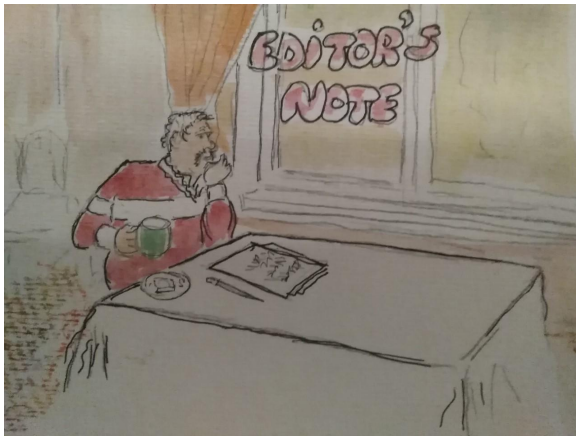




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## January 2023

The first month of a new year! Should we be looking back, or looking forward? There's no reason why we can't be in "the past lane" as well as the "fast lane". We have a treasure trove of history with this club, and I will include excerpts from earlier Gazettes in these pages going forward. What is interesting is the sheer number of committee members back then compared to a skeleton staff today. What

is the same is the hard work and dedication of the small band of club stalwarts and appeals for help. Guilty as charged, and a mental 100 lines "must do better in 2023"

Last month's Gazette featured a cheap fix for a potentially disastrous mechanical problem with Hinckley Triumphs. I forgot to mention that it was posted by Keith Scott! I emailed him to say so and that I would credit him with the article in the next issue. He replied saying that he wasn't looking for credit, just a 'share' to avoid problems for other Triumph owners.

Typical of the brotherhood of bikers generally and our club in particular.

So much of the tech side of compiling Gazettes is all Greek to me (I was rubbish at schoolboy French as well). So I must thank my daughter, Sophia, for helping me through this minefield of cookies you can't eat, and pdfs you can't drink (or was I thinking of i.p.a.?) although I do know about computers crashing to my cost. At the time of writing in late December, the cold, icy conditions are causing chaos across the U.K. I remember, as many others will, the big freeze of 1963. Snow began falling on Boxing day and continued for the next ten weeks.-the coldest since 1739 with temperatures down to minus twenty. I worked at Wadhams at this time and we had moved from Clarendon Road Southsea to the new factory in Hambledon Road. One of the coachbuilders had a Humber Super Snipe so I left My B.S.A. at home and joined five others crammed in for the drive to work. Approaching Purbrook Heath road, we could see that the road ahead was blocked by some vehicles that had 'come a cropper'. We decided to turn left and take the back roads to Hambledon Road. A bad move! After hours of pushing and struggling to gain a little more distance we eventually came to an immovable dead stop in a snow drift. I didn't hear any trumpets but the cavalry hove into view. A farmer going the other way offered to tow us back to the main road that we had left hours before. Purbrook had cleared and we arrived at work, wet and weary at lunch time. One wag said "I suppose we've missed the three minutes"-a leeway for lateness in normal times!. Unbelievably our club ran competition events over this period. Trials where competitors spent as much time slipping and sliding to the start section as riding the actual trials sections.



My undercover agent tells me that the club has pioneered a new sport-wheelie bin wrestling!

The first bout featured “bone crusher”(bin crusher?) Jenkins, but was stopped due to injury, with the bin victorious. A return bout is not being planned.

Steve Cox also sent me (oops I’ve revealed the identity of agent “X”) a fascinating article about the early days of the Brooklands motor circuit. I remember going there for the Brooklands experience organised by Rob Doney. I went with Alan Straughan of our club in his lovely Porsche 911. A lovely drive, although on a very cold day the heater left a little to be desired. Lots to see. Workshops, iconic machines and the “Concorde experience” We piled on the plane and enjoyed the virtual flight. Brilliant! Just like the real thing.



*From a 1963*

*Gazette*-among the raffle prizes was 50 Senior Service cigarettes. Not very P.C. these days, but back then I always got one of these at Christmas. Unbelievably, most of my school teachers smoked and when our favourite "snowy" Young retired we clubbed together and bought him one of these.





**Now...** The Sammy Miller Museum and Wickham Square kick off the motorcycling year in grand style. Some may fettle their bikes before venturing out, while others may be waiting for warmer times. To go with your heated jacket and armoured togs, the latest bit of kit is the "air bag" helmet! It has been displayed at November's Milan show. I read in the M.C.N. that a rider has disabled one of his twin headlights! He was worried

that a careless motorist would mistake his twin lights for a car in the distance. And what else? You ask (I hope). Well a mention of a favourite watering hole in our neck of the woods- *Loomies* moto cafe. And on the telly? Always new series and reruns of Henry Cole riding, shed and burying and rebuilding drag racing- the list goes on! *Bangers and Cash*, apart from finding and auctioning classic cars often has some interesting two wheel gems.

**Then:** I have lots of old Gazettes in my safe keeping. The 1970s featured some beautifully illustrated gems by "morty" A.K.A. Jack Mortlock. A little light reading provided some insight- Jack was a commercial artist for a printing firm at the outbreak of W.W.2. Quite a well paid job as he owned a brand new *Matchless* engined *Brough Superior* of 1000 c.c. He initially joined the Balloon Barrage a local territorial unit with as many as 50 balloons over Portsmouth. The unit had a base on the Old Goods Yard next to Portsmouth Town Station. They lived there 24/7, not allowed out at night. They took it in turns for two or three of the crew to slip over to the Sussex Hotel for a couple of pints. If the "balloon went up" (so that's where it comes from). The balloons normally at 2000 ft were raised to 5000 ft if the air raid sirens sounded. They appropriated some air gunner badges to glamourize their uniforms. They were eventually rumbled and hauled over the coals. A lot of areas of Portsmouth become very wet at times and the cellars of *The Sussex Public House* flooded at times. I was based at Somers Road fire station in the 1960s and we would be called out to pump out the water. This was a chargeable "special service" at the discretion of the O.I.C. We didn't often do "hard pumping". We probably didn't charge as we always got a couple of pints and snacks over the couple of hours pumping. We would have to pack up and go if the balloon went up (there we go again!) Jack went on to be a rear gunner cooped up at the back of the plane freezing cold for eight or

more hours at a time. He has shared some of his memories with readers of old gazettes, and I will include these in future issues

*What was on the telly in 1963?* “*That was the week that was*” which started in November 1962 was essential viewing. Presented by David Frost, it was (at the time) shocking and controversial, and symbolised the permissive ‘60s and a “new” type of comedy-Satire! Pubs, girls Etc. came second and I raced home on Saturday nights to watch it. The first episode of *Doctor Who* aired in ‘63, and confusingly, the B.B.C. Sunday night play on February 1963 was “*The Prisoner*” starring Patrick McGoohan but was nothing to do with the later series with the iconic *Lotus Seven* and a plot that no-one understood! Three different *Lotuses* were used in the filming with the number plate KAR120C swapped between them. The original car was sold to someone in Australia and written off in a car race. Brian Wilson of the *Beach Boys* released “*Surfin U.S.A.*”, an outrageous copy of Chuck Berry’s “*Sweet Little Sixteen*”. Chuck sued him and gained copyright, and not a few dollars. J.F. Kennedy was assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald on October the 22nd 1963. This was the anniversary of J.F.K.’s T.V. address to the nation on Oct. 22nd 1962, at the height of the Cuban missile stand off with the Soviet Union. Oswald was pro-Russian and pro-Cuba, prompting conspiracy theorists to suspect that Russia had a hand in the killing. On the British television and stage, ‘Rock and Rollers’ from the States dominated the scene. Gene Vincent carried a handgun on tour, much to the unease of fellow artists, while Jerry Lee Lewis reportedly set fire to his piano on stage, saying to top of bill, Chuck Berry: “follow that chuck!” We saw them at Portsmouth Guildhall later and the old grudge match was still there. Reg Calvert, a music promoter that we knew was shot dead after a dispute about his pirate radio ship, and a rock group I was in was headed by Jake of “*Jake and the Warriors*” Check out Jake Mandeville Anthony. He sued Disney Pixar for the rights to the “*Cars*” franchise. A strange lot, these Rock’n’Rollers!

From the “motorcycle” magazine. riding on the Thames in late January 1963:



Hardy types, back then. The Dragon rally in Wales also went ahead in Feb. '63 with 2500 riders braving fog, black ice, slush blizzards and 15ft. Snow drifts. One chap warming his backside against a camping stove burnt his nether regions and was last seen riding his Vincent home gingerly with foam strapped to his seat!. By May '63 the

magazines had articles about summer riding and trips in spring (what big freeze?)



Lasham Airfield pictured. I went there on a Sunday club run- Nice restaurant, and great to watch the gliders coming and going. Also in this year, the start of the seven digit number plates, with A prefix denoting 1963 registered vehicles. B for '64 and so on. Much easier to figure out than today's system. I have got C13XJG on retention from my old Jaguar

XJ6. Anyone out there with the initials C B and a Jag? NO? Well it was worth a try. As already mentioned Gazettes will be quarterly with a monthly update “extra”. So to save me boring the pants off of everyone please send anything in to [wmcc.editor@gmail.com](mailto:wmcc.editor@gmail.com)

## *This is me – Irfan*

*More than 1000 motorcyclist from around the country turned up to pay tribute and escort a 12-year-old boy's coffin to his funeral on Christmas eve, at Carnon Downs, near Turo in Cornwall.*

*It was a call from his grieving mother, for her son who suffered from life limiting disabilities, and had died following a brief spell in hospital. He loved the sound of a motorcycle. The bikers revved their engines as his little white coffin passed by. His father was one of the bikers.*

*it made me wonder why would motorcyclists carry out such an act of mercy.*

*It has to be, and must be a code of ethics that governs every motorcyclist's conviction.*

*Stereotypes apart, motorcyclists have an honour, empathy and a bond with their fellow comrades and this is why: -*

*Motorcyclists have an unspoken code of ethics by which they abide by all their lives, are fiercely loyal to each other, and more sincere than to their next-door neighbour.*

### ***Rule 1: - Family first***

*Bikers are very protective of their fellow bikers, and each biker is like their brother or sister and no one messes with them. That is why true bikers ride in groups, they are a pack.*

### ***Rule 2: - No Nonsense***

*Bikers do not tolerate rubbish from anyone, especially if the other person (a motorist) is at fault. Bikers have immense self-respect, but also know respecting one another, man, woman, child or animal is integral to the psyche. When others get brash, they maintain their cool and back their words with action!*

### ***Rule 3: - Honour the Bike***

*Your bike is your ultimate soulmate, and honouring it is essential for as a motorcyclist your life depends upon it. Maintaining and taking care of your bike is an utmost essentiality.*

### ***Rule 4: - Never give up***

*Bikers are not the kind to easily give up on things. Just like their passion for their bikes, passion in other aspects of life matter too. They know what they want in life, and will go any lengths to get it.*

### ***Rule 5: - No rider left behind***



*This rule shows the true sign of camaraderie among bikers. A biker always sticks by those who rides along with them. When one breaks down, you turn back and wait for them. It is the one time and the bikers hit the brakes.*

***Rule 6: - Stay true to yourself***

*No matter how messy life gets, or how many actions may that be questionable (like an occasional wheelie) a true biker is always happy with who they are. A bit eccentric by the way they talk and by the way they dress, but they are who they are.*

***Rule 7: - Stick to your guns***

*Not literally, but a biker sticks to his or her principles and words. A true biker stands his or her ground and trusts his or her instincts more than anyone else.*

***Rule 8: - All gear all the time***

*People who do not ride with the proper gear are called SQUIDS (stupid, quick, underdressed, imminently dead) A biker loves wearing those greasy leather jackets and trousers, and more, it is for protection and not to look intimidating.*

***Rule 9: - Ride with pride***

*Biking is not a hobby, it is not a game, it is an art, and only the passionate ones will understand the true meaning of riding. Riders ride no matter what the cause or the occasion. They never get tired of riding. Their motorcycle is their soulmate, and wherever they go - the bike goes too.*

*(Abridged version)*