

## SUNNY CHIPPING

(from the Lincolnshire fens to the Lancashire fells)

David and Jeanne Shaw were prophetically (nearly) correct for the duration of (most) of this rally when they named it "Sunny Chipping" way back last autumn. My name (Peter Start) might not be known to very many members of I.C.F.R. because Pauline and myself are hardly prolific rallier's, despite my 36 years of Rotary membership and 43 consecutive years' experience of caravanning. We have attended three or four foreign rallies, a few Spring Fellowship/A.G.M.'s, perhaps five Family Rallies and that is about it. My indifference to attending a rally is the connotation in my mind that a Rally is something Girl Guides do and therefore my perception of those attending a rally is that they are a bit "nerdy", despite some otherwise being good friends. Also, in relation to our **personal** thoughts the etiquette and manners of some Rotarians and/or their partners attending rallies we have been on in the past, has been less than I would have expected. Hence this is my first Rally report.

Having read and been inspired by an article on the Forest of Bowland, several years ago, I have long nursed an ambition to stay in the area but had never got around to it. When "Sunny Chipping" appeared in the 2019 Rally Programme the opportunity to go on it was too good to be missed and it proved to be the case. The choice of site at "Brickhouse Caravan Site", was an excellent venue in all respects. The proprietors Lynda and Tim both had "sunny" personalities and were way beyond helpful at all times. The village of Chipping is a classic with old local stone buildings, being generously bedecked with colourful hanging baskets, tubs, troughs and planters. There was a Flower Festival in progress in the 16<sup>th</sup> century parish church which stands in a beautifully maintained churchyard. The floral arrangements within St. Bartholomew's church were spectacularly good, imaginative and in a first class setting. I could go on extolling the virtues of the locality, its kind, polite, community minded inhabitants, its traditions and its spectacular fell countryside.

The rally ran from 20<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> June. The organisation and events were well judged with interesting activities in the Rally Programme but allowing plenty of time to strike out and explore the area, to find a view point overlooking Morecombe Bay, to pass through the lanes and over the fells to find other towns and villages of equal charm and merit to Chipping, all in an area of outstanding natural beauty. Pauline and I visited Carnforth heritage centre on the railway station which was the location where the David Lean film "Brief Encounter" was shot. The centre contains a great deal of interesting railway and David Lean memorabilia.

We settled into the rally on the first night, a fine sunny evening, to a Natter and Nibbles session, a useful introduction to Rotarians and others who we had not previously met and to renew acquaintance with those who we have got to know beforehand. Ra (the Egyptian sun god) continued to smile throughout Friday and permitted an al fresco collective dining opportunity in the evening at Rally HQ. Barbeques were kindly made available to everyone to cook their choice of meat or whatever.

The social theme continued on Saturday with Hospitality in the evening. On Sunday those who were sufficiently sound in wind and limb were introduced to Beacon Fell Country Park, on top of Beacon Fell, for a relatively easy walk around the fell top with magnificent vistas all around including a sighting of Blackpool Tower on the far horizon. The day culminated with a first-rate hog roast in the very well-appointed Chipping Village Hall with entertainment by "Donald The Average" who was a clearly very much above average magician who artfully induced humorous audience participation.

David and Jeanne organised something of a coup for Monday morning with an exclusive visit to the privately owned Brownsholme (pronounced Bruzam) Hall; a Grade I Elizabethan listed building said to be the oldest surviving family home in Lancashire and surrounded by picturesque gardens and parkland. The contents of the house are of museum quality and complement the antiquity of the building.

The finale for the Rally on Tuesday evening was dinner at Ferraris Country House Hotel and Restaurant an establishment of sublime quality with exquisitely laid out and landscaped gardens. The three-course dinner was of exemplary quality, with service to match, especially for £25 per head inclusive of return coach transport !

On the day of departure Ra was still smiling as we departed Chipping and headed homeward, shunning the motorways and the conurbations of west Lancashire for an excursion to the A1 via the West Yorkshire Dales and Blubberhouse Moor to Skipton, Harrogate and Wetherby.

We really enjoyed Sunny Chipping, we really liked the area and its inhabitants and left with happy vibes for Lancashire its people and Rallying with ICFR. Would we do it again – yes, with thanks to David and Jeanne who worked hard, unobtrusively, and with good humour. They deserve the grateful thanks of the 36 members of ICFR who were privileged to have attended their well organised, very enjoyable rally.

As an aside it brought back memories of my English master at my secondary modern school. In an English lesson on the etiquette of writing correspondence correctly and addressing envelopes properly he stressed the importance of using capital letters for the postal town and county less a letter for BOLTON LANCS got delivered in error to BOSTON LINCS. Funny that since some made their way from this rally directly to “We’ll Meet Again” near Boston Lincs.

Peter and Pauline Start. Rotary Club of South Holland and Inner Wheel Club of Spalding