

NORTHUMBRIA ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS. (N.A.M.)

**AFFILIATED TO THE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS
(I.A.M.)**



Weekend away at Derwent Hill, Portinscale, August 2010



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For more information on how to join us and become a better and safer rider come along to our monthly meeting held every 2nd TUESDAY of the month at the WHEATSHEAF HOTEL on the B6918 near NEWCASTLE AIRPORT. 07.00 pm for 07.30 pm

OR

Contact our Membership Secretary,

Eric Fitzpatrick on 0191 271 2245 or Email e.patrick454@ticscali.co.uk

OR

VISIT OUR WEBSITE; www.nam-online.org to see what N.A.M. has to offer.

Chairman's notes.



Our September meeting produced a flurry of test passes with seven certificates being presented during the evening. Proof indeed that we continue to fulfil our primary function of improving individual rider skills. At the meeting, I suggested that we should consider continuing to improve by arranging a refresher ride with a Senior Observer. Certainly we should be thinking of it, if it's more than three years since passing the IAM test.

Recent Cornering Clinics have not produced as many new Associates as previous sessions and we have looked at other ways of gaining new members. Flyers have been printed and these have now appeared in local shops in the Northumbria area, with some being posted on works notice boards. Another has appeared at Hartside Café and I would encourage all members to take some copies and be active in finding new sites to spread our message. Also, take some small visiting cards and hand these out to any bikers that you believe could be interested in improving their skills. However don't just stick these onto parked bikes, as most would be discarded and end up as litter.

I would encourage all new members to get involved in the social side of our club, be it ride outs or weekends away, as this will open up new possibilities to make good friends. The spin-off is that you will seriously enjoy yourselves in the process.

Your Committee have more initiatives planned, Christmas Dinner, Slow Riding event, Pass Plus and if you don't get to every meeting, do sign-up for our Google site or the new Forum to find out details. Our meetings are well supported and we have benefited from some very good speakers, with more to come. Most definitely worth the effort to attend.

Ron

I.A.M. National Motorcycle Conference, 2010.

In July this year, Eric Fitzpatrick and I attended the I.A.M. Conference to represent N.A.M.. This was held at Warwick University and was well attended by many delegates from all regions throughout the UK. This proved a useful experience for me, as I listened to the various speakers explaining the many changes to the organisation as it seeks to adapt to the new economic climate. They wish to improve the interaction between Head Office and the Membership and whilst this will take time, I feel they are moving in the right direction. We were also informed that the I.A.M. continue to put our motorcycling interests to Government, thus ensuring our voice is heard.

I.A.M. Marketing has been very active to improve their message to potential new members and have also introduced a marketing toolkit that includes a PowerPoint presentation for all groups to use. These will no doubt help in showing a corporate message nationally. We have already benefited from their efforts, as a number of our new associates have come to us via the Internet.

We were fed a range of statistics, ranging between the numbers of new motorcycles being sold to the average number of members in each motorcycle group. From this I learned that we at N.A.M. are larger than many groups and are in the higher range for test passes. Significantly, I learned when talking to others that we enjoy a higher than average number of members attending our monthly meetings.

I found the I.A.M. organisers and speakers approachable and helpful and it was certainly useful to speak to other delegates, to hear their opinions on common issues.

Ron Patrick, Chairman.

GOT THE GLOVES – ALL I NEED IS THE BIKE



I have been a bike lover for a good few years now, but have to admit having followed the conventional route by being the “little woman” on the back. That is till I decided enough of the back seat, I wanted the front seat!! This is how it all came about;-

In the heat of the Nevada Desert, nestled in a small town called Las Vegas is where I found them. Away from the strip with its larger than life hotels, gaudy notice boards and Hispanic “flyer boys” trying to thrust cards for Call girls into passing unsuspecting men’s hands, is a small Harley Davidson showroom of 17,000 sq ft, This was the greatest find ever; it’s where Michelangelo meets Willy Wonker. A Gallery of the most fabulous bikes ever, everyone a piece of art in its own right and finding the last golden ticket rolled into one. I was in my sweetshop! I could have spent an absolute fortune!

We were blessed as this was the year that the exchange rate was very much in our favour, 2 for 1, so what harm will a little indulgence do in the greatest sin city in the world. You know what they say “what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas”. Temptation was just too much, there they were a pair of Harley gauntlet style gloves and they had my name on the tag, and you know how it is girls , can’t have the gloves without the matching accessory, had to buy the matching jacket, (Now all I needed was the last part of the ensemble).



LAS VEGAS HARLEY



INSIDE THE STORE



HELLO BOYS

If nothing else I would be able to show them off whilst riding pillion on the back of my husband’s Honda, but this was only the start. When I returned home, call it middle age crisis or just the girl in me with the fire in her belly I decided that I wanted my own bike. I loved riding pillion, had done it for years, I loved the treasure hunts around the county that I had taken part in, giving directions to my partner whilst reading a map, travelling top speed along country lanes and the only thing keeping me on the bike was my thighs.

When I was in my early twenties I had a 100cc motorcycle, I used to potter back and forwards to work on. My early morning starts were early; I was out of the house by 5am travelling down the A19 in all weather. One very cold and very wet morning the bike decided it didn’t like it either and stalled a couple of times en route. I managed to get it started, however I came a cropper and I ended up burning the lower part of my shin whilst leaning over the bike. I had waterproof trousers over tights and the heat of the exhaust burnt through the trousers and melted the tights to my leg! No more of that for me I thought and the bike was sent on its way.

Years passed and in 2007 I completed my C.B.T. I must admit I had quite a few lessons on a 500cc Kawasaki, not always enjoyable as I struggled with my confidence and dropped the bike a couple of times. My problem was junctions, not having enough revs on and I had the knack of turning the handle bars at an angle which altered the balance of the bike and over it would go. I do have a Nemesis; it’s the junction of Beaconsfield road and Kells Lane in Gateshead. The camber at the junction is uneven and that was always my downfall, literally, I hated and dreaded that junction. I had a good instructor a Scot called Jamie, who had a tendency to swear at students down the earpiece if they made mistakes. He was a very confident character and I have no doubt, that’s how he got away with his antics. We had many laughs along the way which kept me going back for more, even the Beaconsfield junction.

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After passing my test I inherited my husband's Honda Hornet 600, a great bike to ride, really responsive and very forgiving. My first thought after passing my test was to learn more, I hardly had any experience under my belt but I wanted more knowledge, I wanted to know how to handle it, what the pit falls were and how to ride her the best way I could. I wanted to be part of a team, someone to learn from and be part of. The hubby was not the one to learn from though, too many domestics on the way! I enrolled in N.A.M. My down fall was that I never went to one meeting; I didn't have the courage to turn up. On the back of that I enrolled with I.A.M. and I had my initial assessment with a great guy, who told you how it was and I loved that. I was out for a couple of hours, I was taken through urban and country roads and then had a debrief at the end and felt great. After the assessment I rode the Honda home in a different light, I had been told that I had produced a good ride, my riding was "safe" and that meant a lot to me.

However there were a number of factors that made me get rid of the Honda, the biggest being the confidence factor. The old demons had come back to haunt me big style, I dreaded getting the bike out of the garage, I felt the weight of the bike when manoeuvring was just too much for me and the thought of pulling away at junctions! My husband tried his best in encouragement to get out on the bike but I resisted at every opportunity. I remember one day I conceded and rode the bike to work. I was overtaking on a dual carriageway stretch which had a long sweeping bend to it. For some reason I became transfixed on the concrete pillar of a railway bridge and was heading straight for it. At that moment I remembered my instructor saying "you go where you look" and by god I was doing just that.

My arms were rigid and it felt as though I couldn't turn the handle bars, in a split second those words came to me again and I immediately looked at the road ahead and the bike started to respond. I knew my days were numbered on that bike but not quite in this fashion.

After much heart ache I was convinced I had two options, quit the idea of biking or find myself another bike and I didn't want to quit. So, one Saturday morning my husband and I set off to Westgate Road. I looked at many bikes but nothing jumped out at me. I was very much looking for a particular bike, because my confidence was sorely knocked, I wanted a bike that was low enough for me to get my feet solidly on the ground, this tippy toe affect wasn't my cup of tea. Hubby suggested we take a look at Harley Davidson now I have to say I wasn't up for the tassels and stuff but went along with it remembering Vegas. Just as the door closed behind me in the show room, I saw her. It was love at first sight, I walked straight over and sat on her, took hold of the handle bars and lifted the bike up, this was the one, a 1200 Nightster and her name was "Ruby".

After many months off the bike to due health problems I felt I was fit enough to take up the advanced challenge again and contacted N.A.M. I was assigned an observer, again another brilliant guy to put me through my paces. Many an hour spent riding the roads of Northumberland and I always looked forward to the coffee stop and the debrief before heading for home. Every time I went out I always came away having learnt something and this went into my "stay safe" memory bank. Because of the observed rides my confidence started to grow, Ruby and I were now a team and I was enjoying being on the bike again and wanted to experience what others enthused about, going on the road trip on the bike. This we did, even taking a bike out into the Nevada desert and the last couple of summers I have spent riding the gorgeous roads of Scotland, come rain, come shine. In July 2009 we spent the time in rain sleet and hail; we had to cut short our trip to Skye due to the snow in July! However in June this year we made it all the way and even took a coffee stop in the sun drenched Glen Coe on the way back but that's another story.

I took my advanced test in June 2010 and passed. I rejoined N.A.M. and have attended the meetings since and loved it. I am now a totally different rider and I can only put this down to the hours I have spent on the bike and the great support I have had around me, and oh a pair of gloves and jacket as well!



Lyn Alexander

"Ruby"

Road to Morocco. Part two of Bob and Bing's trip

The road south from Zagora consists of a single lane strip of tarmac bordered by gravel verges. Would approaching vehicles leave sufficient room to allow the bikes to stay on the tarmac? Yes, they did and the 50 miles across semi-desert to the end of the road and the start of the desert proper were over too quickly. Photos, of course, and Ron's fix were taken before we re-traced our route back from the edge of the Sahara. Now that we knew the road conditions, speed was higher, but stops more frequent as our eyes caught camels, ornate walled houses and gardens and fences of plaited fronds trying to restrain drifting sand.

Once north of Zagora again, the good road, with sweeping bends and hairpins over the pass, gave excellent riding to Ouarzazate. A 200 mile day of pure enjoyment. Ron found a hotel, which, like many in Muslim countries did not serve alcohol, but the young man at reception offered to get us some beer. By the time he returned from the shop, we were out of riding kit and enjoying the cool of the terrace. Bliss! Over dinner, Ron tentatively (if you can imagine such a thing) raised the question of the route to be followed to Marrakesh the next day. The choice was to continue on the direct, main road or to make a wide sweep to the west and go over the pass at Tizi-n-Test. This route is considered dangerous by the guide books and locals. Guess which road Ron chose.

The next morning saw us on an empty, well-surfaced road leading west across a high plateau. Clear, blue sky, cool and great riding. The descent to the valley was steep and led to Ron's coffee stop. Half an hour later, Ron turned right onto the minor road leading to the pass. We had done 150 miles and not seen a petrol station. There was more traffic on this assumed minor road than there had been on the main road, so progress was slow because of the difficulty of passing over-loaded Lorries and buses. Of more concern was the need to run in low gears and the increase in fuel consumption. We came to a viewpoint which boasted a car park and a primitive bar. I enjoyed an omelette because I need food more than once a day; Ron, who says it's not necessary to eat between breakfast and dinner, had one too, and was better for it. The pass, once reached, although narrow with lots of tight hairpins, falls of stone and big drops over unprotected edges, was easily crossed and we began the long descent to Marrakesh. The road and the scenery were superb.

We intended to find accommodation before we reached Marrakesh but none was available. The 2 hotels we passed were closed. So we arrived at Marrakesh having ridden 265 miles at 5.00pm, rush hour!!! We stopped just inside the city walls to get our bearings and decide what to do, when Ron did his usual magic of attracting someone who spoke some English, knew where to park the bikes and could suggest a hotel. At that point an interesting day became dramatic. To say that traffic was heavy, nose to tail and moving briskly is an under-statement. Following the guidance of our new-found friend, we rode 100 yards along a one-way street, against the flow, crossed, at right angles, 5 lines of fast-moving traffic to the opposite side of the road (miraculously, the drivers let us do that with smiles and waves), mounted the pavement between bollards and rode through a doorway marked 'hotel'. Inside, we rode, yes, rode, past the reception desk and parked the bikes in a disused shop window! We walked a couple of hundred yards up the street to a basic hotel and were glad to get a room with decent beds and a shower for an unexpectedly low price, given that we were only 5 minutes walk from the central square. How did all that happen?

Two nights in Marrakesh were enough. The day between was spent wandering the great square, relatively empty during the day, heaving with humanity at night, getting lost in the souk and people watching. There were lots of people to watch.

On the homeward stretch, our plan was to return to the hotel we had stayed at on our first night in Morocco, which would give us a full day to make the border and ferry crossings back to mainland Spain. The ride from Marrakesh to Mekenes was uneventful, but, on arrival Ron repeated his trick of turning into back streets. He knew of a 4 star hotel which he said we deserved after 2 basic nights in Marrakesh. I was not going to argue despite the fact Ron failed in his mission to negotiate a discount.

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The last full day in Morocco brought the sting in the tail. First, we arrived in Quazzane, but couldn't find the road out. The first road we tried led us up a narrow country lane, obviously not the main road we expected. We turned back to the junction and tried another road, seeming to go in the right general direction. In fact, it was the road to Rabat, some way to the south-west and in the opposite direction to that which we wanted. Eventually, a lorry driver told us to go right back across town to a roundabout. When we got there, we found that our mistake had been to take the second exit, instead of the first. That road meant that we were turning back on ourselves and the associated road sign was positioned behind us as we negotiated the roundabout - totally useless! Having spent a merry hour to-ing and fro-ing, we were on our way again.

Then it got scary. It began to rain and the roads, polished with diesel and rubber when dry, turned into skating rinks. Even the locals halved their speed. Ron has said nothing, which in itself might speak volumes, but I had a couple of moments. Despite my caution, the bike slid sideways on tightening bends and a relaxed hold on the bars called for conscious effort. A third moment came when the tarmac gave way to clay covered with surface water. I could do nothing but sit still, hold the bike upright and straight, leave clutch, brakes and throttle severely alone and hope I could cross without mishap. Fortunately, there was no oncoming traffic or ruts in the clay. Huge sigh of relief when we ran out of the showers and were back on dry roads.

Two days later, in central Spain, the morning was bright and sunny but chilly. We added thermals and sweaters to our riding kit. An hour later more layers were put on. My RT has a big screen, heated grips and a heated seat. Ron's GS has heated grips. I was cold: by the time we stopped for coffee, Ron was shivering uncontrollably. We were riding in temperatures of 3 to 5 degrees C wearing summer kit. We knew to expect rain on our planned ride home through Spain and France: we had not reckoned on winter conditions. Both of us, each hesitating to be the first to chicken out, were glad to agree that the sensible thing to do was to go to Santander and get the ferry home. In the hotel that night we watched TV reports of roads closed and villages isolated by snow in the hills around Santander. We had made the right decision.

Eric Fitzpatrick



Question; which one is Bob and which one is Bing?

After every flight Quantas pilots fill out a form called a "Gripe Sheet" which highlights aircraft problems these are fixed and the sheet filled in by the ground crews. Here are some examples of faults and repairs carried out.
(P = pilots, F = the fix by ground crews). *Quantas by the way have an outstanding safety record.*

P; Dead bugs on windshield. F; Live bugs on back order.

P; Aircraft handles funny. F; Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right and be serious.

P; Noise coming from under the instrument panel. Sounds like midget pounding on something with a Hammer. F; Took hammer off the midget.

P; Number 3 engine missing. F; Engine found on right wing after brief search.

P; Suspected crack in windshield. F; Suspect you're right.

P; IFF inoperable in "off" mode. F; IFF always inoperable in "off" mode

P; Test flight OK except auto-land very rough. F; Auto-land not fitted to this aircraft.

Anne Rickard

BIKE RESTORATION



For many years now I have had this hankering to restore a bike. About this time last year I was looking for a new bike when a friend offered me his old Fireblade which needed 'a bit of work doing'. This seemed like an ideal opportunity, with a bike that is really a modern classic. When I first saw said bike I very nearly ran a mile. It had stood at the back of a lock-up garage for over a year with other bikes falling against it, being totally neglected, and the neglect showed. The tank had several dents, the fairing bodge repaired where my mate tried to start the bike by towing it behind a van. Wing mirrors are not meant as tow hooks! To describe the bike as a wreck is an insult to all wrecks. However once the bike was out of sight the dream of restoration took over and I rose to the challenge (after a few whiskeys) and handed over my hard earned cash. The bike was duly delivered and when I saw it in the cold light of day the enthusiasm made the imperfections seem less pronounced. This lasted all of 30 minutes when I first took a spanner to the bike and discovered how seized an alloy fastener can become. There are eight bolts fastening the front mudguard to the forks. After much sweat and cursing and two hours later three fasteners were removed.

Note 1 – when entering into a bike restoration project do not underestimate how much work it is going to take to do the simple tasks. I am not the best with mechanical things but I do have friends who are. A phone call later and Gaz was round with his expert knowledge and as keen as me to get stuck in. Hard work with a drill and the remaining five fasteners were off. Taking the front mudguard off is not really a big step forward but it made me feel good that progress was being made. It was actually just a sign of how difficult things were to be.

Note 2 – if you enter into a restoration project have a Gaz handy for the really difficult jobs. Further dismantling with several hours work over the following weeks and eventually there was a bike frame with engine and hundreds of bits strewn around the garage. The list of jobs to be done had gradually increased and even the littlest of items were in need of attention. New fairing fasteners required all round, new sidelight lenses and bulbs, indicators and rear light cluster. The front brake discs and pads also needed replacing as the previous owner (by this time becoming a former friend) had fitted alternative discs in readiness for a 17" front wheel but had retained the original 16" front wheel. I know that does not really make sense but that's how it was.

Note 3 – former owners of bikes are never as good as you at doing things.

Cleaning the bike parts was proving to be fun with items being restored to their former glory. New cleaning products are really good at cleaning off years of grease and dirt. Combined with a large helping of elbow grease, wet and dry paper and wire wool with solvol aerosol, alloy parts were starting to shine. I was also fortunate in having a friend, Paul, who is good at paint spraying and had some spare time on his hands. He was able to restore the petrol tank, front fairing and front mudguard back to being as good as new.

The project took 6 months to complete. The bike sailed through the MOT test without a problem. Then came the real joy of riding the bike. The Fireblade is an exceptional bike, handles like a dream and is excessively fast (right hand restraint tested & failed). But there is something special about riding a bike when you have put in so much effort and know that if it was not for you the bike would just be an old wreck at the back of a garage.

Note 4 – do not underestimate the feeling of satisfaction achieved from a job well done.

Smile while you ride, *Kevin Wellden*



Paul's Story.



Well it all started when I used to read about Barry Sheen and Kenny Roberts and thought "one day I will get a bike like that". So the fun started when I was approaching my 16th birthday and asked for a moped. Well I had wanted a "fizzey" and got a Honda SS50. So on the day of my birthday I went down to Fergusons in Blyth with my Dad who dropped me off. From there I went to a school play ground where I was put through my C.B.T. as I sat on my moped, yes, my moped, yippee. Not a dream anymore. Went through the basics, how to start it, how to stop it followed by clutch control. What seemed like a life time it was dinner time and was told those magic words "you have passed your C.B.T. and that I could ride my bike, sorry moped, home. Boy did I feel great so off I went. When I got there was my Mam waiting looking worried sick but like she said, how they could say no to me when my Dad used to have bikes and she used to get on the back as pillion. Despite that she was still going to worry. The day just got

better as I got a phone call to say that I had got an apprenticeship as an Electrician so off for a run on the "bike" to get used to it. With money in my pocket I had better fill the tank up, 25 pence later tank is full (well it was only 50 pence a gallon). Who do I go and see? I know my Nana. Boy was that a wrong move, another talking to. The old story when you are 17 you are going to get a car, yes Nana (don't think so) bigger bike etc. Oh yes do you know I am Barry Sheen now as I have had the "bike" for 5 hours!!! Next day off to Tranwell Woods where I watched all the hooligans racing around a horseshoe shaped runway. Great fun.

Now I have had the "bike" for 3 weeks and used to scratch the pedals on the corners what a buzz eh. One morning going to work I was overtaken by a Mini when it then pulled in in front of me. Bang, I hit the back of it and the next thing I knew was that I couldn't stand up and my foot was pointing the wrong way. Unknown to me at the time I had a broken tibia and fibula. Hospital job!! No ambulance available as they were on strike so the Police took me home and dropped me off and told me to get a taxi to the hospital!! So I had to wait for my Dad to get home. Boy were my ears sore with "I told you not to get a bike" from my Mam. At the time I had to agree. I just wanted my Dad to get home so I could get to the hospital. Duly got to the hospital where the Doctor said "I will have to pin it". Great, only been to work for a week and was now going to be off for at least 6 months. Eventually get the all clear after 6 months and go back to work. I need some "wheels" so told Dad and he buys me a push bike. That's not quite what I had in mind but had to build up my muscles. Ekes. Now back to work and off to Westgate Hill looking for a new bike as I had insurance money and birthday money as I was now 17. The "Hill" was packed bikes and people and this old bloke on a trail bike doing wheelies up and down the road. I spent a full day looking around as you could in those days and thinking how do I tell my Mam about a Yamaha RD250 fitted with Micron exhaust, K & N Filter and that I could pick it up the following Saturday. When I got home I told my Dad and he just said he wouldn't tell my Mam as she thought that I was out looking at a car (well it was a Ford Escort Mk 1 RS) but the bike won. She didn't speak for a couple of days but she came round as Mothers do. She just said "if I kill myself don't tell her". Still trying to work that one out some 30 years later and still daft, still getting called the "Hooligan". That's the reason why I got the Grim Reaper put into the petrol tank.

I now have the same problem as my Mam and Dad had with me as my daughter Katie wants a bike and I cannot say no. Unfortunately her Mother and Grandparents are against such an idea. In Katie's defence she does go as my pillion now and again. I will let everyone know what it happens when it happens but for now she will just have to save up and finish university.

Paul Connell



LACK OF CONCENTRATION



On the 2nd of October 2005, a fine Sunday morning, I made and impromptu decision to go to the Isle of Skye on my Kawasaki KLE 500 to look around the cemeteries. As you do. I had been researching the Family Tree for some time and knowing that my ancestry was Scottish and my surname being Bradford I figured there might be a connection with the town of Broadford on the Isle of Skye. (I have since learned differently and my ancestors hail from the Kincardine area).

I got myself ready to travel etc and made my way to the A69 and onto Carlisle and then up the A74 / M74 to Glasgow through Easterhouse traffic and eventually onto the A82 heading for Fort William. From there I joined the A830 which took me to Mallaig where I got the ferry to the Isle of Skye. All the way up the side of Loch Lomond the weather

began to deteriorate and I ended up riding through what I now know to be the mystical "Scotch Mist" it wasn't raining but everything was soaking wet including the roads. At Tyndrum I stopped at the *Green Welly* to fill the tank with fuel and to have a very welcome cuppa. As I left Tyndrum I noticed the snow gates were open, good I thought, and off I accelerated up the A82, quite a climb out of Tyndrum but a lovely road and beautiful scenery. About four miles north of Tyndrum after cresting the peak, the road levels off and then descends slightly over some enticing right and left hand sweeping bends. I was really enjoying this and I swept through the right hander and leaned over into the next beautiful sweeping left handed bend. Now I know I wasn't on a road bike, the KLE is a bit of an enduro machine and it had knobbly tyres, and this is where I lost my concentration which could have killed me!!!! As I was leaning into and going around the left hander there was a very large hill passing on my right side and there were half a dozen or more rivulets / streams cascading down its side. I was looking over my right shoulder at this watery spectacle when I felt a slight bump. The road had straightened out and I was still leaning left!!!! When I looked ahead, Christ I was in the grass verge doing 60 mph towards the only stone wall for freaking miles, (it was keeping the hillside up). I know I was doing 60 mph because I was conscious of a dark blue Land Rover following me up out of Tyndrum and wasn't sure if it was Customs and Excise or the boys in blue. Anyway the bump I had felt was when I dropped off the tarmac onto the verge as the layers of tarmac are about four or five inches above the grass verge. Even if I had time to think about trying to get back onto the road, even with the knobbles I doubt if I would have succeeded. So with this grey stone wall approaching very quickly the last thought I can remember thinking was ***** this is going to hurt". Then miraculously me and the bike dived into the ditch in front of the wall which was cleverly concealed by grass, ferns and lichen moss, the ditch that is, not the wall. When things settled down, my visor had been shattered as I had nutted the top of my windshield and I was trapped under the bike the chain being across my left shin, up to the neck in water. The front wheel of the blue Land Rover screeched to a halt next to my head. The driver came running around "Christ that was spectacular son it was like a bloody depth charge going off" then another car driver travelling in the opposite direction stopped and came to help, they both lifted the bike off me and the second driver wheeled it across the road where there was a parking space while the first driver got hold of me under the arms and started to drag me out of the water. I remember watching the bike being pushed across the road and thinking "*the wheel isn't buckled and the forks look OK*". The first driver then shouted at me "Are you OK son"? (I still had my helmet on hence the shouting). When I told him that I had had a heart transplant he started to punch 999 into his mobile phone, I told him I was OK then explained to him that when you have a heart transplant the nerves from your brain that normally assist in controlling your heart are severed and the heart controls its own rhythm never missing a beat no matter what happens. "*You learn something everyday*" was his response. "Are you sure you're OK"? He asked. Well I am also Diabetic I told him, where up he grabbed for his phone again. "No" I said it is well controlled and I am OK. Then I took my helmet off and he realized how old I was and stopped calling me son. Then I hobbled across to the bike and it wouldn't start. It took the brain a while to realise it was still in gear and not in neutral. I eventually got it running. It was now about 03.15pm and driver "one" quizzed me about my journey, I told him I was heading for the Isle of Skye and had booked a room for the night in Bank Street Hostel in Fort William. "I live on the Isle of Skye" he said and suggested I follow him to Fort William as he knew the road pretty well. So I did a tortuous journey through Glen Coe etc. He stopped at a garage in Fort William for fuel and once again asked if I was OK. I told him I was aching a bit and my right foot was hurting every time I pressed the rear brake. Well get yourself to the hostel and have a good rest and along with a good night's sleep was his advice. I thanked him for his help and concern and we said our goodbyes and left him to continue his journey home.

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I found the hostel and got settled in but the old Lady running it noticed that I was limping and I told her the tale of how I came off the bike etc. She pointed out of the kitchen window and pointed to a building and saying that it was the Belford Road Hospital and that I should go there and get myself checked over. I took her advice and went around to the A & E Department (very small compared to what we have in Newcastle) but very, very good none the less. I was admitted for checks and X-rays and they kindly phoned the hostel for me to inform them that I wouldn't be coming back stay the night. When they found out I had had a heart transplant it was "instant fame"!!! They even phoned called the A & E Consultant who came in especially to see me. Just about everybody in the small hospital Plumbers, electricians, cooks even the cleaners came to see me as they had never seen anyone who had had a heart transplant before. It had its perks as they really went out of their way to look after me. The next morning time was dragging a bit and I kept asking my Male Nurse, Adam, what was going on as I wanted to be on my way. Eventually at about 01.30pm he came to tell me I couldn't ride my bike as I had a badly bruised left shin bone and two fractures in my right foot. Along with that when I crashed the bike into the ditch the top box burst open and my Immuno Suppressant tablets had been lost in the ditch and they didn't have any in the hospital and were unable to get any at very short notice!!! It was therefore decided to let me out as long as I rode home and to forget about travelling onto the Isle of Skye. So with Nurse Adam and a junior Doctor accompanying me to my bike complete with my x-rays and a verbal "You are discharging yourself if anything happens to you". So once again I got on the bike and set off to tackle the Easterhouse evening traffic and onwards down the A74 / M74 / A69. This was done in some discomfort as it was raining at the time and with my visor shattered I remembered wishing I was in the cab of every lorry I passed on my journey home. Rather stupidly it never dawned on me at the time that I was member of the R.A.C. and that they would have brought me and my bike home if only I had remembered.

I went back in the car to where I had come off the bike about a fortnight later to take some pictures and look for my expensive Philips Sonic Toothbrush which was the only thing of value missing from the top box.

In the attached photos you can see the height of the tarmac above the verge along with the wall and the debris out of the ditch clearly visible on the side of the road. That is my car parked opposite the section of retaining wall.

The moral of this tale is, stop looking at the scenery, dolly birds or other distractions as it could cost you dearly.

Barrie Braiford



The distraction



My car at the crash site



The wall and ditch

MY BIKE; B.M.W. R65 1983



I bought the BM IN SPRING 1984. It had been bought by the first owner from Kawasaki Newcastle when they operated from the bottom of the "Hill" on Westgate Road. I bought it from the first owner. Why did I buy the BM? Having travelled to work (a dirty word now) by motorcycle all year round I was fed up with chain maintenance. They only lasted a year if I was lucky!! The winters seemed colder and longer in those days. The BM has not been perfect having only come home once on the back of a wagon and that was on a N.A.M. chip shop run when it decided it didn't want to drive home from Jedburgh. It was the first and only time to date. Three cheers for breakdown cover you just never know when you might require the service.

THE HISTORY OF TCU 220Y.

It was not long after I bought the bike I was not too happy with its handling, the back end was sloppy and it only had spring adjustment and was poor when riding two up. Fitting a pair of KONI rear shocks with adjustments for spring and dampening solved the problems. Some years later the steering became heavy to turn and the steering head bearings required attention. After stripping the head stock down I found that the grease in the bearing had become solidified and only required cleaning and repacking with new grease then re-assembled. It has been fine ever since.

Brakes; No problems with the rear brake just examine the shoes and replace when necessary. The original front discs were prone to cracking and after replacing the originals and then after a few years the same thing happened again. The next choice had to be cast steel discs which had to be fitted to the original disc hubs. The problem of cracking was solved but there was a downside, cast steel can rest quite quickly and when riding in the rain or on wet roads the front wheel gets filthy in to time. Front brake callipers have been stripped and cleaned many times over the years to keep them in good working order. It is better to service them before they cause problems as they do come apart easily and the job takes less time to do.

Electrics; Yes, there have been a few over the years. The first problem was an intermittent misfire which was traced to the twin ignition coil. The iron core that ran through the coil had rested and cracked the outer case allowing moisture in. A phone call to Motor Works (an independent B.M.W. specialist in new and second hand spares) only to be informed that the new twin coil was quite pricey. So it was suggested that I could fit a pair of second hand single coils that would entail minor wiring alterations at a quarter of the price of new ones. This was done and they are still going strong after nearly 20 years. The break down mentioned earlier turned out to be the electronic distributor (a unit that is used to set and control when the spark occurs). Once again Motor Works supplied me with a tested and guaranteed second hand unit. I have also changed the alternator rotor and charging regulator in recent years.

Batteries; Yes, there have been a few fitted but I only use second hand ones now. There is a good benefit to this. One of my other sins is I play golf and my electric golf caddie uses the same size battery and when they will no longer do the 18 holes they get relegated to the bike and the charging keeps them in a satisfactory condition. Everything in that department seems fine for the moment.

Exhaust System; The exhaust system is all stainless steel, the original silencers having been replaced about 20 years ago and the replacements are still in good condition. The original front pipes were changed about 17 years ago and these replacements too, are still in good condition. They are easy to clean but difficult to keep polished.

The Engine; The first real problem was an oil leak from under the cylinders. The oil was leaking from the pushrod tubes that had rusted away due to using the bike in all weathers. A temporary repair was carried out by cleaning the affected area and them with araldite until time became available to carry out the necessary repairs properly (top end overhaul). New pushrod tubes along with piston rings, valve springs and gaskets were purchased so that the job could be carried out in the shortest possible time.

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Years later the production of leaded fuel stopped and that brought more problems (the engine was designed to run on leaded fuel). There were few additives on the market to compensate for not having lead in the fuel. I chose an additive that was placed in the tank and was to last for 100 thousand miles. The engine seemed to run well enough but there was always that suspicion in my mind that things might not be as good as they seemed. I knew that sometime in the future I would have to do a proper job i.e. having the valve seat inserts and valves replaced. It was my first project after finishing work 14 years ago. I located a specialist engineering company who could remove the original valve seat inserts and replace them with hardened inserts. A company who specialised in re-building older B.M.W.'s supplied the new parts they also recommended fitting lighter gudgeon pins saying that they would reduce engine vibration. By doing this improved the vibrations but you can never eliminate it completely. Although I do not do high mileages the engine stands up to all of my demands. The timing chain was changed a few years later. Not being able to check it without stripping the front end down a replacement chain and all the other bits and bobs needed were purchased before the job was carried out. "A better safe than sorry" thing.

Gearbox; My B.M.W. has not got a good history as far as the gearbox goes. It has let me down twice with the same fault. The gear change return spring breaks and when that happens you are stuck in the gear you are using at that time. Both times this has happened I was changing down from 3rd gear consequently this gear I was stuck in but fortunately I managed to limp home on both occasions. The protesting from the clutch just has to be ignored in these circumstances. It is a big job for the sake of two springs. There are no short cuts and not a job to be attempted unless you have the necessary skills and a suitable workshop. Special tools are recommended. The first time it happened I was able to borrow them from a good friend. I made drawings of the special tools and at a later date was able to make a set of gearbox tools for my own use. While not wanting to use them they were there if I ever needed them again. Needless to say I had to use them years later.



Despite these trials and tribulations I can't see me parting with my B.M.W. R65 and hopefully we will both be going for a great number of years to come.

Norman Mordue

Our Introduction to Biking



Ben: When I recently told a friend that we'd spent the weekend away with the IAM in the Lake District, his initial 'You boring git...' was followed by a more reflective 'actually I bet they're a bunch of silver haired hooligans?!'

Clearly I furiously objected to his remarks, trying to think of some stories which would put him straight on our respectable and honourable fellowship. After a few minutes, I was still struggling... My mind just kept wandering back to the Committee member who was clocked by the notorious North Wales 'boys in blue' playing 90mph catch-up on a leisurely countryside ride out; the Direct Access member who upon passing his test went straight out and bought an FJR, a bike with an engine big enough to power a family car; or the Chairman who despite being more than twice my age, recently bounded across North Africa on his BMW and practically choked on his beer with indignity when I asked which tour operator he had booked through!

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My own relationship with two wheels has been relatively recent. A combination of pressure from a number of work colleagues, an insuppressibly ‘one life, live it’ adventurous streak, and perhaps a certain minor birthday milestone, I found myself booking my CBT and Direct Access in summer 2008. Barely a fortnight later I was the proud owner of a full open licence. Conscious of my inexperience I spent the next few months popping back to the training centre for a number of follow-on refresher lessons...and drooling over the Bike Trader, though impending wedding plans meant that the purchase was initially delayed. Until, that is, we returned in the early hours of a wet February Saturday morning from four weeks honeymoon in New Zealand.

Jet lagged, fed up and still a bit woozy from the seemingly endless champagne the cabin crew had been feeding ‘the honeymoon couple in aisle 42 with the restricted legroom’, we headed into town and stopped for a coffee on Westgate Road.....It turned out to be an expensive 650cc’s of Kawasak-accino!!!

Helen: When Ben first suggested that he was thinking of doing his Direct Access (‘before they changed the test and made it harder’) I was horrified, although not as much as his mum, who didn’t speak to him for about three months after he broke the news. I was adamant that I wouldn’t be going on the back of ‘it’ as I had never had any desire to be involved with motorbikes in any way, shape or form. However, watching Ben get kitted up in beautiful leathers, and heading to a new pub, ice-cream shop or hillside café at the weekends with his new biker friends I started to feel very left out! It’s not in my nature to try ‘dangerous’ things (although since turning 30 I had managed to survive a 12,000 ft skydive) I finally agreed to a single ride, just to confirm in my mind that it was going to be a dreadful experience. Ben arranged with the training centre for another advanced lesson and the trainer agreed to let me ride pillion on the back of his Honda. Feeling awkward in borrowed kit, the first 20 minutes were as I had expected (*‘Ha! Ben, told you I would hate it’*), buffeting up the A1 in strong wind – very scary and noisy!! However, after turning onto some quieter country lanes, I actually began to enjoy it – and remember beginning to smile as we leaned deep into the corners and flowing twisty bends. Apparently I was a natural pillion! It definitely helped the cause when we got home that afternoon and Ben produced a gorgeous Dainese leather jacket that he’d bought ‘just in case’ I enjoyed the ride. I think he had kept the receipt though! Subsequently his e-bay account gained more use as we purchased boots, trousers, gloves and back protector. The helmet came from Hein Gericke though, and had to be specially ordered from Germany due to a rare XXXS fit – it was one of the most expensive in the shop! Every time we went out on the bike, other bikers and motorists would stop to chat to us and I couldn’t believe how friendly everyone was. I was finally beginning to understand the wider appeal of biking. However there was one problem; the seat on Ben’s first bike, a Versys, was not very comfortable and every 20-30 minutes I had to tap Ben on the shoulder so that we could stop and I could get off to stretch my legs, and stamp out my pins and needles

Ben; I was never quite convinced by Helen’s protests about the poor comfort of the Versys – I found the gel seat upgrade fine. However she quickly seemed to learn that by tapping me on the shoulder and gesticulating at the general buttock area resulted her being plied regularly with hot coffee and cake. I quickly stared to feel the benefit of getting more miles under my belt and my improving skills were sharpened by a ‘Bike Wise’ day with Durham’s Bob Brown. Though the Versys was a superb first big bike I have to confess that once bitten by the motorcycle bug there was only one machine lodged in my aspiring heart; a bright red Multistrada S-DS. ‘The one’ came in a private sale which I collected in person from Beverly, North Yorkshire. Riding back over the tip of the North York moors on a glorious Sunday afternoon in September last year has to rank in my top ten best days ever.

Helen; Having known Ben for over 10 years I wasn’t surprised that he joined the I.A.M. with the view to taking his advanced motorcycle test. I was actually really pleased that he did as I was sure that this would help him continue to become a safer and more confident rider. Parents on both sides were also comforted, though two-wheeled subject matter remains on the limits of acceptable conversation! I came to a couple of the monthly meetings and meetings and everyone was so friendly that when the opportunity for a weekend away in the Lakes came up we jumped at the chance. E-bay did an excellent job of producing some panniers a few weeks before and on arrival I was pleasantly surprised how big they looked. Ben did remind me that it wasn’t ‘a challenge’ to see how much stuff I could take – I think he was worried when he saw the pile laid out on our bed the night before! I reassured him that I knew it wasn’t a competition; it was just an initial collection of clothing which I would be slimming down later...honestly.

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The next morning (Saturday) after Ben had tinkered with a groaning suspension, we headed out to meet the other riders leaving from Newcastle for our first group ride. I have to say I thoroughly enjoyed that first day. The scenery, roads, flowing drop of system and more importantly to me the company, range of conversation and regular refreshment stops were fantastic! The evening meal was a similar story and it was very relaxing chatting with a range of different people all brought together by the shared interest in bikes, holidays and food.

Ben and I decided to spend the next day walking around Cat Bells and High Spy as it was part of the Lakes we hadn't explored before. The scenery was amazing...when we could see it through the horizontal Bank Holiday sleet and heavy rain! Allegedly the ride out up to Scotland had been blessed with glorious sunshine!!

Ben; The weekend in the Lakes was really enjoyable – we were warmly and thoroughly welcomed by the group and got to experience some fabulous roads, scenery and stories (thanks in particular to Wilf!). To those of you who have yet to commit to a N.A.M. weekend away, I cannot recommend it highly enough. Not only do you get to meet fellow members properly – something that is difficult to achieve through the monthly meetings alone but being in the saddle on such a range of roads, amongst experienced riders really does continue to build both riding competence and confidence.

This is somewhat of a swan-song for us as we are relocating to Cambridge in October with new jobs, but we wanted to thank you all for making us feel so welcome this year. We look forward to seeing what our new fellows in the East of England will be like and hope there may yet be opportunity to join the two groups in some way. Watch this space....

Ben and Helen Strutt



Stop to take in the views of Wrynose Pass

FOR SALE

It's with regret that I'm selling my SV650. I hope it will find a good home ☺. Here are the details:

- Make: Suzuki
- Model: SV650 (K8, naked)
- First registered: June 2008
- Only one owner
- Colour: Grey
- Engine Size: 645cc
- Mileage: 2765
- Tax until February 2011
- Bike has only been ridden in summer, so no exposure to road salt during the winter
- Bike has always been stored in garage
- Condition is immaculate, tank and exhaust have no scratches, bike has never been dropped and tyres are in good nick
- Also included: Owner's Manual, Service Record Book (1st/500 mile service done, 2nd service/4000 miles not yet applicable), 2 keys, crash bars, almost full tank
- Reason for Sale: I'm simply not using it often enough. This year I have only been out once. So basically I have only used the bike for 2 summers.
- Price: £3,600



If I have missed anything off the list then let me know. If you would like to have a look at the bike then please get in touch by either e-mailing me tan650@live.co.uk or call on 07876028077

Tanya



The I.A.M and N.A.M. welcomes the following new members;



Derek Joicey



Alex Smith



Steven Carey



Andrew Smith

Congratulations to the following on passing their I.A.M. test.



Ben Strutt



John Fagan



Keith Turner



Linda Nicholls



Lyn Alexander



Steven Laidler



Chris Knox



Wilfred Wood



Robert Dove



Kevin Patterson



William Hockaday

The Editor's thanks the following contributors to your Autumn Edition Newsletter; Eric Fitzpatrick; Ron Patrick; Lyn Alexander; Ben and Helen Strutt; Barrie Bradford; Paul Connell; Anne Rickard; Kevin Wellden. Tanja Cooper.

More of our biking couples;



June and Neil Oliver



Geraldine and Michael Sutherland



Anne and Jack Stewart

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