

W I N T E R 2 0 1 8

Plymouth Advanced Motorcyclists Newsletter



Welcome

To the last issue of our newsletter of 2018. Hopefully you have all had a good year and overcome any hurdles or challenges you may have faced.

We wish 2019 will be a happy and healthy year for all our members



Passing on - A THANK YOU!

TO EVERYONE THAT SUPPORTED THE SANTA'S ON A BIKE
EVENT IN WHATEVER WAY THEY COULD.

£5147 was raised on the Little Harbour run (an increase from £3800 last year!)

Jerry and his team of happy helpers did a fantastic job in organising the day and made the event enjoyable for all involved.

A Total of **£19,490.53** across all the southwest rides was raised - all being donated to Children's Hospice South West to help them make the most of short and precious lives across the South West.

Dates from our Events Calendar

Full Day Ride Sunday 6th Jan

The regular monthly Day Ride will leave from Costa Coffee at

9.30

Group Social Monday 14th Jan

Interested in being an Observer?

Come to the Social

19.30

CRD Event Saturday 6th Jan

Our Full Member CRD Event for

January

9.30

From the Secretaries desk

Welcome to the December treasurer and membership report.

Our current membership remains at 118, with 25 of these being associates, 3 being fellows of the IAM.

During November and December, 12 of our members have renewed their subscriptions. I have also sent out 18 reminders to members that their renewal is due. As I write this, 5 members who were sent reminders in early November, have yet to renew. Hopefully we will receive their membership shortly. 2 members, who were sent reminders in October or earlier, have yet to renew, and as these members have also failed to renew their IAM Roadsmart membership, despite reminders, they have effectively left the club and will shortly be removed from the database. Please remember that you must be a paid up member of IAM Roadsmart, to be able to belong to and participate in our club.

Always keep an eye on your Email In box, as I no longer post reminders, but now email them out to you. If I know however that you have a standing order set up, I will not send you a reminder. If you would like a standing order form, to avoid the worry (and the nagging from me), then please let me know and I will happily send you one that you can take to your bank. Should you change your email address, telephone number, or indeed move house, I can also save you the trouble of notifying the IAM. If you let me know your new details, I can update the IAM systems directly for you.

The club bank balance is currently a healthy £8085.22p on the 5th December 2018. In addition, 44 of our members who have paid subscriptions this financial year, have previously completed **Gift aid forms** which are available on the website contributing towards our gift aid claim which I will complete in March. Already this will be over £220 which provides a valuable source of additional income for your club. So far, just over 55% of our members have completed a gift aid form, so there is still more to achieve, If you haven't completed a gift aid form before, and would like to, please contact me. – Gift aiding carries no cost to you.

I would like to welcome the following new associates who have joined us:-



Alexander Hanson
Danny Alexander
Gordon Briggs
Edward Carr
Herbert Morrow

I hope you enjoy the club and your training and wish you every success.

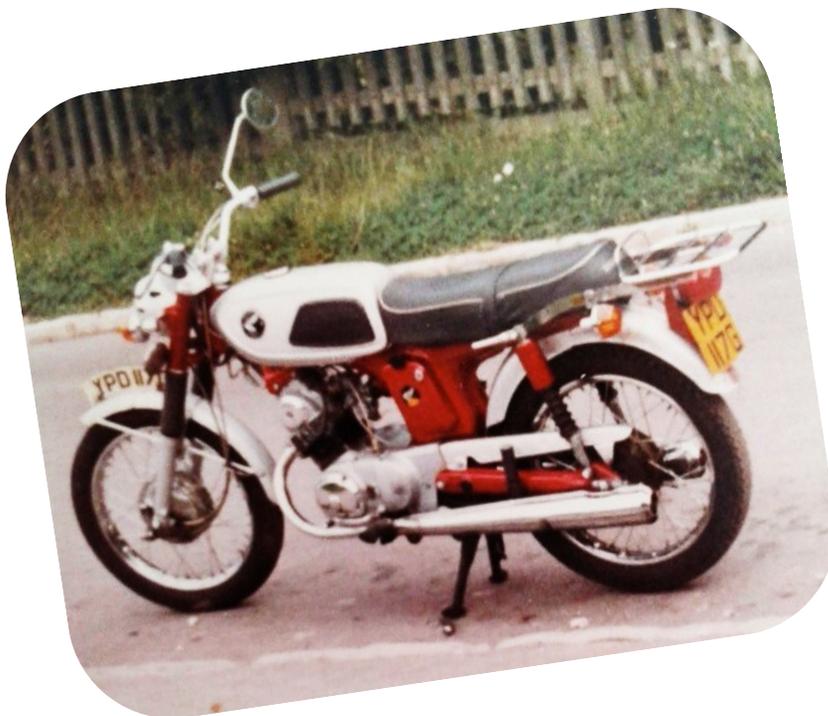
Welcome also to 2 full members who have joined us, **Gary Crook** and **Mark Marshall**. I look forward to meeting you both.

Our newly added PayPal link, from our website, is now working well, with 4 members having used it, so that you can renew your membership that way if you wish.

The **Gift Aid forms** and **PayPal link** can be found here- <https://iampamroadsmart.org.uk/membership>

Some more of my biking history

Well my poor old James 250 with a 2 stroke Villiers engine which my mate (who I now think of as Arthur Daley motorcycles) sold me for £20, just had to go; That or my leg would have dropped off, kick-starting it. Worse still I often had to resort to borrowing my Mums Raleigh wisp! To avoid such terrible occurrences it was fairly quickly replaced by a brand new 1969 Honda SS125 purchased for just over £200 from Minear and Bruce motorcycles, Haslemere.



The picture is of my actual bike YPD 117G.

Wow, this was a revelation, smooth, easy to ride and it started! I had great times on this bike, riding it daily to my work as a Post office telephones apprentice, and to day release technical college. I remember in the winter wrapping large sheets of newspaper round me under my duffle coat to ward off the cold. (This, by the way does not work if your tempted)!

Sadly, my friends then went and bought Honda CD175's and worse still a Yamaha YCS1E two stroke 125. The letters SS on my Honda 125 sadly didn't live up to the Super-sport impression, particularly as it had only a single carburettor, so after too long trying to keep up with the more powerful bikes, it suffered broken piston rings, Afterwards, It was rebuilt to its former glory but sadly the writing was on the wall and I was yearning for more horses in the form of a new shiny red 1971 Yamaha YCS 180...*to be continued*

Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year

Ride safely

Kevin Moorey
PAM TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP
SECRETARY



Adverse Camber - On the Case

I was accosted the other day by one of your PAM Group members. He flagged me down and asked about my motorcycle headgear, which he told me was clearly hazardous (by which he meant potentially risky). On the contrary, I said, "This appurtenance is absolutely the latest safety feature and it has been designed to mitigate the harmful effects of all climatic risks, emanating from various types of precipitation, ranging from severe icing to sand-storms. Moreover, it has both approval and type rating from the indigenous peoples of the Andaman Islands, not to mention the Liechtenstein Monocycle Club and the Royal Health Spa Association of Flanders!"



He had the effrontery to tell me that my remarks were, as usual non PC. He added that he couldn't see a CE mark anywhere on the product so I gave it to him straight: "Well you won't find any of that Pizzle on this stuff because it's top secret; and in any case I'm very offended that you are challenging my innovative and ground breaking foray into health protection for bikers!"

He muttered something about being both rude and insulting to Bulls' penises but continued to press me on the precise nature of my latest invention. So I explained in the simplest of terms that the device was a modified Nordic Horn Helmet with all the trimmings (including reindeer fur and seasonal jingle bells). Within the voluminous flip-front carapace was the *piece de resistance*, namely an original - if slightly ageing Siebe Gorman Superlight 17 Regulator that I had purchased from my 98 year old neighbour who was a clearance diver in the Newfoundland Coastguard and who was moving to a home in Southend-on-Sea so that he could spend his last days "near the mountains". His idea, not mine!



To this robust device that had admittedly seen better days, I had added a supply valve from a Tri-mix Scuba kit (eBay) and some state of the art lightweight bottles of Oxygen, Helium and Nitrous Oxide (Bogey Knights). I explained that this would both refresh me and keep me more than happy on my planned trip to the Quattara Depression (max depth 133 meters). The cheapest passage I could find was via Gozo on board a dhow returning to Alexandria with reclaimed Egyptian artifacts (originally looted by the Knights Templar in the 12th Century). Whilst the provenance of the artifacts was clear, the same could not be said of the dhow, which was in need of some serious caulking. But if it sank, which was a distinct possibility, I would have my own aqualung device and would be the sole survivor in an otherwise doomed venture. Your esteemed member rolled his eyes heavenwards and spluttered off on his faithful Moto Guzzi. Not an easy man to please!

Lighten up John; life's too short!

Ride safe.

Adverse Camber



Replicas of my device can be obtained from a webmail address in Nigeria.

Nought to Masters in 6 years

Vivienne Henwood

Many of you will have heard that, up until meeting Glenn, I had never sat on or ridden a motorbike.

Glenn and I met in March of 2012. By October of that year I had decided that riding pillion was fun, but riding my own bike would be amazing, and I took my CBT (October 2012).

Glenn spent an interesting year (blood, sweat, tears included - mine, not his!!) teaching me to ride. We bought a little Yamaha YBR 125cc for the job. She was called Ruby.

It was hard work, but it was an amazing year. Many, many hours spent practising all the manoeuvres needed for my test. Riding on all kind of roads. Several picnics at Davidstow airfield, using the open space to fine-tune slow speed riding and emergency stops.

I'm pretty sure I put that bike in all the ditches and up all the hedges between Torpoint and Roche, travelling from Glenn's house to mine, putting in some miles and giving Glenn a few grey hairs in the process.

Anyway, toward the end of summer 2013 Glenn thought I was just about ready for my test. We'd begun perusing the internet and touring around all the local bike dealerships looking for a bike low enough for me. Being 5'1" doesn't give me much choice.

We found a beautiful Harley 883 Superlow and against all advice, we bought her in readiness for when I'd passed my test! She was named Lola.

So with Lola sitting on the drive, we thought about booking my test. Through good fortune at a bike rally in the Midlands that summer, we met up with (and became friends with) a DSA instructor. He and his wife invited us to stay for a week in October when he would put the polish on my ride and get me ready for my test. They live in Halifax!!

Always up for a challenge, we accepted the offer and booked time off work and headed 'oop north'!

We arrived late one Sunday afternoon. Cliff was at work at the riding school in Bradford, so after a cuppa with his wife, Glenn and I headed off to Bradford where I had a couple of hours on a school bike, getting used to the extra engine power, braking and weight.

I spent Monday on the practice school trying to hone my skills.

On Monday evening, over dinner, Cliff announced that my module one test was booked for 8.30am the next day in Wakefield.

I'd never been to Wakefield before in my life. Hey ho!

The day dawned and we headed off to Bradford to collect the school bike, which I then rode to Wakefield, with Cliff all radioed up to me. Glenn followed on his bike.

I was the first candidate of the day and to say I was nervous would be an understatement! When nervous I tend to go into verbal overdrive and can sometimes be a little cheeky. I was true to form that day. I'm not sure the Yorkshire examiner quite knew what to make of a middle aged Cornish girl on a bike!!

Glenn and Cliff had been watching on from outside the protected test area. I wasn't allowed to talk to them as I walked back into the test centre and their faces looked similar to that of an expectant father.

I was soon able to put them out of their misery as I gave them the 'thumbs up, I've passed' through the window.

We then went for a top notch cooked breakfast. It was at this point that Cliff revealed that he was pleased and relieved I'd passed my 'mod one' because he'd booked my 'mod two' for Thursday i.e 2 day's time.

We spent the rest of Tuesday on the bikes riding all the possible test routes Cliff could think of.

On Wednesday Glenn and I had a day to ourselves, so I had a day's rest from riding.

Thursday dawned and I was incredibly nervous.

We headed back to Wakefield test centre, again, early in the morning.

I met my examiner and we set off.

At no point had anyone advised me that I could make 'minor' mistakes.....and I made a few.

We rode some tricky roads which we hadn't covered on our practice runs and I made a couple of silly mistakes, so when the examiner asked me what I thought of my ride, I debriefed fully, being very critical of my own ride and talking through my minor mistakes. He was very impressed by my level of self critique and then explained that I was allowed some minor errors. (I had in fact made 3) He congratulated me on passing my test. This was in October 2013.

Once home again, I couldn't wait to get Lola out on the open road.

I loved that bike. It's the only bike I've ridden where I can actually plant both feet firmly on the ground, simultaneously!

I kept Lola for 18 months and clocked up 16,000 miles on her, during which time I enrolled on the IAM Advanced Rider course, with Steve Puckering as my observer.

Steve took me out for 6 rides and we worked on areas to improve. I thoroughly enjoyed these sessions. I was also fortunate enough to be welcomed along on some PAM rideouts, as an associate. In those early days, Glenn volunteered to be 'tail end Charlie' and I tagged along as the 'tail to tail end Charlie', therefore avoiding embarrassing myself in front of all those Advanced riders.

So, here we were again in the month of October, 2014. Steve Puckering declared me 'test ready' and Martin Brown took me out for a cross check. I took my IAM Advanced test with the Cornwall examiner, Rodney Grigg, riding roads around the tin mining area of West Cornwall - Camborne, Redruth, St Agnes.....I did my slow speed riding on a horrible car park in Camborne, with cambers the size of small tors! It was tricky pulling Lola around in a full lock whilst bobbing up and down the little hillocks at the same time - she had the turning circle of an articulated lorry. (But I loved her anyway).

Lola in Brittany 2014



I passed my IAM Advanced Motorcyclist test October 2014.

Since then I've had a couple of years or so of riding. I eventually out grew Lola (in riding style if not in size) and by chance on one totally unplanned and spontaneous day happened to take a Yamaha MT07 out for a test ride..

Well, that was it for Lola !The MT07 was a far better 'all round' bike and has allowed me to develop my ride further.

Lola was so low that I was taking the screw heads off the exhaust heat shield every time I rode along the Torpoint Twisties. We took to carrying spare jubilee clips so we could replace them at coffee stops. Not ideal.

So Lola was traded in for my first MT07 in May 2015. She was called Mitzi.

We went to Ireland (twice), Brittany a couple of times, Paris, The Italian Alps and a fair bit around the UK too. In three years she clocked up 36,427 miles.

Earlier this year Glenn and I started to talk about the Masters course. He thought my ride was of a high enough standard to give it a go. I wasn't as sure as him, but was keen to develop my ride and to gain the confidence and skills to ensure I was as safe as I could be on my bike.

I signed up and embarked on the Masters journey.

Mitzi on the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland July 2016

Similarly to the Advanced riding course, a rider is assigned a 'mentor' and you have 6 rides together, where the Mentor imparts advice and suggestions on how to improve your ride in order to meet the standard required.

The ride sessions and debrief can vary in length of time, depending on what the candidate feels they want to work on, and the mentor's observations.

The key differences, for me, between the Advanced riders course and the Masters, is that the Masters test ride is for one and a half hours and it must be taken on unfamiliar roads, i.e. away from home. There is also an expectation that the candidate will have a much more thorough understanding of 'Motorcycle Road Craft' and its theories.

All my mentored rides were obviously on relatively familiar roads, so it was quite tricky teaching myself to read each road as if I'd never ridden it before and remembering to read every road sign. It's a skill worth practicing though, so as not to become a complacent rider.

My bed time reading, for months, was 'Motorcycle Road Craft' and/or 'The Highway Code'. I was conscious that my knowledge of both these books was not as strong as Glenn's or other observers within PAM and it bothered me! My theory retention, on any subject, is never

strong and so I found it best to read a chapter (if I could stay awake long enough) and then to discuss elements with Glenn before putting the theory into practice within my ride.

Of course, my Mentor also had discussion with me - both before and after the ride. The debrief was always very useful, but as with all my rides, I was always far more critical than my mentor!

For reasons not necessary to explain here, I had three different mentors for my Master's Experience. Each of them gave me some 'food for thought' regarding my ride.

Half way through my mentoring rides (you are allocated 6 rides in total) I had a real crisis of confidence. I was worried about my whole ride. Was my cornering spot on, was my theory up to scratch, did I look for and take every overtake opportunity, did I have the stamina to go a whole one and a half hours maintaining pace, concentration and safety?

I really was questioning my whole ride - not just at Master's Level, but right back to basics.

Glenn went out with me and offered reassurance, but I was still a bit unnerved. So.....I went back to basics and asked Steve Puckering to observe me again.

He obliged - it cost me a burger and a coffee!! :) We went out and practised some slow speed manoeuvring, cornering, positive steering, overtakes.....all the things I was having a wobble about. We talked 'Road Craft'! Steve's prognosis was that I 'still had it' and should continue with the mentoring sessions/Master's programme. He did, however, say that I was a little reserved in the 'progress' department and he felt I could probably do with practising my slow speed manoeuvring a bit more. Both of these were fair comment, I felt.

It was also around this time that I'd started to get 'bike envy' and was thinking about trading Mitzi in for a younger model. Mitzi had been a brilliant bike to me, but her mileage was creeping up and if I wanted a decent trade-in price it was a 'now or never' situation. So, I test rode a Kawasaki 650 something or other. Didn't like it at all. I also took out the latest MT07. Loved it! So, 15th September 2018, enter Baloo Bear. He is fabulous!

I met up with my third mentor shortly after collecting Baloo, so it was a painful ride - watching the rev counter all the time. Glenn and I went on as many long rides as we could and soon enough I'd got the first service done. (Two weeks after picking him up).

PAM had organised a Continuous Riding Development day and I went out with Kevin Yeo one incredibly wet Saturday. It was monsoonal rain. It was the only wet day I'd ridden in all my Master's rides and it more than made up for it. Kevin gave me some good advice and I actually remember putting it into practice on my test - thanks Kevin :) I had a memorable moment too, riding up a hill, in the pouring rain and catching a man-hole cover. I think Baloo did a nifty little dance as we crossed it. My heart missed a beat, but we continued on safely.

So, with my new bike and a new Mentor, (Mark Tucker from CAM) I was off. Confidence returned and I really enjoyed my rides out with Mark. Mark and I had a test date to work to as I'd been advised to book my test as soon as I'd enrolled as waiting times were at least a couple of months.

Mark was thorough and supported me with all my self-diagnosed weaknesses. I was nervous and unsteady in my slow speed manoeuvring (well I thought so anyway) and we really needed to work on the 1.5 hours of continuous riding. We did. We got there!

I needed to take my test in October half term, while I had time off work. With that in mind, the coordinator had asked examiners in the south west area what dates they had. Stuart Haythorn from region 2 (Surrey) came forward with a date of 24th October.

Glenn and I packed up our bikes the day before and headed off to Surrey. Another place I'd never been to. The night before the test, I'd had a phrase whirling around in my head and I couldn't define it. I remembered to talk it through with Glenn. The phrase was 'Tyre Grip Trade Off'. I knew roughly what it meant, but I needed to have a clearer definition imbedded in my mind - which

was quickly becoming overloaded with Road Craft, Highway Code and road signs!! Glenn helped me get a clear definition sorted out - I was so befuddled by this time that I'm not sure I could even give my name accurately!!

The moment arrived and we headed off to meet the examiner - Stuart Haythorn. Glenn wished me luck and left us to it. Stuart was a really lovely guy. He immediately put me at ease. We did the preliminary chat and then set off.

Stuart had briefed me that we would be heading along the same stretch of road several times, criss-crossing it to ride a variety of road types through a variety of areas. This was great because otherwise I really would have felt like we were going around in circles for an hour and a half!!

The weather was a little overcast to begin with, but dry and the sun came out toward the end of the ride.

The roads were indeed varied. Very early on in the ride, we approached a right hand bend which I hadn't judged quite right (on reflection). I thought we'd got some tight corners in Cornwall and Devon, but believe me; Surrey has some blinders!!! This all just sharpened my concentration and I tried not to let it affect the rest of my ride.

The whole ride directions were given by rear observation. I'd been practising this with all of my mentors, but had hoped I'd be radioed up. Not the case. Unfortunately, I missed one rear observation and Stuart had to pull over and wait for me to turn around and catch up with him. Whilst this isn't a major fault, I did lose a mark on 'observations', which is fair enough.

We finally made it to the end of the ride and pulled into a pub carpark. It had a beautiful surface and I thought 'this is where I'm doing my slow speed riding'. Stuart explained what he wanted me to do and that he'd signal with his hand when he'd seen enough. I did two figure of eight turns and that was it. (I'd been worrying myself silly about my slow speed riding and it was over so quickly!)

We sat down and Stuart questioned me on some aspects of the ride, asking why I'd taken a certain line or made a particular manoeuvre.

I'm incredibly proud to say I did a text book perfect over-take! There was only one opportunity to overtake during the whole ride, but I made sure I did a proper job of it! Stuart praised me both for the overtake and for my thorough debrief of it :)

He also questioned me on some Road Craft theory. He asked me to define Tyre Grip Trade Off. Well, I was sooo ready to give a concise answer!!

I made a few minor errors too, where I lost a mark -

* Positioning and cornering - on the early corner.

* Progress - Stuart felt I could have progressed from a speed-restricted area up to National Speed limit a bit more swiftly.

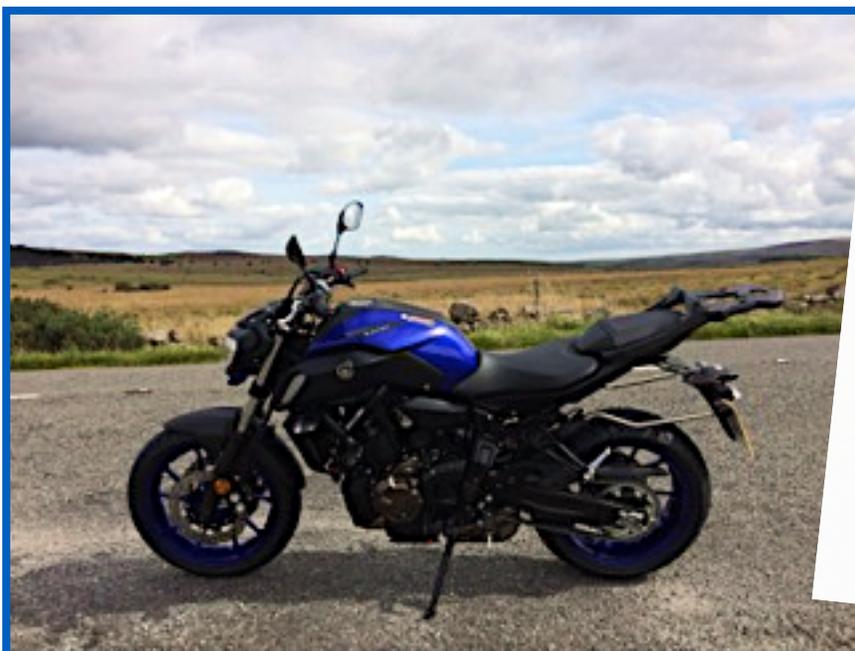
* Knowledge - I didn't know the correct definition of a 'dual carriageway' i.e. a road with a central reservation; and had therefore held my speed back to 60mph when I could have been riding at 70mph.

There were a few other bits and pieces on the ride report, but I'm not going to go into all of them! (My total score was 36. I'm happy with that).

All in all, it was a very successful ride and a thoroughly enjoyable experience. I questioned my own ability on several occasions, but I have proven to the people that count, that I am a good rider.

More importantly, I am a safe rider and that's what it's all about.

Vivienne Henwood, October 2018. Nought to Masters in Six Years!



Baloo, Dartmoor September 2018

Tales of India on a Royal Enfield 500cc Bullet

Ideally you need nerves of steel and a cast iron stomach, but somehow I remain living proof that it is possible without either.

In November a group of 8 of us, led by a chap called Danny Brown, got together and headed to India for an “Experience”, riding Royal Enfields.

There were 6 riders and 2 pillions and all except one had passed their Advanced riding test. My friend (and Test ready Associate with PAM), Steve Howard, was the exception, but having ridden in India a couple of times previously, he was well prepared.



We go off the plane in Delhi and travelled to Alwar to collect the bikes. Patrick, the rider in one of the couples, uttered gently as we were travelling along in the mini bus, “Look for a pattern, look for a pattern”, hoping that somehow we could understand the rules of the road. They do exist, however it soon emerged that the only pattern was that there was no pattern. The anticipation aspect should better be described as imagination. If you can imagine it, even remotely, it will happen, it is only a matter of when....**Rule of the road No1** understood!

The Bikes arrived and we acquainted ourselves with the extensive array of controls; lights, indicators and the ESSENTIAL horn. Oh kick start, start and stop button too (electric start...Thank goodness for that..It is hard to kick start a bike whilst maintaining the Delhi belly induced clench).

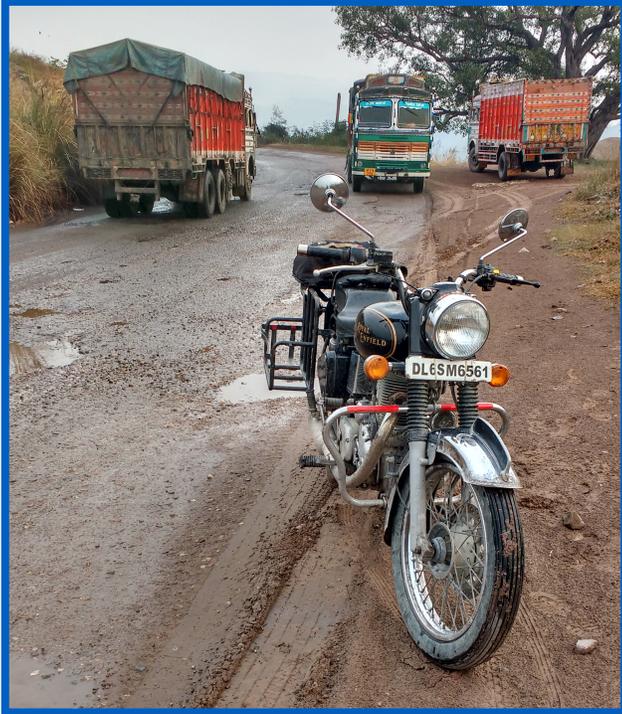
It became apparent that the use of indicators was a little understood concept. The official rule is that they drive on the same side of the road as us, so you might expect a RH indicator to suggest that the vehicle is turning right - Right? Wrong! A RH indicator could mean; they are going to remain stationary, they like the flashing pattern it makes in the whites of the eyes of oncoming Brits, the switch is broken or any other conceivable idea.. **Rule No 2 understood** - The pattern is forming.

The Ubiquitous horn - Oh how I enjoyed the horn...a quick toot, I am behind you and coming through, a long toot, I am passing and I am bigger. One long blast, I am coming past and I need your space...one of us is going to die if you don't move! I did use this one a few times myself. What do you mean, it is not a good idea to overtake on a blind bend (Bends are perfect opportunities to overtake, as vehicles travel more slowly, in both directions, what more do you need to know)..

Rule No 3 understood.

The **gears** on the bikes, being teenagers, behaved exactly as you might expect. They would grudgingly work if you asked them several times, would stop working with any excuse (pothole, bump or simply because they had been working for a little while)...Some had suggested the bikes had 5 gears and 7 neutrals, which was about right.

The **brakes** were also behaving like teenagers ... ask nicely, with a lot of notice and they may eventually do what you ask! Having been a father to two and a teacher of many, I soon recognised the behaviour and we established a mutual understanding...I would not ask much of them (~~Teenagers~~ brakes and gears) and they would deliver below expectations, but you can't help loving them for it.... I did manage to lock up the front wheel a couple of times, so they do work when they absolutely have to.



From Alwar, we travelled into the foothills of the Himalayas, through some amazing twisties, had a day off the bikes, before embarking on the next leg of our journey. Another day on the twisties, with new found confidence and a belief that the words in Hindi on the headlight (Trust in God), would keep us safe....I have to say he was kept busy that day and without his help, I am sure we would have had more incidents, but to our relief we only had one minor accident....Steve came off on a wet, unsurfaced road in front of a lorry....no cause for concern there then!....Steve praised the respective manufacturers of his protective wear and we were away... a broken mirror (invaluable piece of kit), headlight (optional for night riding it would appear) and a buckled crash bar.

OK, for the Advanced Motorcyclist, the universally applicable system, IPSGA, **Information**..rarely consciously given by others (except the use of the horn), but it's everywhere. Like a forensic scientist,

you have to look for the tiniest clue. **Position**, if there is even the inkling of a gap, fill it before something else does. **Speed**, slow enough to be able to find a gap in the midst of chaos (if stopping is your plan, it may not be theirs!), but fast enough to reach your destination before dark, we failed there a couple of times. **Gear**, good idea - find one that works and hope it doesn't drop out. **Acceleration**, yep you will need that too, if only to lift the front end out of a pothole, the size of a grave or escape from a heard of mad pigs, intent on running into the bike!

It is surprising how few accidents actually happen and I think it is because the behaviour, on the whole, is "Predictable".....If your plans are predictable, people (and sometimes animals) will avoid you. Signals (other than the horn) do not illustrate your intentions, discrete changes in the direction of travel or a brake light might. Slowly move in the direction you want to go and when the tiniest space appears, GO. If there is no space...go anyway...I am sure one will form... Another rule understood!



You cannot however predict what might be coming towards you on “Your” side of the road (even multi lane highways); thundering lorries, colourful buses, JCB’s, cars, overloaded bicycles and motorbikes, all manner of animals and pedestrians, perhaps carrying a mattress or 6m plank of wood, to name but a few...



Amaritsar next, we were beginning to feel like Royalty, the way we were being treated by the locals, so we embarked upon an old-fashioned hunting trip (as the Raj would have done), only our trip was for Royal Enfield Spares. I understood they could be found everywhere in India, but this was simply not the case. After several hours, our team eventually sourced the replacement components and fixed the bike.

The riding here was extraordinary, wriggling down a congested shopping centre with hundreds of people, lots of bikes and no idea where we were going. Eventually we reached a dead end and had the joyous experience on riding back through the mania....It felt like Tavistock Goose Fair on steroids, with no traffic restrictions and Mad Max riding shotgun.

Onto Moga, a “Stunning” hotel, which we were more pleased to leave than arrive at, but it did allow us to meet the Moga Royal Enfield Group, all 3 of them. The Royal Enfield is quite the status symbol and many an Indian would stop for a chat about our plans, take selfies or simply share our company.

From the foothills, we passed through the Jungle, which in India, simply means “Wild Area” and into the desert. As you might imagine, it was much warmer here, but none of us felt the need to shed any of our protective gear, so staying hydrated was the order of the day.... Eventually we, arrived at the entrance to our desert camp, which was through about 2km of sand from the “surfaced” road. I had not ridden soft sand before, but how hard could it be???. On a Royal Enfield, after a tiring day..VERY! Most of us made it to the camp unassisted, but one of the bikes had a problem with the clutch and the poor rider and pillion had to wait for help. Our mechanic issued a stern warning to the rider about using the clutch too much and the bike was towed to camp for repair.



The following day we rode camels, so had a break from the bikes, which presented the mechanic with several hours to replace the defective clutch.

That evening we were told there was no problem with the clutch, it had simply overheated and was good to go. We had our doubts, not least as there had been problems with it previously, but either way, he was not going to change it!

Next morning we awoke and I was first to brave the sand track, back to the road. I stood on the pegs, making full use of my off-road skills and initially made excellent progress, to the amazement of all. Up the hill and out of sight, before things started to fall apart (me, not the bike).

I convinced myself it was the heat and tiredness that got the better of me, as a number of my friends passed by. They had used the harder ground to the side of the track, but being a purist (fool) I decided to use the track. "It can't be far now, look ahead, maintain traction" was the mantra playing in my head, but it did not save me from falling off, exhausted, dehydrated and pinned down by the bike, I found the kill switch and sounded the horn. Eventually I managed to get the bike off me and lay there, drained, until the support vehicle picked me up.. That was it, I was mentally and physically exhausted and spent the remainder of that day in the support vehicle, whilst the mechanic rode my precious machine.

We travelled onward through the desert for a few days on dusty roads, past live and dead animals, impoverished locals and maniacal drivers before arriving at a beautiful hotel, from which we travelled for a Tiger Safari...I think you were more likely to see a Triumph Tiger in the reserve than an actual tiger, but that was the claim. There was lots of beautiful tiger food walking around, happy to have their photo taken, before dashing off into the bush and becoming instantly invisible to us.

We said goodbye to the bikes (the trusty steeds, who had suffered all manner of abuse), had another taxi ride back to the airport and home. It took several days to unwind from the intensity of concentration required to ride. It also took a while to calm the desire to fill a space, any space on the road!

"An experience"....it is what I went for. This was once described to me as "Something you have done. Having done it, you realise you should not have!"

I wanted an experience and had a very rich one, about 1000 miles, a number of close calls (on the bike and in the loo), amazing people, mad roads and the unforgettable masala chai and curry!!!

Foolishly, a number of us are considering going again; perhaps in January 2020 to the South, if you fancy joining us, get in touch.



Adrian Perkins

Stuart and Pat's Big Porlock Weir Ride Out Sunday October 7th 2018

Our final Full day ride before the clocks changed was a whopper!

I clocked over 200 miles from home to home. big turnout, an iconic destination and a safe ride – with an amazing revelation at the end of it! Read on. After a promising start at Costa Marsh Mills, in splendid Autumn weather, without a cloud in the sky, we rode out to South Brent, Buckfastleigh and over South Dartmoor to Bovey Tracey where we picked up Kevin Morey (always smiling; he loves his Yamaha Diversion!).

Then on to Chudley Knighton, to pick up the B3193. A bit of a tense ride along the Teign Valley where there were a few obstinate vehicles that were stubbornly resisting safe overtaking until the turn off to Exeter. Across the level crossing near St David's Station then out on the A396 for coffee and cake at the Fisherman's Cott on the beautiful banks of the River Exe at Bickleigh Bridge. Continuing along the A396 we passed through Tiverton (hot air balloon overhead) and out towards Bampton.

Staying on the A396 onwards to Minehead for petrol and then over to Porlock on the A39 and down to Porlock Weir for Lunch. With full bellies and almost full tanks we rejoined the A39 to ride over Exmoor Down (stunning views) then down into Lynmouth via the steep and twisty Countisbury Hill. Then up and out on the B3223 towards South Molton and home via the A377 and Sourton Services. Some had peeled off by then but when we said farewell and thanks to Stuart he astounded us by telling us that he was ready for a "bit of a rest" as he was going in to hospital at 7.00 a.m. the very next day for major surgery.

At the time of writing this (early December) Stuart has already been out on his MV and we have finalised plans to return to Spain and Portugal in May.

John Challenor



Happy New Year to everyone

We look forward to seeing you all in 2019
Keep checking the club calendar for news of up-coming events

*We have
Sunday Rides,
CRD Events,
Wales Weekender,
Rookie rides
..and lots more in the Calendar already!*



PAM Team

