

## Challengers Charity Run 12<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Challengers are a charity that is passionate about removing barriers to play for disabled children and young people whatever their disability. This run is part of their self-motivated fund raising and has become an annual event.

We set off at 8.00 a.m. in Fern our MG RV8. We were heading for the start of the event at Gildings Barn, Dorking. It was some 50 miles and we avoided pounding down the A3 and M25 by taking the back route from Guildford.



We arrived at about 9.30 a.m. to see over 60 cars assembling. There was an incredible mix of vehicles including a modern Roller, a Bentley and a couple of Astons through to a classic Hillman Imp, Midgets and a modern Ford Escort Rally Car. It was a feast of cars just in the car park.

**There was even better to come!**

We set off on a 70 mile run armed with very professional Tulip diagrams and instructions. We had forgotten that Fern still has a KPH odometer and therefore, had forgotten the calculator and the conversion ratio; so, Nita winged it from the diagram and instructions alone. It was a great run through the Surrey countryside although Surrey potholes appear to be more plentiful and worse than Hampshire ones. There was a planned "pit stop" at just over half way.

We arrived at our destination outside of Farnham and were greeted in by the incredibly efficient and friendly Challengers staff. Drinks were on offer along with a free Hog Roast.

The walk of wonderment was about to commence. We had arrived to view a private collection of cars and memorabilia spread over four buildings. Entry is by invitation only.

The owner, his wife and son are passionate about this collection. They have a fully equipped work and paint shop on site. Cars new to the collection are stripped down and rebuilt. The facilities are for their cars alone and they do not do work for any third parties.

The standard of each car in the collection is superb. They also ensure that all the vehicles get driven out.

All the cars have a wow factor but some are wowier than others.



For me and most people there, the original and one of the first off the production line was the Gullwing Mercedes. Reportedly the owner had recently refused an offer of £10M. Along with this was the 1169 BHP Koenigsegg Agera valued at somewhere around 2.5M dollars, which garnered a lot of attention. This car is not street legal in the U.S.

The owner, Robert and his wife Tania and son Zak, were on hand to talk about the cars open bonnets and doors and invite people to sit in etc.

For the less shallow there were three Jaguar SS's and two C types.



The collection of pre-war Lagondas and others were amazing as was the Williams F1 car as driven by Ralf Schumacher and Juan Montoya.



Closer to home there was a homage to MG's. The "A" and "B" were the best examples I have ever seen. I recognised a wonderful TD but not the prewar swallow tail racer nor the MG van nor PFF 411 or JB 1651!





So good to see these cars in such pristine condition and also to know that all of them are driven out and treasured.

Nita even found a couple of long lost friends.



The most interesting fact is that Robert had begun his museum by collecting petrol pumps and petrol related memorabilia which is in evidence throughout the buildings and spells out the history of all things petrol. He only began collecting cars and other vehicles in 2005.

Robert rarely opens up his collection but does so in order to assist selected charities to fund raise therefore this amazing day was topped off by an auction and raffle.

This is a vehicle collection to remember. The early lorry veteran car and tractors have not even been mentioned. It is likely to be repeated next year. I fully commend this to everyone. It is the only way you will get to enjoy this unique feast of automobilia.

P.S.

There are times when I attend these sort of events and see a vehicle and think “wow I have forgotten all about this model!” This event even included one of these moments.:-



The Opel GT – one of the participants of the event came along in this car. This late 60's early 70's car was based upon the 1.1 Litre Opel Kadett with styling similar to the Corvette of the day!