



During 2009 our club, mainly covering the South of England, has attended plenty of events. Now with over 70 members, each with different reasons for owning a Fiat 500, here are some of the highlights of 2009.

Brooklands New Year Gathering (1st January)



The first of this year's classic car meetings was held at Brooklands museum - the world's first purpose-built motor racing circuit, built in 1907. It soon became an aircraft design and manufacturing plant and runway. In July 1961 Brooklands hosted the first meeting of the Concorde project – later producing fuselages, tail fins and rudders for all of the Concorde aircraft. One Concorde is now on display at the museum.

With classic cars of all ages, shapes and sizes, eight of our clubs cars attended, including a 126, a 600, a 500D, and F's and L's both modified and original.

Arras Expositions D'Automobiles, France (March)



One of our more adventurous trips was to a weekend classic car show in France. Meeting at Dover for the ferry, we drove in convoy to Arras. One of our cars broke down, but spares had been packed just in case, so it was repaired and back on the road within half an hour. On the Sunday we headed off from our hotel to join show, until it was time to return to the ferry – and be squeezed in between the lorries!

Farnham Classic Car Show (5th April)



Almost summer and a glorious sunny Sunday morning in the middle of a classic English town, with seven of our clubs 500's joining in. This event brings many classic cars together for the morning and after the event, we moved to a local Italian restaurant for lunch. One of our youngest and keenest members (James Abbott), being half Italian, is pictured trying out a 500 for size!

Spring Auto Italia Day, Brooklands (2nd May)



A lovely hot day and again we were at Brooklands. This event is for Italian cars of any age, and is always very full. We queued with Ferrari's, Maserati's and Lambourghini's for 40 minutes to get in - one game we play is to rev our engines as the Ferrari's do... it makes us smile – even if the Ferrari owners aren't impressed. Maybe they're jealous of the power of our cars??

Once in, we set up our club stand in the shade under one of the museums aircraft, and 15 classic 500's and members arrived. Being England, we sat together drinking Italian wine and eating packed lunches, and had a lovely day with our cars.

Haslemere Village Fete (25th May)



The event was part of the Haslemere Festival and the organisers had invited classic car owners to join us from their twin town of Bernay in France. Being a Public Holiday, many club members were busy, so John Jenkins joined Jimmy and Jan Di Carlo representing the Fiat 500 for the first part of the event – a tour taking in the South Downs hills, quiet villages, country lanes – and Goodwood race track! This part of the run started sedately, but very soon turned into a race! When the tour was complete, we joined the fete and displayed our cars for the afternoon.

Woking Classic Car Show (31st May)



The hottest day of the year so far and the highest turnout of 500's at this annual event. Nine Fiat 500's and a Fiat 125 joined over 300 classic cars, buses and lorries in the grounds of a school in Woking. Woking is the largest Italian community in England, so we had a lot of admirers – many who had owned a 500 when living in Italy.

The local policewoman liked our display – or was checking to see how fast our engines could go and whether their police cars could catch us! We think we may have a new member!

The show is organised by the local hospice and raised £20,000 that day. Our club will be supporting this charity and raising funds throughout 2010.

Amberley Classic Microcar Show (August 2nd)



This event is held in a museum dedicated to the history of British industry – including satellites, telephony, printing, steam railway, buses, fire engines... anything really! Being the 'Microcar' show, the 500 is the largest car allowed in! We were parked alongside Messerschmitts, Heinkels and other tiny cars.

Eight club members' cars arrived – one needing a little help, having broken down within sight of the entrance.

Broadlands Pageant of Motoring (31st August)



This event is held in the grounds of a stately home, used by Prince Charles and Lady Diana for part of their honeymoon. In the New Forest and over two days, it brought a very rare Gamine and a Giardiniera into our club. Both were in lovely condition and drew the visitors to our stand. The event included stunt motorbikes, classic cars of all sorts and lots to see and do for the many spectators.

Pre-Christmas Lunch (28th November)



The last event of 2009 was billed as a Pre-Christmas Lunch – or a great excuse for good Italian food and drink! 22 members of the club gathered at Gusto's restaurant in Liss, having been invited by Fiat 500 owner Luciano and his staff for a traditional Italian lunch. Four 500's brought their owners along which, given the weather and darkness falling early in the evenings, was a good turnout. At the end of the lunch, we ran a hastily organized raffle, supporting our charity for 2010 – the Woking Hospice and raised £60.

Through the year, the club events and magazines have been put together tirelessly by Jan and Jimmy Di Carlo, Jenny and Vittorio Squillaci, John Jenkins, Alisdair Shepherd and Tim MacFarlane who we own much thanks.

If you are in England this year, please get in touch – and come to an event with or without a Fiat 500 !
www.fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk