

MEMOIR OF THE 1977 MOTORCYCLE CLUB

MEMOIR OF JUNE 1977

Dear Member,

June is TF month and although the Hawk Authorities claim the greatest attendance of mainland motorcyclists ever our own contingent was not as large as usual.

Brian Harburton and Nev Watts were racing of course and both had quite successful weeks with replicas to show for their efforts - I was amused to read in the TF special that Nev clocked 136 mph through the speed trap on Eddie's Honda CB250 - must have been a dance on that night which Nev didn't want to miss!

Dennis Bourke, Paul Sandbach, Wilf, Diana, John Cranter and Brian Moores were all spectating and report that racing was interesting but as a holiday the five solid days of action and rain was a bit much.

I didn't go to the Island this year but for me the 1977 TF will bring very sad memories. I refer of course to the tragic death of Pete Hardy in the first Monday's practice session. Pete and Ron Hardy had become great friends of all "17" members these last twelve months and two nice men one could never hope to meet. Thinking of the many Darley Moor meetings when we've seen Pete in a different way through an afternoon's sport it's hard to believe we'll not see him again. A great sportsman and enthusiastic club member, Pete's untimely death reminds us of the dangers of road-racing once again - a broken throttle cable caused the crash and so we this makes the accident more tragic and ironic.

Our deepest sympathy goes to Tom and his mother and to members of the Ashton Club who will surely feel the loss more than most for some time. Dave and Doreen Howland attended the funeral on the club's behalf and Flowers were sent.

MEMOIR OF THE LAKES

On a brighter note, the club campin' week at Fatterdale, Ulswater was a great success. The weather was scorching and we all came back sunburnt and feeling very healthy.

Dave and Margaret Lawson took their family and mobile mansion up early on the 7th May and the rest of us arrived later in the evening. John Cranter brought a friend from work and didn't arrive until nearly 10.30. The "main party" eventually comprised of Sherran and myself, Paul Sandbach and Pete and Steve Kershaw on bikes with Dave Howard in the Ruffley - Transit following behind with all the gear.

As John promised the campsite was superbly situated at the foot of Place Fell overlooking Ulswater. Amenities were spartan but adequate and the site was very full so nobody found a flat spot to pitch their tent. The big event of Friday night was the discovery that the footlock closed at 10.30 and the bachelor brigade were soon back on the site and in their sleeping bags like the rest of us!

Saturday was a glorious day and we went a run out to Buttermere. On the way there we passed through Borrowdale and over the Minister Pass and after lunch we returned to Keswick over another high pass where Dave Lawson took some cine-film of the bikes negotiating the summit hairpin. John left us near Threlkeld to try the Old Coach Road - a green lane back to Doodray over Fatterdale Common.

Before tea we all scrambled up the hill behind the site so the movie can could shoot off some more film and later we sat down and travelled at the

beauty of the valley.

At times like that you realise what a waste it is to lie in bed till all hours at weekend (like Moses does!) and with such grand country so near to home there's no reason why we can't go camping to Cumbria or Wales more often.

Saturday saw most of us end up at the Kirkstone Inn at the top of the famous pass where the beer and pies were excellent and the clientele were all campers and climbers singing and playing in various little folk sessions inside and outside the pub.

Sunday dawned gloriously long before we woke up but soon we were burning under the sun as we prepared tasty breakfasts. The Lawsons and Tootalls spent two hours rowing around the lake and the Kershaws went off to Derwent on a secret mission to do with birds and bees. Paul, Dave and John went to a local beauty spot and waterfall and when we all arrived back for lunch our hon-secretary Dave Rowland and family were there to meet us.

After lunch with the Rowlands booked in at a B & B farm near the Kirkstone Pass and spaces allocated for Scott and friend in the west wing of Lawson's castle we all trundled off to Haweswater. The traffic was really grim by now on the main roads but nobody was interested in rushing ahead on such a lovely day. Sunday night was again spent in the Kirkstone Inn while the Lawsons and Rowlands had an evening "at home".

On Monday the party split up. Dave and Margaret were staying on for a week's holiday and the Rowlands spent the day with them, driving home in the late afternoon and getting back about 8 pm.

The bike brigade and transit set off about 11.00 at a leisurely pace coming back through the Yorkshire Dales. Paul planned a good route through Appleby, Brough, Kirby Stephen and Thwaite then over the Buttertubs Pass to Askrigg. We planned to stop at Aysgarth Falls for lunch but the place was full of coaches and tourists queuing at little tea shops and cafes. After a little council of war we set off again along Dishopdale towards Kettlewell and soon came across the proverbial farmhouse cafe where we were just in time for lunch. For 80p a head, 8 of us had an orgy of eating which made everyone very content indeed! Nearly all the food was produced on the farm. We had a beef dinner, fruit crumble and cream (a choice of 5 fruits) cheese and biscuits and farmhouse cakes!

We were so impressed that we made a point of getting the name and address and telephone number - vowing to come back soon. It was just as well we were in good spirits - the next 15 miles were very slow due to Dave in the van being caught in long traffic jams behind coaches. We bobbed on ahead and found a pub open at Kettlewell to pass the time waiting for Dave. 20 or so miles further was another big jam at Skipton but once through there we had no trouble; Keighley, Hebden Bridge, Todmorden, Littleborough and then M2 right back to Eccles and we used the new Link back to Cheadle where we all had a welcome cuppa at Paul Sandbach's.

This was a superb long weekend holiday and we all felt we had been away for ages for a very small cash layout.

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Don't miss the next trip - Wales July 5th 6th and 7th.

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As I write this our R/C-ACU trainees are gearing up for the test on Sunday June 23rd. One of our lady pupils has given me a poem she wrote about the Scheme as she sees it:-

AN 'IT' OF A TIME

By A Late Starter

There's Trevor, Paul, Virginia too  
At the course run by the A.S.U.  
To teach us motor-cycling skills  
While hoping to avoid the spills.

Trevor, with his four careers  
Grabs hold of life by both its' ears.  
It talk can get us through the test  
We know that Trev. has done his best.

He cycles, drives; he climbs and sings  
And finds some time with all these things  
No help us on our stumbling way  
Which proves that he is 'A' O.K.

There's Paul - so stern, so straight, so tall,  
His riding skill astounds us all.  
How can we fail to bring to mind  
His plea to "Always look behind".

The members of The Club suggest  
Some tips to help us pass the test.  
The local Cop. says "Keep in lane"  
And Trevor says "Go boil your chain".

With this advice - and so much more,  
I hope to chalk up quite a score.  
But if I fail - it's not in vain,  
I'd gladly take the course again.

Calendar

Sunday	June 30th	Road Trial - meet at Robin Hood (10.35 am)
Friday	July 5th	Depart for Margollon camp (7 pm Sandbach's)
Saturday	July 6th	Aces - v - Erebor - Knock Out Cup 2nd Leg
Sunday	July 7th	Club Trial - Harkensend Quarry (11.00 am)
Saturday	July 13th	Belle Vue - World Pairs Final
Sunday	July 14th	Darley Moor - Stars @ Darley
Sunday	July 21st	Road Trial

Tommy Robb has been invited to speak as Guest of Honour at the 1975 Dinner Dance - We await his reply. We hope to have more celebrities along to the club on Wednesdays now that the new large room has been opened at the Robin Hood. We would welcome suggestions from members who to invite. Approaches have already been made to Mick Grant and Mick Andrews.

Observers are required for the Club Trial at Harkensend Quarry near Huddersfield on July 7th. See Dave Rowland at the club or ring Mark Rosenthal /27 - 1755.

Cyril Jones has nearly finished his Ariel and we hope to see him out on a road trial before long. What of Dave Lawson and his project? I believe all the bike needs is an exhaust system - made to measure.

The Cranmer Motorcycle Museum continues to expand - John has got hold of a virtually brand new 1964 350 Norton single and Kelvin came home the same night on a new R50/6 BMW!

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When you read this the 1974 Stockport and District Taxi Drivers outing to Southport with the underprivileged children of the area will be over and done with. In the past the Manchester "17" IDC always provided four or five experienced riders for the convoy escort but recently we've only managed one. Surely we have more members willing and able to take a day off work to do this run - its quite enjoyable and a worthwhile exercise. The drivers by tradition think the "17" always do the job and we are getting the credit without doing the work. The day is rounded off with a party at a club or pub with free food for all helpers!

The training scheme test took place on June 23rd and 20 pupils passed. Three others failed and the rest didn't complete the course from a total of 36 paid up trainees and over 40 who came to have a look - see. The club has gained two members from the scheme - Dave and Alex - and five more are interested.

We have our fingers crossed for the entries of Mick Capper, Dave Ashton and Dave Abrahams to be accepted for the Senior Manx Grand Prix on September 5th. If all three get a ride we could be in with a chance of the Club Team Award.

Keep plugging your MGP Helicopter stickers (nothing to do with the above article!) If you haven't got any see Doreen.

Suggestions wanted for a venue for our NEXT camping weekend. A good date would be August 17/18th as the Donnington Park meeting scheduled for the 18th is unfortunately off.

All Patterdale campers got 10 Social Cup Points. Next rounds are June 30th - Road Trial and July 21st - Road Trial.

#### WEEKEND AT MANCOLLEN - JULY 5th & 7th

##### "TRACING A VINCENT IN THE MGP" (cont)

This lap was also uneventful except for an incident at the Bungalow where the twist had lifted slightly and Tom Newell came past. I tried to follow him and felt both wheels start to go on the left hander. Like many other riders, I thanked who ever it was who removed the Bungalow as I rode over the grass considerably detuned.

Back at the pits we were all very happy with the two trouble free laps. We later learned that only about a dozen riders did two laps. Tom Newell was fastest at 26 m.p.h. I got round in about 36 mins or 67 m.p.h. This was very encouraging as far as qualifying to start was concerned. The requirements are five complete laps, one of these to be done in less than 32 mins.

The next practice was 10 hours later at 6 pm. We cleaned and checked the bike, the only adjustment necessary being tighten the twist grip rubber with some tape. During the day I spoke with several other riders who all gave the same advice; basically "take it easy". Lots of people were already in trouble with blown engines and so on. One comment I remembered was "You can take Glen Vine flat out in top". The weather was warm and sunny all day and we set off on time at 6 pm. I left it in top gear for Bray Hill but rolled off the throttle for the link at the bottom. The approach to Quarter Bridge is bad, very bumpy with adverse camber on the bend and several experienced riders dropped it here Braddan was straight forward if you didn't brake too late, it came up surprisingly quickly after Quarter Bridge. Union Mills is hard to get right but Ian's advice came in useful here and off up the road I decided to try Glen Vine "flat out in top". This bend is a slight right hander, hardly noticeable at road speeds on the crest of a rise. The trouble was, I thought it was a left hander. It was just as well that my flat out in top was considerably slower than most, but later in the week when I got it more or less correct I wouldn't have liked to go any faster. In fact I became increasingly grateful for the

modest performance of the Vin as the week wore on. Had I been on the B.S.A. for instance I'm sure I would have scored myself no much that my lap times would have been slower at the end of the week. The bike was running well and I was able to concentrate on learning my way round. Troublesome spots were Sarah's and the whole section between the 11th and Kirk Michael. I know I was very slow down there.

Right from that first fast lap, the section between Kirk Michael and Ballaugh was great. Very smooth and eventually all flat out in top gear. There's a slight jump on the apex of a left hander just after the village. The apparent correct line puts you over this jump cranked right over. I had to learn to straighten up early to avoid a nasty wobble. Then the corner of a cottage seemed to attract the bike like a magnet. I have always thought of the Vin as the little 'un, but an S-bend taken at around 100 m.p.h. shows just how much weight there is. My respect for men who race 750's and the like in the Island has now increased enormously. Ballaugh was again taken with extreme caution as were Quarry Bends. The road between Ginger Hill and Ramsey is very interesting. An unexpected jump at Kerozpor is followed by a series of very similar looking bends in particular two left handers which look almost identical. The first is fast with a slight jump and the second is slower with a very slippery surface when wet. This section caused me a lot of bother. It was always a heave to pull the bike from one side to the other between the left and right handers at Whitton and then the very bumpy corner at Schoolhouse was the only problem before Ramsey. The big gap between first and second in the Norton box showed up whilst climbing out of Ramsey and I don't think I ever got Hay Hill correct. The section from the hairpin to the Goosneck was very enjoyable and it was very satisfying to get the blind double right hander of Waterworks more or less correct eventually. Flat out, away from the Goosneck I began to lose power and the engine nipped up when I do-clutched. It freed almost immediately and after allowing it to cool a little I set off again slowing intending to limp back to Douglas. After coasting down the mountain, the motor seemed to recover and so I decided to press on for a second lap. It seized again at Crosby, fortunately quite near to a pub where I was given a free pint by the landlady; very nice!

I sat in the car park spectating until the end of the session. Not a lot to see here. Very very fast, particularly Phil Haslam on his 350 cc Watercooled Yamaha. After practice I managed to restart the bike with a little help and rode back to the digs. Poto arrived back soon after to hear the sad tale.

Excited policeman, Ian Bradshaw heard of our plight and offered the use of the garage at his new bungalow. This offer was very gratefully accepted and the garage proved invaluable for the rest of the fortnight. In fact it is almost certain that the bike would not have lasted the week of practice without all the midnight oil burnt in Ian's garage.

The engine was stripped and we discovered a badly scuffed piston, broken top ring and damaged small end. We had a spare piston but, you've guessed - no spare ring! A phone call to the shop in Stockport revealed that no rings of that size were available but Martin could put some spare barrels and pistons on the boat. We managed to scrounge a ring off a Douglas Vincent owner and the bike was repaired in time for Tuesday evening practice at 6.30 pm. The weather was perfect except for low flying sunbeams which were troublesome along the stretch from Douglas to Ballacrine. The first lap was completed slowly to bed down the engine and then as I past the pits I opened it up for the dive down Bray Hill. All seemed well except that the revs were reluctant to rise above about 5,500 on the flat (a top speed of just over 100 m.p.h.)

I was beginning to get the odd sections sorted out and was really enjoying myself. I followed a rider out of Kirk Michael and managed to keep on his tail to Ballaugh.

When you are racing you unconsciously place a lot of trust in other riders. You have to assure they won't do anything very dangerous or unpredictable or else you could never risk cornering together only inches apart (and sometimes touching) at high speeds.

I had been trusting the rider in front for several miles but suddenly realised I was approaching Ballaugh far, far faster than I wanted to. The road here is a tightish S - bend with a fast left hand approach and a very steep hump bridge diagonally across the road. We were banked hard over to the left aiming for the pub wall on the other side of the bridge. I straightened up as late as I could and left it to the will of the gods. It came over beautifully, the front wheel so high I couldn't see the road and landed with just enough room to clear the wall. Every lap after that I enjoyed showing off at Ballaugh. Progress was fine until the Gooseneck. The bike began to seize again and I eventually stopped at exactly the same spot as Monday morning. Again after practice I was able to restart but this time with great difficulty as there was no compression.

The strip-down at the garage revealed a piston eaten away on the inlet side.

Back at the digs we had a meal and examined the contents of the parcel sent over by Martin and kindly collected from the docks by Janet Busby. The only 9:1 piston was the one out of the old Colet - Grey - Flash and we decided to fit this. We worked on the bike until about 3.00 a.m. then decided to give Wednesday morning practice a miss and get some sleep.

Wednesday evening practice was the most successful with three laps completed all inside the qualifying time despite wet roads and a top speed of only 100 due to the rev limit which I put down to valve bounce. At last I had qualified to start and everyone was suitably pleased. That night we had quite a celebration!

MOSES

to be continued  
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(Can he finish it before  
September? - Editor)

FCR SALE  
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L Reg. T250J SUZUKI - OFFERS @ £300. IMMACULATE  
Pete Kershaw, 5 Monmouth Road, Cheadle Hulme.  
Tele. No. 061-485-8259 - or see him at the club.

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CAMPING WEEKEND 5th, 6th and 7th July at Llangollen.  
Meet at Paul Sandbach's house 7pm.

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CLUB TRIAL - Marksend Quarry this SUNDAY - July 7th 11a.m.  
OBSERVERS WANTED!  
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C O M E C A M P I N G  
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STOP PRESS!

Paul Sandbach wins Road Trial  
Steve Kershaw fails to finish  
Results and report next month