



TREADS

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The NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2022 Newsletter of AAMC



EDITORS BITS – Stu Bullock

Welcome to November and December TREADS. Crikey, two for the same money, it must be Black Friday!! The theme for this month is, goodbye, adieu, farewell, and hello.

IN THIS EDITION;

This being the November **and** December issue, we will soon say hello to Christmas. "Ding dong merrily on high..."



Also, we'll be saying goodbye to 2022, and think about hello to 2023.

Eddy says goodbye to another race year and presumably will be saying hello to the next one.

The Moto Corsa Café in Gillingham says goodbye and immediately hello, with a new name, The Old Brewery Café and Kitchen and Café and a new future.

I relate in brief, the story of the number of hello and goodbyes that Norton motorcycles have overseen.

I say goodbye to AAMC and editing TREADS, and hello to another phase in my motorcycling life.

ALSO;

The BMF give us lots of information nuggets to guide us on our way and are well worth a read.

The club diary page: There is still time to get YOUR ride organised. Just make contact with Helen to fix your ride date, **07885 578105** – Nero1dog@gmail.com



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 (editor@aamc.co.uk) at the latest by;

FIRST WEEK OF JANUARY 2023

Submissions accepted in MICROSOFT WORD format. (May be edited to fit available space).

Photos are very welcome if correctly attributed to the owner, either as separate JPEG files, or 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.

Any images included in the context will be attributed to their provider/owner.



CHATTY CHAIRMAN - Simon Gough

This month I would like to extend a warm welcome to four new members: -
Veselin lives in Little Stoke and rides a BMW S1000R Sport.
Peter lives in Bishop Sutton and rides a Triumph Street Scrambler 900 and a BMW R nineT Racer.
Mike lives in Kingswood and rides a Triumph Tiger 800. Finally,
Pete lives in Frenchay and rides a Kawasaki Versys GT.

It was great to see all four of you on the final Club ride of the year, and Pete even brought his wife Shirley along for that and also the P&G Annual Dinner.

We hope you will make good use of your membership next year when Club activity resumes in the spring.



RIDE REPORT – LAST OF 2022 – Simon Gough

The weather forecast for the final Club ride of 2022 was for heavy showers, so I was expecting just a few members to brave it for the trip to Marlborough and beyond. Over the previous couple of weeks, several prospective members had been in touch regarding joining the Club and I had suggested coming out on this ride to meet and try riding with us to make sure they were happy before they 'took the plunge'. We were meeting at the Cross Hands and there were already a handful of people there when I arrived, and that number just kept growing until it reached 18 – far in excess of my predictions. The sun was out and although a bit chilly, it was a nice start to the day.



I had decided on a slightly earlier start than I usually do, so I could include a coffee stop. So, we set off up the B4040 towards Malmesbury and arrived at the Courtyard Café in Sherston shortly after it opened at 10am.



This is a new venue for Club rides and is a nice location with good drinks and cakes, although parking is usually a bit of a squash if you have a large group. I started using it for the annual training course in the spring when I was looking for somewhere better than the small garden centre in Malmesbury, and decided to add it to my list of good cafés. A cycling group was already in the café but there was still plenty of room for us and we all decided to sit outside in the sunshine. Foolishly I forgot to take a photo. Sorry.

After we'd all used the 'facilities', we set off along the lanes past Westonbirt and onto the A46, then back through Tetbury and past Malmesbury to Minety. In Wootton Bassett we turned off through the lanes again and up over Hackpen Hill, dropping down into Marlborough past the Golf Course. Unfortunately, the rain had started by now and became very heavy indeed, so we were somewhat drowned when we parked in Hilliers Yard and dashed inside Mercer's café.

I was concerned we wouldn't be able to find room in the café as it's a very popular location, but the few customers were downstairs and the upstairs room was empty apart from Rob who had decided to meet us there for lunch.



By the time we'd all removed our waterproofs the café floor was awash, and I did apologise to Mrs. Mercer, but thankfully she wasn't the least bit concerned – at least the floor was lino rather than carpet. We were 19 customers she wouldn't have had that day, and she was very grateful for the business. After a short time, the rain stopped and the sun came out again, and it stayed out for quite a while after we left, on our way to the outskirts of Hungerford via Ramsbury. Unfortunately, the group became split up and although most of us got back together, a couple of riders had to find their own way home. Sorry.

The second problem that afternoon was when Jerry got a puncture, but he managed to make a temporary repair and then head directly home. Once we were back together, we headed north-west along the B4000, then back through Lechlade and Cirencester. Unfortunately, the heavy rain started again by the time we reached Tetbury, so it was a quick 'good bye' at Tormarton and home for a hot shower.

Thanks very much to everyone who made the effort to come out. I'm delighted to report the four prospective members subsequently joined so I didn't manage to put them off! Thanks very much to Mark for going back-marker for me again. Hope to see you all in March for the first ride of 2023.

Photos attributed to Simon Gough.



CLUB EVENT REPORT – P&G Annual Dinner – Simon Gough.

This year Helen booked our P&G Annual Dinner at the White Horse, Hambrook. This was the first time for us at this venue and it didn't disappoint, indeed it is such a popular location that Helen had to book it a year in advance. Fifteen of us, including new member Pete and his wife Shirley had a great time. The food was first class and the company wasn't too bad either!



We had the function room to ourselves with a private bar, and Mark kindly produced a fairly lengthy quiz to keep us occupied during any 'slack moments'. It certainly got the 'little grey cells' working.

It was a great evening all round and good to catch-up with friends we haven't seen for a while.

We often visit the same venue for a couple of years before moving on, and I'm sure Helen has a plan for next year already.

Photos attributed to Simon Gough.



VIEW FROM THE SADDLE – Nigel Dean

Back in July 2019, Pam and I did a three-week trip around England and Wales. The weather was kind, we saw many places we hadn't seen before and we stayed in a selection of hotels and Airbnb's ranging from lovely to quirky to downright weird.

One of the highlights of the trip was to be the infamous Hardknott Pass in the Lake District. Achieving a gradient of up to 1 in 3 and boasting a fearsome reputation for gobbling up motorcyclists and spitting them out on the roadside, I thought it best to do some research.

Now, rumour has it, that you can find out how to do anything on YouTube.

Change a tap washer? YouTube!

Bake a cake? YouTube!

Ride a motorcycle over the Hardknott Pass? Eek!

I entered the search phrase "Hardknott Pass motorbike" and presented to me was a litany of warning, woe and wreckage.

Search results came up thick and fast:

- "Hardknott Pass - Corner of Doom"
- "Lake District, Hardknott Pass, - Motorbike Adventure - Scary!"
- "Hardknott Pass Fail"
- "The best (worst and most terrifying) bit of Hardknott pass"
- "Hardknott 3 Motorbike fail - Thou shall not pass!!"
- "Hardknott pass fail on motorbikes"

The list went on and on.

We watched a few of the videos. A German couple stalling on a steep right-hand hairpin and tumbling down the roadside all captured by the pillion's helmet-mounted GoPro. A novice struggling with clutch control and target fixating on a large rock by the side of the road.

Should we be risking life and limb to ride a up a steep, single track obstacle course just to come down again? Of course, we should! Undaunted, we discussed it prior to our trip and we decided we should do the pass on a dry day and when we could leave the (not inconsiderable) luggage at the hotel. We had a plan!

Weeks later, we were pottering around the Lake District, having forgotten "the plan", arriving at the foot of the Hardknott late-ish in the afternoon, fully laden with luggage. There was a persistent drizzle and the mountains were shrouded in mist.

We decided to press on, regardless.

As we ascended the pass, the mist got worse and the views disappeared. The road got more and more bumpy, steep and narrow. As we approached a particularly sharp and steep right hander, almost certainly the same one the German couple had come a cropper on, there came into view through the mist a man standing by the side of the road next to a stranded car with a wheel completely broken off its axle. Noting the large boulders at the roadside which he had hit, I slipped a bit more clutch and revved a bit more to get past the car. I must admit at one point I said to Pam, "Do you think we should stop?" "No!" she commanded, with an eye on the boulders and the absence of anywhere safe to put a foot down.

There wasn't much to see at all because of the weather, but in any case, my eyes were pinned to the road and the descent was at least as challenging as the ascent.

We stopped for a couple of photos at the beginning of the Wrynose pass, a relaxing Sunday ride compared to the Hardknott, and admired what view there was, as the mist had lifted a bit.

Then on to Grasmere for the next stopover before the next adventure.



FIRST OF THE LOSERS - Eddy

Race photography Lee Hollick

Having seen off Mallory Park practice day we were in April at the same circuit for Rounds 1 and 2. Every time I turn up at to a BHR event, the scale and variety of entrants and their enthusiasm never fails to amaze me. We have



massive and costly transporter motor homes as well plenty of guys like me in an aging car towing an aging trailer, sleeping under canvass - and everything between.

For this event I decided to hire a van. The nights were well below zero and having braved Friday night under canvass I chose the van on Saturday. Didn't make a lot of difference – my



pee bucket was frozen solid on both nights. (Thanks for sharing, Eddy. Ed).

So, let's cut to the chase – or the race. Well, the Superdream was not running at all well, and my lap times were not worthy of record.

One of the highlights was to position myself next to Anthony Perrett on his Suzuki GT250 2-stroke.

I was hoping he would pass me so I could tuck in and pick up some ideas. Alas it was not to be. When we spoke afterwards, he said he was up my chuff on the way into bends but hadn't the drive out to make the pass. Our lines were

close throughout however, so helped to build confidence.

At this year's IoM qualifying we lost Mark Puslow from TAB2 Classics, that talented young man who fabricated the tank for my Superdream. At Mallory we tragically lost Stefan Manoli in the Sunday morning scooter race and racing was suspended. I was wrongly confident that the poor running of the Superdream was down to carburation and decided to invest in a pair that were not of the Constant Velocity type – Mikunis or Amal Concentrics.

Cadwell for Rounds 2 and 3. I was going down Anthony Perett's mantra, 'Pretty soon you will be spending more and more to achieve less and less'. Nevertheless, my initial outlay of £1600 to get the bike on the circuit was tiny compared with many others sitting there. The Mikunis were fitted but the bike – if anything – was delivering less than at Mallory – in spite of hours and hours of frustration and fiddling. What also unsettled me was that the chat in the paddock seemed to confirm that my best bet would have been to follow Keith Latheron's advice to fit Amal Concentrics not Mikunis. Anyway, having achieved a 3rd place last year at Cadwell, this time I was in a class of my own – i.e., DNFs and going nowhere! On the bright side, given that the bike would only rev to around 7000rpm (around 70 mph) I reckoned my corner speed could not have been that bad because on the straights it felt like I was going backwards.



The highlight came on Saturday afternoon....
'Attention Paddock...Attention Paddock, would Edward Lambah-Stoate please go to the race

office.' I quipped to the guys 'This is probably an invitation to either speed up or buzz off

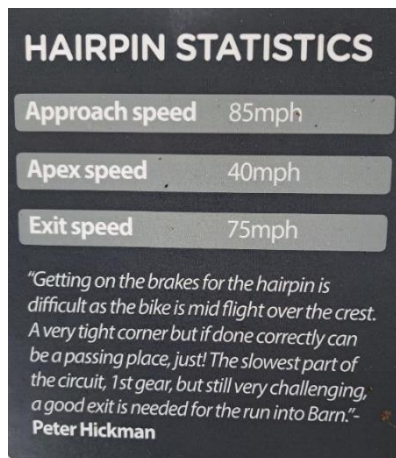


home!' Upon entering the office, I announced 'Eddy Lambah-Stoate here to receive his bollocking' only to be told 'Not at all we have a trophy for you'. It seems I had won the 2021 Novice Championship. This came as something of a surprise as I did not know such a thing existed. Anyway, that put paid to Keith Latheron as my new best friend to be replaced by whoever calculates the machine handicaps (the Novice Championship, like the over 50's races are handicapped).

Just to give a feel for lap times in this type of racing at Cadwell. Our fast guys can achieve mid 1 minute 40 seconds. The pack tends to be low 2 minutes to mid-teens, the slower batch 2 minutes 20ish.

I was managing 2 minutes 33, but with a max speed of only 70 ish. Tony Green No 190 on his 1936 350 Velocette whose consistent smoothness is something to aspire to, was doing 2.22s.

On to Rounds 5 and 6 at Anglesey – well actually Spain and Portugal on my 200bhp BMW HP4. I had decided to use my time away to get the Superdream sorted. I had paid out the thick end of £500 for the Mikunis with a range of jets, another £400 to set up what I had failed to manage myself and bike was still only marginally better. SO big intake of breath and I left it with Dave



Greenham at D&M Engineering at Newark with a pretty open instruction. The day I was due to catch the ferry Dave phoned to say the stator – yes that specially wound Rex's Speed shop one – had vibrated loose and was destroying itself against the rotor. Some of the winding posts were twisted, altering the timing, evidenced by the bluing on the exhaust system right down to the silencer box. The displaced windings were those which came in above 6000 rpm hence the performance problem above that range. I parcelled up a spare stator and rotor and upon my return the bike had been set up and dyno' ed.

When I bought the Mikunis from Steve at Motocarb he told me he had no records or knowledge of the set up for Superdream's (why's that I wonder?) but packaged up the K series CB350 range, which included a P4 emulsion tube.

In Dave's hands and with the benefit of a Dyno jet test the set up for the CB400N for all those who will now be building their own Superdream racers for next year is:

Mikuni 32s

Pilot Jet 20

Main jet 190

Emulsion tube P8

The end result, with each cylinder showing +/- 150 lbs compression, is 32.5 bhp at 9,250 rpm. (Nothing was gained by taking it out to 10,000) that apparently should produce 105 mph. I can confirm it doesn't. The best I can achieve on Park Straight at Cadwell is 95, albeit some of that is uphill.

Onward to Pembrey for Rounds 7 and 8. On the Monday and Tuesday prior I had been ramping round the Bugatti Circuit at Le Mans on my BMW HP4 in 40 degrees of brilliant sunshine.

Friday saw me pitching the tent in the paddock in reasonable and sunny conditions. Saturday morning practice session went pretty well with the bike revving out as I had hoped, race one however was brought to premature halt with a misfire at yup, you've guessed it, 6000 rpm. Flywheel off stator found to be as secure as Dave had left it. Plugs however were as black as the ace of spades. Went to adjust the carburettor needles to find both of the slide ring nuts pretty well undone. Fixed that, by which time we were having some proper rain. Second race went well, my times were a little slower but not to the same extent as the middle ground riders so I was in the tail end mix and managed 3 overtakes from my back of the grid position. Saturday night was indescribable, a full blown hooley with the morning showing a paddock a good deal emptier than I saw it when turning in. Did Sunday morning's race (well off the pace) and packed up with the usual list of jobs to be done to the bike before Darley Moor.

Last year there was a visitor in the paddock who suggested disabling the crankcase balance weights to give quicker response – great idea not! Darley Moor saw the bike continuing to shake itself to bits. My triple tree top yoke became a double tree, the LHS yoke nut came off, the steering went very vague but what the hell, I survived that bend so bash on. That evening walking round the circuit we found the top yoke nut, put it back on with a 14inch King Dick adjustable and it still came off again on Sundays last race. Darley moor also saw me playing with sprockets, changing the standard 37 tooth 400N for the 42 tooth 250N. The machine was way more fun and responsive but the lap times remained identical, which probably says more about the rider than the machine.

The VMCC September anniversary track days at Cadwell were a Godsend, I was able to put the Superdream in a group suited to the its power – Road Intermediate and Fast – and found the capability to plough up the food chain even ‘popping’ the odd machine with way more power than mine. The SD performed very well enabling me to maintain upper end revs in all gears, working at transitioning the throttle smoothly between turning in and loading the rear on the way out of bends. Dave Greenhams’ efforts were amply rewarded and



dropping one tooth off the engine sprocket to 15 and retaining the standard 37 tooth rear sprocket at last found the balance for the smaller circuits that I had been looking for.

And so, we arrive at Rounds 11 and 12, the final rounds, at Cadwell again (see picture for Peter Hickman’s advice on the Hairpin). For once I haven’t had to touch the bike from 2 weeks earlier. It ran and continued to run at full revs in all gears all the time. I am reminded of a talk that Scott Redding, then just turned 16 years old, gave to some bikers in Gloucester. A question came from the floor, ‘What sort of racing advice does your uncle give you’. Answer; ‘Full gas all the time!’. I found myself able to emulate this mantra, feeling a tiny rear wheel drift at Mansfield and the Chicane, even to extent that no matter what gear I selected for the Mountain, I could still use full gas, as the



front tyre refused to lift. On the main race grid, the Superdream is simply not powerful enough to be competitive. With 32bhp it is racing with a raft of 50 up to 100 bhp machines. In the over 50s race, however, where the bikes are handicapped, it managed a podium 2nd, lapping at around 2 minutes 14 secs. The first of the losers. Peter Hickman’s hairpin statistics talk about overtaking possibilities. Well, here I am (coming under Tony Smith, the crusader from Saltash on his MZ) fully committed. Need any help Hicky, you know where to come!

Anthony Perrett on board his Suzuki T500 race number 203 [see picture above] placed

towards the back of the grid ploughed his way through the traffic lapping at around 2 minutes 4 seconds but was placed 17th on handicap. 'What do I have to do?' Moaned the poor chap. 'Race a Superdream', Came the smug reply!



HELLO-GOODBYE NORTON MOTORCYCLES - Stu Bullock

Without doubt, the most repeated 'Hello-Goodbye' record belongs to the NORTON name.

When I was around 10yrs of age, my late older brother took me to visit a local farmer type chappy, who had 'raced' motorcycles. In his shed (the ubiquitous story), covered in sacking, was a Norton racing motorcycle, all gleaming and shiny. Any further detail has been lost in time and regular doses of overexcitement. Already with an unhealthy interest in motorcycles, this visit ignited in me the everlasting fire to ride motorcycles.

Back to NORTON. The first company was started (hello) in Birmingham by James Norton, in 1898. They started to make their own engines in 1907.

By 1913 more investment was required but during WWI and again in WWII, Norton produced so many models for the military, the public were unable to buy them, coining the phrase 'the unapproachable Norton'.

In 1953, with few orders, Norton was sold. Goodbye. Associated Motorcycles (AMC) bought a controlling interest in 1962, and production moved to London. Hello.

In 1966 AMC became insolvent but reformed as Norton Villiers, eventually becoming Norton Villiers Triumph in 1973. Development included the rotary Wankel engine.



Image attributed to: Yesterdays Antique Motorcycles en Classic Motorcycle Archive, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2952534>

As an ACU race Marshall, I was privileged to see these wonderful rotary engine machines race at Donnington and Silverstone. The image below has as its pilot, our very own Ron Haslam.



Image attributed to: Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1153356>

Later in my Police career, I was slightly overwhelmed by being able to ride two models made for the Cops; Interpol 2 and Commander. I treasure that experience to this day, with the Interpol 2, the best frame on a motorcycle I have ever experienced.

Obviously, the most wonderful Rotary engine was never going to make it. Too expensive to maintain and burnt a mixture of fuel and oil in such quantities that made the emissions from a 2 stroke appear clean!!



Norton Rotary engine Interpol 2. My image. Ed



Norton Rotary Commander. My Image. Ed.

These bikes were quick, incredibly smooth and just the best frame ever. One party piece was to place a fifty pence piece on edge on top of the fuel tank. With the engine running, the coin would just sit perfectly still, even when revved.

An adjustment was needed when thinking about engine braking. Frankly, there wasn't any and the disc brakes were not 'user friendly', especially when wet.

Another problem was with the way the rotors (in place of pistons) worked. There were two rotors and to get speed low enough to run in traffic, there was a switch that cut one rotor at

low revs. So, I led the Minehead half marathon on the Interpol 2. The plan was to draw ahead of the leaders as they entered Warren Road, off Butlins roundabout. The leaders were then set to cross the finish line about halfway along the road, where a pavilion had been erected for the great and the good to watch the final steps.

Back to the Norton. Remember, low revs one rotor cut out; no electric to make the bang part of the suck, squeeze, bang process. Remember the engine runs on a mix of oil and petrol. Even when the rotor is not firing, it still goes 'round and 'round, sucking in a bit of fuel/oil mixture that may not all be 'blown' out on the exhaust stroke.

Once I began to pull away, electric returned to the spinning rotor, the mixture ignited. There was a huge bang, a jet of flame from the exhaust and clouds of lovely dark smoke emitted. It appears not many of the great and good actually saw the final steps, so just as well one geezer was well in front and got the trophy. Strangely enough, the Cops were not asked back to escort the race again.

As a brand on its own, Norton was relaunched in 1988 (hello) but again, investment became 'difficult' and in 1993 became Norton Motors Ltd. Manufacture of motorcycles became fragmented due to the number of investors claiming back their investment, and news stories abounded about the legal position of some investors and the odd murky cloud concerning finances loaned by our Government. Hence, a further goodbye in 2006.

The Norton brand was renamed Norton Racing Ltd, (hello), based at Donnington Park and producing some apparently good motorcycles. They went into administration in Jan 2020, (goodbye).

In April 2020 the TVS Motor Company from India, purchased Norton Motorcycles. (Hello). Production of Norton Motorcycles Ltd has moved to Solihull, where it has been

announced that a £100Mil investment plan is in place. The Commando 961 Sport and Café Racer have had various internals redesigned for longevity. Reports are, while they look the same machine and are now in production, they are very different. Prices are reported to be Commando 961 SP £16,499 and the CR £16,999. So far, no firm prices for the V4's but industry sources suggest around £30,000.



Commando 961CR. Image courtesy Norton Motorcycles



Norton Commando 961, Courtesy Norton Motorcycles



Norton V4SP, courtesy Norton Motorcycles



Norton V4SV Courtesy of Norton Motorcycles



V4CR, Café Racer. Courtesy Norton motorcycles Ltd

If you consider the outstanding racing legacy, the continuous previous problems with finances and the very murky stories abounding, Norton has had its fair share of abuse and neglect and yet, has the undying devotion of many motorcyclists. We can only hope that the fabulous Norton recovers its good name, superior development and who knows, maybe another TT? Excited at developments? Too right I am.



ABOVE; VFSP courtesy Norton Motorcycles Ltd



Image attributed to: By Lothar Spurzem - Own work, CC BY-SA 2.0 de, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1315350>



HEART OF ENGLAND RIDE – COURTESY OF ADVENTURE BIKE RIDER MAGAZINE

On any big ride it isn't just your bike that needs filling up, you do too if you are planning on putting a shift in in the saddle.



That's why we've teamed up with our friends at Moto Corsa Motorcycles (*SEE ADDITIONAL ITEM BELOW-Ed*) one of our favourite biker joints in the south west of England to bring you a series of belting weekend rides with some good grub chucked in.

This route starts at the Moto Corsa Café near Gillingham for a fry up and ends right in the historic centre of England in Meriden, near Coventry. There's a description of the ride below, but to get to the meat of it, scroll down to see the route map and Satnav waypoints.



Kick off the day at the Moto Corsa Café (make sure to give them the code ABR70 to get 25% off – **check with the café first. Ed**) and then, once you and your ride are both fuelled up, get

on the road and head south on the B3081. In a mere eight miles you will find yourself at Zig Zag Hill, England's twistiest road, just outside Shaftsbury.

Its narrow bends and hairpin turn, swoop through the woods like a West Country Stelvio Pass. Early in the day with the sunshine blinking through the trees it is a truly spectacular stretch of tarmac. The only drawback is that, though it is gloriously winding, unlike the road Paul McCartney sung about, it isn't very long with the tight turns running out within a mile.

It's still well worth the ride to get there though.

From there, take a hard turn north and loop round back on yourself through Birdbush and Donhead St Mary until you join up with the A350 for a short blast before coming off and enjoying a long B-road ride through Wiltshire and Somerset on the way to Cheddar Gorge.

On your way to the gorge, you'll ride along the most quintessentially English roads you're likely to find anywhere. The hedge-lined lanes carve their way through the countryside linking up villages and towns until you enter the Mendip Hills Area of National Beauty.



The Mendips steadily build in majesty, culminating in Cheddar Gorge, one of the most awe-inspiring natural scenes in England. The sheer limestone cliffs, reaching as high as 453 feet, flank a great stretch of twisting road that is guaranteed to be a joy for any biker.

Interestingly, the gorge was JRR Tolkien's inspiration for Helm's Deep, the stronghold of men in the two towers where one of the greatest battles in all of fantasy fiction took place.

Next, we turn north east as our route slices between Bath and Bristol before linking up with the Fosse Way just outside the village of Castle Combe, Wiltshire for a ride up to Cirencester.

What's all the Fosse about?



The Fosse Way is an old Roman road that stretches from Exeter to Lincoln, but we won't be going all the way today. However, the stretch between Bath and Cirencester gives the opportunity for a touch of off-road riding on the byways if you are that way inclined.

The picturesque Market Place in Cirencester is the perfect spot to park up and grab a coffee if you need a little mid ride pick me up.

For any history buffs, Cirencester can trace its lineage all the way back to Roman Britain where it was the second largest city after London during Roman rule. The town is also home to one of the largest Roman Amphitheatres in Britain (I know, what have they ever done for us?) that once held up to 8,000 spectators.

We then head into the gorgeous Cotswolds, passing through Chedworth, Bourton-on-the-Water, Stow-on-the-Wold and Moreton-in-Marsh on our way to the heart of England. These villages are a Cotswolds greatest hits. A feast of stone-built houses, lining the river with multitudes of local shops and restaurants scattered amongst them.



The Heart of England

After negotiating the Cotswolds you'll pass through the delightful Warwickshire town of Henley-in-Arden. Then there's short blast up the A3400 before picking up the B roads again and winding the way to the village of Meriden, the traditional centre of England. You'll know you've reached the end of your trip when you see the sandstone monument on the village green.

Meriden was also home to Triumph Motorcycles from 1941 until 1983, after their original factory in Coventry was destroyed by the Luftwaffe. Steve McQueen even made a visit once in 1964.

After a long old day in the saddle, you'll probably want to fill up again and have a well-earned pint at one of the local pubs in the village.

And don't forget, quote **ABR70** at Café Corsa for 25% off your breakfast. **(Please check with the café first – Ed)**

- **Start;** Café Corsa (Now **THE OLD BREWERY CAFÉ AND KITCHEN**).
- Zig Zag Hill
- Cheddar Gorge
- Castle Combe
- Cirencester
- Chedworth
- Bourton-on-the-Water
- Stow-on-the-Wold
- Moreton-in-Marsh
- Henley in Arden
- **Finish** Meriden

(The Old Brewery Café and Kitchen are not open on Sundays and Bank Holidays)

Mileage: 189 miles

All words and images with this article are courtesy of Adventure Bike Rider.



PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE:

A follow up story:

Gillingham's Moto Corsa Rebrands as THE OLD BREWERY CAFÉ AND KITCHEN, words and image courtesy of Gillingham News.

The popular Cafe Corsa in the Wyke area of Gillingham has been rebranded as The Old Brewery Cafe and Kitchen and now has ambitious plans for the future.

The cafe, housed in what was once Matthews & Co brewery, closed briefly in August when Moto Corsa, the motorbike company that owned the cafe, went into liquidation. However, the site's landlord, Dr Geoffrey Guy, founder of The Chedington Court Estate, took over the site, and re-opened the cafe under its new name.

In early November, the Old Brewery Cafe and Kitchen Cafe held an event for 200 or so local residents and businesses to celebrate its new beginning. 'We're bigger and better than

before,' says Steve Angell, who has been cafe manager since 2017 and will run The Old Brewery Cafe and Kitchen with his original team. 'And we have lots of exciting plans.'

While the building will continue to house motorbikes, part of Dr Guy's private collection, the cafe has expanded into what was the showroom, adding another 60 places. In summer, with the outdoor space, the cafe can now comfortably seat over 140 people. It can also offer facilities for private dining and conferences.

The cafe has a distinctive look and feel. 'We wanted a quirky, rather than regimented look to the cafe – the tables are a mix of oak and pine tables and second-hand chairs that I found in antique shops,' says Steve.

Many of the dishes on the menu are now home-made, and the cafe's new bar serves high quality Yapp wines and bottled beers from Guy Ritchie's brewery. 'We use a lot of local products,' says Steve.

The next step is opening as a restaurant in the evening, with a different a la carte menu. 'We are constantly inundated with people asking when we plan to open in the evenings so it's a natural next step,' says Steve. 'It's such a lovely building, it's the perfect venue. We have put in for planning permission and hope to be open at around 2023.'



THINGS I THOUGHT I'D NEVER DO – OWN A BMW 'BOXER' – Stu Bullock

In my TITIND folder, owning a Boxer just did not come into question, until earlier this year, when the question that didn't exist, was asked.

Why would I previously never consider owning a 'Boxer' engined BMW? After all, I've ridden loads of them. Actually, there is the answer, *I've ridden loads of them.* Just in case you

don't know, the 'Boxer' engine is so called because it has cylinders that are opposite each other. This means the pistons travel away from each other on the ignition stroke, thereby coining the term 'horizontally opposed'. On start-up, the bike is renowned for part one of the 'Boxer swing', as it pulls away from you as the engine fires up.



The bike above is a BMW GS from 2008 and pictured in Yosemite National Park, California, USA. I hired it for a lengthy trip from Los Angeles to Monument Valley in Arizona, then back west to San Francisco, before riding south on Highway 1 back to LA. Was it any good? Hardly inspiring, with California 'clean air' laws resulting in the engine reduced in power, overtaking required a calendar. Mind you, two up and luggable...nuff said!



The blue one was borrowed from a friend whilst in Greece, so I can't be too rude. Heavy, sluggish, bouncy, directionally indifferent, unstoppable. Do I mean the bike?



Another Greek loaner. Nice weather, isn't it?



This one a borrower in Izmir, Turkey. Now, that is a very pleasant city.



Another 'loaner' above, this time one of many from the Cops. My first was a 650cc, magnificently heavy, side pull out kick start, slow as a slow thing, acceleration caused the

'Boxer Swing' as it would steer right under positive throttle, meaning the rider had to lean to the left. They didn't last. The one pictured was an 800cc version from the early 80's, which went a bit quicker, max around 110mph after several minutes, but brakes were only a minor consideration, so left one with a level of uncertainty that was judged to be character building by the fleet purchasers.



Thank goodness when the K engine bikes came along and even more thanking of goodness when the Honda Pan European joined the fleet. (I've ridden oodles of those great machines too).



My overriding low opinion and impression of the Boxer has never left me and maybe, (for maybe - read HAS), stopped me from looking into the more modern updates to the engine and components. A major error, as it happens.

For instance, the modern engine revs more freely and smoothly, goes much quicker with tons of torque, stops when you want it to, excellent frame, less weight and has lost

forever, the 'boxer swing'. Not that long ago, I was presented with an opportunity to try out a 2022 R1250RS. I found the biggest difficulty, eating humble pie, as I rode. Then, explaining to Sue my reasons for constantly saying, "Boxer? Load of poo, don't even think about it".

The trial was a success, luggage tested, steering tested, carrying capacity two up tested. Also, maybe, just happened to test overtaking. More pie, anyone?



So, after much consideration, the above has joined us and we are looking forward to many more mile's touring, day rides and just 'going out to make me smile' rides. Mind you, there is still a K lurking under a dust sheet, somewhere in the shed!! I used to be indecisive but I'm no longer sure about that.



BMF NEWS ROUNDUP – AUGUST 2022 -
Helen Hancock, BMF Administrator - Written by Peter Henshaw – editor@bmf.co.uk

Crash avoidance testing of automated cars will include motorcycles from 2023. Euro NCAP, a European voluntary car safety performance assessment programme, which is responsible for the tests and which gives all new cars a safety rating, detailed the changes in Vision 2030, a paper published on 9th November 2022.

"We consider this as good news," said FEMA's General Secretary Dolf Willigers. "In September 2022 we published an article about the very high Euro NCAP star rating for the Tesla Model Y, while accidents with Tesla's in the USA have shown that the Autopilot system is far from failproof, especially in bad weather conditions. The paper provides an answer to the concerns we expressed earlier."

According to Vision 2030, crash avoidance testing will now include powered two-wheelers for the first time, as well as pedestrians and cyclists. Tests are conducted on test tracks, but in future will attempt to simulate real traffic conditions more closely with attention paid to different lighting and weather conditions. Until now, tests have also focused on motorways, but from 2024 other road scenarios will be introduced.

The test programme for automatic emergency braking will now include bikes, possibly including a higher approach speed to suit powered two-wheelers. Finally, the paper sees the PTW-related tests developing to include testing of ABS, traction control and other stability aids, along with motorcycle riding gear.

Jim Freeman, Chair of the BMF, said: "We'll be watching this with interest, Euro NCAP have some ground to make up regarding motorcycles."

Written by Peter Henshaw

Imagine the biggest barn find in the world. Hitchcock's Motorcycles, the Royal Enfield spares specialist based near Solihull, has acquired one from the USA amounting to

over 180 old motorbikes, and brought it home to Britain. Actually, it's less of a barn find, more of a huge buyback of mostly British machines, which were exported to North America in the 1950s and '60s, and some before World War II. "It was a unique opportunity in America from two different sources," said Derek from Hitchcock's. "As well as over 180 bikes we've got over 50 tons of spares. Everything was shipped back in five 40-foot sea containers."

The bikes are predominantly British singles and twins, though the promotional film does show glimpses of two-stroke Jawas as well. As you'd expect, BSA, Triumph and Norton are there in abundance, as well as Royal Enfield of course. Interestingly, some of the REs are badged as Indians, a marketing ploy used by the Redditch factory to help market its bikes in 1950s North America.

The bikes range from complete and original to basket case, Norton Commandos rubbing shoulders with BSA A65s, Triumph 250s, at least one AJS Stormer and pre-war hand-change machines. As for the spares, 50 tons amounts to a veritable mountain of just about every part you can think of. A sea of frames, over 250 wheels and tyres, 150 fuel tanks, speedometers, gearboxes...

"It's going to be a labour of love to get all this catalogued and ready for sale," said Derek, "and it might take months, but we are hard at work to get this done and get everything on sale."

BMF Chair Jim Freeman, no stranger to old British bikes himself, said: "What a treasure trove! From my own experience with randomised old spares collections, the most important thing is that cataloguing process, the question, always, is 'That's an old piston. Yep, but what for?' I wish them luck!"

Written by Peter Henshaw



Could your next motorcycle be a petrol/electric hybrid? Vitesco Technologies, a German company which supplies electric powertrain technologies, certainly thinks so, unveiling a 400cc prototype at **EICMA***.

The bike, based on Husqvarna's Vitpilen single, adds a 48-volt electric drive system consisting of a 12Kw motor and small 1.5kwh battery. Vitesco claims that the petrol/electric system gives the best of both worlds, doubling the torque of the standard Husky 400cc engine while delivering up to 75% less CO2 (on the standard WMTC cycle) and makes the bike easier to ride, with an automated gearbox – it's even got a reverse gear.

Petrol/electric hybrid cars have been around for many years, and White Motorcycle Concepts is building petrol/electric Yamaha Tricity scooters for Northamptonshire Police, but no one has yet applied the system successfully to a motorcycle. "For medium-sized and large motorcycles with combustion engines, we expect that future exhaust emission limits can only be met by using hybridization in combination with an automated manual transmission," said Torsten Bellon, Head of Two-Wheeler & Powersports at Vitesco. Vitesco's system, designed for any bike over 125cc, can use petrol power, electric, or (to produce that claimed torque boost) a combination of the two. A control unit decides when to switch between modes and also changes gear when in petrol mode, at a point to minimise fuel consumption.

In practice, says the company, the 1.5kwh battery will power the bike for up to 18 miles at up to 37mph – switch to petrol power and the bike can still top 100mph, with a range of over

150 miles. The real surprise is in the Vitesco hybrid's affordability – the company reckons it would add less than £900 to the cost of a machine, and add just 20 kilos to the weight. You might not want one now, but if combustion bikes and cars face outright bans city centres, then hybrids could have their day.

Jim Freeman, Chair of the BMF, was intrigued: "Another fascinating development, I'm having trouble keeping up with the numerous technical developments, it seems that every month brings another. That battery, small as it is, gives just enough range for ULEZ trips, with the potential for longer distances, without being tied to the weaknesses of the current e-charging infrastructure. The price and weight add-ons are more than practical, unlike some 4 wheeled hybrids, where it's easy to question their validity. "

Written by Peter Henshaw

*EICMA – acronym for Esposizione Internazionale Ciclo Motociclo e Accessoriè (International Cycle Motorcycle and Accessories Exhibition) held in Milan
Top image courtesy of Vitesco Technologies GmbH



AND FINALLY – Ed

Thanks very much for providing and reading articles that I have been able to use, especially those that support the club activities.

It's been a privilege to put TREADS together since April 2019 and in some small way support what is an excellent club for advanced riding, touring and generally gadding about with huge smiles on our faces.

Who of us knew the Covid virus was coming in 2020! What a journey we have all been on since then. Lucky in some way we cannot see everything in our futures. For all sorts of reasons, one thing I am very certain of, is that motorcycling has kept me 'sane' over that period, more so than ever before. Also, being

part of a very good club has meant we have been able to keep in touch, even if only through TREADS, club WhatsApp and Facebook pages and that proves the veracity of that important old saw 'to associate we must communicate', which I have tried my best to achieve, for the benefit of us all.

However, the time has come for me to hand on that baton. I know someone will take the role on, simply because it's too important not to, but possibly in a different format and/or style. I wish you all well, every one of you.

It's fair to say that with my involvement in RoSPA and a lesser degree, the IAM and BMF clubs, AAMC stands out for its purpose of 'Serious Fun', because that is exactly what motorcycling should be. But a club is only as good and efficient as its members and so I urge you all to make sure you continue to support the club, keep organizing rides and other social events going, and following up the advanced riding ethos, because in doing so will ensure AAMC continues its important role.

Anyway, Merry Christmas and New Year to everyone.

So, just leaves Sue and I to say 'here's hoping this is au revoir and not goodbye'.



THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

How lucky am I to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.

Winnie the Pooh



DIARY

2023

DATES



1. Where club events are detailed in TREADS, WhatsApp or Facebook club sites, it would be sensible to contact the ride leader to confirm final details and let them know you are attending. Please advise the ride leader well in advance if you plan to bring a *guest rider*.
2. Please be sure to arrive at the starting point promptly, with a full tank of fuel.
3. Each run will have a **leader** who leads the group, and a **sweeper** who stays at the rear of the group. Both will be clearly identified at the start of every AAMC ride.
4. At any junction, deviation or situation which may cause confusion over the route to be taken, the leader will signal to the rider immediately behind him/her to drop-off and stop at or close to the point of deviation. The dropped rider should ensure their own safety, be visible to following traffic and be able to clearly indicate the correct route to following AAMC riders.
5. The rider who has been dropped to indicate the correct route, will wait until the sweeper has passed before re-joining the group and overtaking the

sweeper can be carried out safely. ONLY if the sweeper clearly indicates can the rider re-join the group in front of him/her.

6. Overtaking within the group is allowed provided it is carried out safely and with courtesy and consideration for ALL road users.
7. ALL riding in groups organised under AAMC rules must take account of the varying skill levels that may exist within each group. Putting any road user at risk and/or bringing AAMC into disrepute is unacceptable behaviour.



NON-CLUB EVENTS that may be of interest.

Castle Combe info and contact details

Castle Combe 'action day' dates available from www.castlecombecircuit.co.uk

Castle Combe Motorcycle Track days are detailed at <https://castlecombecircuit.co.uk/motorcycle-track-days>



british motorcyclists federation

BMF EVENTS:

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BMF DISCOUNT CODE:

Code for 2022 - CLB22VJTR

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 benefit.

BMF INFO – Benefits of membership

The British Motorcyclists Federation is one of the largest motorcycling groups of its kind in the world. United by a love of motorcycling, we represent our members by safeguarding their rights on and off the road. *(AAMC is a BMF affiliated Club – Ed).*

Join the BMF community today!

Just £28 a year. Alternatively, save £22 and create a joint membership for both you and your riding partner (if you live at the same address) at only £34 per year.

Political representation

The BMF represents the best interests of UK motorcyclists, whatever machine you ride.

Discounted insurance with Bikesure

Receive a great discount on your motorcycle insurance in a special deal with Bikesure.



F1, Moto GP, WSB, BSB race dates 2023

