

aamc



TREADS

The August 2009 Newsletter of AAMC

Editor's Bits

I have noticed that motorcycles are being used more in TV adverts. The latest is the one from Aviva Pension Investments, which shows a husband & wife going into a Motorcycle Dealers and purchasing a bike, clothing etc. and riding off into the distance. The oldest advert must be the female courier delivering a package who has been using an anti-cold sore cream. There seems to have been quite a lot of programmes with motorcycles, The Long Way Round; The Long Way Down; The Hairy Bikers; Nick Sanders round the world ride and if you go back what seems to be a long time The Two Fat Ladies. All we need to do now is to alter our image to the general public, which may not be quite so easy.

Keith

View from the 'Saddle'

Following on from recent comments on the government's scrappage scheme for cars, I have observed in the garage where I work a large increase in small cars being sold. Good for the dealer, but not so for the person looking for their first (run about) car after passing their test.

All the cars traded in under the scheme are to be scrapped. What a waste. We've

seen pristine older cars going to the breakers. Recently a Ford Ka with 23,000 miles and a VW Polo with 35,000 on the clock that were obviously someone's pride and joy, not a mark on them inside or out. Although it has also got rid of a lot of old Rovers!!

On more of a bike theme, having ridden in and out of Bristol for a number of years, I find it incredibly hard to believe that more commuters do not change over to bikes. Especially as bus lanes are now open to bikes, cutting journey times and making that journey far less frustrating. I see the same cars sat in traffic going nowhere day in day out. So why is it that all the riders of the future i.e. the scooter riders etc., seem to want to get into a car as soon as they turn 17 and add to the queues of traffic?

This seems to be a trend that will continue if the government and the EU's third driving licence directive due in 2013 have anything to do with it. With outlined proposals speculated to be: banning learners entitlement to ride alone without an instructor and for the minimum age for direct access being increased to 24. Alternatively take the standard route and face a power limit for 4 years! 2 with a restriction of 15bhp & 125cc, and 2 at 47bhp. Just what is the future for motorcycling? Watch out for the consultation paper due later this year.

Welcome:

We would like to welcome four new members to the club this month. Paul, a returning member from several years ago, rides a CBR 1000 and lives in Oldland Common; Andrew who lives in St. George and rides a Kawasaki Z1000; Michael (Paul's brother) who lives in Hanham and rides a Honda CB1000; and finally Clint who lives in Brislington and rides a Honda CBF1000. Clint joined at the recent Bristol Bike Show. We hope to see you on a ride or at a club event very soon. (In fact Andrew and Mike came on Simon's recent run to Henley-on-Thames.)

Congratulations:

Congratulations to Chris on passing his IAM advanced test recently. Well done Chris.

Simon's Club Bash to Germany: -

And then there were two!

Wednesday 10th June dawned dry but cloudy and 2 souls met at the agreed place close to the M4 J19. After greetings and a chat about the route, we were off – a time consuming trip around the block and we were on the M4, France beckoning. It was dry until we were around Swindon. Then the rain started in varying degrees until we were on the M25 when the heavens opened.

After a comfort and refreshment stop near Maidstone on the M20, we were on the Channel Tunnel train. 30 minutes later – Bonjour France! Or should that have been Bonplent France?!?

We arrived at our B&B at Bonavis, just south of Cambrai, soaked and glad to be there. Enquiring from Madame La Patron where the closest restaurant was, we were directed back to Masnieres. Upon studying the menu and asking for several

different dishes, it transpired the only dish available was (just cooked) beef burgers and chips, with a bit of salad. Good job we were rather hungry!

After a night of rest and awaking to fine weather, we were off across France and Belgium to the Mosel.

It was a privilege to be able to stay, with Simon, at the house of a family friend. We were able to sample some true German hospitality. It was a very memorable experience and one I shall never forget with such kind and generous hosts.

Friday had been organised for us, so in the morning we were taken for a ride up the vineyard slopes on a recently installed rack railway system, parts of which seemed almost vertical.

On reaching the summit we were able to admire a superb view and had the intricacies of viniculture explained. It transpires that rabbits, deer and a very destructive moth, as well as us humans, enjoy the produce of the vineyards.

After lunch of a hearty soup we were taken for a ride around part of the Eifel range of mountains by our host and 2 of his motorcycling mates, one in particular hustling a Pan European around the tight hairpins and bends with great aplomb! Saturday was spent just enjoying Germany, walking about, drinking wine, eating cakes – you know the sort of thing. We spent the evening at a local restaurant with our hosts and some of their other guests. Sunday came all too soon and we had to set off for home. That said, we had a great journey enjoying the long, arrow straight roads, sweeping bends and car drivers who seem to anticipate being overtaken; moving over to let you in etc. Totally different from the general attitude of our home-grown drivers.

We returned to the same B&B in France, but this time Madame La Patron's daughter directed us to a local creperie for a meal. The French can do very well when they try!! All too soon we were back in England again via the Chunnel – what an easy, quick, efficient way of crossing the channel it is!!

It was one of the best breaks I have had for some time. Many thanks to Simon for his very good company and excellent

navigation using maps I could not even see without the help of my spectacles, and for his very kind and generous German friends. Put me down for next year's trip please Simon!!

Martin

P.S. Thanks very much to Sue for typing-up this narrative from my handwriting.

And from the leader of the pack:-

AAMC Welsh Weekender 2009

On the morning of 26th June 2009 Sue and I rode to Gordano in damp conditions, going through 2 very dark clouds and heavy rain near Bridgwater. By the time we arrived the rain had stopped and it stayed dry until just before we left to ride across country to where we ended part one of the day at the White House Inn at Sennybridge. This is a superb place for a meal break if you are ever in the area, but for us a tea stop had to suffice.

Refuelling in Sennybridge, we followed the A40 through Llandovery onto the A483 to Cynghordy with the rain becoming 'persistent'. Here we turned onto an unclassified road that heads north into the Bran Valley towards Lake Brianne Reservoir. We soon passed under the reason for starting this section here, the Cynghordy Viaduct, a railway viaduct built in 1867. What is special is that the viaduct is curved, as well as very high and is part of the Heart of Wales line, carrying traffic from Llanelli to Craven Arms, Shropshire. A great sight from below as we passed through one of the 18 arches but what a view must be had from a crossing railway carriage.

We now climbed up to the Lake in drizzle, which became heavier as we continued and the usual stunning views were well hidden behind a cloak of mist. Topping about 550 metres we eventually dropped down to our lunch stop, Café Hafon,

Tregaron. Not fazed by us wet riders, Café Hafon efficiently served us some very nice food and hot drinks, before we set off once again.

We left Tregaron on the B4343 to Devils Bridge, still wet, and the A4120 to Afon Rheidol. Here we made a change and abandoned the plan to pass by the Dinant and Nant Y Moch reservoir, and took the A44 to Capel Dewi, now in dryer weather. Then through Machynlleth to our hotel, Bikers Retreat, Dolgellau.

Here we met Andy, who, for one reason or another had made his own way to the hotel. No, I promised and therefore my lips are sealed, you will have to ask him yourself. However, we soon gravitated to the bar and from there to the dining room for a splendid meal. We had a dram or two for Nick at this stage, as he would have been with us had life not been so cruel.

The next day we set out on our round Wales tour without Mark and Helen, who had their own plan for the day. Lips are sealed again! We passed through Bala, across country in the rain and mist to Betws y Coed for our tea stop in a railway carriage that overlooked the miniature steam railway. Now you might have seen a trend developing. Railways. Read on.

We rode through Conwy, a route specially selected to get some great views of the Castle and walled City, getting dryer as we went. A quick dry blast along the A55, then off to Llanberris and the famous pass through the Snowdon mountain range. We didn't stop for the mountain railway, whilst Mark and Helen gave it a miss too, we were told. We stopped for a photo session but you can't see Snowdon for mist.

Never mind we set off on the few miles more to Beddgelert and lunch. Oh yes, more food folks. Lyn's Café in Church Street is brilliant.

A lot of work has been going on around here to rebuild the section of narrow

gauge line for the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland railways. By the end of this year it should be possible to travel from Caernarfon to Blaenau Ffestiniog. (Toot, toot). We set off across country in sunshine to eventually take our afternoon tea at the Ffestiniog railway café at Porthmadog and then crossed the toll Bridge at Minffordd to take the coast road to Barmouth. The late afternoon sun sparkling on the sea was wonderful. Back to our hotel and another nice meal in great company saw the evening to a close.

All too soon we were riding towards home and much use was made of the more remote roads to get to morning tea at Rhayader. Leaving there in warm sunshine we again used rural roads towards Brecon, ending up at the Honey Café, Bronllys. A pity the whole weekend weather could not have been as warm as this day, and made all the brighter by meeting Sue and Dave H during lunch. All too soon it was time to do the last leg and we used roads more commonly known to get to Severn View, where we said our goodbyes.

So it was that another AAMC Weekender was successfully completed and, going by the emails we have received since, all enjoyed the routes. The 'T' shirts looked good, so thanks to Imprints of Taunton for that. Grateful thanks from Sue and me to everyone making the weekend as good as it was. We can't alter the weather, (although maybe the same weekend as Pilton Festival and Wimbledon was too risky) but the company was great as ever. Where will we go next year? Not at all sure just yet, but look out for TREADS in October/November for further details.

Stu and Sue

The Faggot and Chips Run

Looking out of the office window I figured that it was starting to brighten up - I

hastily packed up my things and put them in the cupboard, donned my riding gear and headed off down the A46 from Cheltenham down to the Little Chef at the Beckington bypass. The weather seemed to be holding up nicely, right until it started raining - well I thought - I'm nearly there - we'll see if anyone else braves it.

Shortly after arriving Simon turned up - then 3 other brave souls arrived. A discussion as to how long a ride we wanted ensued with views ranging from "I don't care, I'm wet already" to "Where's the Chips", at which point Simon asserted some authority and decided on a short route that would take us about an hour and a quarter (besides - the table was booked for 20:15). Gear on and off we went with Paul on his Gold Wingsque new bike as the sweeper.

Round the Warminster bypass - through the Deverills and we were starting to make some headway - through Mere (where we nearly stopped as there was a sign for Fish and Chips), through Gillingham (no sign, but boy did they smell nice - apologies everyone it wasn't my bike sounding rough - that was my stomach), through to Stoke Trister, Bruton, Evercreech and finally onto the A371 just south of Shepton - past the Showground (lots of caravans there - kind of felt sorry for them), and finally arriving at the Chip shop where we waited patiently in line to park (which is more than can be said for a certain Renault Clio !).

The Chip shop were very accommodating of 5 damp bikers (I'm still trying to work out whether Jim's damp shirt was from adrenalin, or his waterproofs not working very well), I won't embarrass those that had the "Large Cod and Chips", suffice to say you wouldn't be able to sue the chip shop under the trades description act. What did I have? - The faggots of course!

Thanks to Simon for stepping in and leading the ride, and also emailing me where we actually went - the weather wasn't too bad (cue lots of "I've had worse"), and again I discovered some new

roads (and had a few - "I'm sure we've been here on training rides" moments).

Linsey

E-mail from Si.

Hi everyone,

I just thought I would let you know that I will be leaving the UK to live in Kharkov, Ukraine on 9th August. I will be helping my girlfriend run her property business - she has had a successful company for over 8 years there. I just got back again from there this week and we have made the decision to make it permanent.

Came back last week to finalise everything. I did the sad job of putting my beloved Tiger on Autotrader and the Club website. I thought about taking it with me, until I found the Honda dealer out there and fell in love with a new CB1300S! - I know I'm fickle!

In fact I've just sold my bike, nearly cried as I watched him ride away on it 10 minutes ago!! But then I counted the cash again and felt better!!

I fly out from Heathrow next week.

Thanks again for giving me the best of times in the club. You are all a great bunch of guys and galls. I have really enjoyed every meeting.

Say Hi and goodbye to everyone from me. I will hopefully still get Treads by email until membership runs out, so I can keep an eye on what you are all up to!

Take care, kindest regards

Si

From the Club we wish you all the best for the future but I'm afraid that it's a bit too far for a club bash!!

Track Day with a difference

We have received some details from Garrad in the South Glos. Road Safety Office of a track day at Castle Combe on 16th September.

This is not the usual 'track day' but an opportunity to increase your riding skills with expert tuition and under close supervision, all at a keen price.

If anyone would like to take part, please contact Garrad by e-mail or phone.

This is a valuable and worthwhile opportunity, subsidised by the road safety office, and you should consider it carefully.

Details:

Hi Everyone,

The West of England Road Safety Partnership are working together with Somerset Road Safety Partnership to offer the Rider Performance Day at £99.

If any of AAMC would like to take part please contact me and I will send joining details. Please do not contact Somerset Road Safety as we (WoERSP) subsidise riders in our area.

Garrad

Club BBQ

On a cold but dry evening (it had been raining during the day) we gathered at the Fromeway Inn. The food was prepared by the Inn staff and there was plenty to go around (and more!) After eating outside, the evening became colder so we moved into the Inn for Coffee, puddings and more drinks.

Thanks to Helen and Mark for arranging the event and Sandra for collecting the money.

Keith

Congratulations to Mark and Helen on their wedding on the 8th Aug. All club members send their best wishes for the future.

We endeavour to issue Treads on a regular basis during the third week of the month. Therefore if you have any items to be published in Treads, can you please ensure that they reach the editor before or during the first week of that month. Contributions for Treads are always needed, whether they are motorcycle related or of general interest! Please don't be shy.