



Issue 5 – October 2018

South West Midlands Area Newsletter

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Area Coordinators Column

As you all know our AC is on his holidays in Spain when the deadline for the Newsletter was due and he forgot to send me a few notes for his column here.

That stated he did want a couple of thank-you published so here they are in lieu!

Thank you to everyone who sent me good wishes after the last two club meetings and also to the 'Helpers Team' for doing a sterling job of organising the election process for the November meeting.

I would like to thank Vince and Jeff for taking over the reins looking after the Pershore Plum this year. I hope everyone had a great day.

Terry - AC

Club Visit to Delft June 28 – July 3 2018



On a bright, sunny Thursday in June, nine cars from SWM met at The Stag Hotel between Alcester and Stratford for the start of a few days jaunt to Delft. Quick refreshments they set off for the next pick up point - Cambridge Services - where they were to be joined by two more cars including John and Margaret from Milton Keynes / Chilterns Area. However when they arrived at the services Gavin and David in their NA were nowhere to be seen!

They unfortunately broke down near J1 of the M6 Rugby but with the excellent help of the RAC they managed to get back to Tewkesbury, pick up Gavin's ND and made a dash for Harwich making the journey in double quick time and boarded the ferry

with just minutes to spare.

Fourteen cars and 25 people departed Harwich on the 2330 ferry to Hooke where we arrived to a bright and hot day. After gathering together in a small car park just outside the port we made the not very far journey to our hotel in Delft. The Hotel had rooms already for us and we were allowed to check in early so it was a quick un-pack, wash and brush-up then off into Town for a quick drink followed by a browse around the Old Town.



The weekend was taken up by many visiting the various museums in Delft, Amsterdam and The Hague and in particular the Lowman Museum on the outskirts of The Hague was popular and all those



that visited it had very good things to say about it. Also many visited the UNESCO Heritage site at Kinderdijk, an area of many windmills for pumping water around the Polders.

We met with our Dutch MX5 friends, meeting Marcel and Ina who led us on a super drive along the Zeeland Islands and bridges. We ended up at a small fishing village called Colijnsplaat where the restaurant Marcel wanted us to visit for lunch was closed so, we all descended on two, side by side establishments, one for the beer and the other for a variety of fish and chips! Very friendly as we were not expected here!! Back then to the cars and the trip back to the port where all but myself, were heading home on the overnight ferry.

What with the good weather and good leadership of Stuart I think we all have a great weekend in the Netherlands and are looking forward to their MIM in 2020.

Pat (with a little tinkering from Dave!)

July Drive- A day at the seaside hosted by Ajit.



On what was to be a baking hot day, twenty six cars turned out for the July Drive starting from the Squirrel Inn, Ludlow. There was drama before the start as Mark S had a nasty shunt from the rear as he arrived and John & Penny had a drive belt snap and had to be towed home, sadly neither made the drive. First time drivers Alby and Marjela were welcomed along with Neal who was to be Trevor's navigator for the day (not an easy job Neal eh?).

This drive was immaculately planned as we would expect from the former Project Manager who was keen to show off his new red leather seats. The Drive Coordinator made sure everyone 'ood' and 'aaahd' every time they were mentioned, some even had a feel and a sniff but that's another story.

We left the Squirrel and headed out onto the many A roads that this route took in. Some super scenery flashed by as we headed through Shropshire towards a

sign saying Croeso and other Welsh words we didn't understand. We did know names like Bromfield, Knighton, Brampton Bryan and Bedstone, Craven Arms and Bishops castle.

All was well until Junie and I followed by Jeff and Andy flew over the bridge at the Lion Pub and missed a right turn. After a six mile detour, Andy (a solo driver) took the lead as he had the route on Sat-Nav, if we went wrong now we could blame Ged (who wasn't even there). We were soon back on track despite Andy's left indicator not working as the lead car so he pointed every time he turned left, ha!

After completing the 44 miles we arrived at the fabulous Castell Powys. Everyone enjoyed a picnic in the sunshine and most headed for the Castle and stunning gardens (I'm glad I don't have to mow the castle lawn). Deer roamed freely and the day was at an end too soon.



Our thanks to Ajit for a fantastic day. Ajit now takes up the story on the final leg to Barmouth.

Wince-Drive Coordinator.

Powis to Barmouth

From Powis, a much smaller group of four SWM MX5s, joined by 3 NWM

We sprinted across Wales on the A470. This was a great turns - which one definitely had to

The sun came out as we entered park, and the scenery and the

When we got to the Mawddach could cross on the 139 year old kindly agreed to hold up traffic so parked on the bridge, with Cader



Barmouth.

(keeping within legal speed limits of course) driving road, fast, but with many twists and slow down for.

the southern part of Snowdonia national mountains were breathtaking.

estuary, we took the southern route - so we wooden toll bridge. The bridge-master we could take a stunning view of the cars, Idris in the background.



From there, it was a short drive into Barmouth where we managed to find spaces to park on the promenade.

We said goodbye to our NWM friends who promised to keep in touch on convenient drives we might be interested in. Then it was off for a beer, ice cream and other refreshments, and for some well deserved dozing in the sun on the sea wall.



In the evening we met at the Last Chance Inn for some more beer and a meal. We all agreed Geoffrey's portion of lamb shank was decidedly smaller than Liz's, but he took this in good spirit, and even ordered a cheese board as compensation.

This was followed by a sunset stroll along the sea wall, and off to a good night of sleep (provided the squawking sea gulls had the same idea).

August Drive – Back To School Run 12th August

It was a damp overcast morning when 24 MX5s and 40 members turned up at Gupshill Manor for breakfast and drinks before starting our run to Stowe School, Buckingham. As everyone was seated comfortably in the warm Trevor conducted the pre drive briefing indoors and by 10.15 we were making our way to the car park for the 60 mile journey to the School. Although a little damp it was still a top down drive.



The route was mainly on good quality fast B roads offering long stretches of road between junctions with smooth bends and a variety of inclines allowing drivers to do what MX5s do best and drive the roads close to the speed limit, at one with your machine. The scenery frequently changed from woodland to rolling hills, Cotswold villages and on occasion some spectacular views making the journey equally pleasant for the passengers.

The first few miles took us over the M5 onto the A46 before turning towards Toddington. We were stuck behind a Mercedes 4 x 4 doing under 40mph for four miles towards Bourton-on-the-Water but, to be fair, this was the only occasion on the entire journey that we were impeded by another vehicle. When we turned off towards Stow-on-the-Wold we were rewarded with a lovely view over the Cotswolds which were looking green again after the rain. We passed through Stow-on-the-Wold and just before crossing the A44 were joined by Bridget and Chris who were waiting for us in a lay-by.

The route continued past the Rollright Stones, through Deddington to the typical Cotswold village of Charlton where, also typically, we followed a horse and rider up the high street. A short hop on the A43 by-passed Brackley and we drove through the village of Westbury before turning left past a gatehouse onto the impressively long drive way, about one mile, to Stowe School. The driveway took us over a crossroads, through The Oxford Gate and over a stone bridge arriving at the security barrier at about 12.15.



We were waved through security and directed to the front of the school where Trevor had arranged for us to have a group photo. Slight snag, Trevor and Victoria were actually 5 minutes behind us as they had been delayed at the start waiting for late comers. Sadie was waiting to greet us and was very understanding but insisted the only thing she knew was 'NOT ON THE GRASS!' A few more cars joined us and waited patiently inline for Trevor who arrived in due course and lined us up on the front drive for the photo shoot. After moving the cars to the car park we went into Stowe House for coffee and cake under the domed ceiling of the Marble Room before the official tour.



Stowe House was created by the Temple-Grenville family, its origin going back to the 16th century when the family fortune was from sheep farming. The house was completely rebuilt at the beginning of the 18th century and was significantly altered and enlarged over the following century including the elaborately designed gardens by Capability Brown. They frequently hosted British and foreign royalty and aristocrats with lavish parties. It also became politically very important as a number of the family were members of parliament or were related by marriage to prime ministers such as Pitt the elder,

Pitt the younger and Gladstone. The family debts in mid 19th century saw all the house contents and art works sold off and in 1922 the house was sold and Stowe School opened the following year.

Stowe School will set you back £12,000 per term but for that you can use the library which is set in the ballroom, the music room with a £75,000 chandelier, and have your lunch served in the Garter room which was the Dukes bedroom and all the time wondering if you are sitting in Sir Richard Branson or David Niven's chair. This fine example of architecture is maintained by the Stowe House Preservation Trust and the gardens by the National Trust.

After the tour some of us picnicked in one of the Temples in the garden while others went to use the 'excellent' National Trust tea room. Everyone had a thoroughly good day and as the tickets are valid for a year many have vowed to return.

Fran



Calendar of Events 2018

An “at a glance” guide to the remains of the year

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| August 2018 | | | |
| Monthly Meeting | Thursday 2 nd | | Ledbury Rugby Club, HR8 2LP |
| Monthly Drive | Sunday 12 th | Trevor & Victoria | |
| Tewkesbury Car Show | Sunday 19 th | | Tewksbury High School |
| Pershore Plum Festival | Monday 27 th | Vince & Jeff | Pershore Abbey |
| September 2018 | | | |
| Monthly Meeting | Thursday 6 th | | Gupshill Manor, Tewkesbury, GL20 5SY |
| Toddington | Sunday 9 th | | Classic Car |
| Sudeley Castle | Sunday 16 th | | Classic Car |
| Monthly Drive | Sunday 23 rd | Gavin & David | |
| National Rally | Sunday 30 th | | Ragley Hall |
| October 2018 | | | |
| Monthly Meeting | Thursday 4 th | | The Berkeley, Worcester WR7 4QL |
| Monthly Drive | Sunday 21 st | Jeff | |
| November 2018 | | | |
| Monthly Meeting | Thursday 1 st | | Ledbury Rugby Club, HR8 2LP |
| Monthly Drive | Sunday 18 th | Ged & Frances | |
| December 2018 | | | |
| Monthly Meeting | | | No Meeting this month |
| MXmass Supper/Dinner | See Below | Penny W | Gupshill Manor, Tewkesbury, GL20 5SY |

Meet the Members

Welcome to the first of our 'Meet the' to Karen & Ian from Moreton-on-Marsh. They immaculate MX5 Mk2.5 Their car won best in even know there was a competition! how polishing our cars. These two members are attend most other drives too.



Members' feature. In this edition we say hello have been members since 2012 and have an show at the Plum Festival and they didn't vexing for those of us who spent a week 'old hands' at planning super club drives and

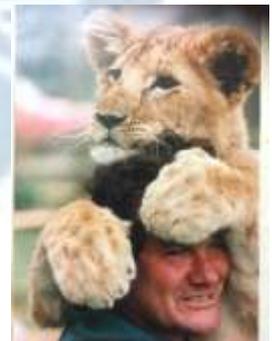
Ian, originally from Zimbabwe, met Karen motorcycle mechanic and successful mutual interest in animals. Ian who had experience with Big Cats in Africa was offered a job as Head Keeper at Paradise Wildlife Park in Hertfordshire and Karen recently worked as a lecturer in animal care at Evesham College for 15 years

when he came to the UK and worked as a amateur motorcycle racer, they share a



Whilst many of us will have kept a cat as a pet, you ain't seen nothing like their 'moggie' this one wouldn't be satisfied with a bowl of Whiskas. They have hand reared many big cats at home including lions, leopards and tigers. Ask them to tell you the story of their early morning walk with their 26 stone tiger in a field in Gloucestershire when a jogger came from the opposite direction. Karen and Ian have too many other great stories and photo's to mention here so chat with them next time you see them.

They enjoy taking their three dogs to their caravan and whilst Karen enjoys gardening, reading and knitting for the grandchildren, Ian enjoys riding his motorbike and he also shoots and beats in the season.



Thanks to you both for agreeing to be our first 'victims' in meet the members.

If you would like to be featured folks talk to Vince.....but be careful what you say