

Chairman's Report - Egham Royal Show 2019

Every year, the organisers of the Egham Royal Show face new challenges in putting on the much loved and well attended event, and 2019's show was no exception, indeed, it was probably one of the most challenging in recent years.

With the changing demands of modern life, it becomes more difficult to attract volunteers to join the show's organising committee, and in 2019, a diminishing number of volunteers meant that a number of committee members took on extra responsibilities to ensure the show went ahead.

The way that people spend their disposable income and valuable leisure time is changing, and we have to think carefully about how we can keep the show true to its original purpose and history, whilst being relevant to today's audience.

Increasing costs associated with organising the show, mean that we are continually looking for ways to cut expenditure and increase revenue, in order to keep it financially secure. The running of the show is becoming increasingly more complex, akin to running a business, and requires a range of skills and experience to cover a variety of roles and responsibilities.

However... it is certainly not all doom and gloom!

We were blessed with fine weather throughout the weekend with visitors hunting out every bit of available shade during the hottest and sunniest periods. The show was once again well attended by a broad cross section of visitors from near and far, attracted by the opportunity to spend time outdoors at a traditional bank holiday weekend event.

The show had much to offer:

- An outstanding selection of classic cars.
- The model tent with some amazingly accurate and painstakingly built scale models.
- The ever popular dog show, with a variety of classes that give everyone the opportunity to participate.
- Traditional livestock displays and competition classes.
- A variety of main arena entertainment, always more enjoyable for the performers and spectators when the sun is shining.
- Children's rides and entertainments.
- A flight simulator, generously donated for a second year by Ralph Perkins of Aviation Logistics.
- Live music, giving local acts the chance to perform in front of a new audience, and new acts a chance to get themselves noticed.
- The horticulture and craft marquee, with a wide range of competition classes, from baking to flowers to photography and childrens classes.
- The trade and food stands, and of course, community marquee with its bar run by The Happy Man pub in Englefield Green.

I would like to finish with a few thankyou's:

Thank you to each and every person, every volunteer, who gave up their time, no matter how much or how little, to help plan, organise, build the show village, run the show over the weekend and clear the showground afterwards. We could not put on the show without you.

Thank you to all our sponsors. Your kind support makes up a large amount of the money we need to put on the show.

Thank you to those who visited the show at any time over the weekend. We can't put on the Egham Royal Show without an audience to come and see it.

And finally, a thank you to several people who after many years of service to the show, are taking a well earned rest and leaving the show committee.

Clair Bonnett, and Peter and Sheila Hassan have for decades organised the horticulture and craft marquee.

Dr Brian Perry has brought expert knowledge to the committee, and has worked tirelessly in all weathers setting up and taking down the showground.

John Bonnett was show treasurer for many years, and recently stepped down from the role. John has much knowledge and experience, and for the last two years has remained on the management committee, allowing us to continue to benefit from his advice and direction.

We thank all of them for their passion, commitment and contribution to the show. Their presence will be much missed.

Finally, we have a lot of good things to shout about. We must continue to go out and tell people about this amazing event, run by volunteers, put on for the benefit of the Egham community. We must continue to attract visitors, volunteers and supporters and we must continue to make sure that this event, run for more than 160 years, continues well on into the future.

Best regards

Darren Kirkham – Chairman 2019.