



.....Issue 18 Christmas 2017.....

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Welcome to issue 18 – the Christmas edition of your section newsletter. This will be distributed electronically to those who have an email address and in printed form at Club events.

### PAST EVENTS



#### Section AGM 16<sup>th</sup> Nov - the Moon, Mordiford

15 Section members attended our AGM on November 16<sup>th</sup> at the Moon at Mordiford, the welcoming hostelry that has become home to our club nights on the third Thursday of every month. There were 3 apologies. Chairman Geoff gave a review of the previous year's activities and there were several suggestions on how to boost interest in the Section, from engaging more local classic motorcycling personalities, to taking a role in events like the Bromyard Festival of Speed. It was agreed that three highlights were Nathan Millward's talk at the Bromyard Festival Theatre on his ride back from Australia on his Honda "Postie" bike; the second running of Herefordshire on the Edge in June; and the second 'Bike Night' held at the Moon on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. As per 2016, participation in runs had been

variable, although the Boxing Day run was great fun and well attended. It was agreed to do it again this year. Financially the Section was doing well with an income of £1,351, over half coming from the Nathan talk and the rest from HOTE. It was agreed to spend a bit more next year on promoting runs and also possibly on outside speakers. It was accepted that: members had barriers to getting out on runs; points of interest and links with things like local model engineering and vintage tractor scenes might help; but providing a varied programme and putting information well ahead of time in the Club Magazine were essential. Other things that came up were the idea of a directory of members' contact details (if they agree) and encouraging more contact between Section members for ad hoc mid-week runs etc. The meeting finished on a 'high' with quite a few members coming forward, volunteering to organise and publicise Club runs.

### COMMITTEE

The Chairman, Secretary and committee members, Geoff McGladdery, Roger Bibbings, David Brand and David Jackson, all volunteered to do another year and if what followed could be called an election, were returned "unopposed". Geoff and Roger have indicated that this will be their last year in "office" and that new committee members must come forward to guide the section for the future. Geoff has agreed that unless someone else is eager to take it over, he will continue to edit this newsletter, but he has too much planned for summer 2019 – including a two month ride around the Baltic Coastline, so that he will not have time to do justice to the Chairman's role. If **you** care about a dynamic future for classic motor cycling in Herefordshire, you must give some thought to volunteering. The Section has got off to an excellent start and it would be a shame to see it fold.

#### Classic bikes and spares auction – HJ Pugh - 18<sup>th</sup> Nov

The usual large crowd attended Pugh's auction, despite the rain. Prices were as inexplicable as ever, with this scrap – and I mean scrap B33 engine bringing an amazing £25 plus fees, exactly the same price I paid for a rare centre-plug head, a good

barrel and some useful chunks of Monobloc carb for my Francis Barnett trials bike!



Coming with 12 months MOT and described as "A good runner", this 1963 650 Thunderbird (the first year of the "unit" twins) looked like a good bike for the hammer price of £5,000



### FUTURE EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2017 - 7.00 pm at the Moon, Mordiford HR1 4LW** – club night – a chance to meet and chat over a pint. Please note that there is no Christmas dinner. There was not enough support

and it was too late to cancel the event in the VMCC Journal.

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> December 2017 BOXING DAY – Brass Monkey run – Meet at 11.00 a.m. at the Moon, MordifordHR1 4LW for an 11:30 a.m. start**



Be a Hero!! Work off the Christmas pudding with a 1 hour ride around the local lanes. This was our best attended run last year!! Those who set off will receive Our unique Brass Monkey Sticker!!! Friends, family and supporters can happily pass the rest of the morning in the Moon, where they will be sure of a warm welcome from Karen and Alan... Irresistible!!!!

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January New Year's Ride – meet at the Market Square in Bromyard HR7 4BP at 10:00 for a 10:30 start.** An interesting short ride in and around the Malvern's then meeting up with the Worcestershire Section for lunch at the newly refurbished and refreshed Fox and Hounds at Lulsley WR6 5QT

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2018. The Conquest Theatre Bromyard 7:30 p.m. THE TRANS AMERICA TRAIL –**

Geoff McGladdery and John Roach will give an illustrated talk on their journey along this legendary Trans-America-Trail – 30 days and 4500 miles on the dirt roads of America from Atlanta in the East to San Francisco in the West, including crossing the Rockies. You can hear about the challenges, not just of keeping their classic bikes going, but riding the terrain, and surviving the American diet. There will be daring tales of dealing with officialdom and bureaucracy in the land of Trump. Why were they stopped 3 times by the police?

A poster for a talk titled 'The Trans America Trail'. The title is in large, bold, white letters against a blue sky background. Below the title, it says 'An illustrated talk, 30 days and 4500 miles over the dirt roads of forgotten America.' The names 'Geoff McGladdery &amp; John Roach' are written in red. The main image shows a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a tan jacket and pants, standing next to a motorcycle in a desert landscape. The motorcycle has a yellow license plate that reads 'A 300 XLG'. At the bottom of the poster, it says 'Admission £5 Thursday 15th Feb 7:30 p.m. The conquest Theatre Bromyard, HR7 4LL Tel Box Office 01885 488575 or on line https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/conquesttheatre/events'.

Their bikes - a 1971 Cheney Triumph ISDT Replica and a 1983 350cc Moto-Morini Kanguro Special will be on display along with their equipment and riding

gear. Admission is just £5 and tickets will be available shortly from the Conquest Theatre Box Office. Tel 01885 488575 or on-line at :- <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/conquesttheatre/events>

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb - meet once again at the Market Square in Bromyard HR7 4BP, this time at 9:30 a.m. for a 10:30 a.m. start.** The John Langford run - guests of Worcestershire section. This is a "social" run into mid-Wales, with stops for morning coffee and lunch. Usually very well supported

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March – South Midlands Autojumble – Ross-on-Wye Cattle Market, HR9 7QQ - 9:00 a.m.**

At a mere £4 for admission, these jumbles are always worth a trip if you're looking for those elusive parts. If you want to take a stall to clear out your shed, then call John Harding on 01989 750731

**WELSH ROAD RACE AND TT 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

Taking place on our doorstep, our wholehearted support goes to the fantastic new Welsh Road Race and TT. This event hopes to be the 4th largest Road Race in Europe and the largest Road Race on the UK mainland, it is now a reality and scheduled to take place on 4th and 5th August 2018. Races were run on a course on the Eppynt from 1948 until 1952. As you can see from the picture below, they were very well attended. I hope the crowds in 2018 will be just as big.



The new race will utilise a 5.25-mile circuit and provide TV coverage, designated viewing areas,

grandstand, catering, welfare and retail facilities. It is planned to extend the races to a 5-day festival, as soon as it is viable to do so. For full details and to book tickets, take a look at the event website.

<https://www.welshroadrace.com/>

**TO BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING** – a new feature which we hope will be a regular. Just send us a photo of your bike in the early days of your riding career and a few words to go with it and we'll be delighted to publish it. Section Secretary Roger Bibbings kicks off the series with his first "real" bike.



A Velocette Viper 350, my first real bike purchased second hand from Fred Cheshire's in Prestbury, Cheltenham in the Spring of 1968. Run by his daughters after he died, they were a long established firm. I remember one of them teaching me to ride it round the local streets. She put a lot of emphasis on not holding the clutch in. (The clutch thrust race on Velos is **very fragile.**)

On my taking it home, my father said, "Why not take it for a real ride?". I suggested Hereford. He said, "No, a real ride! Take it up to Scotland". The next day I duly left home at 9.00 am and was sitting down to tea in a rather twee little boarding house in Edinburgh at 5.00 p.m. (And that was pre-M6) The next day I rode out to Dunvegan in Skye and returned over the next few days via the Isle of Arran and the Lake District. I was hooked. It was a great bike - but I used to ride it too hard. It used to eat big ends (because I suspect, I had not adjusted the quill feed properly). The bike actually went back to Hall Green at one stage to be repaired after I fell off it while my mother was towing me behind our little FIAT back to the local dealers to fix a stripped fibre mag pinion. It used to carry me to work and to college. I could do the 16 miles from Cradley to Praill's in Hereford, where I was working at the time, in 20 minutes. Foolishly I sold it later for a quicker A10 RGS lookalike. **Oh the folly of youth!**

#### **GIBSON HOUSE AND THE COBBING LEGACY**

Chairman Rob Reaney has offered the following update to the status of the proposed purchase of Gibson House. If you have strong views on the issue, then let HQ know or let us know and we will pass them on.

***"Despite the announcement in the Chairman's chat in the current issue of the journal, we have at the eleventh hour, pulled out of buying Gibson House. This was due to new information coming to light at the last moment that revealed the original figures supplied to us upfront by the vendor were not quite correct and our financial director Mr. Donaldson produced fresh evidence regarding the level of costs for future works required for energy efficiency. With This new information there was some degree of uncertainty in the room about how best to proceed. However, I cannot and will not push This business forward with anything less than 100% backing by the clubs' board and committee, and I felt that it would be unfair To take such a risk without further investigations. Nor do I wish to abuse my position and steam roller things through and ride roughshod***

***over our member's opinions. Therefore, Gibson House has been put on the back burner for the moment.***

***Our President Elect Mr Alexander has suggested that a survey be sent out to all members in the near future to assess the mood of the club and ask for ideas going forward, especially in regard to the Cobbing Legacy and how it should be best used. Alistair plans to work on the survey as a matter of some urgency and feels that This can be with you all This side of Christmas. This survey will help guide us forward I am sure.***

***Your board remain fully committed to this business, to improving this club, to working around the clock to improve our situation; it is not the end of the world; more to follow in my next chat."***

Doesn't look like joined up thinking to me.... EDITOR

#### **COST OF CLASSIC OWNERSHIP REDUCES**

The D.O.T. has announced that classic cars and motorcycles **more than 40 years old will be exempt from MOT testing**, with owners voluntarily electing for an MOT if they feel their vehicle needs one. This sits nicely alongside the road tax exemption for classic bikes, which was re-introduced in January 2015 after a trial year in 2014. There is some "small print", which you should take note of.

- Tax exemption is based on a motorcycle's build date, not the date on which it was first registered.
- Motorcycles qualify for tax exemption in yearly batches, **not** when they pass the 40th anniversary of their build date.
- Motorcycles qualify for tax exemption if they were built 40 or more years before 1st January.
- However, you cannot apply for exemption until the 1st April in the qualifying year. Therefore, a Motorcycle must be a minimum of 40 years and 3 months old before you can apply for exemption....."Simples!"

## THREAT TO CLASSIC BIKE SHOWS

Mortons Media Group has been quietly buying up the rights to the major classic bike shows over the last few years to the point where they effectively have a monopoly. One might expect that they would bring a level of professionalism to the marketing and running of the events and that may well be the case, but they have effectively doubled the price of outdoor pitches and reduced the already miserly ticket allocations to stallholders. Will the Autojumbles and small businesses be priced out? Will they stop attending? After all, **the stallholders are the show!**



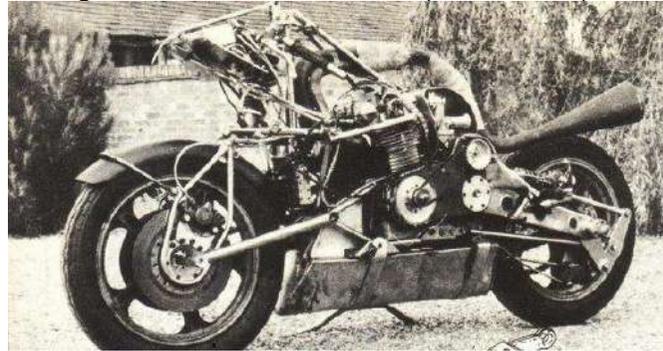
### R.I.P. STAINLESS STEVE

Sad to have to report the passing of Worcestershire's Steve Jones – better known to everyone as **"Stainless Steve"**. With his excellent stall, his limitless knowledge and his multi-coloured jester's hat, Steve was a familiar figure to all of us who attended bike shows and Autojumbles.

Steve died whilst on holiday in Goa, India, with his wife Mandy. They had only arrived the day before, had been out in the evening for their favourite curry, but next day he suffered a massive and fatal heart attack. Mandy had his body cremated with outdoor funeral pyre and full Indian ceremony. His ashes were brought home to UK.

Our commiserations go to his wife and family – he will be sorely missed.

Find us on  We have been having great fun on our Facebook page, looking back at Mike Tompkinson's wonderfully eccentric family of **"Nessie"** Endurance Racers, The 2 pictures below show the last in the line – the Kawasaki, which went through lots of iterations in the 5 years it competed.



The forerunner of the Kawasaki and the starting point for all which followed, was this 750 Laverda which first raced in 1974 as a more or less standard bike, but was transformed for the 1975 season. Mike Tompkinson had originally planned to use a Ducati engine, but Ducati was not a pro-active partner and dragged their heels so a Ducati engined machine was never built. Their attitude was bluntly described as **"impossibly uncooperative"** in a 1982 Magazine article.



The most successful Endurance Racer from the M&T stable was, of course the single cylinder B44 based BSA, We will cover this bike in more detail in a future issue. Thanks for contributing to the thread – it has been fascinating and informative. If you have anything to add, log on to the page and enjoy the nostalgia. If you have any photos of the bike shops in Hereford, Leominster, Ross or Ledbury, I would love to see copies. If you have any stories to tell, we will be happy to print them. What about this dreamy view of M&T's shop "In the Olden Days". Anyone have any other Hereford bike shop pics?



Herefordshire Section of the VMCC is increasingly using the Facebook page to collect and disseminate all sorts of stuff. **Feel free to post to it.**