

## LOBETHAL AND RETURN

Last Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September a small number of Club members assembled at the normal meeting spot, down by the river at the end of Colman Terrace for a short drive from Strathalbyn to Woodside and then on to Lobethal.

Of course there were two enticements to encourage members to get out of bed and be ready to venture forth, rather than turn over and go back to sleep, well it was Sunday wasn't it!

Jeanette Walsingham-Meath was our tour director today and turned up in her delightful cream MG TF 1500 roadster with the top down, we also had Gordon & Di in the dark Blue Humber Snipe saloon and Brian & Jill Bishop in their late model Mercedes Sports. Jeanette also enticed a friend of her's (and ours) Don Walker in his red MGB Roadster. John & Uta Rattley were there in their modern as the Jaguar is still not on the road yet. David and Althea Walsh drove over from Macclesfield to join us in their lovely Blue Sprite plus Jan & I made up the numbers in our MGC Roadster which had not been out of the shed for some time. Also just as we were about to depart Jack and Carlien Vandenaeker arrived in the light blue Mercedes 280 saloon, beautiful timing what!

Bryan & Sonia Chapman were to join us later on.

Jeanette handed out the run sheets to show that the first of the two destinations was to head through Wistow and then divert through Littlehampton and pass through Woodside itself and turn left at the sign which directed us to Melba's Chocolate Factory.

Well you can guess what transpires here! A very easy way to add a few kilo's by spending money on some lovely delights!

After finally getting everyone out and back to the cars we set off for Lobethal with the intention of making sure we got to the Lobethal Bierhaus Micro Brewery by 11.30 am as Bryan had arranged for us to be given a guide through the brewery, not just to have a meal.

The Beirhaus Micro Brewery is located within the complex which was once the Lobethal Woollen Mills but before the woollen mills was set up there was actually a brewery operation back in the 1860's, so it was interesting to hear of the history returning to the district.

The Tour of the microbrewery was extensive and very informative owner Alistair explained how all the ingredients were added along through the process from basically a number of big bags all packed on pallets to the final technical process as the brew moved from one huge polished steel vessel on till the final product was stored and then bottled utilising a very expensive machine which efficiently allowed for one person to place each empty beer at the start of the bottling process and for a second person to receive the full bottles at the end of the process ready to be packed into boxes.

There was an added bonus for us when we were escorted into the final loading bay area of the warehouse and here were two beautiful pre-war Dodge race cars, one a 1927 red racecar has been raced successfully and a second one, a 1939 model in process of being readied for competition when Alistair has some time to devote to it. Both were built up from 1930's chassis with Dodge Q motors

and the bodies have been made by Ray Finch some time ago, from my limited experience I would think quite a handful to drive when the red descends!

When we went into the building to start the tour we were the only ones in sight however when we emerged from the brewery area back into the restaurant itself the place was full of people! What a difference! This place was a hive of activity and it only got worse it seems with lots of people happily spilling out to have a few beers on the forecourt and some food out in the sunshine, very cosmopolitan! And on such a sunny and warm day.

Our next requirement was to line up to get our order taken and then enjoy a glass or two plus some interesting meals. One of the specialities of the Beirhaus is a long piece of wood, called a paddle, with holes and in these holes were a series of small sample glasses with brews for people to try, quite an interesting way to try a number of different drops without getting too full!

If anyone intends going to the Beirhaus in Lobethal my advice is to go on their website and book a table as they certainly do get very busy, in fact when Bryan and Sonia arrived there were no chairs available for them, very upsetting.

Also the Buffalo Wings are brilliant, we added a generous serve of potato wedges as well, lovely!

After the meal we the chance to have a chat with other members before we all went our separate ways heading home after a very enjoyable time, after all the organising made by Bryan and Jeanette it was unfortunate that there were not more of our members wanting to join us!

Mike Greenwood

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