

GSIA visit to Danters' fun fair compound: 22 January 2025

On the 22nd of January 2025, a party of around 25 from GSIA were shown around part of the Danters' 9 acre fun fare compound at Moreton Valance, their base for half a century. The visit was organised by Nick Peters and we were made very welcome by James Danter. The fun fare has been run by no less than four generations (so far) and remains a family business that started in the 1930s. Since then, the business has grown to become a major player, operating a range of attractions renowned as some of the best in the industry.

James showed us some of the extensive well-equipped workshop, which is kept in good order, maintained, and modified. This is a vital facility, where rides are serviced and overhauled, plus upgraded where necessary. A team is constantly on the road during the summer months, servicing rides all over the country. We were shown some of the highly complex rides, which are comprised of complicated combinations of mechanical parts, controlled and coordinated by computers. And repairs are often made in the workshop must fold up in order to fit their individual trailers for transport – a sort of mechanical origami!



Understandably, ride safety is a major concern, and before any equipment is deemed safe for operation, a thorough examination, carried out by accredited specialists, is required, where stressed components are involved. This can include Magnetic Particle testing (used mainly to check welds), Ultrasonic testing to check pins and bolts, and non-destructive testing or crack testing, used to test all structural ride parts. When all is well, the ride is issued with a 12-month 'MOT'. All rides are different, and so the extent and type of testing performed will vary.

It was fascinating to hear about the highly complex world that the Danter family operate in, including stringent testing regimes, liability insurance issues, logistics, and so on, something that most of us had never considered. I think we all came away with a better appreciation of how much planning, organisation, and plain hard work goes into the operation of such a specialist business!



Part of the extensive transport fleet



Complex systems beneath The Waltzer

Stephen Mills