



Area 57 (Enfield) Newsletter

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It was very good to be back for our meeting upstairs again after such a long gap. The only event since last time was National Day which I am reporting on later in this Newsletter.



The majority of the meeting was taken up by discussing a letter that Doug had from the Chairman of the Museum. To sum up the contents, it has been decided that the amount paid to use the Club Room is to go up considerably; over 100% in fact. At present Barbara pays £450 in advance for a year. If we continue as we are now with twelve meetings a year, it would be £80 for two hours making a total of £960!! The club does not have that money and, with our current membership, subscriptions would only generate £600. If we were to raise our subs from the current £20, we would probably lose members as a result. Everyone present was in agreement that a rise of that amount cannot be coped with and we would not be prepared to pay it. With members' agreement, I have emailed the Chairman stating our position and that unless a more reasonable sum can be arranged, we would need to try and find somewhere else to meet. When we get a reply, I will pass it on to Roy to forward on to everybody. This price rise is from January next year so can everyone please see if they can find anywhere suitable. The only other alternative is to meet every other month. We all appreciate the expense involved in keeping the Museum going especially as there has not been a Pageant for two years and this is their main source of income, but the bottom line is that cost is far too high.



Several events are coming up before the next meeting, namely Waltham Cross, Tewin, Buntingford and Capel Manor. I hope everyone has managed to get booked in for them.



We have an invitation from Brian and Mandy for a Cream Tea on Saturday September 11th. Mandy would need to know numbers about a week beforehand or at the 6th September meeting at the latest. Brian can probably give directions then to anyone needing them.



Alan and Barbara have asked me to thank people for their Golden Wedding present of a rose and John Lewis voucher which they really appreciated.



National Day July 24th/25th July

This year's National Day was at a new venue; Walton Hall hotel near Gaydon in the Warwickshire countryside. The Hall itself is a mid 1850s mansion which was once owned by Danny La Rue. I don't know how many bedrooms they have there, as the majority of the accommodation is in separate two or three storey blocks. Some had small balconies and french doors but the complex felt very disjointed. The rooms were very hot, so goodness knows what they would have been like a few days earlier when the weather was much hotter. The Saturday dinner was held in the Hall, which meant a walk of about 250 yards from the bedroom blocks. Good job it wasn't raining! I was reluctant to walk there in heels, so we drove round, but trying to find the way back in the dark along the various road ways was a bit stressful.

We had intended to use the XK as XK Day was incorporated into National Day, however the forecast was so bad that driving about 90 miles with the hood up would have been uncomfortable and noisy, so we used the E-type. As it happened, we didn't have any rain until about quarter of an hour from home on Sunday afternoon. The dinner was OK but the hotel was very understaffed. The guest of honour was Sir John Egan, President of the JDC and he gave a brief speech about the problems he faced when he was Chairman of Jaguar. He explained how much he appreciated being asked to be President. The following day, he was signing copies of his book, "Saving Jaguar" which Doug had bought and enjoyed a few months ago.

There was a very extensive area for all the hundreds of cars to be displayed in the various marques. There were only fifteen XKs, not as many as had been hoped for. We were one of about twenty five E-types. We were impressed by the interest shown in the cars by Sir John as he went round chatting to people about them. Unfortunately Brian and Mandy were in solitary splendour with their Mark 9 most of the day until they were joined by last year's winner, who retained the trophy. There was a wide range of Jaguars, old and new and a display by Jaguar Heritage including James Bond villain's XK8 and the Austin Powers Union Jack E-type. Doug was asked to take the car into the ring for Bob Beecham to talk about. Tony and Lesley won an award with their XE.

As we have been to three National Days at Wroxall Abbey, it was inevitable that we would make comparisons and we felt that Walton Hall was not as good. As all the bedroom blocks were separate you didn't meet up with other people so much. On Sunday morning at Wroxall most people would be coming out of the main entrance and, as lots of cars would be parked there, it was a sociable time, with cars being wiped over before making their way to the event area. Another thing lacking this time was the provision of refreshments. Wroxall always had a marquee with a good choice of freshly made rolls, biscuits, crisps, hot and cold drinks etc. This year there was a small table with pre-packed sandwiches, tea and coffee. There was an ice cream van and we had some delicious fresh cooked crepes from a van.

Although we enjoyed the weekend, and seeing some familiar faces, we would have to think twice about going back if the event was held there again.

