



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

A Compilation of Events in 2018

Officers

Chairman: Bill Barnes
Secretary: Malcolm White
Treasurer: David Bryant

Committee: Mike Allaway
Vic Blake
Derek Carter
Lorraine Carter
Bruce Spiller

Berkshire Section Yearbook 2018

January

Mid-week Lunch Meeting 2018 kicked off to a good start with the mid-week lunch at The Swan at East Ilsley.

Although the day was much brighter than of late, the roads were damp from overnight rain and only Bill Barnes on his BMW – well sprayed with ACF50 I'm told – and Alex Taylor on his Royal Enfield braved the conditions and rode over to the meeting. All others chose four wheels in deference to the vestiges of salt and mud lying around. I like to think that I might have ridden, but I had a crankshaft to pick up from Basset Down Balancing in Hungerford and therefore felt I had some justification for not doing so.

Vic and Laura Blake had kindly organised the affair and although Vic was not able to make it due to a double booking we mustered 26, which was more than the 20 required for the roast beef and pork carvery – of which there was plenty for all. Having polished that off, an almost full complement of desserts followed – just what was needed, given that it was so close to Christmas. Still, if you look at this way, we have eleven and half months to work it off before that comes around again.

Many thanks to Vic and Laura for arranging it and the staff at the Swan for the good food and service.

Annual General Meeting The Berkshire Section AGM was held at the Englefield Social Club at 8.00 pm on Tuesday, 30th January 2018.

The Officers and Committee indicated their willingness to stand for another year. There being no other nominations from the floor, the Officers and Committee were re-elected, as follows:

Chairman: Bill Barnes

Secretary: Malcolm White

Treasurer: David Bryant

Committee: Mike Allaway, Vic Blake, Derek & Lorraine Carter and Bruce Spiller.

February

Bristol Classic Motorcycle Show Several Berkshire Section members attended the 38th Carole Nash Bristol Classic Motorcycle Show at The Royal Bath and West Showground. Some of them – Andy Dean, Bill & Jim Martin, Chris & Rose Green, Doug & Liz Ellis and Malcolm & Michael Bryant – were to be found exhibiting machinery on the New Imperial Owners Association's display, which was awarded second prize in the Club section. Other Berkshire visitors seen out and about were Robin Strange, Roger Prew and Malcolm White.

Malcolm and Roger particularly liked Jim Alves' 1951 Triumph Trophy 650cc. One of three Triumphs entered for the ISDT in Varese, Italy, but as there was a requirement for the machines to be different, Jim Alves' Triumph sported a 650cc Thunderbird engine, whereas the others were 500s.

Cyclemotor Quiz Evening Berkshire A (Michael & Malcolm Bryant and Robin Strange), Berkshire B (Bill Barnes, Derek Carter and Malcolm White), Chiltern, Oxford and Cyclemotor Sections gathered in the back room at England's Rose public house in Postcombe to do battle over a plethora of questions posed by Lorraine, quiz mistress – no PC nonsense here – for the evening.

We in Berkshire B thought we had a ringer when we grabbed Derek for our team, but Lorraine had done an excellent job in keeping the questions and answers under wraps, so no advantage was gained from that ploy.

General knowledge was the first challenge followed by some motorcycling related questions, some almost indecipherable anagrams (where Oxford excelled), a requirement to correctly place corner names on a TT course map and another to identify UK racing circuits from their plan views.

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At the end of the evening, Oxford were victorious with an unassailable score of 70 1/2 followed by Berkshire A on 64, Berkshire B on 60 and in joint 4th place Cyclemotor and Chiltern on 53 1/2 a piece. As usual, it was all good fun with much banter.

Thanks very much to Lorraine for compiling such a variety of questions and challenges and to the Cyclemotor Section for hosting the quiz and the sandwiches dispensed during the evening.

Mid-week Lunch Meeting Lorraine and Derek arranged our February mid-week lunch at the Cottage Inn in Upper Bucklebury, which was well attended with 26 on the roster.

The Cottage Inn is well known to us, as it is the venue for our Girder Fork, Rigid and Low Power run in July. So, whilst there, I took the opportunity to book the 29th with Gary to ensure that we were on his calendar as well.

Menu choices having been made in advance meant that the food was brought out more or less at the same time, although I do believe there was quite some delay for those who hadn't pre-ordered.

Chatter inevitably revolved around progress being made in fettling bikes in anticipation of riding in the coming months and on new projects. Though some expressed difficulty in finding the motivation to endure the cold and damp of the workshop to really get going. There's no doubt that we're all looking forward to warmer weather.

Thanks to Lorraine and Derek for making the arrangements.

Club Night – Speed Awareness Given the sub-zero temperatures, there was stalwart attendance at our club night where guest speakers, Pat and Amanda Connelly, both of whom are accredited Institute of Advanced Motorists Master Mentors for bikes and Thames Vale Advanced Motorcyclists (TVAM) observers, gave us some insightful tips that they use in the speed awareness courses they run for those of us who have been caught doing just that little bit over the posted limit.

It was quite eye-opening to learn that actual impact speeds are so much higher than might appear from say a 2 mph differential between 30 and 32 mph – 11 mph in fact. For example, if a vehicle emergency brakes and stops just before hitting a hazard from 30 mph, then the impact speed would be 0 mph. i.e. no impact. Whereas, if the vehicle was travelling at 32 mph and braking was initiated at the same point it would still be travelling at 11 mph at impact. This is because the vehicle decelerates much more rapidly as it slows down. So, while it's almost stopped in terms of distance the impact speed is still surprisingly high. At 35 mph under the same scenario it's 18 mph. Something worth bearing in mind when next out and about.

A quick discussion relating to road and motorway signs, soon revealed that many of us, while understanding the basic fundamentals of a sign, such as; junction, no-right turn, roundabout, etc., didn't necessarily appreciate that colours of backgrounds behind each sign presented additional information that might be of interest. Definitely time to purchase copies of the latest 'Highway Code' and 'Know Your Traffic Signs' and do a bit of swotting.

We then undertook an exercise that highlighted the things one should look out for in road signage and markings when approaching potential hazards, since their existence and positioning generally indicate the severity of the hazard. A sort of detective mystery where one puts all the clues together to determine appropriate speed while, yes, travelling at speed.

I believe everyone enjoyed the interactive aspects of the presentation and took away at least one additional nugget of knowledge that will be of future use. I know I did.

Thanks very much to Pat and Amanda for the giving of their time and to Bill for arranging it.

March

VMCC Annual General Meeting Sadly the VMCC AGM, despite, I'm sure, a lot of good people's hard work, was a bit of a shambles. The venue and facilities were fine, as was the registration for the

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meeting, but the procedure for voting and submitting proxy votes for others was very confused and confusing and appeared to conflict with what had been stated in the February journal. It was eventually sorted out, but if the outcome of the voting hadn't been as decisive as it was there would likely have been cause for a recount should anyone have challenged the result.

The President Elect, Alistair Alexander, was afforded the opportunity to present salient points that came out of the recent members' survey prior to the vote for Directors. These indicated that the members were more interested in having an organisation that supported the individual sections than the facilitation of a business HQ requiring larger premises.

This was followed by a rather perfunctory handover between outgoing President, Rodney Hahn, and new President, Alistair Alexander – blink and you'd missed it. There was no comment from the Chairman or Directors present and it took an intervention from a member from the floor to thank Rodney for his efforts and contribution made during his time on post. This was acknowledged through the hall.

When the votes were finally cast and counted for the election of the three director positions, Rob Reaney and Brian Southam were not re-elected and Patrick Harvey-Jones was elected. It is unknown at this time, who will replace Messrs. Reaney and Southam.

It is my view that while there was undoubtedly some support for the direction in which Messrs. Reaney and Southam wanted to go, their total inability to back up their ideas with any form of financial or business plan made it very difficult for the majority to go along with it and this was reflected in the outcome.

The highlight for our section was the presentation of the E. E. Thompson Award to our very own Allan Herbert by outgoing President Rodney Hahn for outstanding efforts in promoting and organising club events.

Berkshire members present at the meeting were: Bill Barnes, Vic & Laura Blake, Allan & Jean Herbert, Robin Strange and Malcolm White.

Mid-week Lunch Meeting Another excellent turnout for the final mid-week lunch before the riding season gathers steam. 28 enjoyed the fayre offered by the Jack O'Newbury. Four of whom took advantage of the clear skies while they lasted and rode over on foreign machines. Three from the Fatherland and one from the east Asian side of the Pacific.

Club Night – Bring & Buy Books Club night was the annual bring and buy book sale. There was quite a lot on offer and a number of bargains to be had with most items going for just a pound. I know that I went home with a useful selection of Triumph paraphernalia.

Many thanks to Doug Ellis for his sterling work with the gavel and to those who donated and purchased sundry items in aid of Section funds, while accomplishing the greater goal of recycling material no longer required.

April

Mid-week Run (Report: Bill Barnes) First run of the year and two days before the event the weather forecast was for sun and 16 degrees, so expectations were high only to be dashed when we awoke to pouring rain and leaden skies on the day!!

But the Berkshire boys and girls are made of tough stuff and 12 members turned up on bikes with another five taking to four wheels. Luckily the rain had ceased by the time we departed for our cross country route to Woodstock in Oxfordshire. The combination of rivers of water that resembled the Amazon, potholes the size of craters and copious amounts of gravel and farm manure presented ample opportunity to practice our weaving skills on our route up into Oxfordshire.

Following a much needed warming lunch at the Duke of Marlborough Pub, half of the group headed directly home whilst the other half headed west to complete a further 60 miles across country through

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Charlbury, Burford, Brize Norton, Wantage and then home. Great motorcycling roads – which are commonly known as the ‘Charlbury TT’ – but the mist over the Cotswolds and Chilterns did somewhat restrict the views. Good fun nevertheless although a few hours were then needed to thaw out on our return.

Calleva Gallop No report of the day’s activities was written up, but we’re pleased to mention that the John Moore Cup was awarded to Graham Denton with his rather quick Tiger Cub.

Club Night – Video Evening Michael Bryant once again treated us to a wonderful selection of clips from motor sport. Starting with the ‘Hattah Desert Race’ an unbelievable 4 hour 8 lap event through the sands of Northwest Victoria, Australia, where as many as 400 riders take part, we moved on to a rocket powered bike that did the quarter in 5.46 seconds at Santa Pod Raceway and then saw how to assemble the parts of a pre-war Francis Barnett in 20 minutes.

These were followed by clips of the two day reunion festival held at Brands Hatch in 1981 featuring John Surtees that brought together many of the personalities with whom he had raced on bikes and in cars; the 2018 Pioneer Run, that due to the snowy conditions, was started at Pease Pottage. Many choosing not to start at all, but our very own Lorraine Carter safely made the journey to Brighton though notably a little chilled at the finish; there was also an interesting video which extolled the benefits of the Scammel Scarab ‘Mechanical Horse’ that sought to emulate the flexibility of a horse and cart. In essence, the beginnings of the articulated vehicles that clog up our roads, today.

In closing, we were treated to an 18 minute lap of the Island courtesy of Guy Martin in hot pursuit of Michael Dunlop in 2014. It’s impossible to comprehend how they (and others like them) manage to ride at that speed with the precision necessary to stay within the confines of the racing line.

Many thanks to Michael for compiling and presenting the show.

May

Mid-week Run – REME Museum, Lyneham Paul Fenton took up the challenge last year to organise his first run and with that experience behind him he was kind enough to volunteer to put on another mid-week run this year. This time the destination was the newly relocated REME Museum at Lyneham.

The start was at Little Nellie’s Diner on the A339, a smidgen north of Kingsclere. It’s a good venue, as they serve up mashings of fifties rock-an-roll with lashings of US-style pancakes with maple syrup. At least, theAmericano breakfast is a favorite of mine. Others tucked into bacon sarnies and cups of tea. What’s more, the weather was so nice we were able to sit outside and enjoy the morning sunshine.

Paul distributed a detailed route sheet along with directions on a map just in case any of us strayed from the designated path, but traffic was so light that the convoy of 16 bikes remained pretty much intact throughout the journey. Unfortunately, the fire in Roy Headon’s BSA Firebird went out a few miles down the road, but he waved us on with an assurance that he would do what he could to sort it. (It later transpired that it was a loose electrical connection and he made it home safely).

The day was fantastic, especially for early May, and we basked in the warmth as we rode through St Mary Bourne, Vernham Dean, Fosbury, Great Bedwyn and Marlborough. Then a minor disaster struck. Paul, in the lead and only five miles from our destination, had ridden over a sharp object that punctured the rear tube. Derek Carter was willing to try his puncture repair goop, but when it exited out of the side of the cover, it was clear that the deflation had ripped the valve from the tube. As there was nothing else to be done, Paul urged us on to the museum while reaching for his ‘phone to call the recovery service.

The museum is relatively small, but it adequately tells the story of the REME (Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineers) and is worth a visit, if you’re in the area. The restaurant was also very good with a plentiful selection of food.

One snippet of little known history that I learnt is that Major Ivan Hirst, a REME British Army officer

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and engineer, was almost singularly instrumental in reviving Volkswagen from a single factory in Wolfsburg – virtually entirely destroyed during the war – into a major postwar automotive manufacturer by 1947.

After the visit, we were free to take our own routes home, but I believe most rode down to Calne and then took the A4 back to Newbury and points east.

Many thanks to Paul for organising the run, it was a real shame that he didn't quite get there, although I believe he had visited when doing his recce.

Holy Trinity Church Classic Motorcycle Show The Section have been invited to the Classic Motorcycle show in Bracknell for a number of years, but it has previously clashed with the Owen Tyler Run. This year, however, because the OT was temporarily put back a week, three local members; Roger Prew (1940 Triumph Tiger 100), Tony Heyworth (1927 Rex-Acme Blackburne) and Malcolm White (1938 Triumph Speed Twin) were able to attend.

The show is quite small, but in aid of a good cause, as the funds raised this year are to be used for roof repairs and the on-going maintenance of the church. Perhaps 30 bikes and trikes turned out made up of all shapes and sizes. At the end, there were a number of awards presented. Mostly for modern classes, but there was a retro and classic category that Malcolm was fortunate to win with his Speed Twin.

The Owen Tyler Cup Run Nineteen riders took part in the Section's annual Owen Tyler Run from the Air Scout hut in Hurst. There was a good selection of bikes in the classic period from the late thirties to the sixties, but none from veteran or vintage classes this year.

I know I am biased, being one of them, but four of the participants, Dick & Mike Davis, Roger Prew and myself staged a rather unique display of Triumph Speed Twins dated 1937, 1938, 1939 and 1940 and were, by arrangement, assigned riding numbers 37, 38, 39 and 40 accordingly. Thus bringing together the Speed Twin models for all four pre-war years. An occurrence that will not often be duplicated in a ridden event or otherwise.

There were two routes available of approximately 55 and 75 miles, but I don't believe anyone took the shorter route. The longer route was quite familiar to those who had done it before, but it didn't matter a jot, as there was more time to enjoy the countryside and less concentration needed to follow the tulip diagrams on the route sheet.

Three of the Speed Twins ran well, but mine had developed an apparent misfire with a substantial loss of power at anything approaching 40 mph on the way to the start for which a change of plugs made no difference. Odd, because the previous Wednesday it had happily done 40 miles without a hiccup. I, being group leader and in charge of the route sheet, felt that it was incumbent upon me to persevere and as the engine didn't appear to be overly distressed we soldiered on for the whole run at a less than optimal pace.

Lunch was taken in the garden of the Rising Sun at Witheridge Hill, Stoke Row in warm sunshine. Quite different conditions to those overnight judging by the streams of water and mud strewn roads we had taken to get there.

A comfortable 22 mile run brought us back to Hurst, where riders were plied with tea and cake and asked to vote for their choice in the various classes. After a suitable period of deliberation, votes were counted and Chairman, Bill Barnes, dutifully handed out the awards, as follows:

Best Post Vintage – Mike Davis [1940 Triumph Speed Twin]

Best Post War 1941-1960 – Bruce Spiller [1959 Norton Model 50]

Best Post War 1961-on – Graham Denton [1961 Triumph Tiger Cub]

Best Non-British – Michael Aldridge [1976 BMW R60]

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Best Sidecar – Vic Blake [1937 Matchless Model X]

Best up to 250 – Rob Lane [1966 Honda CB72]

Most Original (Oily Rag Cup) – David Peterson [1947 Velocette KSS]

Highest Combined Age – Vic Blake [1937 Matchless Model X]

Best Entry 'Owen Tyler Cup' – Roger Prew [1939 Triumph Speed Twin]

Many thanks to Vic Blake and Bruce Spiller for sorting out the route and venue, to Laura Blake and Muriel Smith for dishing out the refreshments before and after the event and a thank you to all those who contributed cakes, sandwiches, etc. Thanks also to the Hurst Air Scouts for the use of their facility.

Footnote:

Just in case someone also experiences similar symptoms of a persistent misfire, the issue with the Speed Twin was that the platinum electrode on the contact breaker arm had become detached. (As witnessed by the metallic clink in the tin drip tray when the cap was removed.) As it was then only the end of the arm that was making contact, the ignition was horribly retarded thus preventing the engine from revving. QED.

North Hants Old Tyme Run Making the most of the pleasant weather conditions over the May Bank Holiday weekend, a number of Berkshire members took part in the North Hants Motor Club's Old Tyme Run starting at the Crookham Street Social Club in Crookham Village.

The run was of the order of 40 miles and took in aspects of the Hampshire countryside that we in Berkshire don't often get to see. Returning to the social club for a notional ploughman's lunch, we were presented with an excellent buffet with home baked gammon ham, cheese and all the works plus drinks at social club prices. It was worth going just for the nosh alone.

There were five classes of entry and I'm pleased to report that Ian Bowdich won the British & European Classics pre 1985 [Les Pilbeam Challenge Trophy & Cup] with his Norton Commando.

Club Night – Girdler Fork Evening Sadly, this particular evening was a literal washout, as there was torrential rain in many parts of the region. Snorkel and wetsuit being the order of the day, as Bill Barnes and I left Bracknell. Derek and Lorraine, however, braved the elements and made it there on two wheels – four between them – albeit they were on modern tiddlers. Derek's not quite club eligible 1997 Honda C90 and Lorraine's 1964 Honda C114 50cc four speed.

There was still, however, a good turnout of members who retired to the bar for a noggin and natter.

June

Chairman's Ride-In & Barbecue Glorious weather greeted this our fourth annual Chairman's ride in and barbeque held at the Air Scout facility in Hurst. Burgers and sausages were soon on the barbie, as riders started to arrive a little after eleven. At the end, I believe there were around 40 arrivals on a whole panoply of two-wheeled transport.

Many thanks to Bruce and Bill for slaving over the hot grill in the disbursement of tasty patties and dogs and to Laura, Muriel and Maryan for being equally active in dishing out what appeared to be an endless stream of coffees, teas and cake – and clearing up afterwards. Thanks, also, to all those who supplied cake and treats aplenty. In addition, thanks to the Air Scouts for the use of the hall and to Bruce for arranging it. And finally, to all those who came along to enjoy the day, making it the success it was.

Mid-week Run – Trenchard Museum, Halton There was a good showing of Triumph twins (7 out of 10) for the mid-week run to the Trenchard Museum at RAF Halton. Doug Ellis, arriving on his International Norton, commented that he hadn't known it was to be a multi-cylinder event, which of course it wasn't, but it just appeared to be so. Especially with Lorraine's 4-cylinder Suzuki and her 'V'

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twin Harley that she'd allowed Derek to ride.

Setting off at the earlier time of 10.00 am from the Pangbourne car park, in order to arrive in time for the tour of the museum, we made good progress through Nuffield, Nettlebed, Christmas Common and then down the A4009 to Wendover and RAF Halton.

The museum is relatively small, but it is packed with all types of 'test pieces' that cadets had to make by hand to show their skills in craftsmanship and accuracy. All of which were necessary to keep aircraft in the air during the first and second world wars and everything in between. Later training included advanced avionics systems.

The James McCudden Flight Heritage Centre was created in 2014 to promote air mindedness in RAF recruits, air cadets, school children and other interested parties. It houses a number of Link flight simulator trainers that were used to train pilots in the basics of flying before taking to the air. They were also used as a refresher for IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) training to counter the possible effects of disorientation where the body is indicating one thing, yet the instruments are indicating another.

After lunch, which was served in the recruits mess hall, we spent a little more time with the volunteers in both parts of the museum before heading off in a reciprocal direction along the A4009 towards Benson and the Waterfront Cafe where we further indulged in cups of tea and cake before making tracks home.

Many thanks to Malcolm Bryant who arranged the visit and to Michael who sorted out the route and led us safely there and back. Many thanks also to the Trenchard Museum at RAF Halton for allowing us access and to all the volunteers who were on hand to answer our questions and make it such an informative visit.

Dr B's Custom & Classic Bike Show The annual classic bike show took place on 17th June in aid of Dr Barnado's High Close School in Wokingham.

This year, the date clashed with the Banbury Run, but Derek & Lorraine Carter and Mike Allaway were there. Derek and Mike both picking up Oddball and Scooter category awards for their entries, respectively.

Lorraine reported that there it was a smaller turnout than last year, but they still raised £1,200 for the school.

Banbury Run The annual Banbury Run featured some 471 listed entries in 3 classes; A – mainly veterans prior to 1915, B – early vintage 1915 to 1924 and C – late vintage 1925 to 1930.

Riders familiar to the Berkshire Section were: Andy Dean, 1914 293cc New Imperial Light Tourist; Vic Blake, 1926 350cc OHV Raleigh Sports; Bill & Jim Martin, 1926 500cc BSA Model S26 and 1927 350cc BSA L27, respectively; Chris Green, 1926 298cc New Imperial Light Tourist; Michael & Malcolm Bryant, 1914 500cc Premier Tourist and 1928 350cc New Imperial 2DI, respectively; Malcolm White, 1927 350cc OHV Rex-Acme Blackburne; Roger Prew, 1925 7HP Raleigh 12 V-twin (masquerading as a 1926 350cc OHV Rex-Acme Blackburne); and Tony Heyworth, 1927 350cc OHV Rex-Acme Blackburne Sports.

The latter three riders rode together and managed to follow the route even though there were a couple of deviations – as happened to many others – where the route symbology appeared ambiguous, thus necessitating a retracing of steps.

After half distance – approx. 35 miles – I was firmly of the opinion that it should be renamed the Banbury Temperance Run, given the dearth of open hostelry en route, especially since our late-ish start meant that lunch was past the norm. Even the White Horse, at which we stopped last year was closed and to rub it in, the route caused us to pass it twice.

Fortunately, The Blinking Owl Inn in North Newington beckoned and we were able to slake our thirst and appetites with excellent home produced fayre.

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The final 20 or so miles were covered without route malfunction, although Tony was hampered by a broken hand change linkage meaning that for most of the time the Rex was stuck in 2nd gear. He was, however, able to soldier on and we completed the run in better shape than quite a number who appeared to litter the course with mobiles in hand calling for assistance.

Bill Dorling – In Memoriam William Michael Dorling (23rd May 1935 – 22nd May 2018)

A number of members from the Berkshire Section attended the funeral service for Bill Dorling at the West Berkshire Crematorium on 19th June 2018. Bill was the Chairman of the Berkshire Section when I rejoined the VMCC in 2002 and it was he and Sue who welcomed me to those first meetings and events.

When he stood down as Section Chairman, he became more active with the local AJS and Matchless Owners Club, many of whom formed a motorcycle cavalcade with the hearse on his final journey. A very fitting send off.

Mystery Run 14 riders and one passenger assembled at the Bushe Cafe at Blackbushe Airport, Camberley, for the Mystery Run on 24th June.

It being a mystery run, the destination was unknown to all but Bill Barnes, who was the organiser and Michael Bryant who kindly agreed to act as sweeper. Bill, therefore, briefed us in the use of the buddy system, whereby it's the responsibility of the rider in front to keep track of their 'buddy' behind and to wait for them to catch up at any point in the route where the direction changes. i.e. Road junction, traffic lights, roundabout, etc. This is less formal than the dispatch rider designated drop-off system, but still works toward the goal of not losing anybody en route.

It also takes the pressure off the run leader, who would otherwise need to navigate and place the rider, as well as pay attention to road traffic. Besides, as is oft portrayed by the fairer sex, it's almost impossible for a guy to do two things at once, so asking them to do three things could never be a good thing.

That said, when we found ourselves outside Birdworld, it was evident that Bill had made an erroneous turn, so no matter which method is used, if the guy in front is lost then everyone else is as well. However, we were all still together, so proving the usefulness of the system. Quickly retracing our path, we were soon back on track and going in a south easterly direction taking in Churt, Hindhead and Fernhurst. Then down to Easebourne on the A272 and over to Petworth.

I had thoughts that we might have been going to Devil's Dyke – a ride that I'd taken with TVAM just two weeks previous – but suddenly we were in Amberley and at our destination. The Amberley Museum and Heritage Centre.

The theme of this particular weekend was Emergency Services, so there were many fire appliances and much kit on display with organised demonstrations. One of which was the apparent extraction of some poor dummy from a wrecked vehicle. Perhaps not unsurprisingly, we decided to give that one a miss.

There was much else to see around the Heritage Centre and it was interesting to learn that the site was an important centre for producing lime from the chalk dug from the cliffs surrounding it. The site was also used as the set for the mine entrance scene towards the end of the James Bond movie 'A View to a Kill' in 1985.

The return back to base was beset with what appeared to be a traffic accident a ways down the road, necessitating a return to Amberley and out the other way through Rackham and up to Pulborough and then a road closed diversion soon followed requiring yet another change of route. Anyway, we all got home OK after a very good day out. Many thanks to Bill for organising it all.

Club Night – Car Park Concours The perfect weather and long daylight evening enticed 30 or so new and old members out to the June club night's informal concours at Englefield on a variety of machinery. It was good to see such a gathering under such pleasant conditions.

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After much deliberation, Chairman Bill chose the immaculate BMW of new member Trevor Girton for the prize of a bottle of polish and a tube of Autosol, as he clearly felt that it didn't quite gleam enough. Well done Trevor.

July

Brooklands The Section again had a display at the annual Brooklands Motorcycle Day. The size of pitch was just perfect to accommodate the gazebo kindly provided by Lorraine & Derek, that gave welcome shelter to machines and owners from the noon day sun and well into the hot, sultry afternoon.

Many thanks to Vic Blake, Lorraine & Derek Carter, Mike Allaway, Roger Prew, Graham Denton, Tony Heyworth and Malcolm White for supporting the display and for putting it up and taking it down.

Vintage Coach Outing Repeated by popular demand, Lorraine and Derek Carter organised another outing on a vintage coach of the type many of us would have enjoyed in our early years. In this case it was a green 1949 Bedford OB 27 seater from Mervyn's Coaches in Micheldever.

We had expected, HOD 75 (of Foyle's War fame), but she had succumbed to a burnt exhaust valve the previous weekend and was feeling somewhat under the weather. Not that we had much to worry about in that regard, as the forecast was for more warm and dry conditions for the day and for the foreseeable future.

In any event, the substitution was of no consequence and there was plenty of room on the coach for the 22 members and partners who gathered in plenty of time for a scheduled departure at 10.00 am. This time, we chose to take a tour of the New Forest area with appropriate stops for refreshment and leg stretching.

It was but a few miles before Chris, our driver, took us from our normal known routes and started using byways with which we were unfamiliar, branching off at Kings Worthy towards Harestock to skirt around the city of Winchester and down to Romsey. Whereupon we encountered a holdup of unknown origin that warranted an about face and a detour on to the M271 as a precautionary measure to remain on the loose schedule of the itinerary and facilitate a stop for tea, coffee, etc. in Lyndhurst.

Suitably refreshed, we arrived back at the bus to the excitement of a couple of small children who had clearly not seen the like before – the bus that is. It suddenly dawned on me that I'd watched OAPs getting on buses for excursions before, never considering that I would ever be one of them. Yet, here we were. It was also interesting to see the reaction of people in the street and on the roads when they saw the bus sedately trundling along. Something a bit different to the sterile vehicles of the modern era.

A carvery lunch was on the menu at the Walhampton Arms a few miles to the west of Lymington, after a nice run across the New Forest via Beaulieu. This was followed by a photo op on the cliff top at Barton-on-Sea with the Isle of Wight in the hazy distance.

We then seemed to criss-cross the national park travelling along minor roads while avoiding the major ones. Sometimes finding that the road was almost too narrow for two way traffic, but Chris was obviously familiar with the route taken and a penultimate stop was made at Carlo's Ices and Tearooms on the northern edge of the National Park at West Wellow.

It was then a gentle run up to Shootash, across to Timsbury, past Mottisfont Abbey to King's Somborne and on to Stockbridge. Where you'll be horrified to note that we didn't stop for additional refreshment, but continued on our way back to Innerdown without further ado.

It was a lovely day with good roads and little traffic. A scene that will be a lot different in two weeks when the schools are out and the roads inevitably gridlocked.

Many thanks to Lorraine and Derek for organising the trip and to Chris and Mervyn's Coaches for getting us there and back.

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Mid-week Run – Dauntsey Lock At the AGM in January, a request was made for volunteers to take on the organisation of a mid-week run to lessen the load on the committee and to add different views on possible routes and venues. Paul Fenton organised one earlier in the year to the REME Museum at RAF Lyneham and Malcolm Bryant to the Trenchard Museum at RAF Halton. Brian Magee kindly took up the request for July's run.

Coincidentally, both Paul and Brian's destinations were within a few miles of each other, but there the similarity ended. Brian had chosen Woody's Cafe at Bucklebury Farm Park as the starting point. One that we plan to revisit at the conclusion of the Girder Fork and Rigid Run at the end of this month, as the Cottage Inn is not able to provide food that weekend. Our destination was the house of a long standing friend of Brian's in Dauntsey Lock, who we were told had a mild interest in model railways.

After a few cups of tea and the odd bacon roll and pastry, the nine of us on bikes with Malcolm & Denise and Keith & Muriel in cars, set off on the 45 mile trip, which essentially paralleled the M4, but necessitated crossing over or under it 6 times. The weather was perfect for riding. No expectation of precipitation and broken blue skies. The temperature was also a few degrees lower than of late making it very pleasant. The route chosen was not much impeded by other traffic, so the group was able to keep together as we meandered through the parched countryside arriving at around 12:15.

I don't think any of us, apart from Brian, were prepared for what we saw when we were warmly ushered into the building housing the model railway layout by Nigel, our host. For those of us who may have had double-O gauge railways or the like running around the dining room table, it was enormous. It was also O gauge, which uses a scale of 1:43.5 vs 1:76 for OO.

Nigel pointed out that it was a work in progress, which it was, but that didn't detract from the attention to detail that he and other enthusiasts with whom he collaborates are putting into it. The goal is to build a layout that is a whole lot more than locos, rolling stock and track. The attention to the scenery and backdrop is paramount, as they wish convey a sense of depth perspective to the model. So the rolling hills really do look like hills rolling away. It is also their intent to make it look more real with carefully rendered dirt and grime on the rolling stock and track. Much as we would prefer to see a vintage bike which is used rather than a polished masterpiece that doesn't turn a wheel.

After being amazed by what other enthusiasts get up to in their pursuits, we thanked Nigel and made the short run over to the Cross Keys at Bradenstoke for a late lunch. This was followed by a guided run back to Hungerford and the A4 and our individual routes home.

Many thanks to Brian for stepping up and organising this great day out and to Nigel for showing us his model railway layout and for explaining some of the intricacies involved in modelling. I think I'll stick with full size models.

Girder Fork & Low Power Run This event was reluctantly cancelled/postponed, as the met office weather forecast was diabolical with continuous rain from 7.00am through to 15.00pm and very strong winds. Almost unbelievable after the continuous fine weather of late.

Club Night – Ride a Bike Night There was a disparate range of machinery to be seen at the August club night covering the pre-war era right the way through to modern times. It was initially billed as a noggin and natter, but having postponed the girder fork evening in May and then our main girder fork run just this last Sunday because of inclement weather, it was an ideal opportunity to combine the two and have both. Besides, when would one ever preclude the other?

It was also good to see quite a number of new and returning faces to the Section, indicating a continuing interest in vintage bikes and what we have to offer. Only this week I spoke to a local fellow who has had modern bikes, but has now invested in a vintage bike and joined the club. We look forward to seeing him when he's worked out how all the various air and ignition levers operate.

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August

Mid-week Run – Owen Tyler Reprise When I joined the Section in 2002 the traditional Owen Tyler Run started at the Memorial Hall in Riseley and continued thereafter until 2010 when the start moved to Padworth Village Hall and then to Hurst in 2014.

It, therefore, seemed worthwhile after such a long time to have a reprise of the run starting in the vicinity of its original location. Especially, since I, as the organiser, had copies of the basic routes delineated by Michael Bryant in 2007, that only needed updating and verification.

Fortunately, the Wellington Farm and Coffee Shop – which didn't exist in its present form back then – is only half a mile away from Riseley, so provided an ideal starting point with few changes to the route. The rest of the route proved to be intact, including the Barley Mow pub, that I heard had apparently appeared a bit unwelcoming a decade or so ago, but proved to be very hospitable this time around.

There was an excellent group of 20 riders assembled in and around the cafe for the start, some of whom took the opportunity to scoff butties and sip tea or coffee beforehand. The rider's briefing contained the usual cautions regarding loose gravel and a few narrow lanes and, although route sheets were provided, it was hoped that the use of the buddy system would keep everyone on track.

All went as planned, as we rode down through Rotherwick, Nateley Scures and Greywell, then to Weston Patrick, Bagmore and the Candovers. It was soon after that that things went slightly awry when Paul Fenton suffered a recurrence of the type of puncture he had encountered earlier in the year on our way to RAF Lyneham. This caused a break in the chain since a buddy in front failed to stop at a junction and those following were left to their own devices. Fortunately, Paul was within half a mile of the Yew Tree pub to which Michael Bryant gave him assistance. It also gave the recovery van a specific destination, as opposed to a stretch of road somewhere in the boonies. (Paul advised me later that he'd made it home safely.) The other point of fortune was that those who had been left adrift knew the location of the Barley Mow, so were able to make it there for lunch and about the same time as the main cadre of riders.

In future, if we have that many riders, we need to consider the designated rider drop-off system where the protocol is more strict. i.e. one stays until the sweeper arrives. Or we split the riders into two groups to make it more manageable. Either way, a methodology needs to be worked through to decide what actions are taken when a breakdown occurs.

Lunch at the Barley Mow in Winchfield was excellent with good food and helpful staff and lots to chat about in the warm sunshine. As the Winchfield location presented many options for directions home, most went their separate ways on or before the 10 mile return leg to the Wellington Farm Shop, but Bill Barnes, Roger Prew and I rode it out, since it was more or less on our way home anyway.

Popham Bike Mega Meet Forecast torrential rain deterred me from making the trip down to Popham for the Bike Mega Meet, but Bill Barnes, Brian Magee, Roy Alexander, Allan Herbert and a few others braved the conditions to represent the Section. As it turned out the weather did not become as dire as predicted and apart from a couple of showers I am told that it was mainly a dry day.

August Amble Postponed due to monsoon conditions (see September Sizzle).

September

Annual Holiday (Report: Mike Allaway) On 16th September 12 members made their way to Criccieth for the annual summer holiday. Everyone either trailered their bikes or took them by van on what turned out to be the best day (weather wise) of the holiday. They were joined on some of the days and every evening by Denise, Malcolm and Michael Bryant who had been in the area the previous week and were staying in a house on a self catering holiday.

The weather on Monday morning was dry, but the forecast was not good. We decided to go to Llanberis for the day and visit the National Slate Museum and the Lake railway. Rob Lane had a few

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issues with his Velo LE (part of the pannier frame had become detached from the side panel of the bike and there was also a fluid/oil leak) so he made his own way to Llanberis after he had sorted out the problems. Our ride there was dry, but as soon as we pulled into the car park the drizzle started. With a charge of £4.00 per parking space per vehicle we managed to persuade the owner of an outdoor activity area (which had no visitors) to let us park on one of their grass areas for a nominal fee. It rained all the time we were in the museum and no one fancied a ride on the lake railway, so we made our way back to the hotel (not having seen anything of Rob). Luckily after we got to the end of the Llanberis Pass the rain stopped and the ride back dried most of our riding gear.

Tuesday the weather was grim and the forecast was for rain nearly all day, so we all elected to go to Llandudno in cars with a stop on the way for tea at the train museum in Betws-y-Coed. By the time we got to Betws-y-Coed the rain had almost stopped and upon arrival at Llandudno the sun was out and all the locals were in T shirts and shorts. We had a good time looking around the town and sea front and Keith & Muriel went up to the Great Orme and nearly got blown over by the wind. The journey back to the hotel was fine until we got to Betws-y-Coed again and then the heavens opened and it rained all the way back to Criccieth.

By Wednesday winds of up to 65mph replaced the rain, so it was decided to spend the morning looking around the area individually until lunch time and then do a short ride to Barmouth in the afternoon. This seemed to work well with a pleasant ride along the coast road to Barmouth and back in winds that had reduced to 40 mph, but very grey skies threatened rain at any time. All left together except Rob and Mike who had the slowest bikes and made their own way there after sorting out a small issue on the LE. This was part of a longer route around the Barmouth Dolgellau area, but by doing part of it in the short time we had meant that we managed to get out for a ride even if the best parts were omitted.

The forecast for Thursday was of a dryish morning followed by heavy rain shortly after lunch, but thankfully the winds had reduced considerably. We decided to do a run around the Llyn Peninsula with a lunch stop at Aberdaron. The roads on the north of the peninsula were dry and we managed to get most of the way to Aberdaron before it started to drizzle. It would have been nice to have had a look around the village as it did have some history and places of interest, but the weather made the place look miserable and uninviting. Having had a cuppa and a cake we set off back to the hotel in the drizzle and by the time we got to Pwllheli the drizzle turned to heavy rain for the last eight miles getting some of us thoroughly wet.

Friday was forecast to be rain for most of the day with moderate winds. We had agreed to meet at 10.00am to decide what to do and where to go. A ride to Lake Bala was the last planned route and after a brief discussion it was decided to go for it in the hope that the weather might improve. When we gathered at the bikes for the off several had decided not to go, but 5 bikes set off into the damp and now quite cold conditions en route to Bala. After just 7 or 8 miles the rain intensified and shortly afterwards Ian decided that he had had enough and would make his way back to the hotel. The rest decided to press on, but after Ffestiniog the rain came down even harder. As the road climbed higher the temperature dropped even further, so we stopped in a parking area next to a building right in the middle of nowhere and I asked if everyone wanted to continue to Bala or should we shorten the route. I said this would mean that we would miss out the first planned tea stop, but we could still stop at the second. Doug said what's the matter with stopping here as this is a cafe? I hadn't realised that so we all went inside dripping wet and cold and warmed up with a cuppa and slice of cake.

The rain had eased a little by the time we set off again and instead of heading for Bala we cut the route short and headed back to the hotel. Before we made our second tea stop the group got split up due to Rob having to stop and top up the radiator on the LE. That must of been the only thing that was running hot as everyone else was cold and wet. By shortening the route it meant that we never did get to Bala, but under the conditions it was the correct decision.

It had been a good week but was spoilt by the poor weather. The scenery along a number of the roads we travelled down or planned to travel down was stunning, but with mist, rain and high winds we were unable to enjoy most of the rides, but thankfully there were no incidents or breakdowns.

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Mid-week Run Through the auspices of Vic Blake we were kindly invited by Andy Beswick to view his collection of stationary engines and motorcycles of which there were many. Not that I've spent any time in the serious quest of stationary engines in the past, but I think it's fair to comment that Andy has as many as I've seen anywhere at a rally. There were all sorts from the small 1913 Bradford (hit n miss) engine that fired every so often to a large 'hot bulb' engine that at some time had likely powered the line shafts of a machine shop.

We were treated to a display of four of the engines happily running outside in the yard. The operating mechanisms were not sophisticated, but for the job they were doing perfectly fine and something that most fitters of the day could have maintained and repaired when anything went wrong. I particularly liked the innovative use of a standard magneto on the 1913 Bradford in that the armature was simply oscillated back and forth through about 90 degrees to generate the spark rather than have it depend on a rotational crank. It was thus able to operate intermittently, hence the hit 'n miss.

After a very pleasant interlude, during which time we were supplied with tea and cake and chatted about the various engines, Andy led the way on his beautifully restored Sunbeam Lion to the Travellers Friend at Crookham Common where we tucked into our lunch selections with gusto.

Many thanks to Andy Beswick and friends for their hospitality, Vic Blake for enabling our visit and Bill Barnes for leading us there.

Stonehenge Inter Section Quiz It was quite a busy day for Berkshire, as the Stonehenge Inter-Section quiz was on the same day as the mid-week run reported above. The date also clashed with the Section holiday, so a number of our most knowledgeable members were elsewhere. Nevertheless, Bill Barnes, Roger Prew, Robin Strange and Malcolm White pitted themselves against five other teams at the Redlynch Social Club, Woodfalls in the New Forest.

Rob Unsworth was the question master who soon got us started on six rounds of 10 questions each. The pace was quite brisk, as the Isle of Wight Section had a ferry to catch, but there was plenty of time to write down answers that we believed to be true at the time, debate over others or shake our heads in collective despair for those for which we simply didn't have a clue.

Virtually all the questions were motoring or motorcycle related and spread over a century or more. There was one in 2018 that I thought was a bit unfair, as it was clearly a test of our short term memory or lack thereof. At the end Rob threw in a couple of subjective questions, such as; "How do you double the price of a Brockhouse Corgi?" Answer: Put petrol in the tank.

At the close of the evening we tucked into a wide selection of sandwiches and cake while the scores were settled up. Wessex Veteran & Vintage wiped the floor with their 'A' team winning with a score of 44 and their 'B' team coming second on 39 1/2. Stonehenge 'A' were just a half point behind with Berkshire taking 4th place on 37 1/2 followed by Stonehenge 'B' and the Isle of Wight.

Many thanks to Rob Unsworth for setting the questions, the ladies who totted up the scores and the Stonehenge Section in general for their hospitality.

Club Night - Inter Section Quiz Five teams from Berkshire, Chiltern, Cyclemotor, Oxford and Stonehenge assembled for the annual round of inter section quizzes on club night. Michael Bryant our custodian of little known facts and figures regarding motorcycling through the ages was the quiz master.

Michael claims that we should all know the answers, since many of the questions are simply ones recycled from quizzes from yesteryear, but it doesn't really help, when it's sometimes a challenge to find that screwdriver that one used only five minutes ago. It was good fun, nevertheless, and one lives in hope that the answer to a particular, esoteric question will be retrievable at some later date and, more importantly, at a time when it is relevant.

After 80 questions, Berkshire's team of Bill Barnes, Paul Digweed, Doug Ellis and Robin Strange were clear winners on 62 with Cyclemotor a rather distant second on 47. Stonehenge 45, Oxford 42 and

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Chiltern 38 rounded off the scores.

Many thanks to Michael for compiling the questions.

September Sizzle The September Sizzle was in effect the postponed August Amble that had been unceremoniously washed away in heavy rain on the August Bank Holiday weekend.

Twelve riders and three passengers together with Keith & Muriel met up at the Holiday Inn in Padworth Lane for the 10.30 start. Bill Barnes used the previous year's route for the first half, but as the George Inn at Vernham Dean was unable to accommodate us for lunch, Bill decided to return to the Traveller's Friend on Crookham Common where we'd had an excellent lunch a week or so before.

Vic and Laura set off with the Matchless outfit a short while before the main phalanx of riders got going en masse. It wasn't too long, however, before we caught up with them and with due regard for protocol the group fell in line behind. None wishing to overtake as there was little room on some of the roads to safely do so. Besides not everyone carried a route holder, thus having the potential of ignominiously finding oneself as leader, but without a clue as to where to go next.

At about the halfway point, it became necessary to turn the route sheets over, so it was an opportune moment to break up into a few small groups and make our way from there. It worked out quite well, as we didn't descend on the pub – that was already quite busy with Sunday lunches – in a large group and we got settled in and served in an orderly manner. The majority took advantage of the carvery, which I found to be sufficiently plentiful that it negated any lasting thought of a dessert – though there were lots on offer.

Many thanks to Bill for organising the day

October

Brooklands Section – Normandy Run Tony Baxter of the Brooklands Section kindly invited Berkshire members to take part in an inaugural vintage run starting in Normandy with an emphasis on pre-war machines.

That's not to say that machines from other eras weren't welcome, but the idea was to separate the riders into pre and post war groups and to have two routes. The pre war group using route sheets excellently produced and verified by Phil Winks and the post war group being led by Richard Huckle. Thus the older machines could run at their own pace in smaller groups without the pressure to keep up with the later bikes.

Bill Barnes on his 1937 Tiger 80 and I, riding my 1938 Speed Twin, arrived within minutes of each other at the Royal British Legion hall in Normandy where we signed on and grabbed a cup of tea and a muffin. Tony had hoped he'd get around 15 pre-war bikes and was pleased to realise that hope in that there were probably close to 20 when all was said and done. There was also a good showing of post war iron – but they were on the other side of the car park.

After the briefing at a leisurely eleven o'clock we set off in small groups on the 57 mile jaunt around Surrey and Hampshire. The weather was perfect with blue skies and light winds with the roads mostly dry after the persistent rain just 24 hours before. A day to enjoy the earliest signs of autumn while riding through the English countryside.

Phil had used the tulip diagram notation for the route sheet and it worked very well. I couldn't help but notice that many of the junctions were located next to public houses, so wonder if it was the pubs that were the waypoints for the route and the roads were just a means of getting there. I understand that he rode the route several times to ensure that it was OK, so perhaps there's just a semblance of truth in that.

As a case in point, Bill and I stopped at the Jolly Farmer, Binsted, for an excellent roast luncheon before making our way along the final third of the route back into Normandy. Where we were plied with tea and cakes to round off an excellent outing.

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Mid-week Run – Crux Eastern Wind Engine There was a good turnout for the mid-week run with 13 bikes and two cars meeting up at Little Nellies Diner on the A339 a tad north of Kingsclere. The agenda for the day was a leisurely ride out to see a Victorian wind engine and then back to a member's home for sandwiches and the opportunity to scope out the new workshop.

Doug Ellis had arranged the run, so after we had sampled some of the offerings on Nellies' menu – not least of which was the Americano with eggs, bacon and pancakes – Doug handed out route sheets and we set off for the hamlet of Crux Easton in the parish of Ashmansworth, Hampshire.

The weather had been a little up and down of late – not that we were complaining after the long, hot, dry summer we'd had – but one gets used to the warmth and quite forgets that it's October and temperatures should be lower. This day, however, was an exception to the rule in the best way possible. It was glorious. southerly winds making their way up from Africa and the near continent soon driving away the mist leaving clear blue skies and temperatures rising into the 70s – low 20s for those of a continental persuasion.

Parking up on a grassy knoll outside we made our way over to the wind engine that had been designed and built by John Wallis Titt in 1892 for the Earl of Carnarvon.

Extract from Wikipedia – The Crux Easton wind engine is a Titt Simplex geared wind engine. It has a 20 foot (6.10 m) diameter sail mounted on a 35 foot (10.67 m) hexagonal steel tower. The annular sail has 48 blades, each one 5 feet (1.52 m) long. It is winded by a six blade fantail. The wind engine was primarily used for pumping water, but also drove a circular saw and a pair of millstones. The mill is recorded as being capable of producing eight to ten sacks of flour per day.

It is reputedly self-governing and although we could see the mechanism for feathering the sails, we couldn't see how that was achieved automatically from where we were standing at ground level. It's possible that the gearing from the fantail plays a part in that operation, but it would seem that another visit on an open day is required to find out.

After the visit, we made our way to the member's new abode, that was perhaps unsurprisingly Doug and Liz's in Burghclere. Where we spent a very pleasant hour or two in convivial chatter while indulging in refreshments, so very kindly provided and having a look around the workshop.

Many thanks to Doug and Liz for their hospitality and to Doug for organising it all.

Autumn Frolic The vista, as I peaked out of the curtains in the cold light of a dismal dawn, was not encouraging. Perhaps, an extra hour in bed would be a good thing to do? Sadly, the clocks had returned to British Standard Time at 2.00 am, so the additional hour had already been had. No excuse then, but to go for it. After all, it should be warmer, as the sun will have been notionally up for an extra 60 minutes.

Starting off from Bracknell, the few spots of rain on the visor turned into a drizzle, but looking west the skies seemed to be lighter. Time to press on and hope that the forecast for an improving weather picture was correct.

I was the first to arrive at Little Nellie's Diner on the A339 at Kingsclere and didn't expect that there would be many more given that the temperature wasn't that many degrees above freezing. I was, however, pleasantly surprised, as a trickle of riders turned up to reach a total of 13 with Allan in his '37 MG and Keith & Muriel in their Honda to bring up the rear.

Bill Barnes had organised the run and soon after 10.30 we departed in a south-westerly direction towards Whitchurch and Hurstbourne Priors. And then north-westerly over familiar ground through St Mary Bourne, Hurstbourne Tarrant, Vernham Dean and Oxenwood to the A338, where we turned right towards Hungerford.

Up until this point, while undoubtedly a bit on the chilly side, the sun's rays breaking through the ever increasing gaps in the clouds appeared, if only psychologically, to penetrate our many layers of clothing and raise the temperature a degree or two. That is until we made the turn and found

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ourselves heading directly into the biting north-easterly wind emanating from the Arctic. Add the wind-chill factor and I think we all experienced a notable drop in temperature. We were not, however, so very far from our destination in the Valley of the Racehorse and were looking forward to a roast lunch at The George in Lambourn. It was, therefore, but a temporary discomfort. Although it did take a while to restore the circulation in my toes when we got there.

Bill had called our choices of roast lunch over to the pub before we left Nellie's, so it wasn't long before we were tucking into the piles of beef, lamb or peppered chicken heaped on our plates.

After a rather leisurely lunch we bade farewell to the hospitality at The George and rode in an easterly direction back towards our respective abodes. It was different now, the biting wind had diminished and the low autumn sun in the cloudless sky cast long shadows of bike and rider as we sped along. A good ending to an excellent day.

Many thanks to Bill for doing the organising and to the staff at The George for looking after us so well.

Club Night – Rider Down The club night presentation given by Hev Smith, a senior paramedic in the South Central Ambulance Service, was entitled 'Rider Down'.

As the title might suggest it focused on the steps that should be taken if one were to be the first to arrive at the scene of an incident where a motorcyclist (or anyone) appears to require medical assistance.

Hev first explained the acronym DRsABC for assessing Danger at the scene, Response from the individual, Sending for assistance, checking Airway, Breathing and undertaking CPR, if required, and then went through each in more detail. The intention of the consequent actions being to increase the chance of a person's survival in a potentially life threatening situation before trained professionals arrive and without endangering oneself in the process.

Hopefully, we'll never find ourselves in such a situation, but having some idea of what to do removes some of the uncertainty and confusion that would arise from such an encounter and would likely improve the outcome for the person involved.

The interest during the meeting showed that it resonated with all those present and I believe that we're all a little more knowledgeable should it happen to us.

Many thanks to Hev for taking the time to come along and to Bill Barnes for arranging it.

November

Mid-week Run – The Four Points at Aldworth The weather forecast for our last organised run of the season was for a dry day with ever increasing amounts of sunshine. And so it turned out, as 13 riders and a couple of pillion passengers gathered at the Holiday Inn at Padworth for a short, 25 mile, but circuitous, run to the Four Points Inn at Aldworth.

We could have taken the more direct route, but then for many living in the vicinity the bikes would hardly have warmed up and would perhaps have been a point of discussion as to whether or not it would have been worth putting on all the gear.

Having called the Inn at 11.00 am, to let them know how many were coming, we set off down the A4 at a leisurely pace in the direction of Upper Woolhampton and Bucklebury.

It is, of course, good practice to ride the route beforehand, but it was a short run on known roads, so when faced with a road closure and diversion a few miles into the ride, it was but a minor inconvenience and we were soon back on track.

The roads, especially under the trees and in the shadows of the autumn sun, were still damp from the overnight rain and a couple of sections with leaf strewn surfaces were ones to watch. This was, however, offset by the splendour of the day, as the light wind blew showers of autumn leaves off the trees like confetti and the clouds gradually dispersed into the blue sky. It was topped off by the more

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or less traffic free run from Catmore to West Ilsley and down to our destination at Aldworth. Arriving pretty much on the stroke of 12 noon.

The staff at the Four Points had reserved the back room and a table in the bar to accommodate all those riding plus a few who had planned to meet us there, so about 21 in total. Thus justifying the 20 places booked. Which was just as well, as the lighter lunch menu has become very popular and seating would otherwise have been a problem.

There wasn't an afternoon route to follow, so after a couple of hours of good food and conversation we made our way back to our various abodes. Where, I for one, took the opportunity in the waning sunshine to wipe the road grime off the '38 Speed Twin in preparation for her hibernation over winter.

Oxford Inter Section Quiz The Oxford quiz evening has turned out to be quite a social occasion for our Section, as the types of questions asked are mostly general knowledge. We, therefore, not only find support for two men's teams, but also a ladies team.

The questions were grouped in batches of 20, after which scores were assessed. By the midway point, the Berkshire 1 men's team of Michael Bryant, Derek Carter, Doug Ellis and Robin Strange were well ahead and seemed certain of victory.

The fifth round, however, proved pivotal. It was simply a series of years in which something or other happened. The number of gasps by teams that had missed out on the answer by one or two years was almost unending. In this, the Grass Track section excelled and Berkshire 1 slumped. Ultimately, allowing Grass Track to take home the beer with a score of 62 vs 60 for Berkshire 1.

The ladies team of Denise Bryant, Lorraine Carter, Liz Ellis and Rose Green did very well with the highest scores in two of the six rounds and finishing third overall.

The Berkshire 2 team of Bill Barnes, Malcolm Bryant, Paul Digweed and Malcolm White were joint fourth with the AJS & Matchless club. In a number of cases we should have gone with our first thought of the answer rather than change it afterwards, but as they say "c'est la vie".

Many thanks to the Oxford Section for hosting the quiz and in providing such an entertaining night and supper as well.

Club Night - Cyclemotors Galore November club night's guest speaker was Alan Hummerstone of the Cyclemotor Section. Unsurprisingly, he was there to give a talk on cyclemotors. Surprisingly, to those of us mostly unfamiliar with this genre of motor assisted velocipedes, there were hundreds of different types and models and the number produced, especially in the late 40s and 50s, runs into hundreds of thousands.

My understanding is that the definition of a cyclemotor is essentially what it says on the tin. It is a motor that has been manufactured for the express purpose of attachment to a bicycle and drives directly via a chain or belt, friction rollers on either tyre or as an insert in the centre of the wheel. Or indirectly as a motorised 3rd wheel, such as the auto-wheel, which pushes the bicycle along.

In passing, Alan also gave a mention to Edward Butler, an Englishman who showed his plans for a petrol driven tricycle at the Stanley Cycle Show in London in 1884. Two years prior to Karl Benz, who is generally recognised as the inventor of the modern automobile. Butler's vehicle was also the first design to be shown at the 1885 Inventions Exhibition, also in London. Unfortunately, the 1865 Red Flag Act with the speed and operational restrictions that that imposed made it impossible to test and develop the machine, so he gave up. Turning his attention to stationary and marine engines. What a loss. Disappointingly, history seems to show that our politicians and legislature over recent generations have failed to exhibit any vision whatsoever.

There was a plethora of machines from many countries. Examples being; Motosacoche (rough translation: the motor in a bag – describing the way in which it fitted within the triangular frame of a Gent's bicycle) from Switzerland, Cyclotracteur and Mobylette from France, Simplex from America and Ducati Cucciolo and Itom Tourist from Italy. Not forgetting the Wall Auto-Wheel, Vincent Firefly,

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Teagle and BSA Winged Wheel from the UK. Even Bugatti made one.

Many thanks to Alan and Robert for coming down from Milton Keynes in inclement weather conditions to give us an insight into the world of cyclemotors.

December

Chiltern Inter Section Quiz Six Berkshire members made their way, more or less successfully, over to the Whitehill Centre in Chesham for the Chiltern Section quiz evening.

Bill Barnes, Malcolm & Michael Bryant and Doug Ellis formed the Berkshire A team. Malcolm White and Robin Strange (who had managed to lose his way in the nether regions of Chesham) with Phil Barfield and Julian Wade of Chiltern formed the Tea Drinkers team.

As usual, Glyn Chambers was in the chair and there was lots to play for, as Berkshire had won the quiz three years on the bounce and were keen to retain that position a fourth time.

The format was the same as in prior years with 10 question groupings with a central theme or beginning with the same letter. Glyn did, however, introduce a couple of general knowledge questions in each section to give some of us a chance to score some points.

During the first half our 'A' team romped ahead with Chiltern spluttering in their dust. The Tea Drinkers' amalgam made surprisingly steady progress with results generally above the average. Undoubtedly, helped along with a useful 'joker' – a doubling of points – score of 15.

However, the quantity of bread, cheese, soup and mince pies washed down with cups of tea that was consumed at the break was almost the 'A' team's undoing, as this evidently put their grey cells into a dose and the last half was a shadow of the first. Even the Tea Drinkers beat them in a couple of subsequent rounds.

That said, I'm pleased to report that the Berkshire team was sufficiently far ahead that a last minute dash by Chiltern with a score of 65 was unable to unseat them on a final score of 68. Thus retaining the position of top team and being in receipt of the winning tankards to prove it. The Tea Drinkers were an admirable third on 59 1/2 followed by East Herts (48 1/2), Chiltern Cheats (46), Cyclemotor (45) and Dick's Boys (24).

Many thanks to Glyn Chambers and for the hospitality given by the Chiltern Section for an enjoyable evening's entertainment.

Christmas Dinner 28 members and partners gathered at the Wheelright's Arms in the parish of St Nicholas Hurst for the annual Christmas bash. Seating accommodation was just right. Although I suspect that those on the long table against the wall had a bit of difficulty getting out when the need arose.

Traditional Christmas fare of turkey was on the menu, along with venison steak, shin of beef, seared turbot and roasted cauliflower, celeriac & leek gratin. I can personally attest to the excellence of the turkey, which was plentiful and served nice and hot. I believe that the other options were equally well received.

When everyone had eaten their fill, Bill stood up to give the customary Chairman's address in which he briefly covered the events of the year and thanked all those who had participated both in riding and organising events and in providing food and nourishment. He especially thanked Muriel for her culinary provisions and presented her with a box of chocs. from the members.

In addition, Bill noted that Doug Ellis had been a continuous member of the VMCC for 50 years and presented Doug with a Certificate of Achievement attesting to that fact with thanks from the Berkshire Section for his contribution.

The raffle was then drawn with Maryan Hunter taking home the main prize of the Christmas hamper.

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Many thanks to Bill for organising the dinner and to the committee members who donated the other raffle prizes and to David Bryant for administering the monies and for ensuring that we remembered what food choices we had made several weeks ago with very nicely printed cards. Also to the staff at the Wheelright's Arms who helped make it an enjoyable evening.

In conclusion

Many thanks to everyone who participated and contributed to the Section during the year and best wishes to all for 2019.

Malcolm White

Secretary

For full details of Section activities
please visit our website.

www.berkshire-vmcc.org.uk

email: info@berkshire-vmcc.org.uk