

I received an email from Hereford A7 club saying, that for their Welsh weekend one of the members had had to pull out and did anyone want his paid-for room. That would be me! So I was signed up and ready to go having gained reluctant acceptance from 'er indoors. Actually I think she was tempted to come, but she was signed up to work that weekend at the TIC to help out with the town's annual jazz festival.

Come the day (Friday) I set off at midday for Builth Wells and Forward progression was good. I was planning on three hours to align with room check-in time at three o'clock. Five minutes of driving and the windscreen wiper started to drop down to the six o'clock position. Put it back up and a few minutes later it would droop back down again. Fumbling around the wiper motor and trying to figure out what the purpose of the slidey thing is by the twisty knob I detected a coldish waft of air. The rubber pipe was split. I nearly fixed all of that while on the move, but had to stop in the end to find some scissors to trim the pipe.

It took 1 hour to Leominster. About the same time as the modern car. A further 1.5 hour to Builth Wells, and this was slower than a modern mainly due to the upwards incline keeping the speed down. However, there is now no dynamo charge so I'll have to take a look at that.

Filled up with fuel, 10.5 litres used for the 71 miles. About 30mpg,

The hotel (Caer Beris Manor) is a nice large black and white edifice in grounds encompassed by a loop in the River Irfon. There is one downside - ferocious vampire horse flies. I felt a tickle and saw this thing feeding on me, knocked it off and blood spurted from me. I'll probably contract yellow fever now or something like.

The evening went well apart from half the group went for a special Mediterranean 7 course meal, so those of us who went for the conventional meal had to wait over an hour to receive our first course. There are 18 of us and about 8 a7s and a couple of extras, a modern Morgan and a 4x4 something biggish. Ron Sadler is one notable from the past 750 MC days and is club treasurer, he is a pedantic sod, (or should I say, a precise person?).

Up and about, had a Welsh cooked breakfast which was very passable. Eddie Loader had a look at my lack of charging. The three dynamo brushes were connected to wires and moved freely and sat on the armature nicely. The cut-out

was not pulling in though. And even if manually operated, it did stay in, but still no charge. We had a mess with the third brush and suddenly got 8 amps charge. Great! We backed it off to about 5 amps.

Off and away to the Elan valley dams. Charging stopped after a mile, then it started again a bit, then stopped again, I was looking at the ammeter as the charging stopped and it was like a definite mechanical switch opening, for the way the ammeter snapped back to discharge. I will look into this some other time to find what is wrong, I have plenty of battery and am not using the starter motor.

En route spotted a sign for the Vulcan Arms..... One Elan dam looks much like another but all very impressive and spectacular scenery. Up and down dale with all the younger cars holding me up as they grind their way upwards in their 1st gear, crawler gear. Can't go as slow as them in first gear. A decent puff pastry pasty with Welsh beef in it at the Elan Visitor Centre. Then on to the Red Kite Feeding Centre. That was good, sat in a hide watching hundreds of these birds doing their swoops and dives. Although they can have a 6ft wing span, their bodies only weigh 2-3 lbs, so not that big a bird. I watched one bird swoop, grab meat with talons, soar up, accidentally drop meat, dive down and catch the meat with its talons before the food had fallen 10ft.

And so back to Builth Wells and hotel. Checked car over. Topped up oil in engine, only needed 1/4 pint. Topped up rad, 1/2 pint. Dipped fuel tank, its half full. So I set off for the filling station to top up. I then discovered how far a float chamber of fuel will take the car, the length of the hotel drive. Turned fuel tank tap back on and continued to garage. 9 litres for the 65 miles, so still about 30mpg.

Bought beer and sat on the outside terrace to drink it and phone home.

Apparently there is a one day run later in the year and one of the targets to complete will be the Devils Staircase at Tregaron, lots of 1 in 4, maybe one for the Singer.

The dinner went well with much banter during the quiz and many unresolved disputes about the answer. The quiz got gate-crashed by a fairly inebriated birthday girl who was nothing to do with our group, it was all taken in good humour and finally her husband came along and awarded a small bottle of wine

to the car he liked most. This turned out to be Blossom, the car belonging to Michael Harcourt, the organiser of the weekend. Well earned.

Sunday morning and after breakfast, took a turn around the gardens, no blood sucking horse flies today. The River Irfon course has a horseshoe shape and the grounds are enclosed within. A great place to bring dogs. Paid the hotel bill, well the bar bill anyway, which turned out to be less than expected - phew!

Away and over the Mynydd Epynt, stopping briefly high up, to peer at a German village on the horizon, built for army training. Then we spotted some specks moving, these turned out to be troops on manoeuvre with full back pack, time beat a retreat. Lunch at the White Horse/House Hotel with added entertainment by Gill Harcourt chucking/knocking Eddie Loader's beer all over him. Just as well he had a dry change of clothes as he was well sodden. Maybe this will become a popular event in the future.

Time for me to leave and progress was maintained in an orderly manner until somewhere between Hay on Wye and Hereford, when the car died on a hill. Fortunately there was a convenient lay by to coast into. As the engine started easily and ticked over, but had no power when throttle applied, I deduced a blocked main jet. My that was fun draining the carb over a red hot exhaust and avoiding third degree burns while removing the jets. Anyhow all fixed after 10 mins and on my way again. Just after Hereford I found myself in convoy with a MK II 2.4 Jaguar, all very well but it was travelling at a stately 30 mph. So not fast enough for me to get a run up hills and the embarrassment of a long long queue of traffic behind me. I pulled over to let long queue follow the Jaguar and I happily joined the end of that queue.

On arrival at home I see that I travelled 220 miles over the weekend with a fuel consumption of 31mpg. A good trip. Here is a wodge of pictures on photobucket. <http://tinyurl.com/kgzoaqu>

I have investigated the charging system and have concluded that as the dynamo will not run as an electric motor, and that the field coils probably do not have a high enough resistance, and that adjacent segments on the commutator give all sorts of different readings, that the dynamo needs a rebuild. I will try the usual second hand suspects first.

