



South West Midlands Area Newsletter

Website: <http://www.swm.mx5oc.co.uk> Area Forum: <http://mx5ocswm.proboards.com>

Issue 5 2017

AC's Report

Well, what a busy few months we have had. This September is the big one, the 20/25 national. It is an exciting time for us in the SWM. We will be doing our bit for this one.

It is times like this when it is great to have a good team behind the AC, without them a lot of what we do just would not happen. As you can see from this newsletter we have all been out and about. We will be having a club stand at the national where members can come and crash after seeing all that will be going on. Thank you all for all your support to your team.

Mal

The Hill Climb Run – July 2017

Despite the promise of rain, there was a great turnout of 28 cars at Highfield Garden World for Jackie and Dean's July drive. We left home in glorious sunshine but were met in Stroud by grey and threatening clouds and, you've guessed it, right on time for the start of the drive the heavens opened. Club members huddled under the trees for Vince's pep talk, after Junie drew the short straw and was assigned the task of standing in the rain and waving us off with her "zero the trip" pit board.

A few miles into the drive and we could just about see the hills we were destined to climb. The heavy rain and surface water made the winding lanes an adventure, the twists and turns making for real 'driving' roads which pleased my husband and many others judging from the note comparing at the end.

We climbed up gorgeous tree lined lanes that wound round so much you thought you were going back where you came from. Going up meant we also had to come down some equally narrow winding roads through pretty villages and towns such as Woodchester, Rodborough, Long Newton, Sherston, Hillesley and Kingscote to name but a few.

On the flatter parts of the journey, we crossed the likes of Minchinhampton Common where families were out walking their dogs and cows grazing despite the rain – bulldog spirit and all that, or is it mad dogs and Englishmen?

At one point we were accompanied by a group of cyclists whom I presume had detoured from the Tour de France taking place that day, and as we did pass signs for 'Petty France' and 'Dunkirk' I can only assume they thought they were enroute for Paris.

A break in the rain came as we reached the village of Pinkney just before Sherston which allowed us to see the lovely rolling countryside and impressive Somerset Monument before climbing up

and down the hills into Wotton under Edge with its very narrow roads and the curiously named 'British School' – the Victorians knew how to make a statement! By now, I was becoming more hopeful for the planned picnic and low and behold, we actually had sunshine in Dursley. After tackling the switchback roads through Nailsworth, the inhabitants of which must surely have mountain goats' blood running through their veins, we arrived in the dry at Stratford Park in Stroud. The rain held off long enough for us to gather under the trees and eat our picnics and put the world to rights. It was only as we said our goodbyes that the heavens began to open again for the journey home.

Thank you Dean and Jackie for taking the time and trouble to plan such an adventurous route. The rain may have hidden some of the marvellous views but it didn't dampen our enthusiasm and we shall definitely do the drive again in the dry.

Karen

August Drive- Millets Farm Centre

What a lovely day we had for Owain & Karen's August drive from Gupshill Manor to Millets Farm Centre, Abingdon. It was tops down as 29 MX5s lined up in the car park. John whistled us all to attention for the pre-drive briefing. The whistle was so loud I expected to see a couple of sheep dogs to 'come-by' ready to do some herding. Printed routes were handed out and Owain explained that the route was nominally 60 miles (or 95 Kms for the Eunos owners) provided the correct route was taken- more about that later!! Owain also advised that no 'P' Stop had been included in the directions. 'P' Stop, it turned out meant Toilet Break rather than Pit Stop. I must admit that for a man of my age the thought of travelling 2 hours before lunch without a 'P' Stop gave me some concern but nevertheless, as we all fired up our engines and set off in small groups it looked like being a good day. Well I say ALL, but one of our number did in fact need a jump start to actually get going- no names S&S!!

A few newcomers joined us and one couple, Steve & Kathy were behind Theresa & I as we set off. We were just saying how accurate the Km conversions were as we reached Dumbleton. Well, there was a diversion sign and of course we incorrectly decided to follow it. We soon realised our mistake and both cars turned around. So of course from that point my co-driver needed to add 2.4 Km to all the accurate conversions!! We were now following Gavin & David and what a great job they did. We were OK until we reached Standlake when for some reason we decided they'd gone wrong and we missed a left turn. We then immediately realised they were right, so again 2 MX5s did a U turn and more recalculations were required. Our own mistakes apart, the drive was excellent. We went through some lovely Cotswolds villages that would warrant a closer look in future.

We arrived at our destination and as we pulled onto Millets Car Park there were two long rows of MX5s standing proud in the designated MX5 parking area. 30 cars arrived safely and Sue had managed to navigate the route singlehandedly, so that's a compliment to the accuracy of Owain & Karen's instructions; as well as Sue's ability to multi-task. Millets was a great venue, with plenty of places to eat, a well stocked garden centre and farm shop and some great farm animals along the aptly named 'Pettigoat Lane'. Everyone seemed to enjoy their afternoon.

Thanks to Owain & Karen for a great drive and a fantastic day out. And thanks also to everyone who turned up.

Ron & Theresa

The SWM Area Big Run

(Or the curtain raiser for the 2018 International)

The idea for Terry's Big Run, or simply 'The Big Run' as it became known came about amidst the splendours and manicured gardens of Sudeley Castle, once home to Catharine Parr, the sixth wife of King Henry VIII - she survived incidentally! The castle is now a much loved local attraction set amongst the most beautiful countryside and this provides a stunning backdrop for classic car events like the one we were attending.

So there we were sitting in a big circle overlooking the ornamental lake exchanging the usual banter that is a hallmark of SWM when someone had the bright idea of a weekend away, this attracted a positive reaction then a silence as the enormity of what had been suggested sunk in, someone would have to organize it!

Step up to the plate did Terry Manders, stalwart of the area who never fails to go the extra mile to ensure the success of one of our events- usually to be found putting up the event shelters with Jeff Long well before anyone else arrives! Knowing that we were to host the 2018 International at the Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells he suggested that it would be an excellent idea if we were to stay at the hotel checking out the rooms, facilities and catering that our guests will enjoy next year. Not only would we be staying at the hotel but also Terry would be arranging two long drives to keep us entertained over the weekend.

With some 37 cars and 66 people involved this was no mean logistical exercise, a great deal of work went into this weekend to ensure it went off without a hitch, well, not too many anyway! It had been decided that we would split up the cars into four groups separated by ten minute intervals to prevent bunching up and to allow other users to enjoy the road – Leader, Co Pilot, Navigator and Rear Gunner.

The route that Terry had chosen (and reconnoitered NB!!) took us along a mix of A and B roads heading in the direction of Abergavenny and Merthyr Tydfil, with the roof down and the sun shining it was an idyllic start to the weekend. After about 60 miles of cross-country motoring it was time for a break and so we found the Coach and Horses at Liangynidr, having not long availed ourselves of a "Full English" a hot drink was all we needed and we were soon back on our way again.

The run to Llandrindod Wells, along the A40 and B4520 via Builth Wells, was spectacular the Brecon Hills providing stunning scenery and great photo opportunities. After Builth Wells it was a short 20 miles or so before we arrived at the Metropole Hotel, the owner on hand to meet and greet us. At this point we discovered that Terry leading the first group, had taken a wrong turn going some 8 miles out of their way – as us old pilots used to say they were “temporarily uncertain of their position” – lost on his own run, who would have believed it?? We all arrived safely however and the fun was just about to start!

For the full version of Gavin's report please read 'Soft Top Hard Top'

Calendar of Events 2017

	Monthly Meeting	Monthly Drive	Other Events
October 2017	5th Pear Tree Smite	1st David and Gavin MX-5 Giro Panoramico 22nd Jeff, Chris and Henry Hartlebury Castle	
November 2017	2nd Royal Oak Much Marcle	19th Dean and Jackie In reverse!	
December 2017	10th Christmas Lunch	No Drive	

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