



Northumbria Advanced Motorcyclists



iam
RoadSmart



Chairman's Remarks



With Christmas quickly approaching, it's also the time of year that encourages us to look forward to the forthcoming year. So, I thought I'd take this opportunity to look forward to our NAM year in 2017.

Look out for the winter training events. These will include a Sat Nav discussion session, tips for winter riding seminar plus an advanced riding theory lesson. The details will be announced on the website, Facebook and forum.

During spring and summer there will be a practical event for riders and pillioners, aimed at people swapping their tips and experiences, followed by a ride out for a coffee and cake. There are also, the ever popular slow riding and bike control skills sessions at Heighley Gate and Albemarle barracks.

This year, the Observers and marketing team are going to organise a public event. Combining a social day out for members, guests and others with some training and fun events. Keep an eye out for details, or if you have any ideas about what the day should consist of, please get in touch.

Socially, we have lots of ride outs to choose from (two per month from March until October). If you haven't tried one yet, why not come along and experience great company, great roads and even better cafe's.

The Fort William weekend in May now has 61 people going! If past years are anything to go by, a lot of fun will be had... Then in Autumn we are looking to organise another end of season weekend away.

There will be the usual monthly meetings and for this year we are looking to do something a little different during the summer months in May, June July and August. We will be having the usual Fish shop runs , but we are also looking for ideas for different types of events to make the most of the light evenings. Some ideas already put forward include a BBQ and a Treasure hunt. If you have any ideas please let any member of the committee know.

On Sunday 3 September is the second Jack Lormor Memorial Ride for charity. With everyone's support we are hoping to raise even more money for the Great North Air Ambulance.

These are just a few of the events and I know that many more are being organised including a couple of trips to motorcycle manufacturers, ladies ride outs and other informal trips and get togethers.

The details and updates for these events will be published on the Website, forum and especially the NAM Members page on Facebook. The latter is a brilliant way to keep up to date with what's happening . If you are not a Facebook member then why not consider it. Over 90 members already keep in touch in this way.

Hopefully, there is something to suit everyone, and you will get involved in 2017. There is no doubt that NAM is a very active Group and that is all down to you, the members, getting involved and participating (as indeed you did in 2016). If you have ideas for other training, events, or speakers, or would like to get involved in organising or helping with existing events then please get in touch. Your help would be much appreciated by the rest of the Group

In the meantime I'd like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Mick Goodwin

Mick Goodwin

Notes from the Editor



What a year: an award from IAM confirming what we already knew that we are the best Group in the country. An unprecedented number of advanced and F1rst passes; a Masters Pass, with distinction for our Secretary, Michael Wilkinson well done everyone. If you were at the December club meeting and just read the Chariman's remarks you'll know what a great year the Club has in store for you. Meanwhile. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

A bit of my bike history...



My first bike, at the ripe old age of 14/16 was a James 125cc of indeterminate age with no kick starter! My second, but first legitimate bike was a DMV (Dudley Motorcycle Works) 197cc Villiers engine on which I passed my test in 1961; followed by a red and cream BSA B41 350cc 1959; Norton

Navigator 350cc twin 1960 and an AJS 250cc, donated by



an uncle - this one took some time to get running. It had to be totally rewired with the help of a British Rail electrician (during working hours)! I used both bikes until 1965 when they were replaced by a good old Mini.



I was re-infected with the bike bug in 1974 when I had to

commute when living in Doncaster - I had a Honda 125 which I used for four years before giving it to a friend's son.



I returned to biking in 2003 when living in Milton Keynes with a Kynco Vennox 250 twin cruiser; it looked a bit like a HD V Rod. Unfortunately, it was "totalled" in 2006 - a young woman driver did a u-turn in standing traffic - a classic filtering accident. This was the catalyst I needed to move on to bigger bikes:



2006 Honda CBF 600 - ridden daily from Milton Keynes to London all year round - total 18,000;



2008 Honda CBF 1000 - used around South Midlands, Cambridgeshire and London - 2700 miles. I must say the CBF stands for "Can't Bloody Fault" it;

2010 Triumph Bonneville...with every accessory...screen, pea shooter cans, leather panniers - used it on a trip to the Hartz Mountains, Germany totalling 1,200 miles;



2013 Honda CBF 500F in red, this was to be my last bike, a retirement present from my wife! The bike at 175kg was well balanced and easily manoeuvred. It had a simple dash - digital speed, clock, odometer, dual trip meter, fuel gauge, range and consumption and an eco-riding indicators. The bike was later recalled in order to have a fuel float replaced. I dropped the bike at

Honda Newcastle and went up to M&S Motorcycles on Westgate Road with a couple of mates...and there was this bike...!

2015 It was a Kawasaki Vulcan ABS, 649cc liquid cooled parallel twin, giving 61bhp @7500rpm, 228kg with ergo-fit options - 3 position foot pegs, 3-position gear and footbrake levers and 3 different size handlebars to suit + quite a few accessories. I changed bikes two weeks later.



The bike was built to fit me with a digital gear shift indicator, power sockets located on each side of the headlamp and crash bobbins as there was no centre stand. Hence, the further purchase of a paddock stand and wheel chock - a centre stand cannot be fitted because the silencer and "cat" are located under the engine. I've since fitted a Pugh screen, engine bars and a KAWA rack which meant removing the pillion seat; and I've just fitted spotlights.

So what's it like: sitting on the plush leather saddle-style seat with both feet firmly planted on the ground the bike looks and feels rather bulky but you are sitting "in" the bike, not on it. Ground clearance is 130mm, a little higher than most cruisers. The wheels are 18" front (180x70 300mm diameter.) and rear 17" (160x70 250mm diameter). Dual piston calliper front and single piston calliper rear brakes. The brakes are progressive and inspiring and very good in the wet. After ten months riding it's a really great bike once you get used to the feet forward position.

The 225kg weight is well balanced and easily to push around. It has a simple dash with digital speed, clock, odometer, dual trip meter together with fuel range, consumption and eco riding indicators. There is good rear view vision from traditional mirrors on the high, wide bars. The engine purrs nicely with a HD-type of grunt and handles nicely in city streets but it comes alive on the twistys and motorways. The bike is not unlike a sports tourer where handling is concerned and is quite "flickable" on the twistys. You can filter with confidence and have immediate acceleration when it's needed. The power is easy to manage and will cruise along at 70mph; for more comfortable overtakes drop into 5th for a bit more oomph!

It took a while to get used to cornering in the feet forward position with the longer wheelbase. However, the great NE roads made it easy to get used to handling the bike and, at the same time, renewed my interest in bikes which had started to wane. I have found the ideal bike for me...it's the bees knees! Anyone looking for a smaller bike just come and have a chat and a test ride if you like.

Tom Furlong



Hi, my name is Mark Hipkin. I am a Solicitor who loves all things two-wheeled. This month I had the pleasure of riding the **Triumph Thruxton R**.

I have broken one of my own rules about test riding a bike because I have read a number of articles about this model before I rode it. I usually like to have an open mind. I read the articles because I believed that the bike was a big move forward for Triumph, and looked striking.

This was another “look forward to” test ride. The day didn’t start well. It was an overcast, cold, dewy, autumnal morning and my own bike had decided, despite being on a trickle charger, not to play. Great. It was also much colder than usual and the weather forecast was wrong. It had said it was going to be a bright,

sunny day with some wind. Ideal for back road scratching on a Thruxton, I thought.

I arrived fashionably late at Triumph Newcastle and Kevin rode the bike, through the showroom, out the back, round the corner and into the forecourt. The other customers were taken aback but it was dramatic. He had to prise the bike away from a customer who wanted to sit on it and the look on the guy’s face was priceless. I later found out that Triumph can sell every one of these bikes - there is a waiting list!



The bike didn’t disappoint in its looks. Triumph has recreated, in a very well-engineered way, a modern take on the Ace Café racing bikes of the 60s. This really looks the part. It has some fantastic design details on it with some understated Triumph signs throughout the bike and the beautifully presented SHOWA state-of-the-art bronzed front forks/alloy

and red BREMBO discs and yellow ÖHLINS rear shockers. The gearbox is one of the slickest I have come across. Finding neutral was really easy in traffic. This is a very well put-together machine. I took the road from Castleside to Stanhope and, starting to leave the snow poles at the side of the road behind, I had two moments of poetic inspiration in about 500 yards. I saw a huge red kite, soaring above me, and felt how effortless and engaging my ride on this bike was. As I was entering Weardale, I could see down a cleft in the hills - three valleys, one after the other, in the distance. The black, scudding clouds were above me but, in the distance, each valley had its own apparent micro-climate with different weather in each one.

Down the gearbox and into Stanhope, I turned on to the cobbled Market Square for my second visit to a cracking little café in Stanhope run by Lee which has the tongue-twister of "Fondant & Apron Strings". It's a small café with fantastic coffee and her own customer-chosen cakes that she bakes. See my tourist pic of the coffee and fantastic mini Victoria



sponge cake. It was as nice to eat as it was to behold. She tells me that she only cooks with Belgian chocolate so it is obviously the chocolate cake for my next visit. This is a great re-fuelling stop for bikers and cyclists alike. Suitably refreshed, I was back off up the road home but decided to head towards Alston, turning right past Allenheads and Allendale, back into Hexham, and then along the A69.

The run from Stanhope to Hexham was a swooping delight. It is a twisting, turning, rollercoaster of a road, all at national speed limits, apart from the villages. By this time I had lost my natural caution on the demo bike and switched from road mode to sport. What a difference! From the outset it was like a sprinter – cracking down the straight. The bike was in its element. You could call this a Sunday ride, a back road scratcher or a café racer but, whichever way you consider it, these roads are what it is made for. The A69 drag (as is the case with so many bikes) was a bit of a problem as it was a breezy day. By this time the weather had turned in my favour but the lack of a fly-screen or a nose handlebar fairing (see the café racer and track racer packs you can buy from Triumph) made it harder to make progress back along the A69. Obviously not a motorway cruiser and, following an older Honda Super Blackbird through the twisties, the difference in the reaction of my bike, as it was a much lighter, harder sprung bike, was interesting.

There is a base model and also the Thruxton R (which was the one I rode). The only difference is an upgrading of the brakes and front and rear suspension to state-of-the-art, as opposed to Triumph's own parts. I can't comment as to whether that is necessary but all I can say is that the bike is really worth a test ride. Everything seemed to click on it after I had left the café for my return run so it's either the Thruxton R or Lee's coffee and cake

which has worked its miracle on me! You decide. I put the café into “café racer”! I can see that Triumph will have no problem in selling every one of these they can make and good luck to them. “The Best of British”.

Mark Hipkin practises at Alderson Law LLP in sunny Whitley Bay. He is a Partner/Joint head of the Personal Injury and Civil Litigation department and welcomes your e-mails or calls on the law (or two wheelers) at [wbay@aldersonlaw.co.uk](mailto:wбай@aldersonlaw.co.uk) or call 0191 2533509. We are the largest law firm in Northumberland and now have an office in Whitley Bay and cover Northumberland, North Tyneside, Newcastle and further afield. We have a nationally recognised excellence in Family Law.

Welcome to our Family Law team

We have five dedicated and highly experienced Solicitors and Legal Executives with Law Society recognised qualifications, specialising in Family Law. Between them, our team offer 133 years of legal experience. The team is headed by partners Susan Johnson and Guy Goodings. They are ably assisted by Solicitors Helen Organ and Julie Nicholson, together with Chartered Legal Executive Maureen Dunlop, covering our three offices in Morpeth, Blyth and Whitley Bay. Susan is a member of the Law Society Family Law Panel and an Accredited Resolution Specialist. Guy has higher rights audience in the High Court and is also on the Law Society Children’s Panel, as is Helen. Julie is a member of the Law Society Advanced Family Law Panel. Our team has individually between 15 and 37 years’ post-qualification legal experience each in Family Law. We believe in obtaining and maintaining nationally recognised expert levels which can only be attained by a great deal of personal experience and having to pass rigorous examinations. These are renewed every five years. They show our commitment to outstanding expertise in the area of Family Law. Our team can give advice on the sensitive, complicated and very varied elements of any family dispute, ranging from the most complicated of ancillary relief or financial asset claims between parties, married or unmarried, to pre-nuptial agreements. Leading North-East Solicitors, Alderson Law LLP introduce their Family Law team.

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We are actively involved in every aspect of Family Law including representation at the highest level in court; dispute resolution (or avoiding the need for court hearings); acting for and on behalf of children, parents, grandparents, guardians and local authorities in children's care cases. We are also experts in dealing with hostile & complex contact and residence issues. We have dealt with Hague Convention or child abduction cases and domestic violence issues. We recognise the need, when necessary, to make emergency applications to Court which range from freezing orders (to prevent assets being dissipated) to the more widely recognised domestic violence injunctions. We have considerable experience in dealing with high net worth and complicated financial family asset disputes including cases for and against company directors, business partnership members and owner-managers of businesses, together with pension splitting or sharing cases. The team, individually and collectively, recognises the need for the best advice delivered at the right time. In certain cases legal aid can be available. We are committed to obtaining the best result for our clients in every case, however complicated or difficult to resolve. We offer a real alternative to family law representation outside of the recognised city centres in the North East. Our long-standing commitment to representing our clients also means we have a unique approach to solving family legal problems.

Magic Boots

My boots from Aldi had served me well for over a year but they were never really waterproof. After a wet ride to St Mary's Loch in October my right foot was cold and sodden.

As we all do I started to read reviews on waterproof motorcycle boots, what a choice we have. I have always been interested in the TCX Gore-Tex whilst browsing I came across an article on the Visor Down reviewing sub-£100 waterproof boots.

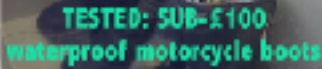
The selected boots were subjected to four tests:

Test 1: Water resistance. Can they keep water out when a full bucket for five minutes? It's all or nothing on this one, awarded if they last the five minutes, zero points given if not.



boot but
website

dunked in
ten points



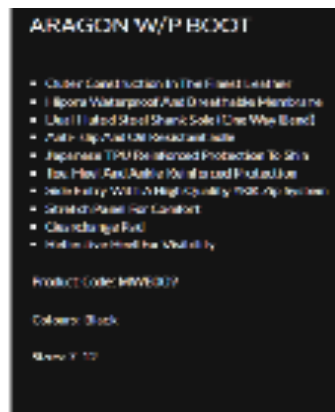
Test 3: Ease of use. How long do they take to put on, fasten correctly, and then take off with a thick winter glove? Intended to simulate the time it takes to remove boots with numb hands from the cold.

Test 4: A first-look impression rating. An overall look at the boot design, components, fabric and features.

Link to full article: <http://www.visordown.com/features/products/tested-sub-%C2%A3100-waterproof-motorcycle-boots>

After reading the article I looked into the Merlin range of motorcycle boots. I was impressed with the result of the Aragon boot in the tests, scoring 36/40 with 10/10 for water resistance. Merlin is a British company and the range of boots and clothing looks very good. If I was in the market for a jacket I would be looking at the Merlin range. I will spend some time on The Merlin stand at the Edinburgh Bike Show in March.

I like to shop local and try on kit before I buy so whilst my bike was in M&S Motorcycles getting serviced I wandered into Custom Lids, Westgate Road and asked if they stock



Merlin boots. They did and had a number of different models including the Aragon. I spent an hour or so trying on different boots and finally came down to choice of two, both Merlin.

After much deliberation I plumped for the Combat boot. It was more comfortable and had



no Velcro which I was pleased about as I don't particularly like the bulkiness of the Velcro flaps.

I have had the boots since 22 Oct and have used them in the cold and rain on my commute and on 3 observed rides, circa 300 miles. They have proved to be 100% waterproof. The

leather is a good quality and very easy to clean and polish. I have treated them with Dubbin once.

Very easy to put on, size 10 fits true, foot in then grab the top of the boot and push my foot in to get encased in the boot, pull up the zips and my calf is comfortably secured in the soft lining. I like my trousers to go over the boot and these are ideal for that, nice and narrow with no overlapping Velcro fastenings.



I do need to sit down to take them off as I don't want to use the toe of one on the heel of the other. And with one off I can't use my bare toes to force the other off as they fit so snugly.

The sole is excellent with a nice heel.



I would highly recommend these boots, especially as an alternative to Dr Martens. My ankles and lower leg feel completely secure in the boots and off the bike they are easy to walk in.

I paid £109.99 for the Combat boots, not quite sub-£100.

I will update this review at the end of next season with my long term findings.

The Merlin range can be seen on their website: <http://www.merlinbikegear.com/>

Rick Henderson

NOT MY AREA OF SPECIALISM



I've got a son and a daughter who are both Chartered Accountants, and I've got another son who manages the IT function for a large insurance company. Whats that you say?, Proud of them? Youbetcha!, but's that not why I mentioned it (but I like to mention it when I can) You see, I have to pay an accountant to submit my tax return - it's not that it's very complicated - I earn a few bob and the government takes the bulk of it. Simple and ... well, it shouldn't be complicated, its just that the HMRC rules are designed to keep the small

person where he or she belongs. Ask your Treasurer, he knows about it because he's one of them too (he's a doctor and he even lectures in it) He's one of those people who are so familiar with the accountancy and tax rules that they think everyone understands. But we don't. Surpluses, Debits, write-offs, reconciliations may be everyday parlance to the professional but not to us everyday Joes.

So why don't my children help me? "Not done tax since I trained, I'm an auditor now" says one "Not done tax since I trained, I more familiar with the US accounting rules" says the other Thanks very much both of you - can I remind you of the time that I was familiar with both Terry nappies and Pampers. I was multi-skilled in those days. And it's exactly the same with IT. I mentioned that I have a son who works in IT. No bloody help at all (hope he doesn't see this what with Christmas coming and all) "Nick, I've got a problem"; "Have you tried switching it off for 30 seconds and then on again"; "You don't know what the problem is yet"; "No, but try switching it off".

Have I tried - the switch is just about worn out I've used it so often. What I really wanted from him is a couple of those shortcuts that professionals have at their fingertips so that I can magically do everything I want to on the computer. "I've got an email problem" "Aah, well" he says - and here we have the classic professional 'get out of jail free card' - "It's not my area of specialism". "Your area of specialism?" I said, very tempted to ask just what his specialism is "I'm only wanting to add a list of emails to this circular I've written. I want to tell all of the NAM members that we have a 2016 AGM coming up. As it is, there are folk who haven't received the emails from me telling them where to go and what to do. Some people are getting cross" "AGM? 2016?" says he. "Is that a tablet or a desktop; a phone or an app, can't say I'm familiar with that model. We've certainly got none of them in my office" So I'll continue to be self taught using the trial and error method and I extend my apologies to anyone who didn't receive the emails. I'll do better next time. Perhaps I'd should ask some of the IT professionals who are also NAM members. I wonder what their areas of specialism are "Slow riding? No mate, sorry. Not my area"

Michael Wilkinson

Special Moments



The election of our new Chairman, Ron Patrick who brings a wealth off motorcycling experience to the role



The first recipient of the Jack Lormor Award for services to NAM and motorcyclingg in general, Geoff Spencer .



April Goodwin the new Membership Secretary who's replacing Roland who has stood down after years of service to NAM



Danny Holmes the new Marketing Officer who's filling the vacancy that has been vacant for too long

Oh, one last thing...

DRINK DRIVING WARNING

I know all NAM members are responsible, but this is a warning to be careful about drink driving as we are getting close to Christmas.

A couple of nights ago, I was out for a few drinks with some friends after work. One thing lead to another and I had a few too many pints and then topped it off with a couple of jaegerbombs. Not a good idea. Knowing full well I was over the limit, I did something I've never done before – I left my bike in town and took a taxi home. Sure enough, I passed a police checkpoint where they were pulling over drivers and performing breathalyzer tests. Because I was in a taxi they just waved it past. I arrived home safely and without incident, which was a real surprise - I've never driven a taxi before and I am not even sure where I got it from.

...a special thanks to Simon Parry

If there are Members who would like to share there experiences about their bikes, accessories and some good advice please email:

newsletter@nam-online.org