



Eighth Wonder

E31s tend to be solitary creatures so the sight of a whole group wafting across Norway must have been quite a spectacle

Words: Terje Nordhus Photography: Various

After attending a couple of 8 Series meetings in Europe, we started thinking about having one in Norway. But would there be any interest and would anyone come at all? We decided to check if there was any international interest by posting a couple of threads on the two biggest 8 Series forums: www.8er.org – where we represent the Norwegian owners as well as having our own Scandinavian section; and www.Bimmerforums.com. Both posts had lots of pictures and a preliminary program

making them very popular in a short time. The 8er.org post reached over 5000 hits and 200 posts, so clearly there was an interest and therefore we decided to go for it. In the planning stage we decided we'd spend more time socialising and tyre kicking and less time driving, as most people would have already covered quite a lot of kilometres just to come to the starting point at Stavanger.

We finally had over 40 people and 23 cars on the list with 13 coming from Sweden, The Netherlands, Germany, France, Poland and Denmark. We also had

an impressive list of attendees including: Fabrice Dray – president of the French E31 club and now also president of 8er.org; Reinhard Wolf – who runs www.8coupe.com, the big 8 Series registry that now holds over 7700 registered E31s with pictures, advertisements, build sheets and so on; Armin Salat – an Alpina enthusiast who brought along two Alpinas for the meeting; and Per Helmer who runs the Swedish 8 Series club.

As for the cars there was a wide range on display and most versions of the 8 Series were present,



With 23 8 Series lined-up on the ferry, it was an impressive sight



including four Alpina B12s (of a total production of 154), two 850CSis, two extremely rare 98/99 Platinum 850Ci ex-Dubai cars (now reunited in Norway), as well as a mix of 850s and 840s of different ages and variations.

Our plan was to visit some of the local points of interest, including the aviation museum and oil museum, followed by a good meal in the evening at a local hotel outside the city. Here we had a few prizes to hand out. The prize for the longest distance driven went to Fabrice from France who covered 2200km in his Brokarot red 850i. We also had a prize for the cleanest car and Sten from Norway in his Arktissilber 840Ci and Daniel from Sweden in his Hellrot 840Ci both showed up in cars looking factory fresh on the inside, outside and even underneath. In fact Sten did not have time to visit the oil museum and instead went to the fountain outside of the museum to catch water to clean his car. This made him the winner by a close margin.

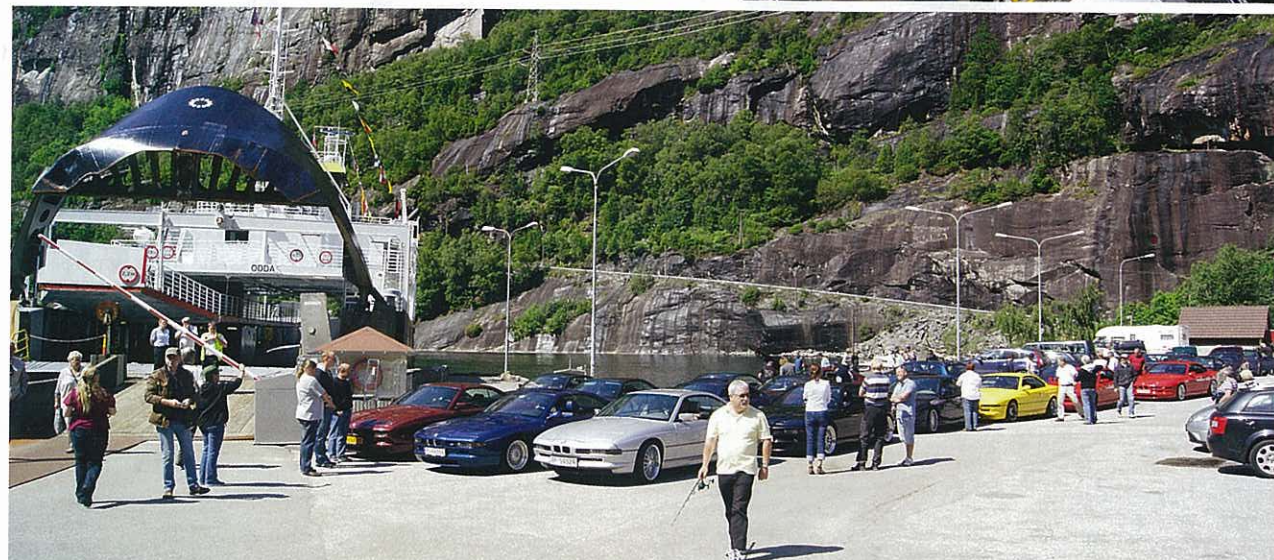
Saturday was the big day and finally it stopped raining; the sun even came out, making the day a huge success. We took the ferry into Lysebotn. This is a popular tourist route during the summer and the ferry takes just over four hours, so there was plenty of time to socialise. With 23 8 Series lined-up on the ferry, it was an impressive sight.

The Lysefjord is one of Norway's most breathtaking fjords where you can see the Pulpit Rock, Kjerag, waterfalls, seals, goats and majestic scenery. The fjord was carved by the action of glaciers in the ice age and, end-to-end, it measures 42km (23 miles) with rocky walls falling nearly vertically over 1000m (3000ft) into the water. Because of the inhospitable terrain, the fjord is only lightly populated and only has two villages on its length – Forsand and Lysebotn, located at opposite ends of the fjord. The few people who live or lived along the fjord are only able to leave their homes by boat, as the slopes are too steep for roads. While most people were enjoying

the scenery others found time to chip tune their cars and one car even got cleaned, again...

After the boat trip we arrived at the end of the fjord and lined-up all 23 cars on the pier, after letting all other non 8 Series cars go first. Then we drove all the way up a winding mountain road to a restaurant at the top, nicknamed 'The Eagle's Nest', where salmon was on the menu. The crazy girl running the restaurant threatened to push a bus over the cliff if the driver did not get out of the way so our E31s could park together. The poor bus driver tried to say that the sign read 'bus parking', but she replied that she was the one to decide what it meant and today it meant BMW parking. On top of this the restaurant cleared the whole outside area of fences and tables so that we could take photos of our cars. After the meal some people took a drive on the mountain roads, others hiked to Kjerag, while the rest started going down the winding mountain road to the camping site at the bottom of Lysefjord for an

Impressive line-ups of Eights at the Norwegian ferries; chip tuning on the ferry; Pulpit rock; on the way to The Eagle's Nest



Eights at rest at The Eagle's Nest



overnight stay. Here we soon found the one and only pub and after lining up the cars in front of the pub on the lawn we could enjoy looking at them while enjoying a cold Norwegian beer.

Sunday was the return day and most people going home then had a trip over the mountain on narrow and winding roads really giving the cars a challenge. All the cars made it to the meeting without any issues and all returned back home in good shape, although the French car did get a fuel leak fixed before leaving Lysefjord on Sunday morning. This was quite impressive for these older two-ton cars loaded with electronics and mechanics, most of them being 15 to 21 years old. So a successful trip all-round and one that everyone enjoyed. In fact, we're already thinking about the next one!

We have several meetings every year all over Europe for the 8 Series and we always have a good turnout. If you're interested in getting your own 8 Series or already have one then I would recommend joining www.8er.org and registering your 8 Series at www.8Coupe.com – you won't regret it! ●



Kjerag rock waiting to fall; E31s go camping



While most people were enjoying the scenery others found time to chip tune their cars

