



**Berkshire Section  
of  
The Vintage Motor Cycle Club Ltd.**

Summary of the Year 2009

We meet on the last Tuesday of every month  
from 7:30pm at

The Englefield Social Club  
The Street  
Englefield, nr. Theale  
Berkshire  
RG7 5ER

The first event of the New Year was the January midweek lunch meeting. We met in The Flower Pot Hotel, a nice inn close to the south bank of the Thames at Aston near Henley. Again we had a very good attendance for these increasingly popular meetings. Not as many walked to the river as the last time we used this pub.

The Annual General Meeting went smoothly without any upsets. The Officers reports were all accepted without any questions. All the existing officers and committee members were re-elected unanimously.

The February midweek lunch meeting was at the Lands End Inn, Charvil a large pub by the ford. We had a very good gathering even though several of our regulars were away on holiday. The snow thawing caused the river to rise so high that the main car park was flooded.

Those who attended last year's Christmas Dinner received a useful 10% discount on their meals.

The Bring and Buy Book Sale saw quite a lot of books and magazines for sale which produced a useful injection of funds for the Section.

The March midweek lunch meeting was to The Greyhound Inn in Wargrave. This was not a very good day as the service was exceedingly slow, we were beginning to feel as though we weren't going to be fed. Any pub can be good when tried out a few days before and very bad on the day we visit, but the crowd was just as good as ever.

The Pioneer Run was well attended by Berkshire Section Members. The New Imperial entry trebled this year. Congratulations to Doug and another local lad Chris Green for all their hard work resurrecting two of them and getting them to Brighton. The sight of Doug, Chris and Andy riding together on half of the known veteran New Imps was something only dreamed of a few years ago.

Lorraine looked her usual cheerful self on reaching the finish on her little JES, a feat I wouldn't like to try. A few others were seen on the road on more modern bikes taking advantage of the warm spring sunshine. A great day to be out on a bike, whether as an entrant or just spectating the trip to Brighton is worth the effort.

The Guest speaker was unfortunately taken ill just a few hours before the meeting so we had to reschedule the video night. A few old films went down very well. Seeing the way they built Triumphs in 1954 it is a wonder that there still so many around today. Modern computer projectors and an old screen make it seem like the film nights of old that Dennis used to put on for us.

The April midweek run was to Basing House. We rode out via Watership Down, Whitchurch and Overton to a lunch stop at Oliver's Fish Restaurant near Basingstoke.

After lunch we rode back to Old Basing. This huge Tudor house was one of the ruins that Oliver Cromwell knocked about a bit. It was a very pleasant sunny day for wandering through the ruins.

The skittles evening was the usual good social night out. Although as competitive as previous years it seemed to go very quickly, we managed to fit in four rounds this time.

The winners were my brother Malcolm who beat the ladies winner June by just one extra skittle knocked down.

The Calleva Gallop did not attract as many riders as some of the previous runs but those who did come had a pleasant morning wandering through some Hampshire back roads. Fortunately there are still some lanes that have very little traffic and we meandered around in peace. We set out from The Calleva Arms in Silchester to ride round the wall of the old Roman Town of Calleva Atrebatum and then out into the countryside. After

about two hours we all returned safely to the pub for lunch.

The landlord was unfortunately indisposed so we asked a handy photographer from the Newbury Weekly News to choose the bike he would most like to own. After going through some of the bikes he had owned in the past he chose a 1941 Indian Sport Scout for The John Moore Cup. The photo of Derek Carter receiving the cup was published in the paper. Fame for our section at last.

The guest speaker for the April club night was Mr. Paul Fahey from The Thames Valley Air Ambulance Service having now recovered from his illness. He gave us a good insight into the workings of the Air Ambulance Service and the way they run the helicopter.

The May midweek run was to be to Exbury Gardens near Beaulieu. Unfortunately due to a nail we ended the run near Romsey with a master class in tube replacement on a Velocette, much to the amusement of the other Velo owners who contributed vast amounts of “advice”? By the time the puncture was mended it was too late to continue to the gardens so we found a nearby pub and had a long lunch before riding home.

The main event of our year is The Owen Tyler Run. We start and finish at the Memorial Hall in Riseley, a conveniently situated place close to Reading but on the edge of some very rural back roads.

We had three routes to choose from again this year. A short run with no steep hills for veteran and low powered bikes. There is also the traditional Owen’s Route for those who want the original run or require a less arduous run for vintage motorcycles.

For the post war bikes or those who want a longer run we have a route well away from the older machines and some of the narrower roads.

This year we had a reasonable turnout for a good run to The Plume of Feathers in Crondall, by which time some people wanted to stretch their legs and have a pint. The return route is about half the length of the morning run and over slightly wider roads.

On finishing the run all the riders joined in choosing the winners for each award. Then they could spend some time chatting with old friends and attacking the refreshments provided by members’ wives.

The Owen Tyler Cup is awarded to a different category every year and this year it was the turn of the best veteran motorcycle. The other cups and trophies were awarded as follows.

Owen Tyler Cup      Doug Ellis      1914 New Imperial

Best Vintage   Brian Kettle   1923 Scott 3 Speed

Best Post Vintage      Bill Martin      1937 New Imperial 46DL

Best Post War   Arthur Ling      1948 Triumph 5T

Best Sidecar   Not awarded as none finished the run

Most Original   Allan Herbert   1937 Velocette MAC

Under 250cc   Doug Plester   1961 Greeves 20DC

Tiddler Award      Peter Winch      1975 Yamaha RS125

Highest Combined Age Michael Bryant 1914 Premier

All winners receive a cup to hold for one year and a small shield to keep as a memento of the award.

Next year The Owen Tyler Cup will be awarded to the best vintage motorcycle so let's have some more vintage bikes out for the Silver Jubilee Owen Tyler Run.

Congratulations went to Dave Albon for successfully completing the John O'Groats to Lands End Run. Dave joined the West Wiltshire Section on their annual End to End Trip. It was more of a meander around the country than a direct run. A great achievement on an old Velocette that ran reliably all the way with the exception of one minor problem with the front tyre.

The June midweek run was to be to The Hawk Conservancy but due to the wet weather the birds would not be flying. It was decided at the last minute to just ride out to a pub for lunch. After another ride around in the afternoon we went to Dolly Daydreams at Tadley for tea.

There was a motley collection of bikes from Berkshire in the Banbury Run. Several of our more active riders were there enjoying the better weather this year. Malcolm was as usual running the New Imperial Club stand which is used as a focal point by our members and many of our old friends from other sections.

The Midsummer Mystery Run was held on a very warm day, just right for a trip along some of the more obscure roads near the Thames above Oxford. We try and find some roads so far off the beaten track that those following the leader don't know where they are. We stopped for lunch at The Bell in Ducklington, a quaint old pub in a small village near Witney. After a long lunch through the hottest part of the day and a wander around the old cottages and duck pond we set out for some more meandering in the afternoon. We stopped later for tea in the café beside the river at Benson. As it was by then getting late some set out for home from there but a few followed me back to Pangbourne.

The July midweek run was to Hayling Island for our annual bath and picnic on the beach. A great day for lying on the beach and over indulging on cakes. Several members even went into the sea.

The ride home was livened up by a short but heavy downpour just after we crested the hill outside Portsmouth. We stopped on the way back for dinner in The Swan in Sherborne St. John, our second visit there this year.

Quite a few of our members were seen at the Festival of 1000 Bikes at Mallory Park. A good time was had by the hardy campers, some of whom paraded their bikes on the track.

The Chairman's Barbeque was another good evening. Not as warm as last year but at least it didn't rain. Many thanks to Doug for the hospitality and especially to Liz for the hard work she put in preparing the food. A very good evening that was much enjoyed by all who attended.

The Founders Day at Stanford Hall was the usual good day out. We don't have an official presence at this event but quite a few of our members were seen wandering about. There were plenty of bikes to see on the various section and one-make club stands and those being ridden in the ring. There is a very good autojumble as well.

July is a busy month with the Car Park Concours to round it off. The committee thought that a Triumph Speed Twin should be this year's winner. A nicely restored and well used bike that appeared to be very much as it would have looked when it left the factory.

The August midweek run was cut short when one of our members was involved in a very serious crash. Denise accompanied him to The Royal Berkshire Hospital and waited until after his wife arrived. Thankfully he is now at home and recovering. All the regular riders sent their best wishes for a speedy recovery. After he was taken to hospital and the police had finished taking statements and released us it was well after noon so the rest of us decided to cancel the run to the motor museum in Bourton-on-the-Water and went instead to the Four Points for a long lunch.

The Popham Mega Meet turned out to be a mega event, thousands of bikes turned out on one of the best days of the year. We had a Section stand in the main marquee which we filled with a varied collection of bikes from veteran to the mid 1950s. Many old friends were seen wandering about amongst the bikes and in the autojumble. Malcolm hosted a stand for the New Imperial Owners opposite ours, giving us twice as much room to rest out of the sun. For those who like looking at anything mechanical there appeared to be even more old aircraft there this year. The autojumble is also getting larger every year; maybe you could find parts that have eluded you for a long time, as I did.

There was a good turnout for the Bucklebury Run, a mixture of vintage to sixties bikes set out for a ride around the Lambourn Downs on a very grey drizzly day to The Ibex in Chaddleworth. Where we had a well earned pint and a nice lunch, the pub treated us very well.

Rain threatened all day, but in the end it did not amount to anything. After a shorter run back to Allan's the weather bucked up enabling us to sit outside and finish the run in the traditional way, lots of tea and a large pile of cakes. Thanks to Allan and Jean for organising the route and providing the hospitality. Many thanks also to the cake makers without whom this event would not be the same.

September's run was our week long trip to The Peak District. We stayed at the Charles Cotton Hotel in Hartington, at the southern end of the National Park. On the Monday we made our various ways to the hotel. On Tuesday we rode over the high moorland around the Cat and Fiddle area between Buxton and Macclesfield. A very windy day, but not too bad once away from the hilltops. The narrow tracks around the reservoir needed care but it was mostly pleasant riding.

The Wednesday trip was to the M&C collection of motorcycles in Bakewell. A very interesting collection of old motorcycles. Afterwards we did our own things, such as hunting for the real Bakewell Pudding or riding on the old steam railway. A much better day for meandering in the sunshine. The ride back to the hotel was better than the run out, much warmer, sunshine does make a lot of difference to motorcycling. Thursday was even sunnier, just right for a much longer run.

We rode out via Edale and along the Hope Valley to Eyam, the famous plague village. The scenery was fantastic, beautiful country to ride around and with the added bonus of smooth roads.

As usual we seem to be very lucky with hotels, this one was excellent. The food was very good, with portions large enough to horrify the wife of one well known trencherman. They also had a large selection of real ales, plenty to keep us busy in the evenings with a different one each night.

The quiz team was on form again, winning the Stonehenge Section Quiz amidst some strong competition. We held our own inter-section quiz this month. Six other sections sent teams this year which was a little cramped even using the adjacent room. But it didn't stop our team prevailing for the fifth year in a row. We must have quite a lot of useless knowledge tucked away between us.

The October midweek run started out with one bike dropping out at the very start and another just along the road. The rest managed a trouble free run on a very nice day through some peaceful countryside in south

Oxfordshire. The bikes perform well at this time of year which made for a good ride. After pottering around for a while we ended up in The Barley Mow in Long Wittenham. A very nice looking thatched pub but the worst one we have used all year, poor beer and even worse food, some uncooked and uneatable. Very unusual for a Chef and Brewer pub. After this we rode to H's Diner on the road from Wallingford to Oxford for a mug of nice tea and some food for Denise who had to get a refund in the pub. The days cool off quite quickly at this time of year but we managed a good ride home in the sunshine. Most of us enjoyed the ride if nothing else.

The November midweek run was the last riding event of the year. We left Dave and Elaine's on a nice sunny day with almost clear blue skies for a run over Watership Down to The Fox on the road between Overton and Basingstoke. Why do bikes run better when we are about to put them away for the winter? I'm sure my old Triumph wanted to "do the ton" on the long straight road to Overton but there were too many slow bikes ahead of it. The heavens opened whilst we were having our lunch, I can't think of a better place to watch rain than from the INSIDE of a pub. The Fox was a much better place than the pub we used last month the beer and food were good and the service excellent. They left us in the bowling alley until we were ready to leave. We left to a light drizzle which soon cleared for a pleasant ride home. The run was just long enough for the time of year. We reached home before the cold started to affect us. A fine end to another year's riding.

We sent two teams to the Oxford Section's quiz. Both teams were on good form and came away without disgracing themselves. Our "A" team came second which was very good considering the way the quiz is organised.

December was the first of the winter midweek lunch meetings. We returned to the Flower Pot Hotel, in Aston near Henley. A nice large pub that could seat us in comfort. Good food & beer and the usual good company made for a nice midweek break. We found the walk to the river was rather muddy this year so not many ventured down there.

The quiz team went to the Chiltern Section in Chesham. The long trip was worthwhile as we came away with the winners Shield. This has been a good year for the quiz team winning three times with a second place at Oxford.

The Christmas Dinner was held at the Lands End Inn, Charvil near Twyford. This was the last major event of our year. It was held in a well organised pub with excellent service, they left a nice interval between courses so there was no pressure put upon us to rush our food. A leisurely evening with plenty of time allowed for us to chat or wander about. The usual good crowd made for a very nice evening.

The last meeting of the year at Englefield was well attended being so close after Christmas. It was the family meeting where wives who do not normally come to club nights can join in. A pint and some savoury nibbles go down well.

We had 3 wind-up gramophones competing against one another. Another highlight was a sing-song to the accompaniment of Doug playing his piano accordion; he's getting quite good at this.

It was nice to get out after being cooped up indoors over Christmas.

Michael Bryant