

Peterborough Goes to the Dogs



Cambridgeshire branch enjoying the night out



Chair Nigel Wilson and Secretary Steve Bretherton joined branch members, partners and friends from Cambridgeshire Branch on a night out at Peterborough Greyhound Stadium last month.

As part of a busy year for planned events during 2010 for the Cambridgeshire Branch, guests were treated to an evening meal all served to them at their table at the Raceview Restaurant. There was also the added bonus of the 'Tote' ladies taking our money from us. Our tables were close to the finishing line next to the window, giving us all an excellent view of the track.

So seats were taken and selections made from the extensive and varied menu. With our starters in place, the greyhounds for the first race began their parade along the trackside. The excitement level was starting to rise as the 'Tote' ladies came round and expertly parted us from our hard cash. Straight wins, all way trios and reverse forecasts just to name a few of the many ways to lose your money were all being placed until finally the greyhounds were led into the waiting traps. Then it was announced "*The hare is on the move*". I never thought such a small sentence could stop people having an interest in food, least of all myself but it is just like a spell is cast over you and for the next thirty seconds or so everyone was focussed on the track. Everyone was cheering and roaring their selected greyhound on with all their might, while I watched my hound taking a leisurely run out at the back of the field.

The first race was over and although no one had claimed a life changing win, we were all eagerly studying the form programme for race two.

Despite this, no one was able to make plans for an early retirement as the greyhounds with our money on seemed to be the only hounds in the stadium not interested in chasing the hare.

As the night progressed however fortunes did change and small winnings were coming in. By then we had enjoyed our meals which were very tasty and filling, the fact people were actually winning was a definite bonus not a necessity.

The night for me personally was capped off with a super win from my wife having placed an all ways trio for the first three placed dogs which proved a very worthy tactic, so not to be outdone, I went for the same in the final race. The dogs were running and the finish line approached and I needed the three selected dogs to finish in any order as long as they were first, second and third. It was a close race to say the least and when the announcer stated it was a photo finish the tension was unbelievable. After what seemed like hours it came through that I had chosen the first three dogs. A great way to end a great night out.

Should any of our members be reading this and wishing that they could have shared the night with us, then I have good news for them as we are arranging another trip to the Greyhounds later in the year. Prices start from as low as £13 for a two course meal and are subsidised for IPA members and their partners.

Nigel Wilson, Peterborough branch

A Rallying Call

Easter traditionally marks the start of the season for the caravan and camping fraternity. The units, having been checked to make sure they've survived the ravages of winter, they're washed and polished, loaded up and readied for the open road.

It seems as good a time of the year as any then to have the Caravan and Camping Group AGM. There's usually a good turn out because everyone is so keen to sit in that meeting for a couple of hours. Or is it because the first trip of the year brings to life that eagerness to start another enjoyable touring season?

With an organisation whose members are spread around the country, it is always difficult to find a suitable location for such an important event. Venues come and go for various reasons so we are grateful to North Kilworth Sports Club, Leicestershire for hosting us for the last two years and we have accepted their invitation for next year.

Ideal amenities have previously been provided at Police premises but lately these have been declined for "security reasons". Our search for alternative venues for 2012 and beyond continues.

This year's meeting was a tremendous success, not least because of the efforts of organisers John and Sue Timson. At the AGM, members discussed real issues affecting not only the Group, but the IPA in general. Concerns were raised about payment methods when cheques are discontinued, how to update members who are not on-line and more parochially, fire safety at Rallies and Rally venue legislation. The meeting was also advised that the Group has 109 members with 82 attending the 12 rallies held in 2009.

Despite the inclement weather, there was plenty to occupy the time including a hobbies



Mike Paxton with rally organiser John Timson

and crafts afternoon which encouraged a diverse display of talents and pastimes. Examples included china painting, war gaming, genealogy and crafts using yard goods. Competitions were held for both regular and younger Ralliers and the evenings were taken up with a Chinese raffle and live musical entertainment.

Kevin Hullah, Secretary, Caravan & Camping Group