



Monkey Business

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Written By Chris Taylor

Bunged Together By Simon Griffiths

This was our second roving meeting, as we seek a new home, which was at the Pinewood Hotel in Handforth. Being the 2nd of January I expected to be a bit down on numbers but, notwithstanding apologies from Mick & Gez, Tim and



If anyone's car is guaranteed to be anywhere when the lifeboats are out on the M56 it's Charles's

Jayne and Judith Van Ingen, we were a field of 11; which pleased me as there are now a good number of those able to help make a choice when the time comes.

So what of the Pinewood? Well, it was an absolutely foul night with sheeting rain, pitch black and a good wind blowing. I didn't think it was particularly cold, only to be corrected by Michelle Mirza who informed me it was perishingly cold, so that, coupled with it being so close to new year's celebrations, it struck me there's not much going for the place! However on the positive side David Culshaw was the first to arrive and was expected and well received.

David was offered several seating options, whilst waiting for more arrivals in the various areas in an around the bar, and elected to be near the foyer where anyone arriving and entering their registration number in the machine would be sure to see him. This worked perfectly and, when several of us had gathered and we moved to our seats in the dining room, the tables had been arranged exactly as I had asked for.

As I had no idea if I would be on my own I had asked for four tables to be put together in a line which were filled. That was not the ideal arrangement and if we go back to the Pinewood I would ask for something different which, because they were so accommodating, I was told any arrangement I ask for will

be done although I'm not sure what. Whilst we were in the foyer Elizabeth Bennett came down from her room. Due to her journey to the meeting being in such awful weather Elizabeth had made an on the spot decision to book a room for the night. Both she and I were really pleased that the price was exactly the same as the Deanwater; this was a surprise with it being so close to Manchester Airport. Elizabeth was glowing in her praise with the quality of the room, so that's another plus and is the perfect example as to why we need somewhere with accommodation.

The actual area for the meal is a large open plan dining room with other diners scattered about, in no particular regimentation, and we were about as far away as possible so as not to be worried about ruining other people's night out. The menu is not the best, it's a bit limited and Tari did ask if there was an upgrade available but sadly not. Peter Lakin and, I think, Simon ate the battered fish and chips and reported that to be a good meal. I had a steak and ale pie and, although I have had better, it was okay.

We were well into our meals when Charles joined us sans Judith who was on grandmotherly duties, however the staff immediately recognised (?) he was one of us and ushered him to our area. Charles remarked that the car park at the hotel is very good with a large fenced area that was deserted on that night but would be good for us when the light nights are with us. The car park in the immediate vicinity of reception has been crowded on both the occasions I have been there but, as Charles remarked, just further on is this area that will suit our needs well. So, back inside, Johnathon Reeves and David Combey who were not eating were shown to where we were and there was no problem to them being in the dining area even when not eating - so another important plus for our meeting which caters for all.

The staff were great, very polite and attentive and obviously well trained as, when it became obvious we had finished our meals, they offered us to move into a quieter area of the bar which I assumed was the residents' bar with more comfortable seats. But, again, absolutely no problem when we declined and stayed in a now deserted (except for us) dining room. When the time came to leave Mike Robinson did point out to us a lovely terrace outside the residents' bar area that, although it was very dark, we could just make out would be a wonderful setting in the summer months. Mike, who has local knowledge of the place, did also say that, years ago, the hotel had a fabulous garden area which we could just make out, in the general direction he was pointing in the gloom, that something of it may well still exist.

So on to our next test venue from the short list, February's meeting will be held at the Legh Arms, The Village, Prestbury

SK10 4DG. This is a lovely village with good Alvis connections in that Nick Walker and Robin Wilmott used to live there, albeit at different times. We will meet at our usual time of gathering something before 7 and to be settled for around 7 pm. I notice on their website for the pub that it has 11 bedrooms and it also states that the kitchen closes at 9pm. The pub has a car park of approximately 18 spaces, however there is a public car park directly opposite which Simon will be adding the full instructions as to how to access it. One thing I have been told is that all 11 bedrooms are fully occupied that night, whether 100% occupancy is usual or not we will make enquiries about.

So, just to recap, the next meeting is on the 6th of February at the Legh Arms, Prestbury Village, SK10 4DG. I look forward to seeing you for our next adventure, although I am going to leave a little early as I am driving to a hotel in Bulkington straight from Prestbury, but you don't need me to have a good time!

During the month I see that D.O'S has spotted Charles and Judith making a foray into North Wales so no doubt there will be something said on that subject.

See you on the 6th I hope.

Directions to the Legh Arms

The Legh Arms, Prestbury is located on the Main Street through Prestbury Village. This street is called "The Village".

Limited car parking is available to the rear of the pub. Other car parking is available within the village either on street or in other car parks, the nearest being off Shirley's Drive.

If you enter the village from the station end, you will pass the Legh Arms on the right hand side and then there is a mini roundabout, take the first exit (left) up Macclesfield Road and after approximately 200 yards take the first left which is Shirley's Drive (JW Brocklehurst funeral directors are on the corner) the car park is a further 100 yards along Shirley's Drive on the left. Having parked, you can then walk through the exit at the opposite end to the entrance of the car park, going behind the buildings and into the village. You will be almost opposite the pub.

If you are entering Prestbury from the Wilmslow direction you will come down Castle Hill, past the Co-Op on the left hand side and will arrive at the same mini roundabout, take the second exit and the directions are as above. If approaching Prestbury from Macclesfield Road, turn right down Shirley's Drive a short distance before the mini roundabout.

And now a brief message from our Roving Reporter, Dean O'Spyder...

The weather being what it has been has curtailed my roving, due to my not having a boat!

I did, however, spot a certain Alvis, across the border in the Principality, taking the sea air in Llandudno. I wonder if that car ever gets a rest?

I had thought of investigating the Welsh Riever's stash of Alvis parts whilst I was nearby but thought amongst all that junk he was bound to have a blunderbus so discretion formed the better part of valour



