

Wicked Welsh Weekend 2022 Report

Lakeside Caravan Park, Llangorse Lake, Brecon, Powys, 16th-18th September 2022

Roy & Dawn Blunt (Joint Organisers with Phil & Lesley Smith and Peter & Regina Hurst)

The weather forecast for Llangorse for this year's Wicked Welsh Weekend had changed from great to dodgy then back to good and that was the situation on the opening day of this year's event – a lovely bright day ideal for camping and Imping. This year we had the pleasure of welcoming five participants from the Netherlands – as far as I know a first for a WWW. There was a '3Cs theme' for the WWW runs this year: Caves, Cider & Canals. By the time the Friday run started off from the campsite (1 p.m.) most people had arrived and many joined in the run which led us on a scenic route through the Brecon Beacons, passing the Beacons Reservoir, before diverting towards Penderyn and past (without stopping – honestly!) the home of Welsh whisky. Onwards then – via the ongoing major road reconstruction works on the A465 (just to let visitors know the ongoing pain these apparently never-ending works cause to the locals), towards Glynneath, across the valleys to Abercraf and into the Crai valley to stop for refreshments at the Dan yr Ogof National show caves. Return was via the Crai Reservoir viewpoint – with the backdrop of an abnormally low reservoir as result of the very dry summer months – even in Wales. As the cars re-entered Brecon many peeled off to fill up with E5 fuel at the local Gulf station – fortunately the filling station dealt with the queue of Imps efficiently and we didn't cause a traffic jam during the Brecon rush hour.

Friday evening was spent socialising – either in the on-site pub or back in tents and caravans. The Brecon Beacons are a recognised Dark Skies area and renowned for its stargazing opportunities – indeed there was an official stargazing event being held that very evening a few miles away at the Libanus Visitor Centre – but there was a tremendous display of stars on show over our campsite at Llangorse.

On Saturday the run started at 10 a.m. and led us towards Hay on Wye and down the Golden Valley (taking us back to runs from the old WWW base at Pandy) and then onto Much Marcle to stop at Westons Cider Centre where we parked up in the car park next to a much heavier and slower vehicle – 'Old Rosie', Westons' traction engine. Many people took the opportunity to enjoy the snacks and meals offered at the excellent café and/or to stock up with cider at the very well stocked shop. About a mile short of Westons Cider one car broke its offside Rotoflex coupling on a right-hand turn – thankfully without doing too much damage. Fortunately the owner was carrying a spare and, in typical Imp Club fashion, the broken coupling was replaced at the side of the road with the help of a few other Impers and the unfortunate car arrived at Westons under its own power before the rest of us moved on. From Westons we returned through Ledbury – taking the opportunity to stop in the town centre for shopping and sightseeing – and then back to the campsite.

Saturday evening marked a welcome return to the WWW tradition of the 'naffle' and quiz – both compèred brilliantly by Dom Smith. Dom introduced a further refinement to these traditional WWW activities by offering a prize for best heckle which suitably enhanced participation by the



Friday's run:
a scenic tour through
the Brecon Beacons
Photo: Kathy Hall



Paul Whittington's Imp in the caravan park
Photo: Graham Anderson



Gill Hill with reverential Union flag draped over back seat heading home on Monday (the day of the Queen's funeral)
Photo: Roy Blunt



George Ritchie taking the Westons cider home
Photo: Roy Blunt

audience. The naffle and quiz were held in a marquee at the back of the Lakeside pub as the pub had booked a singer and a Ruby Anniversary party in the main inside area despite assuring us previously that this area would be available to us in the evening. While we managed well and the food on offer from the pub was excellent it has to be said that the marquee was very cold and, in contrast to previous WWWs, most people rapidly drifted back to re-group in caravans, and B&Bs for warmth once the quiz had finished.

We held the usual 'Show & Shine' on Sunday morning with cars lined up on Llangorse Common in front of the campsite reception building. With the fine weather bringing many visitors to Llangorse Lake the line-up of cars attracted a lot of attention from the general public.

Brief stop above the Crai Reservoir. Graham Anderson's Imp in the foreground
Photo: Graham Anderson



All but one of the awards were decided democratically by popular vote – the exception being the recently introduced 'Organiser's Special Prize' which is entirely in the gift of the organisers – no matter how wrong or controversial their choice might be. Previous awards in this category have gone to 'Dirtiest Imp' and 'Best Amp Powered Vehicle'. This year, however, it wasn't awarded to a vehicle but to two people, Peter & Regina Hurst, (admittedly two of the organisers but they were out-voted by the four other members of the team!) for 'Special Effort' – namely going far, far, more than the extra mile when Tineke Hol developed an eye problem and needed hospital assessment in both Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff before returning home to the Netherlands for treatment.



Refreshment stop at Westons Cider
Photo: Roy Blunt

Show & Shine Results

Best Rootes Imp	SBP 49E	Paul Makin
Best Chrysler Imp	6002 PW	Paul Whittington
Best Singer	CNA 476C	Neil Makin
Best Sunbeam	OTE 425G	George Ritchie (car owned by Isobel Ritchie)
Best Imp Based	APT 87L	Peter Doherty (Clan Crusader)
Best Van/Husky	CGL 358C	Andy Smith
Organiser's Special Prize		Peter & Regina Hurst

As the Monday after WWW had been declared a Bank Holiday for the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II many people decided to stay on at Lakeside for an extra night rather than returning home on Sunday and thus we had more people present on the Sunday afternoon and evening than normal. The run went through Talgarth and then, on sweeping and scenic roads, down to Crickhowell. A few days before WWW, emergency roadworks (with very awkward three-way temporary traffic lights) had started at the turn in Crickhowell so Dawn and I (having planned the Sunday route) were very worried over the effects of this. However, when we got there we were absolutely delighted to find that the roadworks had been removed and the parade of Imps was able to get through Crickhowell and cross the bridge over the Usk without problems. From there we proceeded on winding country roads through Pencelli, over the canal, and back into Brecon itself, heading for the Theatr Brycheiniog and Canal Wharf car park at the end of the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal. Unfortunately the Theatr Café had unexpectedly closed (due to staff illness) but it was only a short walk into Brecon town for refreshments (including the very popular Llanfaes Dairy Ice Cream parlour).

On the Sunday evening we held the usual meal for those remaining. Again we were in the

They almost look related! Malcolm's Chamois and Graham's Imp on Saturday's run near Torpantau

Photo: Graham Anderson



Bernie & Heidi Booth's Super Minx and Eriba caravan. Charming!

Photo: Roy Blunt

that the display of stars over Llangorse was even clearer and brighter than on the Friday evening – an excellent end to another great WWW. Fine weather, excellent company, great chat, wonderful scenery, and a good selection of cars – what more can you ask for! Many thanks to all attendees and to our fellow organisers.

Announcement

The 2023 WWW event will take place at the same location from Friday 15th to Sunday 17th September 2023 inclusive.

Bookings can be made from now – contact the site directly – details below. Please book by telephone as, having reserved Ernie's Field and the

static caravans for our exclusive use, the website will say that there is limited availability. Remember to state that you are a member of the Imp Club and are booking for the Imp Club event otherwise you might not be put on 'our field'.

Please also send an e-mail to wickedwelshweekend@gmail.com to let us know you have booked – remember that campsites (or B&Bs if you choose that option) do not pass details onto us. This will be even more essential than normal in 2023 as we are planning something different for at least one of the evening events and will need accurate figures for attendees prior to the event.

Site Contact Details: Llangorse Lakeside Caravan and Camping Park, tel: (01874) 658226, e-mail: holidays@llangorselake.co.uk.

N.B. The campsite reception office is not always manned full-time in the winter months.

marquee behind the pub but most were fully prepared and took suitable extra layers against the cold!

Along with the rest of the Nation we all stood for a minute's silence at 8 p.m. in memory of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

While walking back after the meal we couldn't help noticing



Colourful line-up

Photo: Malcolm Anderson