

M.M.O.C Annual Rally at Harewood House – June 26th/27th 2010.

Pat and I went to Harewood House on the Friday. This was our first outing towing the Folding camper so we were a little apprehensive. We went via the A556/ M60/M62 and everything went great until we got to the big hill by Huddersfield. We were stuck in traffic due to road works for over 30 minutes. The engine got hot and started to stutter so we pulled into the Services, opened the bonnet and radiator cap, and proceeded to eat our packed lunch. We started off again and the traffic was lighter so we had no more trouble. The members at the Rally said we probably had fuel vapourisation because of the heat and they used to make a metal shield to protect the carburettor.

Arriving on site we entered with Richard & Ruth who had travelled independently. We discovered Bob and Barbara Plant had secured a plot with their Motorhome and we set up the Manchester camp alongside. By night fall we had nine pitches housing 17 members so a good turnout. The parkland was beautiful, although the facilities were basic. We were watched by one or two large red kites that stayed all weekend and were always on the look out for food. After eating we gathered, with some refreshments, in Richards's gazebo and talked till dusk.

Next morning we went to the Rally Field and set up the Branch Flag, Banner and Gazebo. This was the first outing for David's Minor Trailer which carried all of the gear to the Rally and returned home afterwards with David's inevitable 'that will be useful' purchases. Alan & Gill Dinnis arrived with their Baby Minor and with this the stand became a magnet with lots of people visiting and stopping to chat. We all went round the stalls to look at the spares and goods for sale. There was a Birds of Prey display and we hoped they wouldn't fall foul of the Red Kites. In keeping with the Wild West theme there was a display by the Pioneers firing blank cartridges and re-enacting scenes from the Cowboy days.

On Saturday night we were all rather tired by the long day and warm weather so after eating we gathered again in the Gazebo for a natter and noggin with cake and cheese and biscuits together with a delicious apple pie.

On Sunday we went back to the stand and Alan went into the main arena with two other miniature Minors. One was a pedal car, one was battery powered and of course Alan has the two stroke petrol engine. Various other cars were on display and one in particular was a Traveller built as a shooting estate vehicle for a Country Estate. This vehicle had one large single rear door and two doors on the passenger side! It was nice to see how many members turned up on the Sunday; altogether I counted over 30 people linked to Manchester Branch which was a great turnout. We all enjoyed eating a slice of Gill Dinnis's delicious cakes.

Because of the distance and the heat we left at about 3-00 p.m so we missed some of the competitions and judging. On the return journey the M62 was closed from junctions 25 to 22 so we joined the A58 and returned via Halifax rejoining the Motorway near Rochdale. At least we were facing the queuing traffic but some of the Pennine hills challenged our little outfit. Alan Dinnis reported similar problems towing the little Minor on its trailer on his route home a little lower down. Still we all got safely home and had a great weekend with lovely weather.

Tony Price.