



TREADS

www.aamc.co.uk

The June 2013 Newsletter of AAMC

EDITORS BITS

– Chris

Errr...hello? New editor here.

Don't be fooled by the new look – it's not here to hide failings elsewhere! In fact the contribution to Treads this month has been particularly good with articles from various club members including an article from the TT 2013 and a bikers personal diary excerpt from a 1976 trip.

In the news recently there have been various reports on transport including the new fines for tailgating and hogging the middle lane on the motorway (see View from the Saddle). What caught my attention was the report regarding Wetherspoons' plans to build a pub at the motorway services, or rather the way in which it was reported. It began with the "pub at a motorway services" introduction which, I guess, leads most people to think it is a terrible idea straight away. You eventually find out towards the end of the report (if your attention has not faded) that the service station in question is Beaconsfield (M40) which currently hosts an Ibis hotel and very little in the way of evening amenities. Is it really such a bad idea? ■



Old citrôens – gorgeous!

Prescott Hill Climb

– Morton

Prescott? Not him again? Oh no! Well, if you want to kick him off the pages of Treads you'll have to flood our esteemed Editor with so much material there'll be no room for Morton's Memoirs.

Anyway, Prescott again, this time "La vie en bleu" – a reference to French racing blue, the colour of lots of the Bugatti racing cars on show and steaming up the hill. The whole flavour of the event was French, with loads of Citroëns (including several Maitret-mobiles), Matras, Renaults, a French bus, gendarmes, the obligatory (and excellent) accordion-player and three can-can dancers. Bugatti had brought along three – yes, 3 – Veyrons (250mph) and an EB110 (a piffing 209mph) for us to drool over.

For someone who grew up in the sixties, the array of traditional British sportscars was fabulous – I can remember the Big Healeys taking wins in The Liege-Rome-Liege rally, the Acropolis, etc,

though how they managed that with zero ground-clearance I'll never know. They thundered up the hill, some with great gobs of opposite lock at the hairpins, but as so often happens, the smoother



Big Healeys lying in wait

drivers got the better times. Some of the Sprites that followed them were just as fast, being lighter and more agile. The TVRs ranged from early Vixens, with 1600cc Ford engines to Cerberas and

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Going on holiday?

– Jim

Then be aware of some weird traffic laws in other countries!

- In Belarus it is illegal to drive a dirty car.
- In Russia it is illegal to pick up hitchhikers. [and presumably to hitchhike?]
- In Serbia compulsory equipment to be held by the driver includes a tow bar and 3m rope.
- In Spain if you need to wear glasses then it is compulsory to carry an additional pair when driving.
- Also in Spain, in some cities cars must be parked on different sides of the street according to the day of the week.

Be warned!

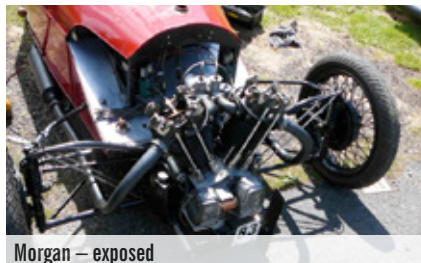
Training Ride

– Pegasus, VIB

Thanks to Jim for pushing me out of the way. My pet lady sunbathes while waiting for the RAC. As soon as he comes I start perfectly. He checks my charging and it's back to square one – previous attempts to sort me seemed to have worked at last, but no. I am just about charging ok with the heated grips but once my headlights are on I am too hungry for my charging. Well, at least we get home on my own two wheels but we don't like not having headlights on. So I'm off to V10 again this week for further prodding an poking.

➤ Prescott Hill Climb – continued

Chimaeras with Rover V8s and TVR's own flat-crank engines, the latter sounding a bit like Lorenzo's race bike – or am I kidding myself that I can detect the similarity? (Yes).



Morgan – exposed

The Morgan 3-wheelers were nearly all pre-war, with all the engine-variations: JAP and Matchless exposed V-twins, and some Family 4s (Ford sidevalve engine as used in the Model Y), one of which my mother used to drive – probably faster than her uncle, the owner, liked. Interestingly, the Morgan drivers all wore racing leathers, while the others wore Nomex or similar fabric overalls. The barely-silenced Aero racers sounded brilliant and looked really hairy, cornering just like a Brockbank cartoon (writer's age showing again!) – see www.russellbrockbank.co.uk/. By chance, the cartoon on that page would have been appropriate for this meeting: a Blower Bentley bearing down on a hard-driven Citröen, entitled "Citröen Pressé"

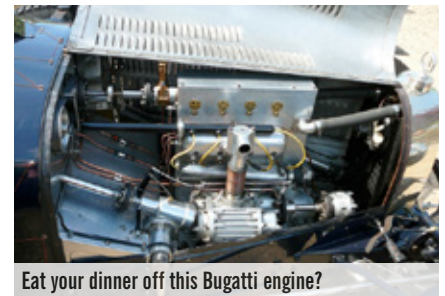


and I could have bought one of these for £350 in 1978!

The second day of the meeting promised still more pre-war Bugattis, single-seater racing

cars of all ages, and some pre-war (even pre-WWI) cars with huge aero engines, plus loads of specials. If anyone from the club went on the 2nd, I'd love to hear (or read) all about it.

Bikes? Well, there was a gleaming Triumph Rocket in metallic orange with flame stripes, a couple of Harleys, some SV650s and a Guzzi, plus a very smart FJR parked by the marshals' clubhouse. Presumably a regular, he (or she) had his own concrete slab on the grass for the side-stand. Severn Freewheelers were there as usual, with a queue of kids waiting to have their picture taken on the BMW RT.



Eat your dinner off this Bugatti engine?

Finally, to complete the modes-of-transport picture, the roar of internal-combustion engines was punctuated from time to time by the whoosh of steam and the whistle of the nearby Gloucester and Warwickshire Railway trains – a treat for another day. ■

P.S. One of the classic Bugattis was a 57SC, which looked magnificent. Classic Car Weekly tells me that a barn-find one fetched £3M (yes, £3,000,000) a few years ago!

P.P.S. On the second day the driver of a 1924 Bugatti worth £250K (yes, £.....) tried to take a hairpin too fast and rolled it, amazingly with no injuries. Once the damage to bonnet, wheel, steering and scuttle are repaired (at God knows what cost) he will resume competing in it – just as Ettore Bugatti would have wished.

View from the 'Saddle' – Tick tock

'Food for thought'

With such a awful spring, its good to see summer arrive and finally be able to ride in the warm sunshine on dry roads. Andy Smith's 2nd June ride being one of I hope many club rides with start to finish sun, a good day had by all, cheers Andy.

In the news this week the government are proposing to raise fines for speeding and using hand held mobile phones from £60 to £100. Drivers who hog the middle lane on a motorway or tailgate others will face a £100 fine with the introduction of a new fixed penalty fine for careless driving. All done to make it easier for the police to fine you without going to court. Lets hope it stops more people using their phones whilst driving as many now hold their

phone at the steering wheel and are clearly talking on speaker phone. Or the other group where the phone is in their laps and they are texting, looking up for 10 seconds then back down, not good for concentration or even the situation where you've stopped and you are hoping they look up in time to stop too!

I also read a report in a motorcycle publication recently warning all motorcyclists to check the terms of their insurance policies carefully.

In the good old days you got a reduction in your premium for keeping your bike in a locked garage, apparently this changed several years ago to stipulating that the bike must be in the garage between the hours of 10pm and 6am, if it was at your home

address or it wouldn't be insured.

Several alterations to this have occurred over the years, with this years revision of terms stipulating that your bike is NOT covered AT ALL if it isn't in the LOCKED garage and within 500meters of the premises at any time.

This means if you leave your bike outside your garage after washing it and it's stolen you are not insured. Or if you leave your bike outside after getting home to open the garage and your bike is stolen you are not insured either.

It appears there is no way around this clause so don't leave your bike out of an unlocked garage for any reason, you have been warned, check your policy.

Enjoy the sunshine, it appears it's set to last a bit longer. ■

Euippe's Cotswold Cavort – Euippe Ellery

Hurray! My owner is taking me out at last having not ridden me since last June! I have had a trip to Cambridge but ate more petrol than usual as I had a heavy bloke on board and lots of luggage. At least I was spared the rabbit otherwise I'd have had no cables left in tact!

Carenza felt very rusty at first so managed to lead out group of 4 last and was a bit de-rusted by then.

#We had an interesting diversion to an airfield. I got quite excited as the last time I was on an aeroplane was probably when I was flown over in bits in 1985, (or did I come by sea? – I can't remember as I wasn't properly born then). But no, we stayed firmly on the ground.

We stopped there as our leader Andy thought that there might be a café with loos for the humans. No such luck but a very nice biker man let them use his caravan loo, made then all cups of tea and coffee and

even produced chock chip cookies, the chick chip bits eventually melting in the sun. Their host lives there all the time and maintains everything.

Andy had provided a list of roads to take which they stuck to our tanks with insulating tape.

I was worried about my paint-work but it was ok. Some of the roads were hiding and we did a few u-turns but ended up at the right place, which was Castle Combe. Apparently we set "a blistering pace."

My owner helped around AAM, BMF, IAM and chatted to various

tradespeople including a man selling bike and car covered with a solar panel to keep your battery charged. She was quite interested. Then he was very rude about us (CBX550s): how to lose a potential customer then!

A helicopter hovered around the track filing the police bikers in their bright yellow bibs. It was National bikesafe day so they had come from all over the country. We bet they couldn't wait to go mad on the track! Then is was home time after a lovely day out. And she has been commuting on me since. ■

Visit to the 2013 TT – Tim

I asked a few locals when on the island why there has been a growing interest in the TT the last few years, most answered with Guy Martin and his excellent documentary closer to the edge along with the nightly TV coverage on ITV4. One other person I spoke to when we were sat on a grassy bank a foot away from a Superbike peeling into a blind right hand corner said "where else in the world can you do this?", this was the right answer.

The TT has stayed protected from our current world of health and safety and this allows the riders to put on a show like no other in the world.



We rode up to Liverpool from Bristol on some lovely A roads taking in the Horse show pass in North Wales, the bikes are then packed into the ferry like sardines



in a can, real cross section of bikes and nationalities on board.

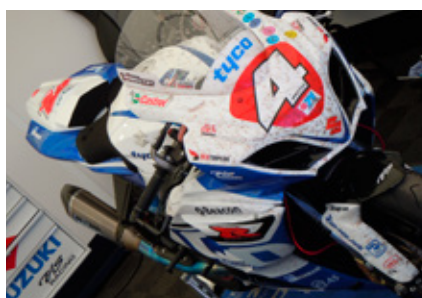
We choose to stay in a Home Stay accommodation, allowing you to use a local's house or in our case a lovely apartment. We were made most welcome and our host Ricky

took us out in the evenings to visit the TT's evening entertainment which is nearly as good as the bike racing!

You can get close to watch the racing in many places on the course we sat at Ballacraigne on our first day, you pay a fiver and you can sit in a farmer's field with his converted horse box for food and drink. The racing is out of this world, the first time you hear the big bikes approaching is scary, first thought was they will not get round the corner at the speed they are travelling at, they did and then went faster.

We rode round the course a couple of times, it's very bumpy and up on the mountain section exposed and windy, most people have respect for each other and if riding slower (like me) just use your mirrors and keep in.

It was a fantastic holiday; we were blessed with the best weather in 10 years, Michael Dunlop's domination of the racing and a genuine kindness of our home stay host. If you have not been put it on your 'bucket list' as one Kiwi sat next to me said. ■



Pegasus Goes Flying Too Almost

– Pegasus

Today is an historic day as at last the two of us solo CBX550s from the Ellery stable go out together – what a fetching pair in red and blue!

We go training again though I was incapacitated last year for most of the time. When we learn that we are going to Compton Abbas airfield, we know that this means – the dreaded zig-zag hill (the computer doesn't recognise it – does that mean something? We go very slowly up it and still end up on the wrong side of the road at one point. I am waiting for them to build a nice left, it could be in the form of one of those water/gravity things like they have at Lynmouth or somewhere.

We watch the planes come and go and Keith's trike gets a lot of attention as usual. We stay dry which is good, otherwise, not much to report on this one. I get home on my own wheels for the first time since mid 2011!

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. E-mail editor@aamc.co.uk

'View from the tail light'

– Jim

Ride report – Saturday 25/5/13

The last session of the Skills Development Course is often a club style run to familiarise course participants with riding in a group. I had already volunteered to act as back marker and had, perversely, decided to take my scooter, a Yamaha X-Max 250 – all 34 [maybe!] bhp of it. With limited power and automatic gears I only hoped that I would not keep people marking junctions waiting for too long. They were kept waiting but it wasn't my fault!

After setting off from McDonalds in Brislington the group made it as far as Bridgegate where Carezza was dropped off to mark the double mini roundabouts. When I got there I was met by a distraught Carezza saying that her old 'classic' Honda CBX550 had run out of electricity, as James May would say. There was no starting it and even if there was then there was no guarantee as to how long it would keep running for. We pushed the bike into a nearby pub car park for Carezza to wait for the RAC and I continued on my way up Tog Hill.

At the top of the hill there was Paul with his Gilera 350. He had been kept waiting for a good while due to the above and the old air cooled thumper had got hot and bothered – I think that the bike had overheated as well. Paul switched the engine off and, being Italian, the Gilera took exception to this and refused to start again. Still, it is small and quite light and was soon bumped back into life again. And on I went after stop number 2 in less than 10 miles.



Lunch break, Chipping Norton

The third stop came at Malmesbury but this was pre-planned and so doesn't really count. Johnny was marking the junction and had to leave the ride to go to work so after updating him with Carezza's woes I 'twisted and went' on my way.

I almost made it to the coffee stop just the far side of Cirencester before the next stop. John's Suzuki TL1000 was misfiring and an engine management warning light had come on. After a couple of brief stops when the bike was started again it died halfway round the Cirencester ring road and John called the recovery services.

The last two miles to the coffee stop went without a hitch with just a couple of riders going up the farm track instead of turning into the farm shop car park. Apparently they didn't understand what 'Private. No admittance' meant.

At the coffee stop Rob joined the ride as planned and had only been kept waiting for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour. The ride on up to lunch at Chipping Norton was similarly devoid of entertainment.

After lunch all went well for the first couple of miles! Paul [again] was just in front of me as we left the 40 limit into the national, but on we continued at 40. There was no other traffic and I thought it odd as it would be unlike Paul not to spot a road sign but on we pottered until Paul turned into a farm driveway. A piece of plastic that holds the visor in place had fallen off his helmet. I had seen an odd shaped bit of plastic on the road and had dismissed it as a broken part of a bumper bar etc. I about turned and went back to retrieve it, fortunately still intact. After a bit of a struggle the visor was put back in place and we set off again, Bristol bound.

Apart from saying goodbye to a few at Cirencester there were no other stops until the ride end at Tormartin.

So, if you haven't been tail end on a ride and think that it will be boring, think again! It's an essential part of the ride and can really be quite entertaining. ■

P.S. and the scooter kept up!

Extracts from a 1976 Motorcycle Diary

– Nigel

Recently, in a drawer full of rubbish, I discovered the typed-up diary of a motorbike trip I made as a teenager. It's not particularly riveting, but it has some points of interest which a trip of this sort is bound to generate. Extracts from the actual diary in italic font.

It's April, 1976. James Callaghan is the Labour Prime Minister, British Leyland has just introduced the new Rover SD1, Sid James is just about to die of a heart attack on stage, and I am preparing to embark on an ambitious "round the world" motorcycle trip. Brotherhood of Man were 4 weeks into a 6 week stint at Number 1 with "Save Your Kisses For Me" a fact alone that was reason enough to leave the country for a while. I had just turned 19, I thought I knew everything, but in reality I knew '...eff-all about eff-all'.

I had been interested in motorcycles for as long as I can remember. My father had been a motorcyclist in his youth and was disparagingly described by

his future mother-in-law as "... that man on that old motorcycle" although this was sometimes recounted as "...that old man on that motorcycle." The films "On Any Sunday", "Easy Rider" and a US TV series called "Then Came Bronson" about the adventures of a lone motorbike rider convinced me as a boy that life as a modern day "Lone Ranger" was my calling just as soon as I was old enough to ride.

So, mid 1975 I left my poorly paid job as a trainee draughtsman and went to work as a builder's labourer, thinking I would earn plenty of money for my grand trip. However, after 6 months of hard toil, even this naive teenager came to the realisation that his



Rover SD1

savings were certainly not going to take him all the way around the world. So, I finally decided that I would head out, take whatever money I had saved and then turn around for home when half of it was spent. It seemed logical at the time.

Looking back, planning and preparation were sadly lacking. I joined the International Youth Hostel Association, bought a big Ordnance Survey map, and spent a day in London trawling around various Foreign Embassies and Consulates. I assumed that I when I walked in and declared I would be visiting their wonderful and exotic countries on my motorcycle, they would welcome me with open arms, pat me on the back and load me down with useful tips and travel information. Instead, I got vacant looks from the security guards and dismissive rejections from the receptionists. I can see their point of view now; here was a wide-eyed, long haired teenager with a Canadian accent and clad in a greasy Belstaff jacket arriving un-announced and without an appointment. I returned home from London undaunted and made ready for my journey.

My bike was a green Honda CB250 from about 74 or 75. A top box but no fairing or panniers; not even a windscreen. A luggage bag, various bits and bobs and a camera case were strapped on with bungee

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Honda CB250

➤ **1976 Motorcycle Diary — continued**

cords. I was a keen photographer then, as now, and I had an Asahi Pentax SP500 with a 135mm telephoto lens which I took with me.

So, with my Travellers Cheques in my pocket, my strategically folded OS map in the top of my tank bag, I was off!

*DAY ONE**TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 1976**Chipping Sodbury to Dover**Days mi.- 218**Total mi.- 218*

Weather couldn't have been better first day out. Nothing spectacular. Same old freaks trying to run you off the road. Very windy. Slipstream most of the M4 to save petrol. Rang up Dover Youth Hostel from Maidstone to check on state of bookings; not full so press on all the way to Dover. Stopped at Slough. Only Steven and Anthony

there. Cup of tea and off. London very hot, slow, fummy. Didn't stop. A20 to Folkstone then up coast to Dover. Hostel filled for tonight by Germans. Chatted to one Australian.

Well, you can see that safety was not my prime concern. The thought of slipstreaming down the M4 now makes me shudder. In Slough lived my Uncle Henry, a real character and my favourite uncle, but alas, I had failed to let him know I was coming, so I missed him.

*DAY TWO**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 1976**Dover to Criel, France**Days mi.- 166**Total mi.- 384*

Left Dover under overcast sky. Drizzle kind of weather (but it didn't) A bit chilly. Caught 10:05 ferry. Arrived at docks at about 9.25. Didn't even want to see my ticket. ("You have an honest face even though I can't see it behind that helmet"). Rocky ride on ferry. Ride off ferry amid Yankee choir group walking off. First out. A bit chilly for the first while but OK once sun breaks out. Stop at Amiens to see immense cathedral. Arrive at Criel to find I've lost an hour. (Something to do with the difference in summer time). On to Paris tomorrow. Meet a Triumph riding Londoner and his girlfriend who've been to South of France on £190 for three and a half weeks. French drivers better than English. More respect.

To be continued... ■

Move over Rossi, PC Plod coming through!

— Reprinted with permission from *Motorcycle News*, May 2013

The rider in front is smooth. The kind of rider who looks like he isn't going very fast... but he is.

There is no lairy, scary hanging off. Just knees and elbows-in swings from one bend to the next.

At each corner-entry the bike is perfectly positioned on the road to give its rider the best possible view through the corner. Then follows a smooth glide to the apex and a wind of the throttle as man and machine surge onwards. Cars are dealt with swiftly but sensibly with plenty of room left for unexpected swerves from a startled driver.

There's no stomp of the gear lever or crack of throttle to give jerky and aggressive acceleration. It's all well-planned and the rider is

obviously looking and thinking as far ahead as his senses allow.

'Here was a living, breathing, riding example of how you can progress at pace without scaring the bejesus out of yourself

ANDY CALTON

I can just about keep up but I can't overtake. Not that I would, even if I could - he's a policeman! I'm concentrating too much to look down at the speedo but it feels like we're going pretty fast.

I had been acutely aware of my speed as I headed back towards Skegness after the rideout from MCN Live at Butlins. Lines Police had been out in force, helping us safely steer over 200 riders on a 30-mile meander through some

stunning, sun-soaked countryside.

On arrival at the allotted destination, a motorcycle-mounted officer made it clear there'd be a few of his colleagues riding around the area, ensuring everyone was 'behaving themselves' on the ride back to Skeg-Vegas. Hence my earlier concern over velocity.

The police rider in front seemed happy enough, though. He was more interested in how well his fellow two-wheeled friends were riding than how fast they were riding.

And he was a living, breathing, riding example of how you can progress at pace without scaring the bejesus out of yourself and those around you. ■

Speed!

– Bob Smalley, ROSPA Chief Examiner

When discussing the various aspects of the system at a recent Skills Development session the topic of 'speed' was discussed with particular reference to the need to show the ability to 'make progress' at or near the legal limit, rather than riding at a somewhat lower rate.

This matter has also caused a fair amount of debate within ROSPA and the letters page of their publication 'Care on the Road' has printed several from ROSPA members / examiners.

There follows here the correspondence from Bob Smalley, the ROSPA chief examiner, that hopefully clarifies the issue;

'I am frequently asked to interpret our guidance to examiners regarding the application of our policy on the use of speed expected by candidates taking our advanced / riding test. The recent correspondence in Care on the Road on issues relating to speed have prompted me to clarify our position.

Dealing exclusively with the test and making the assumption that the candidate is fit and the vehicle is suitable, the examiners are given guidance on how to arrive at the three grades that can be achieved by the candidate.

It is important to stress that this is a test requiring the candidate to demonstrate 'system' driving / riding according to the principles set out in Roadcraft. The use of

speed is an extremely important part of the 'system'.

We often hear that 'speed kills' and also the retort that it is the misuse of speed that is the real killer, both are an over simplification of the problem.

It is, therefore, most important the examiners give close attention to the choice of speed that the candidate makes as they move through the variety of road, weather, and traffic conditions that challenge them throughout the test. These choices must be made within the posted speed limits, demonstrating an ability to choose the correct safe speed within those parameters. This may be and often is well below the posted limit, but also demonstrating progress up to the limit where appropriate.

There are two overriding principles stated in Roadcraft that are worth repeating.

Firstly: "Always drive so that you can stop safely within the distance that you can see to be clear". It is anticipated that the updated edition of Roadcraft will reintroduce the words "on your side of the road" which ROSPA has always advocated.

The other principle is: "Always drive within your competence, at a speed which is appropriate to the circumstances."

I hope that this has provided the necessary clarification.' ■

Good Cause

Dear All,

Please find following message from Andy about helping the Freewheelers Charity to win £2000 by voting for them online.

They need all the help we can give.

Congratulations! The charity or cause, Freewheelers EVS (Blood Bikes), which you put forward, has progressed through to the voting stage of The Big Break's '100 good causes' initiative.

Anyone can vote for you by visiting your page online. Here is your unique link - make sure you share this URL with your supporters and in any promotion that you do, so people can click straight through to your voting page:

<http://email.swordfish.co.uk/t/y-l-truhet-ykwdttkil-x/>

To help you maximise your votes, we have prepared a page full of handy hints, which you can view here. Plus there is a selection of web buttons for you to use online and on social media.

The cause with the most votes at the end of this month will receive a £2,000 cash donation from Direct Debit. The runner up will receive £1,000, and the next 8 will get £250 each.

It's all part of our plan to give 100 good causes their very own Big Break. But you only have until 30th June to get all your votes in, so don't delay!

Good luck!

The Big Break team

So lets have your votes!

Parish News

– from the Vicar

Martin

Just after the last Treads, I received an e-mail from Club Member Martin telling me he had recently suffered a heart attack, so we wouldn't be seeing him out with us for a week or two. Luckily, as it happened, he realised what was going on and got straight to hospital where he underwent an operation during which they fitted two stents. He tells me he is now being very good and obeying all the doctor's orders. Believe that if you will! Anyway, I'm sure you will all join with me in wishing him the speediest of recoveries, and we hope to see him out on two wheels again very soon. ■

Barbecue

The Club barbecue will be upon us in a few weeks, and you will find further details and an application form enclosed with this issue. Please remember the new date of **Saturday 20th July**, which has been changed from the date published in the Diary. All eventualities are covered for inclement weather with undercover cooking arrangements in place, if necessary. Don't forget to come early so you can use the heated swimming pool. I'll be first in, as usual... ■

Fish & Chips

I'll be running the annual fish and chip ride again this year to that rather good establishment in Shepton Mallet, on the evening of Thursday 4th July. This is usually one of the best attended events we hold. I can't imagine why! There is no need for you to book with me in advance, but I need to book the group as a whole with the restaurant, as they are always packed. If you would prefer to make your own way there, please let me know in advance so I can add you onto my booking. Thanks very much. ■

Are you Buying?

I find it incredibly difficult to source good information about general bike stuff and internet forums can be a nightmare. Should I ask someone at the bike shop? Which shop?

I am far more likely to listen and trust comments from people

within the club, especially those with more experience than me.

If you are thinking of buying a bike or some gear? Drop Treads a line and let us know what, why and how. Any tips for the rest of the club? What to look out for? Pitfalls?

Even if it is just a pair of gloves – write a few lines in an email, it doesn't have to be War and Peace! After all, we are all forking out plenty of our hard earned cash for this stuff and it is so much better when we get it right. ■

Ride report

– Chris

Wet. Fortunately I have a bit more room than for just one word. Only 3 of us showed up at Churchill for Paul's planned ride to Exmoor which was, in Paul's own words, "flexible". I suspect many were scared off by the expected weather.

We set off about 10.20 via Shipham, Cheddar and Wedmore. Quick

looking roads but very bumpy across the levels with initially light rain made things a little more hazardous. Then the rain really began to settle in much earlier than expected. It was getting miserable. A quick chat at Bridgwater and we all agreed to get to the first coffee stop to see how things panned out.

One of the group, tempted by a warm sofa and Moto GP no doubt, decided to call it a day. After a lengthy tea break (the service was 'interesting') the remaining

3 decided to head back to Bristol via Bishops Lydeard and an 'un-made' road over the top. The GS handled the surface pretty well although I think the Fazer was less comfortable but a welcome break from the traffic.

Whilst wet and cold I still enjoyed the ride – the conditions certainly focused the mind. Many thanks to Paul. I am only sorry the conditions didn't make for a longer day. ■

Letters

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COURSE 2013

Hi Simon

I am going to have to give my apologies for the final sessions tomorrow night and Saturday, following my 'incident' last Saturday morning before the ride.

The good news is, I have not broken anything, the bad news is that I have snapped my Achilles tendon and will be in plaster for 6 to 8 weeks and a support boot for 4 weeks after that. Therefore it looks unlikely that I'll be able to ride again until the Autumn.

Upon close analysis of what happened, I think that after I pushed the bike out of the garage, I stood on the footpegs and bounced a couple of times to check suspension and brakes, as I always do, and the surgeon who dealt with me suggests that I probably broke the tendon doing that and then couldn't support the weight on my leg as I got off the footrests and fell over??

On the bright side, I received my copy of Treads, so will try to come up with something entertaining or interesting for the next issue.

I would just like to say how much I enjoyed the rides and the instruction evenings and feel I have learned a tremendous amount and met some great

people. I am hoping to be mobile enough to attend the BBQ at Carezza's in July but if not look forward to seeing you in the future.

Kind regards

Al

MOTORCYCLE TRAINING DAYS

Hi Simon

Thanks for the heads up about the training day, I had a good day out on Saturday on a one to one basis we covered areas that I felt the IAM didn't really cover.

Thanks again, Guy.

Something to say? Please don't be shy. E-mail editor@aamc.co.uk And send some photos in too!

Diary

June

Wednesday 19th
Sue

Evening Ride.

Thursday 20th
Stuart

Weekday Ride.

Wednesday 26th to
Sunday 30th
Simon

Club Bash to Brittany. Pre-booking with deposit required before April.

July

Thursday 4th
Simon

Evening Fish and Chip Ride to Shepton Mallet.

Saturday 20th
Mark

Club Barbecue. Further details and an application form in June TREADS.

Sunday 7th
Tim

Club Ride to Devon.

Wednesday 10th
Andy

Comedy Walk entitled 'Bizarre Bath'.

Thursday 11th
Stuart

Weekday Ride to Dartmouth.

Sunday 21st
Mark

Club Ride.