



TREADS

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The MAY 2021 Newsletter of AAMC

EDITORS BITS – Stu Bullock – 07711898178



I can honestly say, I cannot recall a colder Spring since 1962ish, when it snowed until May. Oh well, 'man up' as they say and keep riding.

Keeping on with the touring theme, started by Nigel Dean, I've added my own mumblings about a trip I did, with Sue as general manager and Simon Gough as direction controller, to the West side of the USA back in 2008.

As lockdown has slowly eased, we have been out and about more. My experience of driving and riding is that many other road users are not yet on top of their game, the biggest problem being a lack of judging distances. The low standards displayed are very obvious and need some careful thought and planning to deal with. My thoughts are. "Hope for the best. Plan for the worst".

You may notice there is not a 'publication date' for the next edition, which will still be published on or about the third week of each month as usual. It has changed to being a 'submission date', which will always be the first week of the month in question. If something is required, for example July, submission date is the first week of July.

The reason for this is me being too flexible with my leisure time. This means I often have to email people to change the date. This change

should be more flexible and may just be easier to remember, the first week of the month in question. We'll see how things go.

WELCOME – Simon Gough

This month I would like to extend a warm welcome to new member Johnny who lives in Speedwell and rides a Yamaha XT660X. We hope to see you out and about with us very soon on a ride, as things are finally starting up again.

TREADS - NEXT SUBMISSION DATE

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 the next TREADS, can you please ensure that they reach the editor at the latest by;

FIRST WEEK OF JUNE 2021

Submissions accepted:

- In MICROSOFT WORD format. (May be edited to fit available space).
- Photo's as separate JPEG files, not embedded in the text.

We publish articles for the benefit of members – none are an endorsement or recommendation unless explicitly stated. You must make up your own mind if you think something is suitable for you.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Technology. *The knack of so arranging the world that we don't have to experience it.*

Max Frisch – Home Faber. (Latin; Man the maker).

LEGAL QUESTIONS – Andrew Dalton

Disclaimer: *The legal advice and statements contained within this/these article(s) is correct at the time of printing. Andrew Dalton is a trial lawyer, with White Dalton Motorcycle Solicitors.*

Q1. Probably one of the most important documents you will ever fill in, but regrettably also one of the most boring is your insurance proposal.

Because you're reading this in a motorcycle magazine, I will concentrate on Road Traffic Act insurance, but exactly the same principles apply to all consumer insurance including home, travel, critical illness and life cover.

Before I get into the current law it is worth reminding you of the pre-2013 position, because plenty of insurers will try to persuade you that this position is still good law.

Your duty as a Consumer

Prior to 2013 it was your duty as a consumer to tell the professional insurer anything which might lead them to increase their premium, without them asking you. The burden was upon you.

This particularly harsh line ended in April 2013 and the current rule can be summed up as; 'if your insurer cannot be bothered to ask. then you do not have to volunteer'. This has led to a change in how insurance proposals are drafted.

Prior to 2013 insurers very much liked 'assumptions' in the knowledge that most consumers would scan read the insurance proposal, sign it and send off the premium, and

those uncorrected assumptions gave many feet of wriggle room.

Now the proposal will have direct questions, reflecting the change in the law. Typically, you will be asked, 'do you have any fixed penalty points?' Or, 'do you have any criminal convictions?' Or, 'have you ever been refused insurance or had a policy voided?'

You need to answer carefully and honestly. If you answer dishonestly your insurer can refuse payment to you and, in the nightmare scenario of the use of your motorcycle seriously harming another person, your insurer will have to meet any proper compensation claim brought against your use of the motorcycle, but they can come after you for reimbursement.

Answer Carelessly

If you have answered carelessly the insurers still have a trick up their sleeve. They know their underwriting and if they say, 'had we known the answer to the carelessly answered question was different we would have raised the premium by 30%,' they will pay you out 70% of the full claim.

Because they hold the underwriting information which you can only challenge by obtaining your own underwriting evidence, they hold the aces. You can challenge this through the courts but it is expensive.

Their ultimate weapon is to 'void' your policy, a nuclear weapon which insurers are quick to deploy in an insurance dispute. If an insurer voids a policy you have to declare that voidance in all other policies of insurance.

Most insurers will decline insuring you, and those that will have you by the short and curly's and the premiums will reflect this. Rescission of a voidance is the most common thing I have to do directly to insurers. It is not something you can leave.

So, when you fill in your insurance proposal, do so carefully. If you want to challenge it later in

the day you will be playing for a five-a-side team against an 11 strong team at their place, and the referee, the Financial Ombudsman Service, does not hold the reputation of being particularly consumer focused.

Andrew Dalton

September 2020

Q2: When it comes to the UK's country roads the law places some particular duties on users.

The most obvious is we all have to share the rural roads network. This means farmers with large machines have to share the road space nicely with us, car drivers, equestrians and cyclists. So, the first rule of the rural road is to expect rural things; if you bowl into a blind corner and end up fishing yourself out of the pointy bits of a tine harrow the Courts will be unsympathetic.

The fact that an agricultural vehicle may be taking up both sides of a road, does not make its presence negligent or unlawful. Where the law does help us though is that drivers of 'large and invulnerable vehicles' do owe a high duty of care to other road users, so in a finely balanced case, the mere size of a farm vehicle can tip the scales to a favourable outcome for the vulnerable road users – and we are defined as vulnerable road users.

Put succinctly the driver of a large and fast super tractor, with a crop sprayer, cannot belt around a blind corner and say, 'you should have expected me. It was a country road.' He or she needs to guard against the possible repercussions stemming from a bike coming into the same corner, a fast-closing gap and an unusually large farm vehicle with attached accoutrements.

We expect a spike in claims against farmers every late summer as the harvest comes in. Agricultural workers are exempt from tacho restrictions and I am well aware of farm workers

working 20 hours a day in the harvest season. While it is no defence to claim that the driver of a large and potentially dangerous vehicle is knackered, I work on the basis that farm vehicles driven at dusk or later are going to have a less than totally alert driver.

Be aware that agricultural quads are largely exempt from insurance requirements, so colliding with one can be an insurance nightmare. But, as to that other uninsured danger on the highway – horses – agricultural quads are at least predictable.

The Courts take a pragmatic view of horses in that they are lawfully using the road despite not having to have a licence like motorists and motorcyclists. That is to say horse riders, pedestrians and cyclists use the road by right. Motorists – whether on two wheels or four – are expected to show restraint and careful driving around horses.

However, even applying a modicum of self-preservation, half a tonne of stupid and unpredictable flight response animal near you is more dangerous for a motorcyclist than it is a car driver.

So, even if you are just motivated by self-interest, give horses a wide berth, at a slow pace and with minimum volume. If you have your race cans on, give serious thought to diverting away from horses or killing your engine and letting the horses come by you.

Noisy or close passing of horses is likely to finish up badly, both legally and physically, for the motorcyclist and equestrian alike.

Andrew Dalton

January 2020

LOCKDOWN RAMBLINGS – California **Dreaming – Stu Bullock**

The dreaming went on for some time before hard and fast plans were made for our 2008 holiday in the west of the USA.



A friend had told me about HC Travel from Hampshire, (01256 770775 – www.hctravel.com) and I had a chat with them. In my experience of travelling around the world, anyone with a bit of common sense can book a road trip. However, one problem can quickly escalate into a trip spoiler especially as we were going so far for so long, so it is best to have an agent in the country you are visiting as a backstop. I gave HC my ideas and after a few days they provided an itinerary, which I accepted. HC then booked all of our choices, provided air tickets, bike hire and hotel vouchers in due course. They were professional, friendly, knowledgeable and very good indeed and of course, they would cover any hotel problems whilst any bike problems would be covered by Eaglerider Bike Hire.

Me, Sue, Simon, flew from Heathrow (meaning Heathrow) to Los Angeles (meaning The City of Angels). The afternoon following landing and booking into a nice hotel were spent exploring Manhattan Beach. Very nice it was too and BIG. Next day we took a taxi to Eaglerider premises to collect our bikes. BMW GS1200's our choice. All too soon we were heading east towards the edge of the Mojave Desert and Palm Springs.

Only 190 miles, with a great deal on 'freeway', similar to our motorway.

Palm Springs, home to millionaires, Cahuilla Native American Indians, the Betty Ford rehab centre and San Jacinto Mountains. As the journey went on the temperature rose, the valley became narrower, the mountains higher. The amount of wind turbines increased to huge numbers. Windy place then. Hot? Oh yes, 104F hot. Hotel found, pool swam in, showers taken, meals eaten, sleep slept, we were soon setting off for our next stop, Laughlin, 230 miles away northeast on the banks of the Colorado River.



To get there we planned to pass through the Joshua Tree National Park. Full of what we know as Yucca plants, and once through the lowish mountains the desert heat soon built up. The whole huge area of Mojave Desert is one of sand, rocks and boulders from volcanic activity, and old gold mines. There are also a couple of military bases, glimpses of which can be seen occasionally. The first half of the day we rode through small villages and hamlets. You may have heard them called Trailer Parks on American TV shows. These consisted of buildings much like our Park Homes, or even tin houses and caravans and bigger. There are however, lots and lots of open unused land. And Yucca trees. Big Yucca trees that, local rumour has it, resemble ancient spirits at night.

We took our morning tea stop in the town of Twentynine Palms at a traditional American roadhouse café. Buckets of coffee with free top-ups. Pancakes like Sombreros and "have a nice

day” everywhere. From here on it was desert all the way. Ever been in a real desert? The road was fairly straight simply because it didn’t need to turn corners. Fairly flat and it was very hot, around 100F most of the time and like having a hair dryer blowing into your visor. This is pure heat though, as humidity is minimal. However, hot is hot and plenty of water is required to keep from bursting into flames!! Breaking down is a major problem without a good mobile signal, so desert travel needs careful planning.



Vidal Junction

Eventually we reached the outpost and major crossroads of Vidal Junction where we were able to download lots more fluid and bike fuel before we turned north towards Laughlin, Nevada and our next hotel.

We rode on through Chemehuevi Mountains, a sandy barren range, with blown sand on the road as we travelled down onto the plains, with the mighty Colorado River nearby. To get to the town of Laughlin, we turned off our road at Needles, through Willow Valley, Mohave Valley, Fort Mohave, Mohave City, Bullhead City (Which we renamed). Then we turned left to cross the Colorado to the Aquarius Casino Resort. Booking was hilarious as the busboys (hotel luggage movers) rely on being tipped. So, what a surprise one had when all our luggage from two bikes for three people went on one trolley. Well, it amused me.



Aquarius Casino Resort

The hotel and most of Laughlin could not have been more opposite than the sand strewn desert. Loud and bright and brash, Laughlin has aspirations on a Las Vegas scale, sitting as it does in Nevada. It’s very close to the borders of California and Arizona, where gambling is illegal. Our hotel was huge, as was the pool. After such a hot day it was very welcome and the restaurant (1 of 3) was superb. The temperature stayed high well into the evening and was brewing up nicely the next morning as we set off east in the direction of Flagstaff on the first leg of our third day.

Route 66 comes into the equation now as we left Laughlin and crossed into Arizona. With a film and a song to make it known worldwide, Route 66 was opened in 1926 to connect Chicago with Los Angeles. 2,500 miles of winding road was the first to be ‘black-topped’ for the entire length. Its winding route linked hundreds of rural communities in Illinois, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. It is commonly referred to as ‘The American Mother Road’.

Due to its importance as a means of crossing the USA, by 1970 nearly all segments of Route 66 were bypassed by a modern four-lane highway and completely succumbed to the interstate system in October 1984 when the final section was bypassed by Interstate 40 at Williams, Arizona. The interstate system, as is the rail system, was designed to allow American

Military to reach its major bases in minimum time and distance in case of internal insurrection. The fact that the public can use the system is a secondary consideration.

It was in fact to Williams that we headed for on that fine sunny morning. Just after Kingman we joined Route 66 riding leisurely through rural communities such as Berry, Valentine, Peach Springs and Crookton, Arizona. Absolutely fantastic to be on this quiet part of American life. We took a tea break at a Hualapai Indian owned roadhouse at Peach Springs before reaching the end of the old Route 66 and joined I-40 through rolling grasslands to the town of Williams.

It is fair to say the Americans have woken up to the historic value for tourism of Route 66 and it is mostly well signed and in good repair. As we rode through Williams, we found an extra section not shown on our map but finally said farewell to the iconic road and continued north on the 64 and 180 to Tusayan, still in Arizona and very close to the south rim of Grand Canyon. 245 miles for the day and we had 2 nights to look forward to at this hotel.

We checked out what was on offer and booked up for a helicopter trip across Grand Canyon. The locals told us to take the last flight of the day, because the sun shining at an angle into the Canyon gives a better perspective than when it is shining down.

We also booked a part walking part bus trip into the Grand Canyon National Park. The Canyon is almost beyond description because it changes so much, including as the sun passes across the sky reflecting different angles from the rocky terrain. It has been formed in the past by the action of three oceans and the Colorado River. It is just magnificent. It is possible to walk into the Canyon, drive, take a boat ride or in some places fly to the bottom.

Our helicopter flew across forest areas to reach the rim and as we slowed, stirring music "The ride of the Valkyries" came through our headphones as the 'copter flew across the rim.



One second there was forest and firm ground just beneath us and the next, nothing for more than a mile! Over. An hour passed like seconds and we soon returned to our hotel to check out the photos we had taken. As the guidebooks will say, a photo does absolutely no justice to the magnificence of the Canyon.

Next, we visited the superb museum on the south rim. It is free and a brilliant educational point for all ages. It made me cringe at the thought of Americans visiting Stonehenge and what they must think of the so-called visitor centre there.



Now we were riding east again, 170 miles to Kayenta. The Navajo Native American Indians own a huge reservation covering a lot of Arizona and Utah. The area uses 'Summer Dream Time', one hour ahead of USA time. We soon reached our hotel and booked in. 45 minutes later were in Cowboy Pete's Suburban and off, with me totally over excited, to Monument Valley itself and real cowboy country. Yeehaw.

The area is dotted with huge rock pillars. No, I don't mean huge. I mean Monumental. Monumental? Geddit? At one time the land was

the bottom on an Ocean and the pillars are harder rock that resisted erosion caused by the effects of tide action, wind and rain. It is spectacular and our guide filled us in on the history of the land, its current ownership and took us to where 'normal' tourists don't normally go. This was because I mentioned The Eiger Sanction. This is a film starring Clint Eastwood and, in the film, he climbs a single pinnacle of rock. Cowboy Pete took us to the very spot, warning us about sand scorpions and snakes as he did so. I also mentioned 'Ford Valley'. This where the film director John Ford made most of his iconic cowboy films, many starring Marion Robert Morrison. He changed his name to John Wayne. Odd that. Finally, we watched the sunset with its accompanying range of colours as the sunlight shining on red sand reflects on the sky. Monumentally awesome.



Next day we were up early and setting off to Bryce Canyon, Utah. This day's mileage would be 340 in a generally north west direction. We rode past Black Mesa, the biggest coalfield in America and the second longest conveyor belt in the world. Our route late morning took us through the heart of the Navajo reservation reaching the town of Page. Page is near Glen Canyon Dam, owned by the Navajo Nation and holding Lake Powell back to provide water and electricity for the region.

At a fuel, or gas station I was stung by a wasp. On asking directions to a Pharmacy a local lady advised me to cover the bite in mud. I did put some chemical treatment on it later but it does appear that the mud took the worst of the sting and itching initially. There is no direct road

across the mountain range containing Bryce Canyon and with only a third of the journey behind us we didn't tarry long. From Page we left the flatter land and began to climb, and climb, and climb.

The hotel pool was indoors here and received some weary travellers. It was also time for a laundry session (no not in the pool) and of course a good old poke around the tourist shops in the village. We were here for 2 nights so had time for a lengthy trip right to the top of the Canyon. Bryce Canyon is renowned for its bright pink rock formations. The Canyon extends south from the town and climbs up to around 9500 feet. The rock formations are really weird, from rock bridges to loads of round rock pillars, like so many soldiers, created by softer rock being eroded away. The guidebook told us that Bryce is carved by freeze-thaw cycles, not a river. Yet, 'world's largest pothole' is neither adequate nor flattering. It is certainly different. The view from the top is incredible as you can see for miles in every direction.



Bryce Canyon

On leaving, our start was ever so slightly delayed, as my bike appeared to have a flat battery. No apparent reason could be found other than the night-time temperature had dropped to below freezing. The local garage turned out and for \$20 got the bike going. We took a 250-mile route to Las Vegas and rode through Zion National Park on our way to Interstate 15 near Harrisburg junction.

Zion Canyon was spectacular as it was narrow and deep. We wound our way down and through this fantastic gorge. The only thing was that we

were in a queue of traffic the whole time, which rather spoils the effect.



The visitor centre was used for a comfort break. There were hundreds of people of all ages gathering to camp, hike, bike ride, horse ride or merely party in the rocks. American National Parks certainly get used but a thought sneaks into your mind of what exactly is the Park protecting in the way of natural resources?

Zion is located along the edge of a region called the Colorado Plateau. The rock layers have been uplifted, tilted, and eroded, forming a feature called the Grand Staircase, a series of colourful cliffs stretching between Bryce Canyon and the Grand Canyon.

Inevitably we joined the Interstate, only to find ourselves buffeted by the notorious Santa Anna wind. Unfortunately, it lasted the whole of the journey southwest to a very hot Las Vegas.



Hard Rock Cafe, Las Vegas

What can I say about LV? Noisy, brash, OTT. No, it was far worse than that. Stephen Fry once said of casinos. "Vulgar, tasteless and desperately sad". How true. We had 3 nights here so a good meal followed by the fabulous show Cirque du Soleil took care of one night and a stage version of Mama Mia another. We also

managed to visit the Hard Rock café. Another T-shirt to get home! Naturally, we had to visit Hoover Dam. What a magnificent feat of engineering it took to get the dam completed. Unfortunately, there wasn't time to sail Lake Mead but it was with relief (on my part) that we found ourselves starting the 170 miles journey out of Las Vegas to Death Valley.

We took a short section of Interstate 15 and then turned west crossing from Nevada back into California and the northern Mojave Desert. (Man, that desert is BIG). Our hotel was at Furnace Creek and we rode through places named Deadman Pass, Dante's View, Funeral Peak, Badwater, and Starvation Canyon to get there. Temperature reached 111F and I can verify it is possible to tell the difference from 111F to a 'cool' 98F, the latter being the night-time temperature. Furnace Creek is 282 feet BELOW sea level. Needless to say, not much there but mining the abundant minerals. The riches we can't see.



Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley

Riding through the valley it is reassuring to see old tanker trailers used for water store left at the roadside for public use. Most are marked with a sign 'Radiator water', suggesting only the desperate would drink it. Signs also suggest turning off air con in vehicles, so as not to stress the engine! Travellers do need to take the area seriously, carry lots of water and be aware of the likely effects of being stranded in such blistering heat. Just imagine the stress on tyres and just how thin does engine oil get in such heat. The bikes we were using were 1200cc and air-

cooled!! Now THAT oil must have been thin. There is a strange beauty to Death Valley. I found I liked it and was sad to leave it.

Leave we did, next day setting off on the 190 miles to Mammoth Lakes. We gradually climbed up to 4000 feet as we rode out of the desert into Owens Valley, with the Owens river and grassland on our right, and the Sierra Nevada mountain range containing the Sequoia National Park and Kings Canyon National Park on our left. We made good time and early afternoon saw us settled into our hotel in the middle of the town of Mammoth Lakes. In the much cooler conditions up at 9000 feet some retail therapy saw off the time before dinner. A good walk to a very nice restaurant and a pleasant evening soon passed in the town, which is essentially a ski resort. It was a touch chillier on the return walk but a 'nightcap' soon sorted that out.

Next day we were to stay in mountain country and make the relatively short run of 150 miles to the town of Mariposa, just outside the region covered by Yosemite National Park. We rode into the Park over the amazing Tioga Pass with many dramatic views as we rose up to 11000 feet. Once over the crest we rode down the side of Mount Hoffman through thick forests to the Yosemite Valley itself. We intended to visit the valley the following day, as we had 3 nights here, and so we made our way to the hotel at Mariposa.

Another good pool and a superb restaurant enabled time to pass in comfort. Next day we rode back to Yosemite and took a tour of Mariposa Grove. The grove consists of several hundred Sequoia trees, which are the biggest trees in volume anywhere. Their cousin the giant Redwood can be taller, but nothing has the girth of these bad boys.

I was mesmerised and could have stayed longer if the thought of another evening meal hadn't dragged me away. Next day we took a local bus to Yosemite itself. You may recall I said National Parks were busy places. This one was literally like Piccadilly Circus. I think we were all a bit disappointed, as this section of American 'wilderness' had paved footpaths everywhere.



*Mariposa Grove, Sequoia Trees. Giant Sequoias are the third longest-lived tree species with the oldest known specimen to have been **3,266 years** old*

Soon enough then, thoughts turned to the next 200-mile leg of our tour, to San Francisco. By choice we took a rural route for the first half of the journey, riding northwest along the Sierra Nevada Mountain range through what had been the scene of the famous Californian gold rush. There were silver mines too, but maybe they didn't have to rush them.

All too soon we were crossing the plains through Lodi to Concord and finally, San Francisco. 3 nights here and we had a tight schedule. We had pre booked a tour to the island and former prison of Alcatraz, and needed to have a trolley



Ellery Lake, Tioga Pass, Yosemite National Park. Darned chilly at 9000 feet.

bus ride, check out Fisherman's Wharf and the elephant seals, visit the famous Golden Gate Bridge, do a tour to Muir Woods (more Sequoia's) and check out the fabulous restaurants, while thinking of the film Bullitt.

and trolley busses leave from the Wharf. Everything was just great and a thoroughly enjoyable place it was. It has the same kind of liveliness as New York or Berlin, noisy and so much fun. However, it was time for another ride.

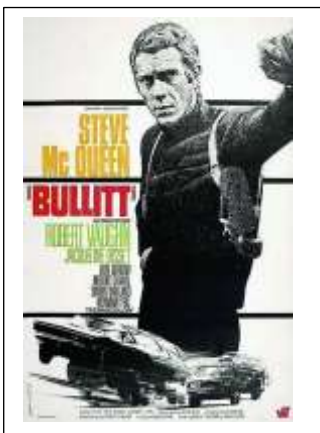
Getting onto Highway 1, or the West Coast Pacific Highway took some patience as we rode through the grid network of streets out of San Francisco. Morning tea was provided by the owners of an countryside Italian Café (don't ask) who were kind enough to explain the region, and their inevitable English roots to us.



Alcatraz Island and former prison



Every now and then another beach would appear, some remote but many with surfers clad in their wet suits to keep out the cold from the Pacific Ocean. We lunched at Santa Cruz on recommendation and rode out on the boardwalk, a wooden pier. Very cool, we thought. All too soon the 120 miles had been eaten up and we were at a very swish hotel in Monterey. Dump the kit because we were now on one of my missions.



Our hotel was a 2-minute walk from Fishman's Wharf, the centre of activity for us as boat trips



The task was to ride the 6 miles east on Highway 68 to the Mazda Speedway. You may know it better as the Laguna Seca raceway. Oh boy, was I excited at being at this stonking circuit. Only a couple of weeks before we left home, we had seen Valentino Rossi demolish the skill and spirit of the whinging Ozzie Casey Stoner in a fabulous knee-bashing race. The others were thinking about wasted pool time so the visit was ended all too soon and back we went for a swim.

Next day we needed to ride 150 miles to Pismo Beach. We started with a short tour through the homes of the rich and famous in Carmel. Beach Lodges they are called. Lodges? Most are bigger than normal houses, so some sort of Lodge.

Back on Highway 1 morning tea was taken at the Big Sur information point cafe. More big trees but you have to walk off road to see the best bits. We were satisfied with riding through this spectacular region although rather sad to see the forest on fire at one point. The slopes of the Santa Lucia Mountains on the left, the Pacific Ocean on the right. The road rises and falls sweeps and swoops through the small villages that cling to this route so well used by tourists.

At San Simeon we turned off the road into the grounds of Hearst Castle. Built by a newspaper baron, the father of the notorious Patricia 'Patty' Hearst, of the Barba Meinhoff gang fame, the Castle is more fairy-tale than defensive. At one time it was the party home of those of note from the film world. It cost a bomb to tour the building and we did not have the time, so onwards we went.

Pelican Point, Pismo Beach. Beautiful white beaches stretched in either direction in the evening sunshine. However, all Pelicans do is eat fish and poop. I don't know where they eat but they poop at Pelican Point. When it's cool it's great; when it's hot it stinks. However, a wonderful restaurant provided a great evening meal (we didn't have anything that resembled

bird) and all too soon we were ready to head onwards to Los Angeles.

225 miles today so we used Interstate 101 to get to Santa Barbara as Highway One wanders a hilly route through Vandenburg Air Force Base. There is a launch centre for one of the space shuttles there but we didn't have time, or space, for such a diversion.

We took a stop at Santa Barbara and I found my retirement location. Simply great with huge flat beaches and warm walkways. No time to drool, as we had to be back in LA for 5pm at the latest to return the bikes. We took the Interstate to Oxnard then Highway 1 through the suburbs of LA back to Eaglerider HQ. Thanks to the guys for sorting us out in short order so we could get the hotel for a celebratory beer, or two. Next day we had a half-day tour around the sites of LA before presenting ourselves at LAX airport for the 11-hour flight back to Heathrow. I have to say that LA does not do it for me. Too much concrete. Too much wealth alongside too much poverty.



Anyone thinking of a US road trip, I advise you to get on and do it. We have found nothing but friendliness and courtesy from the locals, wherever we went. Roads are generally well paved and signed but of course nothing beats a good plan. All you need to do now is get a good map.

The photo's shown here are a very small selection of those taken. They are attributed to Simon Gough and Sue Bullock.

VIEW FROM THE SADDLE – Adan

I have seen in the recent weeks that the club have had a spontaneous ride in and around the area of the Elan valley. Unfortunately, due to other commitments I was unable to make it, but it did encourage me to book a Friday off work and head north for a long much needed ride. I was hoping to take my Aprilia, but due to it breaking down on the south coast one evening and now in the garage with electrical issues (no Italian bike jokes please), I had to take the Kawasaki. I won't go on about my breakdown for too long, all I'll say is breakdown cover really got me out of a tricky situation in the current climate.

I met Simon at the M48 services where we headed through Usk towards Abergavenny, where we stopped at the bus station for a quick cuppa. I had been looking at the weather all week where it appeared to be nice all day, and to my disappointment it did start to drizzle when we got there.

As we left and headed toward Crickhowell, the drizzle passed and we were back to dry, slightly cloudy but arguably in my eyes the perfect temperature for riding. Once through Crickhowell we headed towards Brecon and then up and over the military training ground that the local Welsh guards use. At the top there are fantastic views so if you have never ridden the B419 north of Upper Chapel I really recommend it.

We then headed east on A483, every time I ride this road think to myself that I need to ride the whole lot from Llandovery as it's fast and flowing and easy enough to get past cars if you wish. Once we got to Builth Wells we headed North towards Rhayader and the start of the Elan Valley.

I'm always really interested in the Elan Valley and the engineering behind it, but to summarise it's a series of Dams and reservoirs built a hundred years ago to supply water to Birmingham and the surrounding area.



I was planning on visiting in the winter and brave a wet and cold ride up to witness the dams overflowing but unfortunately down to the lockdown I was unable. Fingers crossed I'll be able to this winter but I don't think I'll brave the wet riding with the Aprilia's dodgy electrics.

I decided to stop at the visitor centre to have a quick coffee and then headed back on the bikes to ride clockwise around the valley past 5 of the 6 dams, to head back to Rhayader and the very direct main route heading south towards the Honey Café for cake.

We both had commitments and we had to be back in Bristol. So, after our last stop at The Honey Café, we headed straight back heading past Llangorse lake, around Abergavenny then across towards Usk.



I always enjoy riding this route as it can be extended further to Devils Bridge and towards the west coast or by heading North where the A483 from Newtown is always a fun road to ride, but this slightly shortened version was 230 miles door to door for me and it really was great to be back on the bike for a long day, so thanks to Simon for joining me and subject to restrictions moving forward I'll look at leading a club ride in that part of the world.

AND FINALLY – Ed

It is really good to add group events, even your own riding experiences, as articles in TREADS. First of all, it's easier for me not having to trawl for items that may be of interest, rather than have members experiences to read. I'm sure it is the same for you. So, when you have been on a ride, organized a ride, or something about riding occurs to you, let me have a few words and a picture or two to put into TREADS.

Good luck to everyone, get well soon if you are poorly, look forwards to seeing you on a ride in the near future. Let Helen have any rides or other events you would like added to the list that follows.

Keep safe and well.



AAMC CLUB EVENTS – Helen

Please send your club event dates and descriptions to Helen, as above, and a club events calendar will then be published.

Where club events are detailed, it would be sensible to contact the ride leader to confirm

final details and let them know you are attending.

Keep an eye on the Club WhatsApp page for last minute changes or additional rides.

- Please be sure to arrive at the starting point promptly, with a full tank of fuel.
- Each club run will have a **ride leader**, who leads the group, and a **sweeper**, or 'Tail End Charlie', who stays at the rear of the group.
- At any junction, deviation or situation which may cause confusion as to the route to be taken, the leader will signal to the rider immediately following to pull in and stop at the point of route deviation, often referred to as being '*dropped off*'. This person should indicate to following riders the correct route to take.
- The '*dropped off*' rider will re-join the ride after the **sweeper** has passed, and then pass the **sweeper** when it is safe to do so. (ONLY if the **sweeper** indicates to do so should the '*dropped off*' rider re-join the group in front of the **sweeper**).
- Overtaking within the group is permitted, provided it is carried out safely and with courtesy and consideration for **ALL** road users.
- Please advise the **ride leader** well in advance if you plan to bring a *guest rider*.

MAY.

Sunday 30. Simon Gough. 01179 734120

JUNE.

Wednesday 16. Fish and Chip evening run. Simon Gough. 01179 734120

Wednesday 23. Aust Services, 9.15am for 9.30am start, Worcestershire direction. Nigel

Sunday 27. Nigel Dean. 07736 275406

JULY.

Sunday 4. Andy

ury,
09.45am for 10am start to Crofton Pumping
Station. Rob

Sunday 18. Cheddar Main Car Park, 9.15am for
9.30am start to Exmoor. Nigel

AUGUST.

SEPTEMBER.

Sunday 8 to 18th Club bash to France/Spain.
Simon Gough. 01179 734120

OCTOBER.

NOVEMBER.

Sunday 7. Final organized club ride of 2021.
Simon Gough.

Saturday 20. AAMC Plug and Grub annual
dinner. Helen

Times: 8am each day, till approx. 5pm

Contact number: 01886 812211

Wells classic Motorcycle Club

The tenth Tortoise and Hare Run, Sunday 17
July 2021.

Details and booking:

wellsclassicmotorcycleclub.weebly.com

Tewkesbury Classic Vehicle Festival

Date: Sunday 22 August 2021

Event Address: Tewkesbury School,
Ashchurch Road, Tewkesbury GL20 8DF

Website: <https://tewkesburycvf.org/>

Non-Club Events –

Adventure Bike Rider Festival

25-27 June 2021

Ragley Hall, Warwickshire.

Shelsley Walsh Classic Nostalgia

Date: 17-18 July 2021

Event address: Shelsley Walsh, Worcester,
WR6 6RP

Website: www.classicnostalgia.co.uk

Entry Price: £20 per adult advance ticket
price, or £25 on the gate.

BMF DISCOUNT CODE.

Code for 2021 - CLB21TAH

Club members can use the above in conjunction
with the Club Name, to receive discounts on
advance tickets to all BMF rallies and events;
discounts on Insurance and other BMF member
benefits.