

Christmas and President's 90th birthday Issue.
Waterlooville Motorcycle Club
FESTIVE EDITION DECEMBER 2025



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Happy 90th Birthday John

(a brief history)

John was born in 1935 at Pinkhurst Farm in Surrey, where he lived with his parents, two sisters Beryl and Daphne (brother Colin didn't arrive until the family were living in Portsmouth) and grandparents who were the tenant farmers.



His first school was Oakwood Hill

At the age of 9 John moved to Portsmouth where his father was a Chief petty officer cook in the Navy.

After leaving school he went to work as a Page Boy at The Queen's Hotel, Portsmouth and then at the age of 18 National Service saw him join the Royal Artillery. He trained as a driver in Rhyl North Wales before being sent to Malta, where he apparently spent a lot of his time playing water Polo!



After 3 years National Service John returned to Portsmouth and went to work for Percy Kiln in the workshops as a motorcycle mechanic. He then went on to Jenkin & Purser, Copnor.

During his working life he has been a herdsman in Basingstoke and also at Manor Farm Langrish home of the Ken Hall event. A gamekeeper for Jenkyn Place, Bentley where he met and married Mary. Then 6 years having a milk round with Unigate.

Moving to Bordon John worked for AMK as a chauffeur and coach driver, and was there until retirement, when he and Mary moved to Waterlooville.



John Theobald, John Jenkins, Alan Parsons, Roy Collins at the Eric Furneaux memorial relay

In 1959 he came across a motorcycle gymkhana at Castle Fields, now the site of the DDaymuseum. The gymkhana was in aid of The Police Widows and Orphans fund, and being run by the Waterlooville Motorcycle Club. John being a keen motorcyclist became a member of the club, and took part in charity events on his colourful BSA Empire Star. John's interest was Trials and Scrambles and entered many local events. In 2004 John was treasurer of the Club and in 2005 became President.





FESTIVE EDITORIAL

DECEMBER 2025

I'm not very good at the tech stuff associated with being the editor of this historic club's magazine, but it's an enjoyable, metaphorical ride.

Although I'm not riding as much these days, I'm not the only one. My old school chum, Alan Straughan has hung up his riding gear and finally relinquished his last bike.

Did I mention my non techieness? Opening my email ,I found that I had somehow enabled "oldest mails first" and from 2010 a message from the aforementioned Mr Straughan he had just bought a B31 in boxes.





Then onto mails from 2011-excellent Gazettes from the then editor, Allan Grimaldi. One of them, suggesting additional jaunts on four wheels. Gordon White and crew have embraced this with "Topless Tuesdays" (I see that North Pole Bike club member Mr. S, Claus has also done this with his green Austin 7). A nice contribution to the Gazette from Cliff Rees, with a witty comment signed Ed. Ahh! Those good old days!

Presumably, Mr. Claus passed his driving test at the North Pole driving centre. DVSA figures reveal that in 2024, of 1.8 million driving tests, 470,000, (26%) were taken in automatic cars. The relentless rise in electric vehicles could be one reason.

The law has always been "a ass", since Charles Dicken's day, so no surprise that in the '50s, you could drive a three wheeled car (identical to a four wheeler, except for

the lost wheel) on a motorcycle licence as long as the reverse gear was blanked off.

.....but,more of that stuff later. For now,let's concentrate on enjoying Christmas,a constant celebration in the global madness.

What would Christmas have been like for the WMCC members in 1928? Not far removed from today .Turkey and goose on the table,real pine trees and lots of paper decorations...we still had them when I was growing up(crumbs I'm feeling like an old monument).

The BBC broadcast the first carol service in 1928 from Kings College Cambridge,which continues today.

Happy Christmas and Happy trails.....Colin
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THE CHURCHILLIAN

MENTAL HEALTH MOTORBIKE

MENTAL HEALTH MOTORBIKE

'WAR ROOM'
Motorbike Coffee Morning
10:00 - 12:00

Sunday 5th Oct **Sunday 16th Nov**
Sunday 14th Dec

Join us for a relaxing coffee morning here upstairs at The Churchillian with fantastic views over Portsmouth, a chance to take five and catch up with old friends (or make new ones) in the biking community. No Bike required - come by car if the weather is bad or your bike is off the road.

The Churchillian
Portsdown Hill Rd, Cosham,
Portsmouth PO6 3LS

Supporting Mental Health Motorbike
www.mhmotorbike.com

Left,a message from the mental health team.

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TEA BREAK(NOW).

So what is new?A world away from that 1961 picture of me and Alan with a B31 and A7,what about the Maeving RM2?A British firm from Coventry.Similar to an old school 125 c.c.Removable batteries or direct mains recharging.A MCN test ride gives it a thumbs up.

A team of ex RE and Triumph engineers have perfected it. 70 mph.Good acceleration and good looks,so why would I prefer a 125 BSA Bantam?

One of the attractions of that old Beezer is free road tax. This is now under threat according to shadow transport secretary,Richard Holden [MP.He](#) believes that a “tax grab” is possible in the next budget.(I am writing this in November,so I may be proved wrong).

The all party parliamentary historic vehicle group at Westminster was quietly disbanded after the general election. Apparently, classic vehicles contribute 0.2 % to annual road emissions, contributing £7.2bn a year to the economy, so worth looking after us I'd say!

 In the news today, a report that lots of electric cars are being written off after minor damage because of fears that the battery may have been compromised and the cost of replacement is too high. Drawing on my experience running a car body shop back in the '80s, there are basically two types of write off - a constructive write off - Amanda's treasured Mini is so mangled that it can never go back on the road and an economic write off where the cost of repair exceeds the estimated value of the little darling. Good news for Amanda as second hand parts, a friendly repair guy and an engineers report will see many happy trips for Amanda and Molly (all classic cars and bikes have to have a nickname - it's the law!). My Thunderbird was "Betsy" and mum had Boris the Morris. She later had a 1725 Hillman Hunter which she was still driving into her nineties. She had a mock driving test at 90 and passed with a few suggestions for improvement. She was a fast driver and her grandson said she was like a jet taking off. The grandkids also called her Rasta gran because of her knitted hat! But I digress (as always). I wonder how electric bikes would fare after minor damage.



Tea Break (then)



Tea break(then)

....and talking of three wheelers.....One of our crowd went over to the dark side and bought a Bond.A little more comfortable for his girlfriend,but he had the

indignity of getting under the bonnet and kick starting if it stalled at the lights!

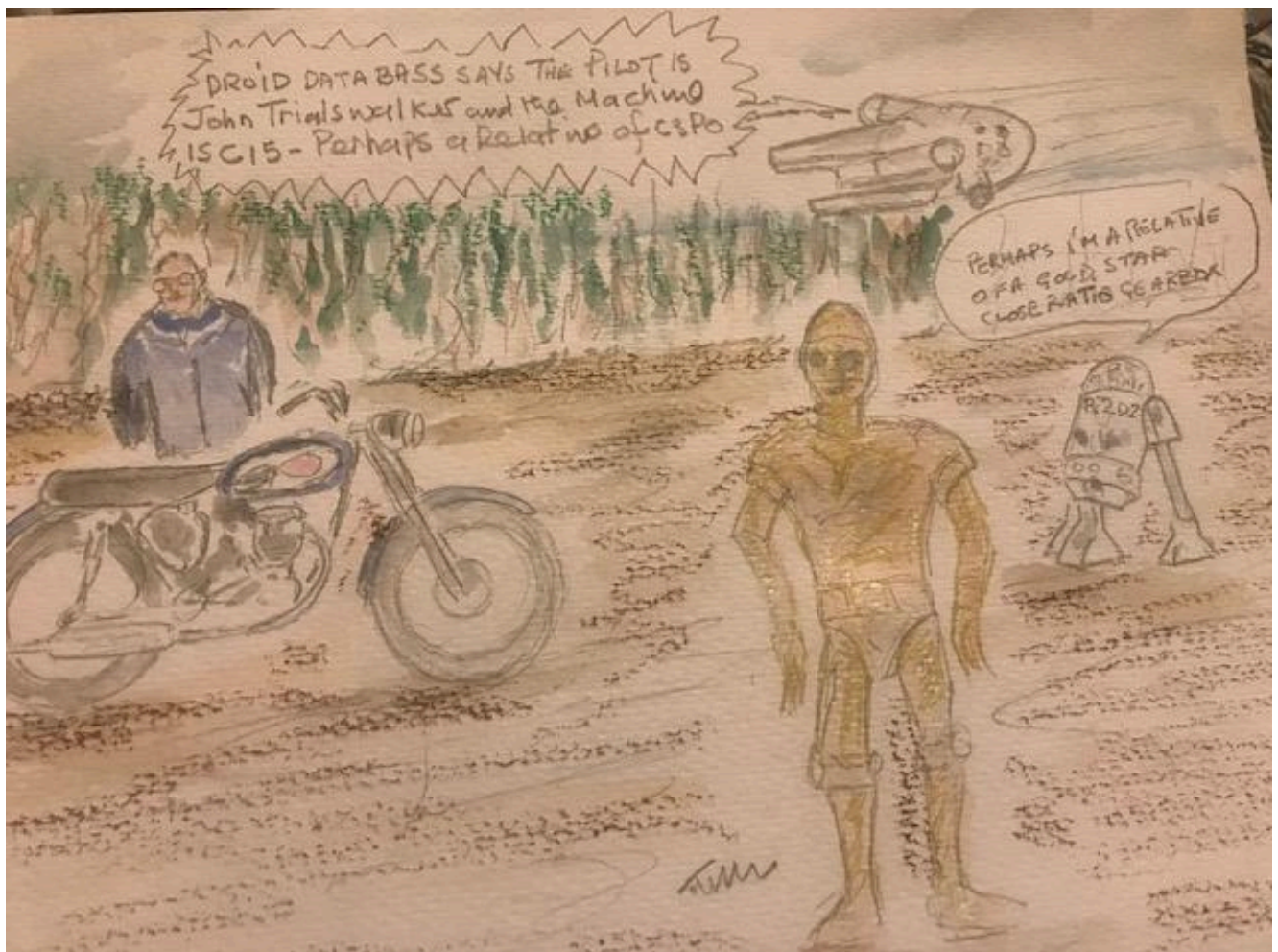
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The motorcycle, on the other hand was first classed as a "cycle". The general public were very "anti" at first and local motorcycle clubs were formed (did I see a jolly roger somewhere when our club was first on the scene?)

WMCC Gazette Dec'92, saw John Jenkins as chairman and John Theobald as editor. A police 2 day trial at Buddens and Butser chalk pits 5th and 6th Dec...and a barn dance on the 9th. Margaret Theobald's recipe for home made peppermint creams in the issue and a new venue for committee meeting-Horndean community school. Cryptic messages from club members known as "duvet and Quilts-secret agents, perhaps?

In the "wanted" section, John Jenkins wanted a bike rack and John Theobald wanted a BMW twin. The tradition continues as Paul Hoffman asked for a BMW twin to be included in this month's "wanted", but asked for it to be cancelled as he had found one. Dec.'86-the editor writes "my biggest problem has been collecting enough to fill up a few pages"-nothing new there either! The club subs had been hiked to £6.00-our current subs don't seem too bad!

Back in 1965, I did a memorable all night gig with the WHO. In spite of the lyrics of "my generation"-
The best plan is to die young as late as possible!
Our president, the indomitable John Jenkins is certainly forever young at 90!



RedDust Revival, LakePerkolilli or Bertie the BeezaDown Under, 2025.

Our son, Nick, lives in a place called Kalgoorlie in Western Australia. Kalgoorlie hosts, every three years, a desert 'race' event on a dried-up clay lake-bed called LakePerkolilli. The lake is just over 20 miles from Kalgoorlie and the event is called the RedDust Revival. The 'race' track is around 2 miles in length, roughly triangular in shape and was the official race track of Western Australia from 1914 to 1939.

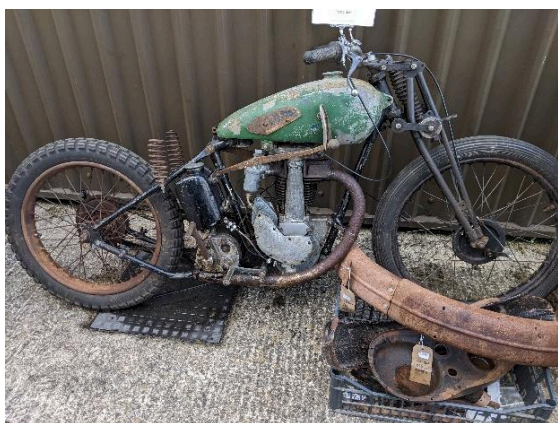
After WW2, the track fell out of use until about ten years ago when a group of motor enthusiasts decided to revive racing on it using pre-1939 machinery. And so, the RedDust Revival was borne.

Back in September 2022, Sue and I were staying with Nick and his family in Australia. Our visit happened to coincide with that year's RDR event, so we went along to see what was going on.....What we saw seemed to be a cross between Mad Max and the Wacky Races; old race cars and motorcycles dug out of barns from all over Australia and thrashed around this incredibly dusty circuit, hence the name.

After spending a day watching these crazy people roaring around, Nick and I were hooked and determined that, at the next event, we wouldn't be spectators but competitors!



Fastforward to 2024. Nick had picked up an early flyer for RedDust Revival 2025, to be held at the end of September/early October 2025, and passed it on to me. Some quick conversations, fast decisions and I (or, more correctly Sue) was off looking for an appropriate bike. Sue found one quite quickly, a 1938 350cc BSAB26 'project', at auction. Having given the bike the once over, I bid on it and won; now the adventure began.



I quickly nicknamed the bike Bertie, which seemed appropriate (to me, at least) and got to work. A full strip down and rebuild followed through the late summer and autumn of 2024. The bike was successfully started in the October and given some off-road testing at Brooklands.



Once road registered it was road tested around the lanes of Denmead, Clanfield and surrounding areas. Some fettling work settled everything down and, with entries to the RDR event secured for Nick and I, export and import documentation for Australia all in place, Bertie was collected, crated, containerised and on-board ship at Southampton by mid-June.

Arriving in Fremantle in early September and clearing customs and bio-security checks, Bertie arrived at Nick's place in early September. Sue and I arrived on the 10th September, by which time Nick had already had the bike up and running, and ridden it around his garden.



The week before the event, Nick and I buckled down to some fettling of the bike to make sure it was as good as we could get it.

The schedule for the week, as published, was practice from Monday through to Thursday, the racing Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with award presentations and a charity auction late on Sunday evening.

As the Monday of the event week arrived, we loaded Bertie, some spares, our kit and other bits and bobs on to Nick's trailer and dragged Bertie out to the track. Once we got to 'Perko', we parked up, unloaded the bike, and wandered over to starting area to see that cars were already lining up to go out! Bikes were already being fired up, too.



A quick check told us that scrutineering of the bikes was already underway and we had to get the bike over pronto. It didn't take long to get bike and helmets checked and approved, and with the scrutineer's sticker on the front mudguard, we got kitted up for our first practice session.

Nick graciously suggested I take the first session. So fully kitted and sweltering in 30+ degree heat I trundled off down to collecting area. As always with these things it's 'hurry up and wait'. Being wary of problems starting hot engines on these old machines, I chose to keep Bertie ticking over which, in

hindsight, wasn't the best decision as, once I got going on the circuit and done about half a lap the engine just started to nip up! Disaster, I thought, all that work and planning and we don't get past practice... I got the clutch in straight away, coasted for a short distance, let the clutch out... and Bertie fired up, no problems, and ran brilliantly for the rest of the week. Speaking to a number of the other guys who were there, several of them had multiple seizures (the bikes that is!) during the week, so Bertie did very well. The nip must have rubbed off a few high spots in the bore.

Both Nick and I had uneventful practice sessions that Monday with the bike having settled to running very well, albeit, with a coating of the ubiquitous red dust. After practice, we packed Bertie up and headed home for a hot shower and a beer; this set the pattern for our week.



On Tuesday of race week, Nick had to work, so I settled down to checking the bike over, changing the oil, etc. and some general fettling after the first day's work.

On Wednesday, we were back out to Lake Perko for practice session two (for us). As we were sharing the riding, the organisers gave us a transponder each for our runs. Bertie performed perfectly and went like the wind. I had been impressed with the bike when riding around locally before it went to Oz, but in thrashing it around this outback track, the bike seemed to come into its own.

Thursday was a bit cooler and we had a fantastic day out on the circuit, the bike running really well. We did notice, back in the pits after one session, that we had an oil leak around the top of the oil tank. A closer inspection showed that, with all the shaking on the track, some cracking had occurred around the top fixings of the tank. So, once we had finished the day, we dropped by a motor factor in Kalgoorlie, bought some plastic metal repair and brake cleaner, went home, cleaned up the tank, filled up the cracks with plastic metal and lashed it to the frame down tube with a tie-down strap for extra security – a bit belt and braces, but it was the RDR after all!



Friday was not a nice day, temperatures in the mid-30s and a strong wind whipping up the dust like crazy. We got two practice sessions in, which were pretty hazardous as you couldn't see where you were going most of the time. Sensibly, the organisers pulled the day around lunchtime and Nick and I went back for a shower and an early beer. We saw a lot of gazebos in the pits destroyed that day.



By Saturday, the weather was back to normal. However, the wind on the previous day was just a precursor to a major storm due to come in later on Saturday, so the organisers decided to end the event a day early. But Saturday, without doubt, was the best day for us and Bertie. By the end of the week, out of the 45 or so bikes entered, more than half had pulled out for various reasons, many with breakdowns and serious engine problems. With about 20 of us left, we had great fun thrashing around the track, Nick getting the third fastest time of the day; not bad for a 350 up against the big vee twin Harleys and Indians. The message from the organisers was 'keep riding until you run out of petrol....or else the car boys will squeeze us out'

With the racing finished, Nick and I packed up the bike and headed for the main presentation tent for a well-earned beer or two. The guy who was M/C for the week was fantastic, the awards, mainly for the cars, went down very well and the auction raised thousands of dollars for children's charities in Western Australia.

It was a good job they did pull the event a day early, as 60mm of rain fell over Saturday night and Sunday, which turned Lake Perkolilli back into a real lake—some folks who didn't get before were stuck there for two weeks before it dried up enough to move.



So, what an adventure for Nick and I, and Bertie; we were privileged to be part of the 2025 Red Dust Revival, everyone was so friendly and helpful and we just had a great time. A week to remember.

And what of Bertie? He remains in Australia with Nick where the next part of his adventure is to be made roadworthy in Oz, so Nick can use him around Kal, and, of course, for the next RDR in 2028!



Steve Cox



& HAPPY NEW YEAR