TREADS

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The August 2013 Newsletter of AAMC

EDITORS BITS

– Chris

So this summer started with my first RoSPA retest well and truly on the horizon.

The day arrived and I spent the late part of the morning checking the bike over, topping up the tank and just making sure everything was in a good state so all I had to worry about was the test itself.

A 90 minute ride just to get to the start of the test began in bright sunshine. It didn't last long – the heavens opened and a thorough soaking was inevitable. By the time I arrived at Nunney catch it was bright sunshine again and the only sign that it had rained was the wet patch on the seat.

The test started in sunshine but with a few miles left to go lightning put in a 2nd appearance and it tipped it down again – the rain reduced the line between the road surface and the rest of the world to a grey blur. Finishing at The Little Chef at Beckington for the debrief we managed to dry off (a little).

So what to expect on the ride home? Yep, after drying off a second time that day I was destined for a third soaking. The 3rd time didn't bother me though as I was really chuffed with a pass!

Midweek Dartmouth Ride

– Stu

Thursday 1 August 2013 was notable for the only day of perfect weather that week. The other days were wet and overcast so a good choice. Well, not really. A poorly bike a few weeks earlier meant that we had to rearrange the ride to this date.

I had a plan and had even done a recce on the parts of the ride that I was unsure of. Starting a touch late we rode across the Blackdown Hills towards Honiton. What was meant to be a short stint on the A30 dual carriageway turned into a longer stint. I had not known about the Honiton Show and the route we intended to follow, the old A30 was blocked with queuing traffic. So, I decided to carry on to Exeter and join the A379.

Oh dear. On arrival at the junction, more long queues. From the M5 we could see the traffic filling all lanes heading towards Dawlish. I decided to carry on past Exeter and join the A380 towards Paignton and then on towards Kingswear. Sorry guys for the long stretch of dual carriageway. However, I later learnt that a fatal road accident had closed the road for several hours.

However, we arrived at our target lunch stop earlier than planned, which meant we could leave earlier than planned. The National Trust property Coleton Fishacre has a fantastic garden by the sea; an 'Arts and Crafts-style' house, featuring Art Deco-influenced interiors; a great café and garden shop. The house was built by

Rupert D'Oyly Carte, best known as proprietor of the Savoy Theatre and Savoy Hotel, Claridge's and the Berkeley Hotel.

By now the sun was well and truly baking hot. Suitably replete we set off with the intended route taking us towards Bovey Tracey, skirting the edge of Dartmoor to Whiddon Down and from there to our afternoon tea stop at Bickleigh Mill, near Tiverton.

First goal was to the Lower Ferry crossing the Dart from Kingswear to Dartmouth. Hardly 'all at sea' but a swift crossing and a tour of the town's narrow streets soon saw us on our way along the A384 and A382.

I have never known a ride where I have come up behind and had to follow so many slow moving vehicles. Every road that we turned onto we very quickly found farm vehicles, Lorries and people whose legs are too short for them to reach the accelerator. Needless to say, a pleasant cooling airflow was not reaching the extremities and therefore a very hot group pulled into Whiddon

Cross services to refuel. The excitement was enhanced when a visitor to the area dropped his bike when moving it from a pump. Very unfortunate but nothing major damaged that could not be fixed.

We then used the only stretch of road occupied only by us, the old A30 from Whiddon to Tedburn St Mary and so some very 'smooth' riding was called for. Turning off that road towards Crediton and normal service was resumed behind a delivery lorry.

A piece of opportunism was called for when dealing with oncoming traffic. It is a move that Roadcraft does not detail, and in my view is a serious omission!! Fortunately everyone in our group had been on the same training course, so

we were soon in second gear again.

Arrival to Bickleigh was about 40 minutes later than the plan (?) and a number of phones were used to transmit pleadings to extend the 'out alone' pass. After refreshing drinks (goodness it was hot) we rode up to the junction with the M5 at 27 and departed on our different routes homewards. So, another sorry to those left at home whilst we were out enjoying some wonderful weather and fabulous scenery.

Thanks to everyone who came out to play on this the last of my weekday rides for now. ■

Photos...

Some photos from recent rides. A couple from the Hereford & Worcester ride below (sorry, no write up on this one!) and 4 from Tim's North Devon ride (right) which arrived a touch late for the July issue of Treads.

View from the Saddle

– Andy

This is one of my favourite anecdotes about Motorcycling, although it could equally apply to any pastime, of course:-

"You start with a bag full of luck and an empty bag of experience. The trick is to fill the bag of experience before you empty the bag of luck."

The more you think about that, the more prophetic it becomes.

Motorcycling is a skill (well at least it is if we are to survive, or remain uninjured whilst motorcycling) that we all continuously develop and improve as we gain experience. But how do we gain that experience? Roadcraft tells us that, "Every near miss and accident needs to be seen as an opportunity to re-evaluate and improve your riding technique."

We all make mistakes from time to time, the consequences of which vary depending upon the situation and circumstances existing at that exact moment, but for Motorcycling the consequences may be disproportionate to the level of the initial error.

We will all recognise those SMIDSY moments when we are baulked by another road user. But do we just consider the other driver/rider to be at fault? Or do we consider, what might I have done differently, or what would I do differently in future to avoid a recurrence? There is usually something we could do.

Observing an oncoming Cyclist is another observation link that identifies a serious hazard for us. Whilst a cyclist is narrow and not particularly threatening to us, that cyclist is a relatively slow obstacle for traffic approaching from behind. Increasingly these days that traffic observes the cyclist and regardless of oncoming traffic, whether it is you on your bike or an 18-wheeler Artic, that traffic pulls out to overtake the cyclist. We therefore need to consider those cyclists in our repertoire of experiences.

July 2013 has seen a heat wave for the majority of the month. We all know that rain after a long dry spell results in slippery roads. On the 27th the rain came and even though I had considered that the roads would be slippery and ridden accordingly, it was not until about 20 miles into a 25 mile journey that I had a "moment". This will remain with me for some time and after some self-analysis and given the amount of riding I have done in wet weather over the past year or two, I did not do anything unusual. I believe that at that time, in those conditions, that particular section of road was exceptionally slippery and I poured a lot of luck into my bag of experience! I shall however be extra vigilant when riding in the wet in future.

One of the benefits of the Club is that hopefully we may gain some of our experience collectively as a group rather than having to go it alone.

Finally, if you have read this far, may I ask that if you are going to use your luck, make sure that it goes directly into your other bag! ■

It's Open!

– Simon

I'm pleased to tell you the excellent café in Nunney has now reopened under new ownership, following its closure earlier this year.

I always found the café to be in a very convenient location for a shortish ride from Bristol or a coffee stop whilst out training, and was very disappointed when it closed, forcing me to use the nearby transport café with its chipped and dirty mugs (luckily just on the inside).

The new owner is doing his best to get it back to a high standard and is keen to encourage new customers. They have a good selection of home-made cakes and light meals, as well as the expected modern range of coffees, teas and other drinks.

It's right in the middle of Nunney, next to the bridge, at the top of Castle Street, so very easy to find.

I heartedly recommend you try it.

P.S. I have no connection with the café apart from being a satisfied customer.

Fish & Chip Run - 4th July

– Simon

The annual fish and chip run to Whitstones in Shepton Mallet is usually one of the best attended Club functions of the year, and this year was no exception. The weather makes a huge difference, of course, and July was a really warm, sunny and dry month. So seventeen of us sat down in the restaurant to a really good meal. The quality of the fresh fish is second to none, and the chips aren't half bad either!

Trying to find different roads each year from Bristol to Shepton is becoming more of a challenge, but I did manage to slip in one or two. We left Brislington and skirted Keynsham before getting on the A368. Straight across Chelwood Bridge roundabout had us heading to Bishop Sutton, where I unexpectedly turned right through some back lanes and we rode past the Chew Valley Lake picnic area and across the dam into Chew Stoke. Here we turned left and passed the other side of the lake, then on up Harptree Hill. We passed the Wellsway Inn and Castle of Comfort before turning left at the Miners Arms (which was a very famous restaurant serving local snails when I grew up in the area). We continued straight across the traffic lights at Green Ore and the next crossroads before I took another unexpected right turn towards Masbury. At the T junction at the bottom, we turned left past the Rocky Mountain nursery and tea room and followed the road along the top of the hill to the crossroads with the A37 above Shepton. Here we went straight across towards Whatley and Mells, then turned right at the staggered junction to Cranmore and thence back into Shepton.

When we arrived at Whitstones, Keith and Val had just beaten us to it. Apparently the restaurant was pretty full when they arrived, but everyone was shooed out on the dot of 8 to make way for our group. That left plenty of room in the car park and restaurant for us. Great. Another really enjoyable trip and meal.

Thanks to everyone for supporting this event.

BMW Comfort Shell - a brief review

– Chris

I purchased the BMW Comfort Shell jacket and trousers just over 2 years ago after much deliberation about buying some kit – do I go for leather or not? All year round kit or not? etc. etc.

To keep this brief here are a few of the key boxes I needed to tick and a score out of 10 for each (in no particular order). Also bear in mind this is designed to be summer kit and I wear it all year round:

Waterproof – 8. This is generally excellent although on the last ride (120 miles in torrential rain) there was a leak through the fly which looked like I'd had a little accident!

Lightweight – 9. Very light.

Windproof - 9. Only the closures around the wrist would let this down as it is a velcro wrap. There are also 4 shoulder vents (2 front and 2 back). I generally overheat but these suited me well.

Warmth – 4. This is sold as summer gear so I can't really score highly on warmth however layering up in December and January answers these questions very well. Wear thin under-layers in the rain and the heat is drawn away from your arms very quickly.

Cool in the Summer – 8. On a trip to Italy the temperature reached 40°C and the kit was pretty good at keeping me cool.

Protection – I can't really comment as I haven't tested this (and I hope I don't need to) but there are elbow and back protectors in the jacket and adjustable knee protection in the trousers. The trousers also have hip protectors.

Comfort – 8. the protective inserts are a little stiff when putting on the gear cold but after a short while your body heat softens them a little and they mould to your body position. I don't get any pressure on the knees or elbows at all and I rate this high for comfort.

Not an exhaustive review by any means and just one opinion but if you are after gear that is suitable for most of the year and you don't mind layers this might be worth a look.

THE CATALYTIC CONVERTER
History and a Little Politics

– Mike

In the motor engineering world of the 'seventies little thought had been given to a fundamental reduction of exhaust emissions until the US market required the catalytic converter and its associated unleaded fuel. This was then foisted upon the European automotive public as a result of our politicians' wish to be seen to be doing something – anything – rather than waiting for the promised lean-burn technology, but it is here to stay for the foreseeable future. I have little doubt today's children show us that freedom from automotive lead emissions is not related to intelligence, although at the time it was heralded as being responsible for the ills of a generation.

In spite of the fact that catalytic converters were available from BMW as an expensive option in the UK for several years, and were standard equipment on all new models since 1990, few of us know much about them, as they are hidden within an apparently ordinary exhaust system.

The basic purpose of a catalytic converter is to reduce the levels of hydrocarbons, oxides of nitrogen, and carbon monoxide in the exhaust gas by means of a high-temperature chemical process, which converts most of them into carbon dioxide, nitrogen, and water. The necessary heat is initially provided by the exhaust gases, so starting the reaction which liberates more heat to raise the temperature still further, resulting in a faster reaction which produces still more heat, until maximum efficiency is achieved at about 600° Centigrade.

As produced in their original form, during the late nineteen-seventies, catalysts were based on a ceramic honeycomb structure, coated with platinum and palladium. A typical converter has a total active surface area in the order of a quarter of million square feet!

These early catalytic converters soon gained a reputation for expensive fragility, as even a backfire caused by the associated weak mixture required in engines of the period could shatter the honeycomb. Driving through deep water could also damage the honeycomb, due to its sudden cooling effect, while being hit by a stone spelt the end for many converters. Attempts to strengthen the structure by increasing its thickness resulted in excessive thermal inertia, which increased the time taken for the converter to reach its working temperature. As with any chemical reaction, the conversion process operates better at high temperatures, and in short commuting use these old units were ineffective.

Subsequent development led to the converter being insulated and protected by an external shield, while the ceramic honeycomb was replaced by a thin metal structure of high mechanical strength and low thermal inertia. This design has increased reliability, and when coupled with the addition of Rhodium to the coating, improved conversion efficiency and reduced the warm-up period, making modern converters more effective under low speed and short distance conditions.

The low cross-section of the metal structure also reduced the exhaust restriction imposed by the converter, which had been

Typical spiral-wound converter core

responsible for a substantial loss of performance. Some manufacturers even developed electrically pre-heated converters to improve 'cold' performance. Several car manufacturers, such as BMW, often fitted two parallel catalytic converters, such as on their later six-cylinder engines, so reducing the exhaust restriction still further.

In spite of these wonders of metallurgy, the converter remains at the mercy of the exhaust gas; the coatings can be 'poisoned' by the use of leaded fuel, or by an engine which is burning oil, particularly if the oil contains zinc, tungsten, or phosphorous-based additives. These additives were popular as a boundary lubricant to provide protection for highly-loaded components during cold starts, but their use was drastically reduced in oils from the 'SJ' approval classification onwards. These later oils are therefore not suitable for engines prone to cam and follower wear.

Large uncontrolled converter for 450bhp MAN truck engine

Any unburnt fuel, such as may be admitted to the converter when unsuccessfully attempting to start the engine, can – after starting – raise converter temperature to a level where the honeycomb will melt, partially blocking the exhaust, and promoting other damage such as burnt exhaust valves. Such unused fuel is reduced in many modern engines by a camshaft position sensor, which at low or starting speeds signals the injection system to supply fuel only to those cylinders about to fire.

The life of a modern catalytic converter can exceed the usual life of the vehicle, as was proven by the Mobil 1 endurance test, where (under ideal conditions on a test bed) a BMW E30 325i covered a million miles, during which the converter was replaced at 200,000 mile intervals.

Although many manufacturers, such as BMW, will 'trade in' old catalytic converters, few will sell them as separate items, preferring to only provide a complete all-welded system, but they are available from specialists.

The characteristics of the modern catalytic converter are therefore as efficient as the sum of its design and use of precious metals can permit, but its output quality is dependent upon that of the exhaust gas produced by the engine. Such a converter is known as an 'Open Loop' type, for reasons which will become obvious, and is now mainly used on diesel engines, which produce far smaller proportions of the same emissions as petrol engines.

With the application of increasingly stringent emission control legislation during the 'eighties, most car manufacturers adopted electronic fuel injection systems, so setting the stage for the next development of the catalyst. This took the form of a probe – generally known as a 'Lambda' probe – which was developed by Bosch during the early 'seventies. The sensing element consists of a zirconia-ceramic cylinder, coated with platinum, which senses the level of oxygen in the exhaust gas. A weak mixture, for example, will contain a surplus of oxygen, while a rich mixture will have very little.

The probe is inserted into the exhaust system ahead of the converter, where it is able to sample the quality of the basic exhaust gas, and send an appropriate signal to the injection system. The probe signal is operative from idling speed, and is able to modify the exhaust quality to ensure optimum low speed performance as the condition of components such as spark plugs and injectors deteriorate. When the engine is operating at high load – from about two-thirds of full throttle – the probe signal is ignored to protect the engine, the injection system enriching the mixture to suitable levels.

Modern manifold-mounted converter

The probe output, of course, is a feedback signal, and in monitoring the exhaust output it is used to modify the injection period, and also in many cases the ignition timing, to control the basic exhaust quality. This basic exhaust - probe signal - injection control - modified exhaust cycle is referred to a closed control loop, and therefore this type of converter is known as a 'Closed Loop' device, as is fitted to virtually all modern cars and many motorcycles.

American regulations now require a second Lambda sensor to be positioned behind the catalytic converter to monitor its performance, as a healthy converter will reduce the level of oxygen in its exhaust gas.

Remember that the converter uses excess oxygen to change carbon monoxide into carbon dioxide, hydrocarbons into water, and oxides of nitrogen into nitrogen – a failing converter will have an excessive level of oxygen in its output.

In normal conditions 30,000 to 50,000 miles is regarded as an average life for a probe before soot accumulation reduces it effectiveness, while the self-cleaning heated probes introduced in 1998 can last as long as 100,000 miles. During one of the UK's periodic petrol shortages , many drivers filled up with leaded fuel, which can be guaranteed to destroy both catalytic converters and lambda probes, while a recent petrol contamination problem showed that a probe can be 'poisoned' by even a small level of silica content. For this reason joints in fuel systems must not contain silicone rubber, while the use of silicone grease to fit 'O' rings etc is also proscribed.

It is interesting to see that this technology is also used to monitor oxygen levels in the mixed gases used by deep divers and anaesthetists, where rapid and accurate control has life-dependant considerations.

In a world where emission requirements are being progressively tightened, it is ironic to consider that when the currently projected exhaust emission regulations come into action, engines will be required to produce exhaust gases which may be purer than the ambient atmosphere in which they operate!

It is now over twenty years since the German government gave notice of their intention to withdraw Type Approval from all vehicles not fitted with catalysts, should atmospheric conditions deteriorate sufficiently, with similar legislation being prepared in France, and no doubt also in the UK . . . just in case it is useful.

Initial targets will no doubt be the many motorcycle engines which are at least as large as those in a small car, and whose fuel consumption is appreciably higher. When we also consider that most motorcycle use takes place in urban areas, it is inevitable that the level of untreated exhaust emissions produced by them will come to the notice of governments. It is possible that legislation may require the fitting of uncontrolled catalytic converters, but the associated cost means that many will be scrapped.

Other targets will doubtless be 'Historic' pre-1970 vehicles, such as those currently granted freedom from Vehicle Excise Duty, and which are currently on the road at the pleasure of Her Majesty's Government. It would only take the stroke of a pen for this dispensation to end, as the right of such vehicles to pay VED no longer exists – a chilling thought.

Such legislation would remove almost every older vehicle from our roads, so making them into museum pieces, only able to be used for transit to designated old vehicle events. The government, of course, probably imagine that sales of new cars would boom, so generating additional VAT. In order to remain fully road-legal it may be possible for some vehicles to be fitted with a catalytic converter, but as any well-worn oil-burning engine would wreck its catalyst, this would not be a practical proposition in many cases.

This will no doubt be seen as an attractive 'Green' vote-catching bonus for politicians, but its true significance will not be lost on enthusiasts who take a pride in the regular use of an older vehicle.

A more insidious effect of catalytic converters is the effect of their less benign by-products. We have all experienced the 'rotten eggs' odour of hydrogen sulphide when travelling behind various cars. This, however, may not be the only unpleasant side-effect.

The fumes given off by any process involving the use of hot platinum are known to produce symptoms which are one of the many covered by the loose description of 'Industrial asthma.'

Could it, perhaps, be mere chance that the period since catalytic converters became mandatory has coincided with a dramatic rise in the incidence of asthma, particularly amongst children, who, it was claimed, were most at risk from the effect of exhaust fumes? ■

Many thanks to the author, Mike, and to BMW Club Magazine editor, Stewart, for allowing us to reproduce this article.

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

Great Southern Land of New Zealand – The South Island

Robert, Auckland, New Zealand – www.twowheeltouring.co.nz

For many of us ticking off an overseas motorcycle tour is usually on our motorcycling wishlist. For some that includes riding New Zealand's South Island. New Zealand consists of two main islands and many smaller offshore islands. The South Island is the larger island and is about 20% larger than the North Island at 151,000sq km as opposed to the North Island's 114,000sq km. Despite having a larger land mass than the North Island, the South Island's population is only about one-third (1.1mil) that of if northern counterpart meaning from a motorcycling point of view southern roads are relatively uncluttered. The total New Zealand land mass is about the same as that of the US State of Colorado or about 10% bigger than the Australian state of Victoria.

The South Island has two main length of the island arterial highways, being State Highway 6 (SH 6) and State Highway 1 (SH 1 - which also goes the length of the North Island), SH 6 generally follows the western side of the Southern Alps mountain chain and SH 1 follows the Pacific Ocean coastline. Whereas the North Island has the volcanic activity and the beaches, the South Island can proudly boast the majestic mountain ranges and dense virgin forests. Due to having a ready source of river shingle from the mountain streams, the South Island boasts infinitely superior roads to the North Island. All highways and 'main roads' are bitumen, though for the most part nearly all are only single carriageway. The South Island is roughly 900km in length, approx. 250km in width and boasts over 5000km of coastline, ranking it as the world's 12th largest island. For most overseas folk considering motorcycling the South Island the starting point is usually the gateway city of Christchurch (pop 350,000) where the motorcycle rental firms are based. The other viable tour starting point option is the settlement of Picton which is the terminal town for the inter-island vehicle ferries from Wellington – it is a three hour sailing journey across Cook Strait between the North and South Islands. If riders are comfortable riding around 350-400km per day then there many superb roads to ride during a weeks touring, where one could comfortably circumnavigate the South Island. Must stop overnight stops include the South Island tourist capital of Queenstown, a night at either of the Glacier townships Franz Josef or Fox Glacier, whale watch town Kaikoura and the alpine resort settlement of Hanmer Springs. For sheer kiwi hospitality an overnight stop at a Westland country pub is a must, with two well known motorcycle watering holes being the Mahinapua Tavern south of Hokitika, and the 'Formerly the Blackball Hilton' at Blackball near Greymouth.
A few 'must ride' highways include the 250km SH 73 Trans Alpine Highway which traverses the Southern Alps, and also the 260km SH 94 (also known as the Milford Sound Road) which sees motorcyclists start with rural sheep country in Gore, the lakes of the Te Anau area, and finishing with magnificent beech forests and steep mountain ranges. Another route on the local kiwi

riders conscience is SH 60 which takes riders from Nelson to Farewell Spit which includes the 23km Takaka Hill which is awash with tight corners and switch-backs, some aptly named with corner names like 'Devils Elbow' and 'Eureka Corner'. Farewell Spit (an 18km long sand spit) is so named as Captain Cook departed here on one of his voyages.

New Zealand's speed limit is 100kmh, though with the South Island's roads being less congested, this can create a false sense of security for motorcyclists as it is not difficult to 'cook a corner' and final yourself in a ditch or the wrong side of the centreline. Exceeding 140kmh will see a rider face an instant 28 day loss of licence. During the summer months, NZ is awash with campervans – particularly the South Island – often travelling slowly and driven by inexperienced van drivers which can cause a build up of impatient drivers behind them.

The South Island also experiences a far greater variance in temperature so its not uncommon to be riding in summer at 25 -30 celsius during the day and then for overnight if to drop to 5 celsius. Further during the summer months it does not become nightfall until around 9pm at night so days with big distances are not such a problem, or the barbecue can be cranked up for many an hour.

Another feature of South Island roads are the road-rail bridges of the Westland province where trains and vehicles share single-lane bridges. Motorcycle memorabilia can be found at Methven and Invercargill, and is well worth the stop – in fact for Invercargill a very good collection of old motorcycles is located in a long serving large family hardware store in the main street.

When you finish your day's riding then you may want to relax with a beer at a pub and this will cost you around $NZ6 for a pint of local bitter, petrol is currently around the $NZ2.16 mark (Aug '13) and a good three course meal at reasonable restaurant will set you back around $NZ50, and certainly plenty more if you wish to dine at the higher end of the market. A motel of reasonable standard will set you back around $NZ150 per night, though if you tent and using a camping ground this will only be about $NZ25 per night for your ground plot and use of communal facilities. Holiday parks on a shared room basis can work out a very cost effective at around $NZ40per night per person. One thing is for certain though is that it won't take long for fellow kiwi motorcycle enthusiasts to come over and introduce themselves and have a chat on how your tour is going.

New Zealand's South Island represents the pinnacle of motorcycle touring, big enough to have varying terrain and awe inspiring scenery each day and small enough that you can comfortably travel and tour the bulk of the island within a week. Come see for yourself why New Zealand is motorcycling nirvana.

Club Bash 2014 – Simon

At a Committee Meeting in late 2004, I found myself being arm-twisted to organise and lead a short trip to France during 2005, and in June that year nineteen of us left for a long weekend in Epernay in the Champagne region.
That was the start.

The following year we went to Chamonix in the French Alps for a week, and we've been abroad every year since – one year a long weekend, the following a full week.

In 2012 Andy kindly volunteered to organise a trip to the south of France, visiting such attractions as the Millau Viaduct, Gorges du Verdon, Pont du Gard and riding up the Route Napoleon, to name just a few. On our way back, we stopped for a night in the French Alps at a small village called Vaujany, just north of Alpe d'Huez, and stayed in a wonderful catered chalet, used mainly by skiers in the winter and cyclists in the summer. It was so good, we decided then and there we just had to go back.

So, for the continental trip next year, it will be a ride to Vaujany over three days, five nights at Chalet La Maitreya, and three days ride back. We will be using the Eurotunnel Shuttle to cross the channel, and the total distance from Bristol to Vaujany is about 770 miles. Experience has shown these trips are usually best undertaken in either mid June or early September to avoid the school holidays, and for this one we have picked early September, as some of the mountain passes (cols) we want to ride over will still be blocked by snow in June!

Andy has kindly been back in touch with the Dutch owner of the chalet and sorted out pricing and available dates for our trip. The plan is to leave Bristol on the morning of Thursday 4th September, and return home during the afternoon of Saturday 13th. That leaves Sunday to relax and sort out all your dirty washing before work on Monday!

Costing for the trip (using an exchange rate of €1.15 to £1) looks like this:

Travel down 800 miles (80 litres x €1.60/litre)	£	110
Tunnel Cost (Nominal) Folkestone to Calais	£	25
2 x Overnighters	£	100
Five Nights at La Maitreya (€39 x 5)	£	170
2 x Overnighters	£	100
Tunnel Cost Return Calais to Folkestone	£	25
Travel back 800 miles (as above)	£	110
Food and Refreshments 10 days x £35 per day	£	350
Fuel for Riding around in the Alps (500 miles)	£	70
Total per person	**£**	**1,060**

Please note this doesn't include any alcoholic drinks.

If you are interested in coming along, please let me know fairly quickly so I can give the chalet owner an approximate idea of numbers, although these don't need to be definite bookings at this stage. There are quite a few rooms in the chalet and they also own the chalet next door if we 'overflow'.

I really can't tell you how good the place is for quality and value, and I'm really looking forward to going back.

Parish News

– A message from the vicar.

There is no Parish News this month as the vicar is away at a convention in Italy.

Normal service will be resumed next month.

Website update and member profiles

– Sandra

Website update & member profiles:

We've been asked by members if its possible to be notified when new messages are put on the notice board which will ensure you don't miss any new messages added for adhoc events or club rides.

To enable us to do this we need you all to update your membership profiles with your current email address, this will ensure that the messages get through to everyone. It's very easy to do once you are logged into the members area, there is an option on the left side with your profile, this is where you update your details, you are the only ones who can update this, so it's up to you.

We will let you know ASAP once this facility is up and running, we would also welcome any feedback you have either now or once this is set up, feel free to pass on any other thoughts about the website too, what else would you like to see etc. We will always try to put in place what is requested by members if possible.

Please send any comments to webmaster@aamc.co.uk.

Many thanks.

Going to China?

"**A friend went to Beijing recently and was given this brochure by the hotel. It is precious. She is keeping it and reading it whenever she feels depressed Obviously, it has been translated directly, word for word from Mandarin to English...**

Getting There: Our representative will make you wait at the airport. The bus to the hotel runs along the lake shore. Soon you will feel pleasure in passing water. You will know that you are getting near the hotel, because you will go round the bend. The manager will await you in the entrance hall. He always tries to have intercourse with all new guests.

The hotel: This is a family hotel, so children are very welcome. We of course are always pleased to accept adultery. Highly skilled nurses are available in the evenings to put down your children. Guests are invited to conjugate in the bar and expose themselves to others. But please note that ladies are not allowed to have babies in the bar. We organize social games, so no guest is ever left alone to play with them self.

The Restaurant: Our menus have been carefully chosen to be ordinary and unexciting. At dinner, our quartet will circulate from table to table, and fiddle with you.

Your Room: Every room has excellent facilities for your private parts. In winter, every room is on heat. Each room has a balcony offering views of outstanding obscenity! . You will not be disturbed by traffic noise, since the road between the hotel and the lake is used only by pederasts.

Bed: Your bed has been made in accordance with local tradition. If you have any other ideas please ring for the chambermaid. Please take advantage of her. She will be very pleased to squash your shirts, blouses and underwear. If asked, she will also squeeze your trousers.

Above all: When you leave us at the end of your holiday, you will have no hope. You will struggle to forget it."

Letters

TRAINING RIDES

I've been out on some training rides with Andy over the last month or so, working towards a test. Enjoying going out and getting my riding assessed and then applying it in everyday riding.

Thanks to Andy for giving up his spare time, although from the picture, he looks like he's having a nice time too. If he wants that other McFlurry I think he will have to un-zip those leathers a bit more!

Adan.

Dear Treads,

Following the photo of me in last month's Issue taken at our Club fancy dress competition in Brittany, I thought you might like to see a photo of the 'dress' that won second prize.

Modest forbids me disclosing who actually won the competition...!

Simon.

Is that a wannabe Smurf, Simon? – Chris.

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

Diary

September

Sunday 1st
Jim
Club Ride to Bishops Castle.

Friday 13th to Monday 16th
Andy
Club Bash to North Wales.

Sunday 29th
Sue
Club Ride.

October

Sunday 6th
Mark
Details TBC.