



THE BUSH NEWS



LEOMINSTER CLASSIC MOTOR CYCLE CLUB NEWSLETTER

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October 2020

CHAT FROM THE CHAIR

There will not be an AGM this year or Club Night until restrictions are lifted.

When some sort of normality returns it would be good to get members involved more with organising and supporting any events held by the club. Now is the time to sort out some runs for next year, if you have never put a run on just shout out if guidance is required.

Next year 2021 it will be the clubs 30th Birthday. Thoughts please on celebrating this event.

It was a fairly good turn-out for the first club night since lockdown at Dom's in Leominster the weather was kind to us, a brilliant venue.

Below is an up to date list of committee members and their duties - a big welcome to Roger Brookes who is now in charge of membership.

Chairman Steve Powell

Treasurer Mike James

Secretary Ian Price

Membership Secretary Roger Brookes

Newsletter Editor Sabine Ray

Newsletter Printing Mike England

Events & Runs Co-ordinator Sue Moore

Social Secretary **position vacant**

Visiting Speaker Co-ordinator **position vacant**

Archives Mike (Bigfoot) Davies

Committee members Dave Peake, Dave Therin, Ruth Caldicott

Mid-Week & Winter Meets Dave Therin, Ruth Caldicott

Facebook Admin Andy Williams

Webmaster Andy Williams

MAG Contact Sue Moore

Steve Powell

BIGFOOT'S MUSINGS

September 2nd saw the first club meeting since March and not a bad turnout at Dom's. We did have a mid-week meet at the Owls Nest in August but due to it being a very wet day only 3 of us made it (with Sue breaking down on the way) so a ride home in the dry in the breakdown truck.

Since they opened the Welsh boarder I had great days out on the GS riding some of my favourite roads including the Drover's Road - it was good to be back. The Worcester VMCC is up and running, so I have been able to get some riding with them (having picnics instead of pubs). I took them on a run to the Black Mountains in August with 18 bikes riding in 3 groups of 6, which worked very well. Meeting for coffee, lunch, tea and cakes all 2 metres apart seemed a bit odd but it worked.

After weeks of sitting in the garage looking at the new Himalayan I have now got it running, and to say I am pleased with it is a very big understatement. It's great – pulls like a steam engine. It's good to see that we have yet another one in the club – Sabine has got a 2018 model in black and she also seems very chuffed with it. Be careful out there Royal Enfields – could be taking over the world.

Our walking group started up again in July, and we have had some cracking walks up on the Welsh hills – Bredon Hill with 360° views along the rivers Wye and Lugg and around Shobdon and Eardisland. The Bredon Hill walk was based on Elemetry Castle which has lots of thatched cottages and a proper village green with cricket pitch – the sort of place you need a certain amount in the bank before they let you buy a house in the village. But a wonderful walk, part of which goes through a 1500-acre estate; if it was not for the Malvern Hills you would be able to see Hereford.

September 6th and 7th rode the Worcester T.T. – a good turnout of bikes from the First World War to 1980's; a cracking route through Wyre Forest and Clee Hill - the Worcester VMCC have some very good route plotters. 77 stands for 3-wheelers (cars and bikes), and tiddlers; anything under 250cc or low powered, i.e. early vintage. A cracking day out, even if it did rain coming home.

Hope to see you at the AGM

FETTELING FUN – PART 5: TWIN SHOCKS

The old adage *measure twice, cut once* is useful but only if you measure the right bit! Having researched various twin shocks, it became clear that any useful increase in performance would entail having the shocks made to suit rider weight (in full kit), riding style, i.e. whether touring, street or track, and incorporating adjustments for preload, rebound and compression. Now everything comes at a price and it can be difficult to reconcile what's available to suit your pocket. Simplest is to just change the spring to suit your weight for about £50, but this can be problematic as the OEM unit on the V7 uses progressive springs so it is difficult to find a suitable rating to match the hydraulic performance, especially if changing to a linear spring.

Twin shocks with progressive springs shout 'compromise' as they are trying to compensate for the changing fluid dynamics caused by the speed of movement through a spring rate which

varies with length. There is no ideal and so a whole aftermarket suspension industry has developed ready to offer you choice (and take your money). The optimum performance appears to be approached by having separate adjustments for each aspect of the suspension, and, as the table below shows, these all add cost.

Twins shock	Length	Pre-load	rebound	compression	Cost £
Matris M40KC	No	Yes	Yes	Hi Lo	1467
K-Tech Razor	+/- 5mm	Yes	Yes	Hi Lo	954
Maxton WR26	Any	Yes	Yes	Hi Lo	895
K-Tech Razorlite	+/- 5mm	Yes	Yes	No	594
Maxton T260C	Any	Yes	20-click	No	535
Bitubo WME02V2	No	Yes	Stepless	No	325
Shock Factory	No	Yes	16-click combined		312

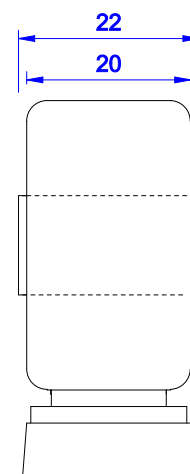
It is surely difficult to justify investing large sums to ‘improve’ an inexpensive bike like the V7 where front and rear suspension upgrades could add 25% to the cost of the bike with little chance of recouping this on re-sale. So, it boils down to what you are prepared to pay and what you are prepared to compromise on. I met another V7 rider who had paid £135 for a pair of Hagon shocks with softer springs (he always rode solo) and he was happy with the result but many riders complain the ride is already rather ‘soft’ and could be improved. Clearly any decision is based on personal preference and budget.

One of my requirements was to raise the seat height and this can be done by padding the seat or raising the suspension. I found some shocks had variable length, either by alternative eyes or limited threaded adjustment. One maker, Maxton, was able to make the shock at any reasonable length for this purpose. The advantage of the Maxton unit is that the extra length is gained by increasing the stroke (in my case from 80mm to 95mm) rather than simply changing the eye. I duly sent off measurements of the bike: wheelbase, weight on each wheel, swing arm length, shock length, location of shock on swing arm etc; along with rider weight in full kit. Maxton then plug in the data and calculate the wheel rise based on the geometry and all the other parameters for the bike/rider combination.

I made two mistakes when measuring up. Firstly, I didn’t remove the shock when measuring the eye width and so couldn’t access the boss. Fortunately, the 2mm error was easily solved by shimming the new shock with a stainless washer.

The second mistake was more significant as the after-market rear rack I had fitted (half the cost of a Guzzi one) passed behind the shock and was secured to the rear footpeg whereas the OEM rack mounted on the top eye with a longer bolt. Needless to say, the new shock had its spring higher up the strut and so it fouled the rear rack. Nothing for it but to make new brackets and chop off the offending bits.

Now I’m in the process of optimising the shock settings. What’s clear is that normal riding on potholey Hereford roads needs 5 clicks less firm than well-surfaced flowing tarmac.



Thankfully Wales is open for business again! Steve Hackett

MORE MISCELLANEOUS MEMOIRS

As I said last month, after Ruth and I got married in May 1970 (not May 1969 as in last month's newsletter) my motorcycling days were put on hold for a while. However, in the mid 1970s I got a job in the Stats Office of the Kloof Gold Mining Company just outside Westonaria, about 40 miles west of Johannesburg. The mine offices were about 2 miles from home and we obviously worked office hours with a full hour for lunch. This meant that it was feasible to leave the office and go home for lunch which virtually everyone in the offices did. So that Ruth could have use of the car during the day I bought myself a 50cc Kreidler Florett to commute to the office and back. I don't think one could call it a moped as it had no pedals - it had a dual saddle and footrests like a motorcycle and a foot gear change rather than a handlebar twist-grip gear change. I enjoyed my Kriedler, and despite its small capacity, it had quite a bit of go. At that time Kriedlers were making their mark in the world of 50c racing and held the world speed record for 50cc machines. (The record was set on 25th October, 1965 in Utah when a 50cc Kreidler Zigarre did 131 mph - not bad for 50cc!). I didn't have any adventures with my Kriedler but every afternoon when I came back from the office I would put our son, who was then 2 years old, on the saddle in front of me and take him for a few laps around the garden.



By one of those strange quirks of fate (or fortune), in the mid 1980s we found ourselves once again back in Piet Retief. By then the family had grown – we had 5 children. I bought myself a red Suzuki 250GSX. All in all, I also found it a satisfying bike to ride. I had a windscreen and despite the limitations of the wind resistance imposed by the windscreen I could get it to 80mph which was fast enough for me. I used it for buzzing around town and occasional trips in the country to the towns of Amsterdam and Pongola. Amsterdam was about 30 miles north of Piet Retief so it was a nice half hour ride. There was a short mountain pass about 5 miles out of Amsterdam with some nice bends. If I came home during daylight hours I would drop the bike down to 4th, open her up to about 9,000rpm and enjoy the sound as the engine noise reverberated off the rocky face of the pass as I climbed to the top. It was a different story if I came home in the dark. I didn't enjoy riding in the dark as the headlight only had a 40 watt (I think) bulb and 50mph was the absolute limit at night. If you were lucky, if there was anything on the road, at 50mph you could possibly just pick it up in the headlight beam and stop in time. In contrast, a friend in Piet Retief had a BMW R60 and he put a 120-watt bulb in his headlight. His parents lived in the village of the wattle bark extract company at Iswepe, about 30 miles out of Piet Retief on the Ermelo road. I went to Iswepe on the back of his bike a few

times at night and compared to the headlight on my Suzuki, his headlight was like a searchlight.

The ride to Pongola was also an interesting ride. Pongola was 60 miles south east of Piet Retief and for about 20 miles the road ran about 15 yards from the Swaziland border fence. There was also an altitude difference of about 3,000 ft between Piet Retief and Pongola, Pongola being lower than Piet Retief. Piet Retief was a timber growing area and Pongola was more sub-tropical - a sugar cane and citrus growing. There was a sugar mill in Pongola. The Suzuki had a 2 into 2 exhaust system with a mixer/balance box under the engine. I remember riding to Pongola one Sunday morning and on the way home about midday, the mixer/balance box blew. There was nothing I could do about it except ride home with the bike making a lot more noise. When I got home I parked the bike in the garage, got changed and had Sunday dinner with the family. After dinner I thought I would have a look to see where and how big the hole was in the mixer/balance box. I went into the garage and knelt down to look at the exhaust system. As I did so, I put my hand on the engine casing to assist me as I looked under the bike and burnt my hand on the engine casing. This was about an hour and a quarter after I got home. Goodness knows what temperature the engine was running at when I got home. I replaced the factory exhaust system with a Cowley 2 into 1 system.

Piet Retief was an interesting place to live in during the mid and late 1980s. It was the time when the struggle against Apartheid was marked by bombings and violence. Piet Retief, being a border area, was a sensitive area. There were many dirt roads in the area amongst the plantations and farms. Freedom fighters/insurgents/terrorists (however you want to describe them) would come across the border from Swaziland and plant land mines on the dirt roads. As we are aware from the UKs involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, land mines do extensive damage (if not completely destroy) conventional vehicles and seriously endanger the lives of personnel travelling in them. The South African Defence Force (SADF) developed a mine-resistant, ambush protected vehicle know as a Casspir. One usually saw them in SADF khaki or camouflage. They had a crew of 2 and could carry 12 troops. In essence they were armoured personnel carriers. There was a gold mine about 20 miles from Piet Retief as well as other small communities and children from these communities would come to the schools in Piet Retief as weekly boarders. The mine, and other rural communities, provided Casspirs to fetch and carry pupils from their communities to schools and back. So it was interesting on a Friday afternoon to drive past the boarding establishments of the schools and see 5 or 6 Casspirs lined up to take children home for the weekend and see them come back again on Monday mornings. They weren't in SADF khaki or camouflage – there was a yellow one, a light blue one, a pale green one as well as other colours.



One Christmas I was roped in to be Father Christmas for a pre-school play group and I made my appearance on my Suzuki. The red of my Father Christmas outfit was a perfect match for the red of my bike.

In the early 1990s we found ourselves in the small town of Somerset East in the Eastern Cape, about 120 miles from Port Elizabeth. I bought myself a 50cc Honda Movie twist-and-go scooter for around

town use. I can't complain. It did all that I wanted it to do and didn't give me any trouble. It wasn't fast but town wasn't big so that was no problem. A friend I made in Somerset East was also into biking. I don't remember what he was riding then but he had an early model Yamaha XT500 which he had used some years before for a ride around South Africa and Namibia. He wasn't using it so he asked me whether I would like to use it. There were some nice dirt roads through a nature reserve with some substantial hills as a backdrop just behind town. I jumped at the opportunity and enjoyed some lovely rides along the hillside roads of the nature reserve whenever the opportunity arose. I didn't use it on the roads too much as it was a bit noisy and barely road legal although I obviously had to ride it on the roads to get to the nature reserve from home and then back home later. Riding it on the road wasn't too much of a problem in Somerset East as the traffic cop only came to Somerset East on Thursdays. It was the day when anyone whose vehicle was slightly dodgy or had bald tyres would leave their vehicle at home and walk to work.

When we left Somerset East at the end of 1995 he asked me whether I would like to take the XT with me. I said, "Yes please!" so when we moved we took the bike with us (as well as the Honda Movie). We moved to Kroonstad, some 500 miles north towards Johannesburg, and lived there until Ruth and I came across to the UK in 2004. Every year Dougie would pay the road tax for the XT and post me the tax disc to put on the bike. One of the problems I had with the XT was that the rear number plate would vibrate to pieces in next to no time. It still had the old registration number system with a white on black number plate. I solved the problem by making a number plate out of quarter inch black rubber insertion and white self-adhesive letters and numbers. The only problem I had with that was earthing the tail light which was mounted at the top of the number plate. However, that wasn't too hard to overcome. I didn't use the XT too much in town in Kroonstad as I found it a bit impractical. However, in the last two years or so of our stay in Kroonstad our youngest son was finishing his schooling. He had a friend who lived on a farm about 15 miles or so out of town, so I rode the bike out to the farm and left it there; on weekends my son would go out to the farm, and he and his friend would ride the bike around the farm. They couldn't ride it on the roads legally as they were only 15 years old and too young to get licences.

That, then, ends the saga of my motorcycling adventures in South Africa. Shortly before coming across to the UK I returned the XT to Dougie and the last I heard it was still in his garage.

Andrew Pantland.

MAG UPDATE

Green recovery – but what does this actually mean for biking? A continuing theme of creating a 'green recovery' for the UK after the Covid-19 pandemic appears to have two elements to it that cause concern. Firstly, it's not at all clear what the timing of this is going to be – so bikers (and indeed all British citizens) continue to live with a mixture of lockdowns, arbitrary road closures (see below) and employment uncertainty. At the same time, motorcyclists would be right in thinking that we form PART of the green recovery, given our low eco-footprint and congestion-busting mobility. It seems that the Government partially agrees, judging by helpful

comments from Ministers, including the Secretary of State for Transport, Grand Shapps MP. But MAG needs to focus policymakers' minds on getting this thinking totally clear. That's why MAG is repeatedly appealing to MPs to remind Ministers that one of the quickest ways to 'go green' is to 'go riding.' As bikers already know, motorbikes are an efficient, economical and clean way to get around. They already do the job of cutting emissions and they don't need special routes to be built for them - all they need is some secure parking and access to bus lanes.

Three demands goes local The three demands letter writing campaign has undeniably brought results. The job is far from done and we now need further support from members. The campaign so far has opened doors at the DfT, albeit only a crack, but enough for us to get a foot in. There will hopefully be good news to report in coming months, but for now we need to remain circumspect in what we say. Rest assured that there is dialogue starting and a few glimmers of hope on the horizon. Publicly as many of you will be aware from responses from the DfT via your MPs, the Department is playing the slopey shoulder game with respect to bus lane access and secure parking. We therefore need to take the fight to local authorities whilst still continuing our efforts at the DfT. Centrally we have gone to the Local Government Association (LGA), Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), and Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA), asking them to share our slightly rebranded "Transport Restart Proposals" (find the document here: https://wiki.mag-uk.org/images/6/6a/Transport_Restart_Proposals_-_2020_07_29.pdf). The LGA and WLGA have already confirmed that this has gone out in their bulletins to their members (this covers virtually every local authority in England and Wales). We are awaiting confirmation from NILGA and COSLA. We now need local constituents to reinforce these proposals by specifically asking for the measures in their local towns and cities. It is important that local politicians see local bikers asking rather than a faceless national organisation that they can choose to ignore. We are therefore asking all MAG members to write to their local councillor to ask for secure parking to replace any that may have been lost, and access to any new bus and cycle routes that are popping up. Please be specific naming roads and locations – we cannot do this centrally, but you have the local knowledge in your area. We have generated a template letter which you can see here: https://wiki.maguk.org/images/c/cb/Three_demands_Template_letter_for_Councillors.docx but feel free to do an entirely personal plea adding anything you wish to the mix. Then let us know how you get on, or call on us if you need any help answering questions from your council or speaking directly about the cost free benefit that they can gain.

Equality and the Highway Code MAG is working very hard on formulating a response to the latest Highway Code Review. There is a program of discussion taking place behind the scenes with road safety bodies, professionals and collective groups covering road safety. There will be a great deal more published on this subject over the coming weeks. For now please do speak to your local and regional reps with your thoughts opinions and ideas on this subject. The timescale is relatively short on this one and we want to influence the responses going in from other road safety organisations. This is part of our "leading the debate" strategy discussed at the last NC meeting. If you need any more explanation on this new strategic approach please do get in touch.

JUST FOR FUN - Child's artistic impression of Mummy's new motorbike



I asked my son Josef to draw me and my new motorbike, and I was rather impressed with what he came up with in 2 minutes - especially the speedy wheels!

He took great care to get the branding right - 'R' for Royal Enfield. I also seem to be a rather thoughtful rider, always shoulder checking, but not sure where my long hair has gone?

Sabine and Josef Ray

WHAT'S ON IN OCTOBER and CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2020

All events will be reviewed each month depending on further developments. Please keep checking with us.

All Club events (including runs) should be organized through our Events Coordinator Sue Moore, email bobandsuiz@hotmail.co.uk

TEXT ONLY on 07857 250023 or PM through Facebook

Events in Italic are non-club events

<u>October's Club Night</u>
Due to the latest developments regarding Corona we decided to cancel the club night
<u>MID WEEK MEET</u>
When: 21 st October
Where: Elan Valley Visitor Centre, 12 noon

OTHER ITEMS FROM THE COMMITTEE

<p>JOBS VACANT</p> <p>If interested, please contact Steve Powell st1100@hotmail.co.uk</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Runs Coordinator 2. Social Secretary 3. Visiting Speaker Coordinator 	<p>Good News about your MEMBERSHIP!!!!</p> <p>Due to Covid-19 and the guidance not to arrange social events, the committee has extended the membership until the end of December 2021. This means all current members and anyone joining this year will not need to renew until January 2022.</p>
<p>TREASURER'S REPORT:</p> <p>Current a/c £ 954 Deposit a/c £3049 (no change)</p>	<p>MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT:</p> <p>Membership: 131 including 26 family members</p>

29th AGM of the LEOMINSTER CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE CLUB

Leominster Classic Motorcycle Club Activity Report: year ending 30 Aug 2020

Membership

Year	2020	2019	2018
Members	131	167	184

Distribution

Gloucester	3
Herefordshire	95
Powys	5
Shropshire	6
Somerset	1
Worcestershire	21

Payment method

Paypal	45
Cheque	51
Cash	22
Honorary	13

Newsletters

Post	58	(Includes family)
Download	73	

Accounts

It's prudent to retain about one-year's operating costs in reserve, and we continue to do this. Any fall in membership is always of concern and represents a loss of income and as such needs to be monitored, and steps taken to reverse any further decline. However, there are no other significant threats to the club's financial stability.

Just over one-third of members joined online but as the fees charged for this service were 4.9% it was decided to cancel the Paypal account in August 2020 and rely solely on cash and cheque payments in future.

The accounts shown on the following page indicate an expenditure of £477.69 in excess of income which largely reflects the setting up costs for shows that could not take place due to Covid-19 and the free food at the Christmas Awards Night.

The charity account stands at £100 which was the sum raised by the Skittles evening which was the final club event that managed to run during the financial year.

The booking fee for the Prescott Bike Festival was reclaimed; similarly, the Withington Hall booking fee and damage deposit will be recovered and returned to the sponsor or club account as appropriate.

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) continued its full activities to justify its subscription. The associated public liability insurance covers all of the club events and ride-outs irrespective of number and, as it runs across a different time period, it was not possible to recover any of the premium during 2020. This insurance is organised for some 53 motorcycling groups under the auspices of MAG and the effects of the pandemic on the ability to hold events (and hence reduce risk of a claim) may be recognised in a future premium(s).

Interest rates continue to be very low but there was a small addition of £22.57 (0.75%) on the deposit account during the year. However, it was decided to close this account and rely solely on the current account.

The committee decided to extend membership until the end of 2021 to reflect that few events had been held for members and to maintain its excellent value-for-money reputation through re-doubling its efforts to re-establish a vibrant suite of events in the coming year.

The accounts will be audited prior to handover to the new treasurer.

LCMCC Financial Summary to year ending 31st Aug 2020

	2020	2019
Bank Balances		
Deposit	Skipton BS 3049.37	3026.80
Current	TSB 1339.40	1784.62
Petty cash	<u>13.84</u>	<u>46.31</u>
	4402.61	4857.73
 Income summary		
Membership	1457.82	1957.28
Raffles	113.00	266.90
Sales	15.00	30.10
A to M Show	2019 deposit 100.00	1917.00
Open night	0.00	820.00
Charity	skittles 100.00	6.00
Other	PBF refund <u>360.00</u>	<u> </u>
	2145.82	4997.28
 Expenses summary		
Shows etc	Prescott 360.00	0.00
	A to M Show 163.22	399.95
	Open Night 40.50	499.30
Club nights	speakers 0.00	0.00
	food etc 622.21	796.48
Newsletter	printing 81.90	10.99
	postage 214.82	434.44
MAG	subs 120.00	120.00
	insurance 326.81	326.18
Website	24.00	24.00
Sundries	87.58	307.00
Petty Cash	32.47	0.00
Charities (see below)	<u>550.00</u>	<u>2353.50</u>
	2623.51	5271.84
 Charitable Contributions		
	Mid Air Ambulance 500.00	Heartstart 365.00
	Hereford Food Bank 50.00	St Michael's Hospice 1650.00
		Remap 105.00
		SSAFA 100.00
		Worcs Auto Club 108.25
		Midlands Air Ambulance 25.25
	550.00	2353.50
opening balance	4857.73	5115.49
income over expenditure	-477.69	-274.56
interest	<u>22.57</u>	<u>16.80</u>
	4402.61	4857.73

Ross on Wye PC Repair

Services range from Virus Removal, Hardware Upgrading, Memory Upgrading, Screen Replacements on Laptops and Notebooks, Hard Drive Upgrades, Anti-Virus Upgrades, Performance Tweaking, all covered under a No-Fix-No-Fee Policy (or if fault re occurs within 5 days), with No Inspection Fees. You pay only for the completed work and for any replacement parts. Contact Luke Sutton

Phone 07973 993 049

Email info@rossonwyepcrepair.com

CLUB SHOP

Club shirts & other clothes etc.: Clubsport have set up an online shopping facility for us:

www.clubsport.co.uk/index.php/clubshops/category/85-leominster-classic-motorcycle-club

Or you can order at any of their shops: Leominster (South Street), Hereford (All Saints Court), Ledbury (Bye Street), Ludlow (Old Street), Newtown (Broad Street), Ross on Wye (High Street) and Kington (Church Street). Please note: The design for the club logo is held at the Clubsport base in Kington but any branch's staff can find it amongst the local sports clubs listed on their in-house computer system.

Badges, Stickers etc.: Enamel lapel badges (old style) and Club stickers are available at The Bush £1.00 each.

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