

VMCC Notts and Derby September Newsletter



Cover Photo: A visit to the Avro Heritage Museum. Riders pictured under the wing of a Vulcan.

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What's on in October.

1st. Duke William, Matlock.
2nd. AGM
5th DUKERIES RUN. 10.30am Griffins Head, Papplewick. Bruce 07442168932
11/12th Stafford Classic Show

LAST RIDE RUN, 21st August.

Unbelievably tonight was the last evening run of the year. Seventeen bikes with 4 pillion met at Ripley Marketplace. Graham & Sue led the way through Crich, Wirksworth, Hopton to name a few places, onto the Via Gellia, over Bonsall Moor and finishing at Matlock Bath for fish & chips.



Bikes arriving at the start.

A very enjoyable run even though Graham managed to find a very bumpy lane with a very tricky tight bend, thankfully everyone negotiated it safely. Big thanks to Graham & Sue for a very good run.

Kate Sherras.



Mick tucks in.



The point of it all.

AVRO HERITAGE MUSEUM RUN, 22nd August.

8 bikes with myself & Tessa pillion turned up at the lay-by for the run to the Museum. Andrew led us off down the A6, along the Via Gellia and the Cat & Fiddle with stunning views, through Macclesfield where we had a coffee stop then onto the Museum at Poynton. It was very interesting and we were able to go into the cockpit of some planes, pictures from the Vulcan and Lancaster cockpits. A very good day and a big thank you to Andrew for a great run out.



The group met at Whatstandwell.



Lancaster fuselage.



Have you flown a Vulcan before, Pete?

Inside the Lancaster.

Kate Sherras.

Section News, a plea.

We have the AGM coming up on 2nd October. It is an important evening as decisions are taken which affect the way the section is run. It is YOUR chance to come along and contribute your ideas or offer to help.

We are in **desperate need** of a Deputy Secretary as the current incumbent has had a change in circumstances which means he can no longer commit to the role.

As we stand, if something happened to me, we would be without anyone who knows how to do the job.

Please get in touch if you think you can take this on. Full training will be given and I am attaching a Job Description to the Newsletter mail.

The job does NOT include writing the newsletter (unless you want it to) but it has a lot of responsibilities. Without a deputy who has the knowledge, the main communication with Allen House and the members will be lost and the new secretary would have to start from scratch.

Please consider helping if you can.

Letters.

Hi Bruce,

Thanks for the August newsletter, very informative and an excellent read. I was particularly interested in Mike Hornsby's contribution about getting to old age, which we can't avoid. I still have three bikes, Honda Deauville (2004), 1961 Golden Flash and 1957 Matchless G11. Sadly they are not used much these days but are all in good working order, regular inspection in the garage lifts the spirit if nothing else does.

Unfortunately I also have duties as sole carer for my wife who is disabled and find little time to spare for motorcycling. I was incidentally 94 on the 4th August; riding the bikes is not a problem (care has to be taken) but getting the blighters onto their centre stands is difficult. Last year I fitted a Rob Swift centre stand to the Matchless which did make a big improvement. My motorcycling started in 1950 whilst doing National Service. Marriage in 1960 put a halt to motorcycling until I got the bug again in 1984 and acquired a very dilapidated BSA A10, which I still have and which took me four years to rebuild. Well worth the trouble with many hours of pleasure on the road including the 1998 ACU Rally (maximum marks) and regular trips to Scotland to watch the Scottish., and an interesting tour of Ireland with the IMTC in 1998.

New bikes I have owned since 1950 were Matchless G3L (1950), BSA Golden Flash (1953) Ariel VH500 (1957), Kawasaki KLE500 (1994), Honda Transalp (1997) and Honda Deauville (2004). Which was the best? They were all good, fitting their requirements of the day. The BSA's probably my favourite being so user friendly but

the Ariel was excellent with a surprising performance, comfort and handling. The KLE and Transalp were very good but perhaps the Deauville with shaft drive and long-distance ability was the best. Over the years motorcycling has changed very much, I do not like the present trend to superbikes, in fact Sundays in the garden are ruined by the constant howl of bikes coming into Bakewell.

I think my message to Mike Hornsby is make sure you never give up and if you can continue your motorcycling by downsizing a bit then do it. My late pal John Mayfield who left us two years ago finally bought a Suzuki VanVan which fitted the situation well after many, many years of happy motorcycling. I think that I am now too old to go down the downsizing course but am very lucky to be still able to manage the bigger bikes. I probably should have said that although I love the Deauville, its handling and performance, it is quite a heavy beast and the one that I shall have to dispose of first.

Well done Bruce, keep the interest in our motorcycling to the fore!
John Arnell.

Continuing the theme of parting with our much-loved steeds, John Lawes writes in:

Sunbeam EC 3713.



We've been together now for 58 years with absolutely no regrets. If there's something I can take with me when I go it will be my Sunbeam. However, being realistic, I've taken the next best option and EC 3713 is staying in the family.

I purchased my Sunbeam in 1967 from Mike Halfpenny who lived $\frac{3}{4}$ mile up the road in Angmering, West Sussex, for the then market value of nearly 46 Guinee's i.e. £48. At the time I had a veteran Triumph Model H which needed A LOT of restoration. Believe it or not, it still had its original 1914 logbook, however with some minor rodent

damage. Yes, Triumph did start the manufacture of the 1915 Model H in 1914. My H was made in October 1914 but later received some "improvements". The Triumph was later passed to a friend who restored it to a very good standard. As I write he has just left on it having visited while enjoying the sunshine on the first day of spring. If only.....

Originally it was found in Geoff Brazendale country by the late Arthur Lambert of Shoreham, West Sussex, who purchased the bike. Whenever Arthur went on holiday, he would put an advert in the local paper looking for an old motorcycle; replies to his holiday address. This would have been around the mid to late '50's. Subsequently, Arthur restored the bike to a very good standard as can be seen from his paintwork which is still on the bike, except for the tank which had to be repaired and then repainted a few years ago. Arthur's paint of choice was hand brushed 50% black Valspar and 50% varnish.

Arthur later sold the bike to someone who only used it to go to the pub at weekends. Subsequently it was purchased by Mike who later sold it to me. The first event we attended was a steam fair at Eastergate, or was it Westergate, in West Sussex, in September 1967. The following year I had the only disaster with the 'beam. It was on the run at the Farnborough Rag Week Rally which I had ridden to. On the enjoyable sun drenched run the engine lost power and just made chuffing (both definitions applying) noises. On kicking the engine over there was no compression. Spanners out, barrel off, piston above the flywheels, as you may expect, which then just lifted off revealing a 2" length of conrod across the flywheels! The piston was rather second hand with damaged gudgeon pin bosses. A somewhat terminal diagnosis. Fortunately, the student organisers soon arranged suitable transport home. The late Syd Plevin came to the rescue with conrod and piston; only that piston has subsequently been changed as well as the small end bush.

After a while I found the gearing was rather low. The 3½HP "Double Purpose" machine had three gearing options obtained by fitting one of three different gearbox sprockets: solo, intermediate and sidecar. I made an engine sprocket with two extra teeth using a Sunbeam engine sprocket and Triumph gearbox sprocket. It's still working very well giving a comfortable top speed of around 50mph. Another improvement was to the gear selection. There was some occasional difficulty finding and keeping it in neutral. This was overcome by making another quadrant with the neutral notch suitably repositioned. On a Coventry to Brighton run the spark plug blew out of the valve cap and, fortunately, only put a dent in the underside of the tank. There is now a piece of 10swg plate to protect the tank. I was lucky that, when the plug was replaced without the seal ring, it continued working until a proper repair was made. Recently, a rebore was needed, but locating a suitable piston took some finding. I resorted to a piston where all dimensions were suitable but was Ø 83. This gave the advantage of only needing the barrel to be skimmed to clean up and a liner made to suit. The loss of capacity is more than compensated for by the improved performance. The only other "problem" encountered, which was really a maintenance issue, that I can recall was very worn front wheel bearings. Rather than trying to retain cup and cone bearings I modified the hub to take sealed ball races.

There was only one other “disaster”, although nothing really desperate. A friend, Tony Simmons and 1932 Model 9 plus myself and 3½ were to attend a Sunday run about 35 miles away. We had decided to load our bikes into my trailer on the Saturday and drive to the event the following day. A good decision as it happened as there was heavy rain overnight and well into Sunday. The morning run was cancelled hoping for a more clement afternoon. As it happened the rain had eased somewhat. The afternoon run was then shortened for those who wanted a ride. Tony’s bike would not start as water had found its way into the mag. My ‘beam started first kick, and we completed the run. On the way home we encountered one stretch of narrow country lane with about 10” of water. It was impossible to turn around, so we gently drove through slowly, slipping the clutch and keeping the revs up a bit above tick over. The following Saturday the bike would not start - water in the mag. I saved that weekends run by fitting a veteran Bosch magneto. The advance/retard lever was on the “wrong” side, so the mag was fixed in the full advance position. This worked well for several weeks while the E.I.C. mag was being rewound and fitted with new condenser. If nothing else a tribute to the quality of pre-Great War Bosch magnetos.

Since then, we have covered very many happy miles including the Coventry to Brighton Run. I rode to Meriden overnight, joining other KSS Section members at Guildford and then riding on to the Triumph Works. At Triumph I spotted a then unannounced development Triumph three-cylinder machine going out on a test run. Then it was back to the south coast assembling at Preston Park and then, with police escort, finishing up on Maderia Drive. Later a short run home and back the following day for the finish of the event. A memorable ride with only two minor problems; a whiskered plug (probably my over-oiling) and tappets closing up. It’s here that I learned the recommended tappet clearances needed an extra two thou in very hot weather. Another lesson learned was to use an air cushion over the saddle on long runs. To supplement the adequate carbide lights, I borrowed the dynamo from my wife’s push bike and replaced the drive pully with a Ø 3” replacement to compensate for the additional m.p.h. This worked very well except at slow speeds, where the carbide lights were certainly adequate.

Over the years we have competed in many various events both here and abroad. We have competed in several Windmill Rallies in this country; the D-J Run, but on a borrowed KSS; several rallies in Hungary with the ‘beam and Model A; Coventry to Brighton Runs, ‘beam and R12; and, naturally, very many local events including green lane runs. I have even been “chastised” by some for green lane-ing on the ‘beam but I counter with the fact that up to c1928 the A52 outside my house was water-bound macadam. Mild green lanes are like some early 20th. century main roads. I can show you a difficult (hard work) green lane that was at one time the only route from a small hamlet to the main A52. Everything had to use it even funeral processions. For reference it comes out at the top of Swinscoe Bank. We have even competed in some more serious events e.g. mud plugs and road racing “demonstration runs”. One memorable event was at Crystal Palace. Here we had three laps of the circuit and, as you would imagine, the last lap was ridden rather more enthusiastically! On one slightly

adverse camber right hand bend I almost lost the front end with one footboard scraping the track, and despite some “body English”. Other similar events attended, although on other machines, include Montléry, Brands, Mallory and Donington.



I have had a most enjoyable life with my Sunbeam and several other bikes. Regrettably, I am now unable to legally ride, or drive, but the enthusiasm is still there. If only my body could do what my mind wants to do! Through motorcycles I have made very many good friends, had many memorable rides on many interesting and sometimes desirable bikes. As mentioned above, if there's something I can take with me when I go it will be my Sunbeam, but don't come and dig me up, the Sunbeam is staying in the family.

John Lawes.

Derbyshire Road Run, 24th August.

This was the first Derbyshire Road Run since 2019. Seventeen bikes, two with passengers, took part in our Route Card run through parts of Derbyshire, Staffordshire and almost into Cheshire. We had a guest, Lance, who is one of Mick Gather's racing pals with us on his trials Cub. I was on my Norton, on its first ever club run.



Gathering at the start. My Norton at the front is yet to be tested.



Lance's very pretty Tiger Cub.

Strange stone work.

We navigated ourselves from the route supplied by Gordon, taking us through Elton. Along Weddow Lane, just after Gratton, there was a strangely carved monument, pointed out by Mick as we passed, so I stopped for a photo. Left at Middleton to make our way to Monyash, and across to Harpur Hill.

We took in part of the Cat and Fiddle, then, winding our way up to Quarnford, there were great views to the left. Just before we turned right for Royal Cottage, there was a car stuck in the bank at a tight right-hand corner to Gradbach mill. This caused a gridlock of cars, but on a bike, I rode through. Out on the A53 Lance's trials Tiger Cub ran out of petrol. He was prepared for this as it has a tiny trials tank, so he topped it up from his spare container. We then turned into Tittesworth Water Visitor centre for lunch where we were allowed to all park together for free!



Views on the way there.



Lunch over, saddling up.

On the way back, we passed through the picturesque village of Thornecliffe, then rose up to take in panoramic views which I tried to capture on my phone. With a route card, I can do this without holding anyone up. This took us back on the A53 to turn right towards Longnor, Hulme End Alstonfield, Parwich, then through Alderwasley to get back to Homesford Cottage for tea and, of course, cake.



Views on the way back.



The Norton actually made it!

A fantastic run of just over 80 miles. And we forgive Gordon for his mistakes on the route plan!

Don't push too hard!

Pete Latham suggests that I warn all members to be careful when you're giving someone a push start.

At the start of his run from Ripley marketplace, Martin's OHC Norton was hard to start. Pete gave him a push but ended up with a hamstring injury. He thought he'd pulled something but this is the picture from the next day.

The squeamish amongst you should look away now.



Free Advertisements.

WANTED:

Member Bob Gregg is looking for a sidecar outfit. Any make of bike but minimum 500cc. Non-runners certainly considered as he is an expert engineer. Ring Bob on **07790 589982** if you have an outfit to sell.

FOR SALE:

Single Motorcycle Trailer.



Belonged to a N&D member who passed away.

£150.00 ono.

Please contact Graham Bower, who is acting on the widow's behalf for details.

07745888938 or

graham.bower@hotmail.co.uk



CONTACT US:

Let me have any stories from the past, recent or distant, amusing or otherwise, concerning motorcycles, or any technical information, rebuild stories, photos or news of events by replying to this email.

Let us know what you've been up to by emailing me at:

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Use the same address and format if you have any items or motorcycles for sale. Don't forget to include a phone number and a price.