

Beta Meeta 2010, Kilver Court

by Derek Robinson, photos by Marcus Robinson

Or should I say Lancia tea and cake party! On August 7, 2010 the first meeting of Lancia Betas and their various derivatives was held at Kilver Court, Shepton Mallet, Somerset. It was the brainchild of my son, Marcus Robinson, who unknown to me had tried to secure the venue the year before with no success as they were fully booked. As a result of this, he was then contacted out of the blue in mid February and the scene was set.

He had gained permission to park the cars on the viaduct overlooking the beautiful gardens below, with an approximation of 15 vehicles listed on the Betaboyz forum. All Lancias were welcome of course, which was just as well as my own 1600 HPE had an issue with the automatic choke causing the car to cut out at junctions, so I made the decision to take my 16v integrale instead.

The starting time for the event was set at a very relaxed 9:00am letting some of the more distant members a chance to arrive a bit later in the day. The weather was not very good – OK, it was terrible at times! But this was on and off drizzle surrounded by dark clouds and some blue sky in the far distance. We waited with anticipation, who would be turning up first; which happened to be some very nice examples of some bright coloured Spiders, two lovely series two facelifted coupes, a Prisma, Trevi and a couple of additional integrales.

Time passed by quickly as owners discussed their pride and joy between showers. It was a 11 o'clock and the drizzle was now rain, so the group decision was to seek shelter and drink something warm. We soon found the on-site cafe which provided the appropriate beverage and many choosing some cake to compliment their drink.

Meanwhile, Tony Field had contacted another member that he was on his way from the Midlands and would pop along for a short time while they were on their way through to their intended destination. This was possibly the highlight of the event, as at long last, two Trevis would be at the same event, giving Tony and Theo the chance to compare each other's wonderful examples in detail. The weather had now changed for the better, and the sun made its entrance. Jonathan Gillingham and my son had previously discussed about going for a drive around the local area during the day, something which everyone agreed on; so Jon became lead car as he knew the area best and we headed towards Cheddar Gorge. Jon's spirited driving in his 1600 coupe soon

reminded us all how well the Beta handles and performs, as if we needed reminding! Various photos were taken along the way with a brief stop in the Gorge before we were charged for staying, and we made our way back out of the Gorge towards Shepton Mallet.

By the time we got back, time had flown away and it had now gone 3:00pm; time to get some dinner. But we soon found that all the local establishments had finished serving food and it was either the local petrol station or the hope of sandwiches at the on-site cafe. We decided on the cafe and to our delight the only food available was cakes! Everyone found this rather amusing under the circumstances and an air of eccentricity prevailed as the tea and coffee was served in a variety of tea sets, most probably older than the people drinking out of them, and of course there was the cake many had already eaten earlier in the morning.

On behalf of my son, I would like to thank all that attended the event, some covering well over 200 miles round trip and Kilver Court for the use of their facilities, tea sets and selection of cakes. For 2011 we will have to wait and see; hopefully someone will take on the organising for next year and Beta Meeta can be an annual event.



Jon Gillingham and Tony Harrison enjoying a luxury cup of tea.

