

Aberdare, a Newcomers view..

Having only joined the club within the past few weeks, I would not be surprised to find out that my wife Julie and I were the newest members at this years rally. Saying that though the feeling of welcome we both felt from the moment we arrived, we could have been members since the clubs conception.

Unfortunately due to our daughter playing her first "gig" in a rock band, we had to miss out on the Friday night. We planned to set off from our home near Radstock, Somerset at 8.30 thinking two hours would be plenty to reach Aberdare Country Park by 10.30. However I did not allow for the repair of the Speedo cable that had come out of the back of the clock. Luckily my IT techy son was at home, his long thin fingers were ideal to get up behind the horn and grip the knurled end of the cable and tighten it back up, (I can loan him out for these special occasions). The rest of the journey was quick and easy. As we came out of the Newport tunnel on the M4 we spotted a Grey PC800, I was going to follow him assuming he was also on route to Aberdare, but to be honest 60 is a bit slow for my liking on a Motorway so we waved as we went by. I was surprised later on not to see the bike at the rally, just as well I didn't follow him! In fact come to think of it I did not see any grey PC800's there. We arrived just as the AGM was getting under way, I won't go over the items, as I am sure they will be reported elsewhere in this issue.

At the end of the meeting a couple of committee members made themselves known to us and ensured we were aware of what was happening during the weekend. A couple of others invited us over for a coffee and chat while waiting for the run to begin. My knowledge of PC800's and their idiosyncrasies was expanded tenfold in a matter of minutes. The bikes all assembled for a 12.45 start, the destination "The Big Pit" at Brynmawr. As the entourage led out through the town a leading bike ridden by one of our Irish friends kindly positioned himself at a junction to guide us out, I suspect he is an ex Policeman and old habits die-hard. The ride over the side of the Brecon Beacons was quiet and very pleasant arriving just after 2 p.m. The Big Pit is a closed down colliery now open for underground tours, and as it's a museum entry is free. For those close enough I can recommend a visit. My only small criticism was no one gave a time to meet for the return run, therefore people made there own way back, some were lucky enough to go back over the top of the Brecon, I know from experience the scenery is superb. However Julie and I being so close have been over the route a few times, so we decided to find our hotel to check in, and freshen up ready for the night.

The Dare Country Park is a nice relaxing location, the owners obviously keen to make our stay a pleasant one. When they realised we preferred to sit out side and enjoy the nice evening, they quite happily brought the food out, and had no worries about us moving all the garden furniture so we could all sit at a mish mash of long tables. True to his word Chris Tallent commandeered a TV and video for a showing of a certain motoring programmes report shown a few years ago of the PC800. I expect a lot of people may remember it also made the national news because of its use as a Taxi bike in London. After the buffet was demolished and the late comers had wafted the smell of pie and chips around, we retired to the bar. Here Chris once again true to his word hit us with a quick fun quiz, 25 questions on what you ought to know about the Highway Code. Well done to the only person who got 100%. We were assured the fact that Debbie is married to Chris had nothing to do with it. We all believe you honest! The highlight of the evening was the auction, where some desirable and not so desirable PC related items were sold. As the proceeds were going to the club funds who could resist the bargains, and once more my knowledge of PC800's will be increased by the hand book I purchased. I really wanted a shiny nice exhaust cover as well, but I ended up with a new flip top screen, well you can never have enough choice of windscreens (that is what I'm telling Julie any way).

Sunday morning came much too early, boy was I glad an impromptu vote on Saturday night decided to delay the photo shoot by half an hour. The bikes were lined up in the groups of colours, then after a quick debate as to where my Powder Blue one should go, I stuck it in the middle, the cameras went into action, but guess who forgot theirs? If someone has a nice one of the whole group, any chance of a copy please? As a few people had quite a long way to go home, farewells were said, and promises of meeting again next year. Do we plan to go to Cumbria, after the warm welcome we received, you bet we do, and we can recommend it to anyone else who is thinking of it.

By Richard & Julie Fry, Radstock