uncertainty as we progressed through the earlier part of this year…

1. **Valentine’s Day Run & Spring Naviscat**

The Valentines Day run along with the Spring Naviscat, on March 28th, became a “Stay-at-home” event with photographs sent through of owners cars decorated for Valentines day…and the Spring Naviscat, scheduled for March 28th, became a Google treasure hunt instead – But both were attended well, which just shows our members hunger for being involved with the SE Centre events on offer.

1. **Dive-It Day**

Fortunately; Less than a month after the Spring Naviscat, the country started to open up again and thanks to John Morgan’s impeccably organised Drive-it Day Run, the MGCCSE had their first “Non-static event!” of 2021..(albeit with some Government Covid restrictions & Motorsports UK rules & guidance!.. That meant John doing lots of paperwork beforehand, promoting social distancing at the stop and no gathering at the finish – which was all adhered too.

The Drive-It Day run was on Saturday 24th April and began at Denbies Vineyard near Dorking in Surrey. The route traversed the North and South Downs via country lanes over 45 miles to finish on the coast at Rottingdean.

The sun came out…So, what a fantastic, “top-down day” to the sea-side and a nice start to commemorate coming out of the winter lockdown and the day went very well without any issues, which further strengthened our confidence to go forward with more similar events to this.

1. **Leonardslee Lakes & Gardens**

On the success of the Drive-it Day; The SE Centre went back to Leonardslee Lakes & Gardens on Sunday May 23rd, after its success there back in September 2020.

Two runs into Leonardslee Lakes and Gardens converged under grey and darkening skies. The starts were at Bocketts Farm, Leatherhead in the North, and at the Red Lion, Ashington in the south.

Despite occasional heavy showers, some unfortunate early breakdowns and very windy weather, where my son and I nearly lost the event shelter at one stage – with me being dragged across the gravel carpark at Leonardslee!, the event was another huge success for the SE Centre and their members and is a definite future venue, we will use again, I’m sure.

1. **Alternative Pride of Ownership**

The MGCCSE Alternative Pride of Ownership competition also made a welcomed appearance again, for 2021..

**Round 1: Sunday 4th July from 12:30    Surrey Oaks, Newdigate, Surrey**

**Round 2:  Thursday 8th July from 7pm    The Fairmile, Cobham, Surrey**

**Round 3: Thursday 19th July from 7pm   The Pheasant, Buckland, Surrey**

40 cars turned up at the final round and the overall winner of the event was Dave Naylor in his MG L2 who amassed 40 points in total.

In second place was Simon Gray and his MG Metro which is his everyday driver and in third place was Peter Gray in an MGTC. All of them had attended all three rounds.

1. **June 12th Brooklands**

The SE Centre were back at Brooklands again for a meet organised by the Fairmile Natter. It was great to see around 50+ MGs turn up on this gloriously hot day. The club parked up at the top of the Finishing Straight and spread on to the Banking underneath Members’ Bridge, which provided a welcome amount of shade for those post 1980 MGs lucky enough to be under it. Again; It was one of those days when it was just fantastic to be there, to be anywhere really in these Covid times with MG friends.

1. **August 7th & 8th weekend**

The South East Centre had a busy weekend on the 7th and 8th August with two great “turn-up” events, which the SE Centre put on..

Firstly; On **Saturday 7th August** the South East MGF Register, organised by Tim Morris, gathered on Hayling Island for their annual Fish n Chips on the beach. This was just a turn up in the beach car park opposite the Coast Cafe on Sea Front and meet up with the other MGs before getting some fish n chips and sitting on the beach with other club members. The weather was, shall we say, a little wet… with strong winds and heavy rain. In Tim’s words “…After arriving at 5pm soon after the heavens opened, the rain was torrential and the wind buffeted the cars parked alongside the beach…”

But this didn’t deter many MGF/TF owners turning up on the day. Perhaps better weather, next year, Tim?

Then the following day,**Sunday 8th August,** we had our “Splendid Summer Day” out at the Kent & East Sussex Railway on the Tenterden Railway organised by Chris Leigh

Again; It was a typical English summer weather-weekend of sun and showers. In total; There were 20 cars parked in a designated area and 5 were invited to park on the station platform! Many of the entrants took a wonderful ride on the Kent & East Sussex Steam Railway.

1. **19th Sept – Lullingstone Castle and World Gardens**

The Autumn Meeting returned to a venue not used by the SE centre since out Autumn Gathering in 2007. The event included two Scenic Runs, one starting from Godstone in the west and the other from Bluebell Hill in the east, along with a Concours de Elegance and Pride of Ownership competition.

The weather in the South East didn’t look promising…But I managed to travel there and back with the roof down and apart from a brief shower late afternoon, it remained dry and good enough for people to enjoy their picnics in the open.

In total; 95 MG’s turned up on the day with 17 cars on the east run, 26 cars on the west run, 4 cars in the concours and 20 cars in the Pride of Ownership..

The Concours and Pride of Ownership cars provided an excellent display in front of the castle. The east run was 26 miles long and followed part of the Pilgrims way. The west run was 30 miles taking a loop to the south through Tandridge, Edenbridge, Four Elms, Ide Hill past Emmetts Garden to Sunridge, Shoreham and into Lullingstone Castle.

The earliest car was a 1932 M Type. Other models ranged the full spectrum from the TC through to the latest MG5 electric car, supplied by the MG dealership in Canterbury. Other unusual cars included and MG Magnette mkIV, a MGZTT260 and a MG SV.

We all entered via the historic gate and parked up in front of Lullingstone Castle (main house) and chapel on the lawns.

The resident owners; Sarah and Tom Dyke also made us most welcome on the day and were on hand to answer any members questions about their home and gardens.

It was also nice touch that a Non-National Trust, privately owned home, which have struggled under Covid, was able to open up again and make some money from us to keep it open for years to come.

**Concours de elegance and Pride of Ownership results:**

Concours First Anthony Clutterbuck – White MGB - EUC8J

Second Richard Thorpe – Yellow MG3 - GJ66OYC

**Pride of Ownership Pre-1956**

First Bill Outram – White MGA - RSY977

Second Peter Field – White MGA Coupe - 9348N

**Post-1956**

First Michael Murkin - White MGTF 85th Anniversary - MG10MRM

Second Lee Rose – Red MGRV8 - M22MGR

Third Jeremy Marsh – MGZTT260 - M26OMG

**03rd October - Autumn Naviscat - CANCELLED**

**Andrew Mitchell**

November 2021