



Southern Sporting Motor
Cycle Club

CONTACT

MAY

2013

Contents

President's piece.....	1
Editor's piece	2
Hayling Island club run	3
Bits and bobs	6
The trials and tribulations of a young motorcyclist	7
Ypres club run 2013	12
Caption competition	13
Dates for your diary	14

President's piece

I put an article in Contact last month about the clocks going back and that hopefully more people would come to the Adelaide, and we do seem to having more people turn up on a Wednesday night. That is great – keep it up!

At last we managed to have some nice weather and go out for a club run. The trip to Hayling Island was well attended. About eight bikes went from Fleet Services, we collected Steve Pearce at Loomes on the A32 and Karen Pearce came straight to the Ship pub. Sam Wallace and Carl also arrived at the pub but in the car. I did not stay long as I had to get back for a christening.

This month is the trip to Ypres in Belgium, Sunday 12th and Monday 13th, meeting at the Euro Tunnel. Mick is going to send out an itinerary of what you should have booked.

Remember to take your Red Triangle, bulb kit and breathalyzer kits. You will have to take more kit than clothes.

No other ride has been arranged in May.

See you out and about.

John Mason – Chairman

Editor's piece

Hurrah! The sun has finally come out to play! Which means we can too! The first club run of 2013 saw a great turn-out, which you will see from the write-up by our Club Captain, appropriately illustrated with photos taken by your dedicated Editor. As a follow on to the last couple of month's articles, written by Doug (on becoming an instructor) and myself (on becoming a biker chick), Snowy has surpassed himself with a whistle-stop tour of his biking career, furnished with some great pictures (we will have to take his word for it that it is, indeed, him in the pics). I'd love to follow this up with more stories of how and why our members got into biking, and specifically your experiences of taking your bike test in the good old days before modules, cones, speed traps and radio sets made things so much more challenging! So please do send me any articles, pictures etc. however brief!

Apparently we already have a pretty good sign-up for the Ypres trip in a couple of weeks' time, but please do get in touch with Mick if you need more details. You'll find some more information in this issue of Contact, including a map of the proposed route.

Check out the Dates for Your Diary to make sure you don't miss out on any upcoming activities, and please feel free to make suggestions if you have any sensible ones!

Amoret – Editor

Hayling Island club run



So we have finally started. After last month's disappointing cancellation of the club run to Brighton due to the unusually cold weather, this Sunday saw a change in fortune. For once the forecasters got the weather predictions correct, although I had my doubts when I wheeled the bikes out of the garage in the sunshine and it started to rain for a short while, but it did hold off.

So the first stop was at Fleet services and when Heather and I arrived there we found Snowy, Dave, John and Katie already tucking into breakfast and coffee. Blimey they were keen – we were already half an hour early. So the banter started, and we were joined by Spanner and Amoret, then Steve Gill who had only got back the day before from a trip to Brugge. There's dedication – well done that man.



But the biggest shock was the unexpected arrival (due to the hour of the day i.e. before midday) of Estelle and Tony Coe. Tony had obviously dragged her along as Estelle didn't look like she was fully awake and was clearly in need of some caffeine!!

So suitably fuelled with coffee etc., we set off down to Loomies at West Meon, where we met up with Steve Pearce, and his eldest son. Loomies was packed with bikers as usual, which again begs the question from last year. Why is it so busy, but when it was a little Chef it was empty??





After a short break we set off to Hayling via Boarhunt and Havant, which is one of the sections where Snowy likes to play. This time, though, Snowy didn't have his Boy Wonder (Mini Me) with him, which meant things went slightly differently from normal. This time Snowy went past me for his play on the bends, but followed by Tony Coe, which meant at some

point I would see Tony coming back towards me after he found a roundabout, and Snowy would be waiting at a junction for us to catch him. Only this time Snowy made it all the way to the pub. (Well done Snowy, you've finally found your way to the pub without getting lost). But the truth was he did go wrong but was far enough ahead to rectify it before we caught up. Some things never change!



Steve's missus and junior joined us there, as did Sammi and her boyfriend Carl. So we took over a section of the pub's restaurant and had a very nice lunch. Well mine was. We settled into the usual banter session, this time with most having a pop at me on my BMW. Remember I know where you lot live!!





After lunch we had a change of route, this time going past Goodwood and up to Midhurst, then along the A272 to Petworth then Wisborough Green, where we cut across the green to get on the road to Loxwood and the Onslow Arms. Unfortunately Mr. Coe had passed us on the way and didn't realize that we were effectively cutting the

corner at Wisborough Green, and went back and forth for a while till he eventually found us at the pub. [Estelle was ecstatic to be reunited with her bike, Boris! Ed.]

The Onslow Arms is a new haunt for us, and Snowy will be needing a dedicated driver to take him back there as they appear to sell a range of beers that had him salivating at the prospect, so we might have to go back. It's obviously a popular place as it was rather busy inside.

We starburst from here, Snowy leaving first with a toot-toot from his toy horn, making most of the customers turn and stare at the strange man on the little yellow bike with a kiddy horn.



The ride back was uneventful, and luckily still dry. So overall a good day was had by all. Let's hope the next one goes as well.

In May we are off to Ypres for an overnight trip. Details are listed later in Contact.

Mick Wallace – Club Captain

Bits and bobs

A new breed of bike?!



Take a look at this link (thanks to Doug Chaney for bringing it to my attention). Perhaps John Mason could arrange for us to give this a go at his shindig on 22nd June?! Although Heather – practical as ever – says we can't afford the cones!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNh8tquXzc8>



Biker Thought for the Month ...

Sometimes it takes a whole tankful of fuel before you can think straight.

The trials and tribulations of a young motorcyclist

The 70s was my era, but the late 60s was when I discovered powered two wheelers for the first time, thanks to my father! My dad loved old British motorcycles (two of which now reside in my garage) consequently his garage when we lived in Whitton was liberally scattered with spares and basket cases awaiting attention. Between the garage and the fence under a tarpaulin was a sad but complete 98cc Auto cycle, god knows what year it was and it was more rust than paint. I asked dad if I could fiddle with it and within two days had it running, then spent the rest of the summer holiday blatting up and down our back alleyway much to the annoyance of our neighbours!



Numerous machines were tortured to death up and down that back alleyway until I turned 16, one of which was an NSU Quickly, now worth quite a bit of money. Then the day arrived when I got my provisional licence, O Joy! Visions of taking the world by storm were short lived as I was promptly booked in for an 8 week training course at, you guessed, The Southern Sporting RAC/ACU training scheme which my dad took me to on the first day, Oh the humiliation! And he came in and watched! Oh the horror! Even now I always feel a twinge when parents stay and watch.

Back in the days before time and CBT, all you needed was a licence, insurance and a roadworthy bike 250cc or under with 'L' plates (note the squashed 'L' plate stuck across the front forks). My trusty steed was a 1962 BSA Bantam in blue with cream panels on the sides of the tank with a massive capacity of 175cc! I can't recall much of my training although I know I enjoyed it and it definitely held me in good stead for the rest of my riding life (which by the way isn't over just yet!).

Over the seven weeks you were trained and then assessed at the end of each session on a points basis, the same as we now do for further training pupils. There were no radios so the instructor told you the route before you left - if you went the wrong way he simply stopped at the corner you should have turned down. If you didn't stop and turn round fairly quickly you got a bollocking when

you returned to the school for not doing a rear observation. As it was the early 70s very few bikes had indicators, so hand signals were the order of the day along with gauntlet gloves with reflective backs so they could be seen at night. Try explaining the concept of hand signals to a young pupil today.

My seven weeks went fairly well and I was feeling quietly confident for week 8 test day - Ah, the misplaced confidence of youth. In my cockiness I didn't bone up that well on the Highway Code so I failed, but to the rescue came John Palmer (training scheme organiser) who on the following day was examining at the Staines training scheme so he took me along and I retook and passed the dreaded Highway Code exam.

Once you had passed you received an RAC/ACU graduate badge and a certificate which was personally delivered by John Palmer along with an invitation to come back and help out, thus my involvement with the training scheme and the club started. At this point I would like to expand on the influence the late John Palmer had on me and many others at the training scheme and within the club. He was always smiling and had a knack of making you feel at ease straight away. When he was teaching he always made it fun and I never saw him lose his temper. Many of us old timers remember him with fond memories.

Back to the plot ... Now it was time to get shot of the dreaded 'L' plates, the test was booked and off I toddled to Teddington test centre for my test, slightly nervous. When people tell you how easy it was to pass your bike test back in the 70s, believe them because it was. The examiner took me round the corner (he was on foot by the way) and told me to do a circuit round the block doing left hand turns while he watched, then a couple of laps doing right turns, an emergency stop then followed where he sprung out from behind a tree but I could see him way before I got there, a few Highway Code questions and we were done - Passed - Easy!

The Bantam didn't last too long after my test - it had a big end failure in Whitton High Street which luckily wasn't far from home. After a torrid affair with a Triumph Tiger Cub which expired on a regular basis it was time to get something reliable. A club member who worked for a Suzuki dealership bought a crashed 185 Suzuki GT insurance write off, frame good just bent forks and smashed headlight. As it turned out it was a club member who bent it when a



car pulled out on him and deposited him on a central grass verge with a broken leg. It was very low mileage so I snapped it up, and yes that is me in the picture and not a girl, long hair was the fashion then, ask John Mason!

The Suzuki was one of three bikes that I owned at that time, circa 1973/4, the others were a Jawa 350 twin and my all-time favourite, a Velocette 350 - more of that later.

I travelled many miles on my little Suzi, it was my work bike, training bike and on numerous Sundays many trips to Brands Hatch to watch amateur club racing. A couple of guys from the club raced at these meetings so it was a good excuse to go and help out. The classes and machinery for these meetings was very diverse, from 50cc to 1000cc with more Marques of bikes than you could shake a stick at.

Now for the Velocette saga; I bought it for £100 in fair condition and in very standard trim, it was my all round bike and I loved it. The handling was sublime, poke it into any corner and it was like being on rails. For a big single cylinder in was silky smooth unless you revved the nuts off it which happened often with me and led to its demise later on. The one big trip I did on the Velo was to the Isle of Man for the 1973 TT races. The club used to book some self-catering flats in Peel on the other side of the island. I travelled up to Liverpool with John Palmer and we caught the evening ferry, the bikes were roped to anything that didn't move on the decks and we fell asleep on a bench inside. I was prodded awake at about 11.30pm and told we had arrived, but as we were one of the first on, it took forever to get off the boat and by the time we had it was the wee small hours. John had been before so I was just following his lead, so it was a total surprise when this, ride-by-the-book, never-break-the-speed-limit chap took off like Barry bloody Sheene ! When we arrived at the flat I asked John what was all that about, his answer was simple, "there's no speed limit out of the towns." My reply was he could have told me as I only just managed to keep up and occasionally I didn't.

My bunk mate for the week was Gary Ward (see picture of Bodie & Doyle, ha ha!), the only problem was it was a double bed. Now Gary was a bit of a geezer and the thought of sharing a bed with a bloke freaked him out a bit, but we came to an agreement to stay well away from each other at night. One morning I just couldn't resist and squeezed his arse, well, I've never seen anybody move so fast and I've never laughed so much.



You have to do mad Sunday when you go to the TT -



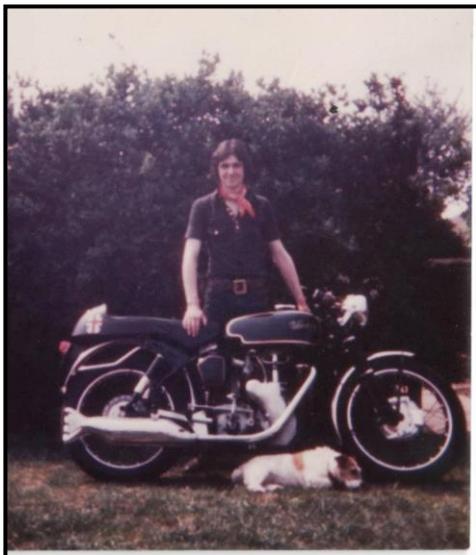
it's the law! So along with hundreds of others we rode round the TT circuit taking in the sights and the famous corners. The difference from sea level to the top of the mountain is startling, if only for how much cooler it is. We stopped at Creg-Ny-Baa where there is a pub and sat around to watch Gary try

and get his knee down on his Triumph Daytona 500 with crash bars - it wasn't going to happen no matter how far he got off the bike but we had a laugh watching him try. The defining moment for me was Ballaugh Bridge which I didn't realise was coming up so soon where I managed to clear both wheels off the ground which was fine but as I landed the dual seat collapsed in the middle into the shape of my bum. When we got back I had to remove the seat and stamp it back to near normal. It was never the same shape after that, it had a slight banana look to it but was a lot more comfortable.

The trip home was a bit of a nightmare. After decanting from the ferry on a Friday evening I faced a 200 mile plod home in the dark. Me and another club member also on a Velo headed for the M6, just outside of Knutsford Services - whilst doing around 70 mph the rear tyre spun on the rim ripping the valve off causing instant deflation resulting in the use of the full width of the motorway and soiled underpants! The guy with me (whose name I can't remember) pulled over and we both decided I wasn't going anywhere without a new inner tube. God bless him, he lent me £30 to pay for recovery and left me there. It was about 1am when a scabby white transit pulled up and loaded me on board along with a fellow biker with a very leaky Vincent Black Shadow, we had a chat and he

was surprised he had got this far on his Vincent and was off to the station to get it home by train. I on the other hand was deposited at Knutsford Services for the night and told I would be picked up at 9am to get my tyre fixed. Services were very basic in those days so I tried to sleep on a plastic seat in the warmest place which was the Wimpy Bar; after 8 hours waiting I was so glad to get the tyre sorted and get going again. The rest of the trip went without a hitch and I eventually arrived home about mid-afternoon Saturday knackered.

The final chapter in the Velocette story happened as I was rounding what is now Curries Roundabout, and the back end of the bike went all loose. So I tootled home and then inspected the bike and to my horror the back end of the frame had snapped off so the only thing supporting the swing arm was the shock absorbers. The cause I found out was loose engine mounting bolts which in turn vibrate the frame until stress fractures appear. A second hand frame was purchased from Dennis Heath's, alas now closed for good, and a full restoration was embarked on which took nigh on four years on and off.



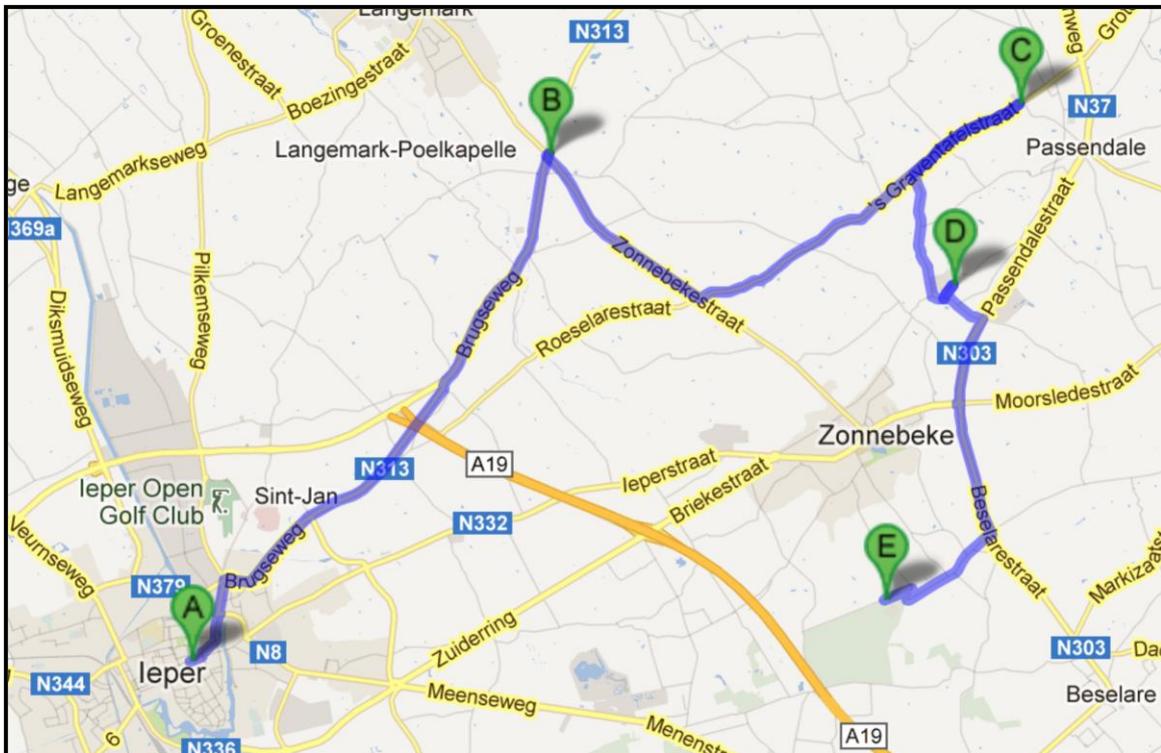
Sadly I didn't ride it that much after the rebuild and about a year after this picture was taken I had to sell it. I got £400 when I let it go and that just covered what I spent on it; it's worth about £5000 by today's prices and I still want one now.

As an appendix to this tale of youth, my Dad was into the vintage motorcycle club and he acquired a 1929 Ariel 250cc for me to ride on VMCC runs, so from the tender age of seventeen I knew all the complexities of a hand change gear shift and how rubbish old bike brakes were. We had many a good days out at shows and rallies but only ever once the whole family was on two wheels, with my mum pillion with dad and me with my little brother on the back; he only came because he didn't want to be left behind in the car, although he did do the training scheme and he did have a moped for about a month then gave it up, so the bike gene doesn't run in the family (maybe he was adopted?).

Snowy.

[You may have noticed that I snuck in a picture of the REAL Bodie & Doyle - Ed.]

Ypres club run 2013



If you take a look at the map above this will give you an idea of where we are going for the Ypres trip.

The general plan is those of us who are on the same train out (08:20) will make our way to the centre of Ypres (Grote Market Square), **A** on the map, where we will have some alfresco lunch, or sit inside if not warm enough. Because we can't check into the hotel until the afternoon I intended to visit **B** (Canada Corner) then Passchendaele, **C** on the map. Then if we have time, on to **D** which is Tyne Cot Cemetery, which is huge.

Back to Ypres (Ieper on the map) for dinner and a visit to the Menin Gate for last post at 8pm. It might be best to eat after so I'll try and book a table when we have lunch.

The following day a visit to **E** which is Buttes New British Cemetery, Polygon Wood. Then we have plenty of time to visit any suggested locations. We can discuss more on the day.

The return tunnel is 16:20 on the Monday.

If you have any recommendations for the Monday please let me know. I suggest you take the time to look up the locations on Google so you are familiar with them.

See you there! **Mick Wallace.**

Caption competition



Winning caption:

SHE'S BEHIIIIIIINDE YOU!!

Best of the rest:

Mick soon found the Road Haulage Association talking rucksack was really annoying!

Special offer with each purchase of a Harley Davidson – free membership to the Black Widows MCC and a Scottish Widow!

Mick's new interactive satnav took him completely by surprise the first time he turned it on!



May's picture ...

(Sorry, Doug, but can't resist!)

Send your suggested captions to me at:

a.whitaker@nhm.ac.uk



Dates for your diary

12th-13th May	Club ride to Ypres, Belgium, including overnight stay
18th May	Bowling night (tbc)
9th June	Club run to Straford Upon Avon
22nd June	John Mason's 40 years instructor celebration
6th-7th July	BMF National Road Rally
7th July	BBQ @ Sheila & Dave's
20th July	BBQ @ Estelle's
28th July	Club ride to Lechlade Trout Inn
18th August	Club ride to Bathampton
15th September	Club ride to Ogri Café, Sussex
6th October	Club ride to Arundel
3rd November	London to Brighton Veteran Car Run