

MGCC Midland Centre AGM – 21st March 2022

Midland Centre – Chairman’s Report 2021.

2021 once again proved a challenging year for the MGCC and the Midlands Centre. I am pleased to say our Centre rose to this challenge and despite the ongoing Covid Pandemic we were able to put on a varied programme of activity. The only casualty was once again having to cancel the Welsh Touring Rallye, a victim of the uncertainty of having access to Welsh roads.

Membership of the Centre has remained stable. We ended the year with 1255 members, a slight but satisfying increase over 2020. We are one of the few centres that have increased our year on year membership and that is due in part to the revamping of our website. Our thanks go to committee member David Wood, whose tireless work in undertaking this has reaped us such benefits.

Financially the Centre is very sound. With strong support for our programme, highlighted below, we have been able to achieve a small surplus on our 2021 activities. We always aim to cover costs on our events at the same time making them as affordable as possible.

We have a committee of many talents that make our events so successful. The sprint programme is a case in point with entries for both the Spring and Summer rounds being well supported. Faced with dwindling entries it was decided to partner with the Shenstone and District Car Club for the April season opener. This proved a great success with some 60 entries received, split evenly between the two clubs. We were pleased to see a good take up for the August event which was run solely by us. (I am equally pleased to say that this year’s April Sprint, again in partnership with the S&DCC, has attracted a capacity entry of 80). Admirably managed by Simon Morris, our fully qualified Clerk of the Course, and Entries Secretary David Russell, we thank them for their hard work and commitment.

The Centre used to promote two trials per year, one in the Spring the other in the Autumn, but lack of entries has resulted in us staging just the Autumn event. Once again the action occurred at East Lodge Farm, Bromsgrove in September, with a full entry list. The day was superb weather wise and everyone enjoyed themselves, including the local spectators who relished a free spectacle. We hosted “Taster” trialists who approached the challenges set out ably assisted with an on board expert. Tony Lake and Adrian Tucker Peake continue to prove an unbeatable partnership in dealing with entries and the laying out of the sections, and we thank them.

Bob Blackstock stepped up to the plate and hailing from Malvern was well placed to put on a Midlands Centre run for those attending the first ever MGCC/Triumph Weekend at Malvern in August. Some 35 entries took up the challenge and safely and happily completed the 60 mile course. Earlier Bob staged one of his “Naviscatters” in June with a drive through Herefordshire locating various clues.

Concluding at the Weston`s Cider Mill all agreed it had been a very enjoyable event blessed with hood down motoring. Go on the website for how you can take part this year.

New for 2021 was the Centre`s attendance at the British Motor Museum`s Gaydon Gatherings. This free to enter social meets occur from April to October on the second Tuesday evening of every month and proved very popular for the classic car fraternity. MGs proliferated so there was plenty of socialising by our members. We shall be there this year.

The Centre plays an active part in the MGCC. Your chairman was part of a team that has developed a club "Values" booklet. This sets out how we relate to each other both in what we do and what we drive. There is always going to be a divergence of opinion between traditionalists and modernists, T Types and SUVs, but we should all respect each other, for we all drive the Octagon. In addition the chairman chairs a MGCC Committee pulling together a programme for 2023 which will see the Centenary of the MG marque. It will also be the 90th anniversary of the formation of the Midlands Centre so we are all going to be busy.

I have already expressed thanks to some of our committee, but I must include Brian Osborn our tireless treasurer who spends many hours keeping a wary eye on the financial figures; Andy Robson who devotes much time communicating to our members and Natter groups; the redoubtable John Fry who is always ready to help us out when problems arise but most importantly is able to lend us his knowledge based on a life time of MGCC membership. And finally Paul Hollingworth our diligent secretary, who pulls everything together with his excellent minutes.

Then there is Martin Price, the previous chairman and a long serving MGCC member best known for his motor sporting activities and his unbelievable skill as an MG car artist. His drawings are legendary. Sadly, he has not enjoyed the best of health over the last two years. The committee have missed him. We are not sure if we will lose him as an active member but to avoid that happening the Centre is proposing that the MGCC Council allows us to invite Martin to become our first president. A motion will be put to Council`s next meeting on the 26 March 2022, at Abingdon, (where else), when it will surely be approved with acclamation.

We are always on the lookout for those that would like to join us in moving our club and centre forward, especially given the proximity of the Centenary and the Centre`s 90th anniversary next year. The committee meets via Zoom once a month so wherever you reside in our area you can take part.

I hope to see you at one of our events during the year.

Roger King