

BEDS VMCC NEWS

KEEPING YOU INFORMED DURING LOCK-DOWN

Happy Halloween Motorcycling



Editorial

So, you might ask, what has Halloween got to do with vintage motorcycles? Absolutely nothing that I'm aware of, although there was a rather dreadful film released in 1990, "I Bought a Vampire Motorcycle", starring (if that's the right word) Neil Morrissey and Micheal Elphick (aka Boon). Many of us might think that the true star was the rather blood-thirsty 850cc Norton Commando. The original trailer for the film opened with a soft-focus of the black Interstate with t somewhat laryngitic voice-over: "Most good motorcycles run on gasoline. This is a bad motorcycle, it runs on blood...". If that isn't enough to put you off, the whole thing is free on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=waRdV96zZ6I>.

News of another cancellation, this time it's the very popular New Year's Day "Vintage Stony" meet in Stony Stratford. Rather a shame, but inevitable. I fear it's going to see a very long Winter. Many thanks to this week's contributors: Gordon, Neil, and Will – that list is getting shorter; please, please, please keep the contributions coming.

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SECTION AGM

As mentioned in the last issue, written reports are being prepared and will be sent out for review and comment sometime in the next few weeks. They should also be featured in the next Virtual Clubnight, on November 12th, details to follow nearer the time.

MIDWEEK DAYTIME RUNS

The next run, weather permitting, will be on Thursday, 5th November – when we'll be going for a burn-up (Guy Fawkes-related attempt at humour). Please contact Don if you'd like to come along, either by email: donmckeand@hotmail.com, or by telephone on: 01525 720629.

CHANGES TO VMCC BYE-LAWS

[from our excellent Area Rep, Gary Sleeman]

The [VMCC] chairman has sent an update on the changes to the club bye laws which were agreed in principle at last year's AGM. The aim of the changes is to formalise that, at the organiser's discretion, non-members and riders of modern bikes can join our rides without compromising the event organiser's liability insurance. Assuming this is agreed by the directors it will be formally announced to the membership and, as long as there are no objections, will be changed after the required 90 days. If there is an objection it will go forward to the AGM for a vote. [if anyone has an objection, please let me know asap and I will forward to Gary - Bryan]

'The change is to Section 8, which covers the 25-year rule and age classes. 8.2 is the amended form of words approved at the AGM. 8.3 is updated in line with the AGM decisions: these changes are already fully agreed. 8.1, however, is the proposed revised form of words that was left undecided at the AGM and I am now suggesting we put it forward again. The material difference is the addition of the first sentence. This codifies the 25-year rule as an eligibility requirement for "participation" in Club events. The new 8.2 then spells out that the event organiser has discretion – thus, no change to established practice – to allow members using ineligible machines to assist with event organisation, or to "follow" or "ride along with" an event without being considered to be "participating". The essence of this matter is the precise use of specific words to create a deliberately hair-splitting distinction between participating and non-participating riders/drivers, which preserves the sanctity of the 25-year rule without actually excluding anyone from the great majority of riding activities. It also confirms that event organisers can permit the involvement of non-members, who, regardless of what machine they may be using, will always be non-participants. The objective always was to find a form of words which confirmed and enshrined the 25-year rule without changing the Club's long-established policy of welcoming inclusiveness, and the new 8.2 appeared to do that to the satisfaction of members at the AGM. One may ask what the practical difference may be between "participation in" and "riding along with" an event: in many cases the answer will be that there will be no practical difference at all, and the distinction is only likely to matter where riding awards or other trophies are at stake.'

LOCAL CAFÉ RECOMMENDATIONS

In the absence of our favourite café re-opening it would be good to compile a list of places recommended by our members. This week we add the café at the Leighton Buzzard Garden Centre, on Hockliffe Road as you enter town, as recommended by Neil Cairns who says they do an excellent sausage & mash and reasonable breakfasts.

The list so far:

- Blossom Café – Leighton Buzzard Garden Centre (Neil)
- Blossom Café – Willington Garden Centre (Bryan)

- Jordan's Mill – Broom (Kerry)
- Nobby's Farm Shop, Great Billington (Bryan)
- Scald End Farm Tea Room - Scald End, Thurleigh (Norm)

[please send in your own favourite to add to the list]

The Midweek Run Report

BRYAN MARSH

Thankfully, the Rain Gods had had such a good day on the Wednesday that they decided to have a bit of a rest on Thursday, the day of our planned run. OK, there was a light shower as we gathered but we could forgive them that.

Norm's Round-Bedford route from a few weeks ago gave me the idea to do a similar circumnavigation of Luton, on backroads, avoiding the town itself. Aware that 'tis the season of road closures, I did my homework to try and where we likely to encounter barriers preventing us going where we wanted. A quick look on the official roadworks website heralded problems around the Chiltern Green – New Mill End area. So, off I went on a reconnaissance mission to scout alternatives. Lucky I did because one of the detour "roads" I'd identified, from Peters Green down to East Hyde, turned out to be horrendously narrow with blind corners, gravel everywhere and almost nowhere where anything we might meet would be able to pass.

Leaving from our layby meeting point, the two Gerrys, Will, Norm, Don and I headed through Harlington and up Sundon Hill, scene of an MCC hill-climb contest some 109 years ago. Upper Sundon, Streatley and across to Lilley Bottom, then up to Darley Hall and around the back of Luton Airport, catching a glimpse of several EasyJet planes parked up with nowhere to go. On to Chiltern Green and down to New Mill End where the road wasn't closed at all; no sign at all of road works; oh well, suits me. That meant we could head straight across the Lower Luton Road skirting Luton Hoo to the A6, as was, and down to Kinsbourne Green.

Turning right at the min-roundabout took us up through the big houses on Annables Lane and on to the narrow, but traffic-free, lanes in the general direction of Markyate. Traffic-free, that is, apart from one poor lady on a bicycle who seemed to get tangled up with us as we negotiated what was signposted as a ford but was more of a puddle in the middle of a patch of deep gravel. Trials-riding experience not essential but could be useful. The semi-dry ford was, however, compensated by a near-by stretch of road doing a passable impression of a small lake.

Through Markyate and up Buckwood Lane, an old drove road, towards Whipsnade but deviating off left, past Studham, to Little Gaddesden and then on past Ivinghoe Beacon (should really have stopped there to enjoy the view) and down to the main Dunstable-Tring road. Another road closure on the preferred route forced us to take a tricky right turn onto the busy main road and the inevitable splitting up of the group. Luckily, we were able to regroup in a layby before turning off down to Ivinghoe Aston and Slapton. Actually, luck didn't come into it at all – it was all carefully planned!

On then to Great Billington and the excellent café, Nobby's, at the Farm Shop. A large party had taken up most of the inside seating, but it was still dry so we chose to sit out in the large backyard – safer bet, Covid-wise, anyway. That's one advantage of riding a bike – we're dressed for the great outdoors.

It was a real pleasure to be out with such good company, on a great selection of VMCC-eligible bikes (Ariel, Honda, Norton, Royal Enfield, Triumph & Velocette), in good weather with nature providing the most superb display of colours. And happily my 1969 Triumph Tiger 100 didn't repeat the disaster of the previous month's attempt. Surprising that an expensive modern AGM battery can fail suddenly like that. I shalln't be using one of those again on that bike; and a traditional, but of the maintenance-free variety, wet-acid battery is cheaper anyway.

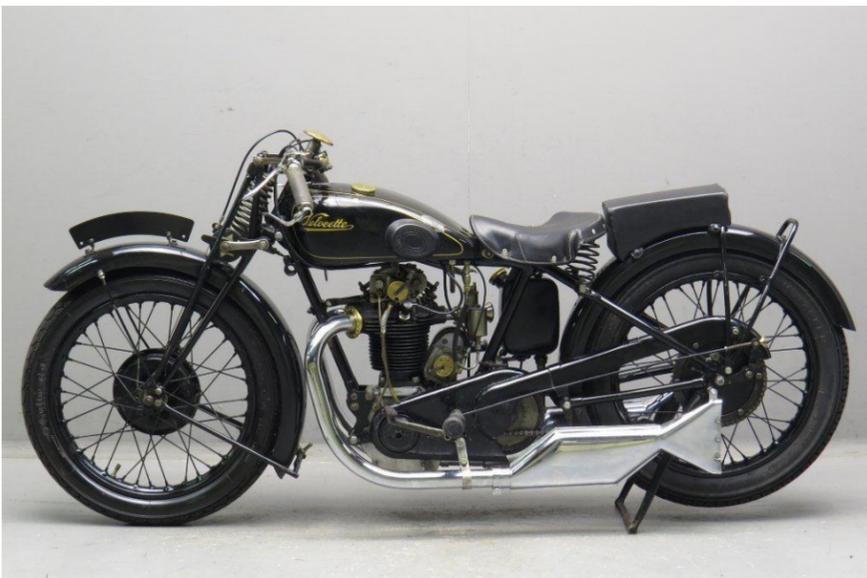
Motorcycle Pin-downs

WILL CURRY

These are my three 'anti-pinups'. They don't necessarily run and ride badly, they just look, to my eyes at least, horrible. One at least actually performs well - looks certainly do deceive here.

They have one thing in common - they are all factory efforts: you could go out and buy one in the shops - and they have been created to follow a fashion. They were all created by taking a perfectly reasonable model and bolting 'Fashion' onto it. They are all, understandably, quite rare today.

VELOCETTE KTP



What were Veloce thinking of?

In the late 20's there was a fashion for twin-port singles. I've no idea why as there is more to keep clean, the engine usually doesn't go quite as well as its single-port sibling and they are often louder and they always cost more.

With one exception, Velocette didn't follow fashion, they made functional motorcycles, the KSS being an excellent example. They produced a number of variations on the KSS theme including the subject here, the KTP. There weren't many made and those that were often got 'promoted' to KSS by fitting a single-port head. Not only would it look better but it would go better too.

GREEVES 250CC SPORTSMAN TWIN 25 DCX



Yes, this is the original colour scheme

This was Villiers 2T-engined roadster. There was a 3T-engined version, the 32 DCX, which looked the same, even down to the colour scheme I think.

The cycle parts featured dropped handlebars and a rather strange handlebar fairing. Greeves' distinctive leading-link front forks were disguised with bolt-on spats. The whole was finished in a two-tone light blue and yellow colour scheme and topped off, like some monstrous cherry on top of an exotic ice-cream, with a red pvc-covered dual seat.

It was built to Greeves' usual high standard and it steered and stopped to that same high standard. 'Nuff said'.

NORTON COMMANDO HI-RIDER



Also available in black, this one is from the first year, 1971

Unlike the KTP where the styling changes directly hobbled the engine's power output, the changes which created the Hi-rider from the original Commando limited its range considerably by the fitting of a 2-gallon petrol tank and limited the rider's ability to ride any distance at anything like a reasonable speed by fitting high-rise handlebars and a seat of most questionable comfort. This styling exercise was expensive, the Hi-rider being the second most expensive Commando variant after the production racer.

They sold well enough to last from 1971 to 1975, the Mid-west of the USA apparently accounting for quite a number of sales.

The page 3 girl



Continuing the Halloween theme

Four engines down...

NEIL CAIRNS

I served in the RAF from 1966 to 1988 as an Aircraft Engine Fitter. My last five years were spent at RAF Halton as an instructor, the RAF's Technical College in lovely leafy Buckinghamshire. One of the aircraft I had worked on back in 1969-70 was the legendary Shackleton, a slightly updated post-war version of the Lancaster bomber, but fitted with four Rolls-Royce V12 'Griffon' piston engines (big Merlins). Because the Mk3 was so heavy, it was also fitted with an additional pair of jet engines on the Mk3 Phase 3 models, behind the Griffons with their huge contra-rotating propellers. The Shackleton was a maritime aircraft that spent hours and hours searching the oceans for enemy submarines. I used to tell this story to my trainees at Royal Air Force, Halton, who were mostly youngsters heading out into the RAF as engine technicians and mechanics. My guess is that it is probably true, but the authorities will never admit it, but then such stories make the best ones. This one includes a huge USA aircraft-carrier and is back in the late 1950s....

“One fine early sunny morning at RAF St. Mawgan in Cornwall, in the late 1950's, a Shackleton aircrew wandered out to their steed for the day, a nice new Mk3 Phase 3, Avro Shackleton MR2, the one with tricycle undercarriage (the older ones had tail wheels). It sat waiting expectantly ready serviced, full of fuel and raring to go. The crew settled into their various stations in the fuselage and the massive piston engines were all started up one by one. Checks were carried out, chocks away and off it taxied to the runway. For the unwary, the Shackleton has four Rolls-Royce 'Griffon' piston engines with contra-rotating propellers but the Mk3 had two extra engines, to assist it into the air, as it was a lot heavier than the MR1 Mk2 (MR means Maritime Reconnaissance). These jet engines were Bristol-Siddeley 'Viper' jet engines, similar to those fitted to the Jet Provost jet-trainer. They differed in that they could run on Avgas (high octane petrol, the same fuel the four V12 Griffons used) where normally a jet engine used Avtur or Avtag (a posh name for paraffin or kerosene.) The hotter running Avgas shortened the jets running lives due to the hotter running of the turbines. They were mounted behind the normal outboard Griffon engines and contra-rotating propellers, in the outer nacelles, but were only used to get the heavy aircraft into the air during take-off. Jet engines burning Avgas tend to produce quite a bit of black smoke, they run 'rich' to help cool the turbines. To the uninitiated the Shackleton looks a lot like a WW2 Lancaster and is often mistaken for one by our American friends.



The Avro Shackleton

It was another routine search pattern 'jolly' over the Atlantic Ocean as part of a NATO exercise and a long boring one. A 'Shack' can fly up to 12 hours. The aircraft wended its way back and forth along a grid pattern, looking for a US submarine known to be in the area pretending to be a Russian one, as well as anything else of interest. Then one of the crew spotted a blip on the radar screen that was a ship on the horizon. So the pilot persuaded the 10,000 rivets flying in loose formation to turn and headed towards the blip. As they drew near to it, the fine outline of a huge, brand-new, United States of America Navy aircraft carrier loomed up on the horizon. Our intrepid aircrew being a little bored, decided to have a bit of fun.

The Shackleton was only some 500 feet above the waves as it flew towards the carrier, some ten miles ahead of it. The carrier crew saw the aircraft on their radar and now by eye and tried to contact it by radio. Getting no reply, they then sent out some signals by lamp. The Shackleton did not seem to be receiving any messages and did not respond. Perhaps its radio was broken they thought. Instead, it flew slowly round in a large arc till it faced the carrier following it into wind,

the normal way any aircraft intending to 'land' does (flying 'into wind' helps to slow down the landing speed so an aircraft carrier will steam into wind). Many of the inquisitive carrier's young, conscripted crew came up on deck to see this museum piece flying around, to them an ancient, four-engined, WW2 British bomber. Now the crew on the carrier could see the Shackleton had its two outboard engines feathered (engine stopped, propeller blades facing forwards for least resistance) and they assumed this was the cause of its low height and slow speed and perhaps those engines were damaged. They did not know the Shack normally flew very slowly compared to a modern jet. To the carrier's crew it seemed to have two 'broken' engines.

Still some miles away, the port-inner prop was seen to splutter to a stop and auto-feather. Some alarm now swept over the aircraft carrier's crew as it was realised the huge British WW2 Bomber was on an approach to them and appeared to be intending to land on their deck and now only had one engine. Frantic arm waving, coloured flares were fired, whistles and lamp signals were everywhere; the carrier's deck was full of parked, shiny brand-new 'Phantom' fighters with their wings folded up and ground crew running about in a panic. The Shack continued on its approach, now seemingly very, very low almost clipping the waves and only just keeping up a speed above a stall, on its one remaining engine. It looked to be struggling badly to stay in the air.

Then black smoke was seen to billow from the rear of the two outer-engines' nacelles and a growling whine could be heard above the single struggling Griffon. It now seemed that this stricken bomber was now on fire as black smoke billowed out behind it. Now out and out panic set aboard the carrier...this stupid RAF pilot was about to try land a huge, four-engined vintage bomber on their crowded deck, AND the thing was on fire. About half a mile out the last remaining engine was seen to cough and splutter to a stop, and then auto-feather its prop. This must be the end they all thought, it must be about to ditch, but no, an incredulous carrier crew watched the Shackleton unfailingly continue to fly on its approach towards them, with NO engines and black smoke pouring out behind it. By now three bulldozers normally used to remove crashed aircraft had been shoving perfectly serviceable, new Phantom Jet Fighters off the edge of the decks into the sea to make room for the bomber. If this maniac was going to land on them, at least they could provide a clear deck.

Now the unbelievable began, as they saw with their own eyes, a huge British World War Two bomber, on fire and flying towards them with NO engines that was actually beginning to CLIMB. As it approached the threshold of the deck, it had climbed 200 feet above the sea. The now cleared deck that had been expecting a very nasty landing was passing underneath the Shack. All eyes were on it, as first one, then two, then three and then the fourth Griffon engine were started up again and roared into life. By the time this WW2 Bomber had flown a couple of thousand feet ahead the carrier, it was climbing away strongly on all six of its engines. Off over the horizon it went, and the poor Captain of a USA carrier had a lot of explaining to do about the loss of so many new Phantom jet fighters.”

You can bet that was 'covered up' very quickly. There is no record we know of, of what happened to the Shackleton's crew. Out there, somewhere in the mid-Atlantic, lying on the bottom are lots of new, one owner, Phantom jet fighters.

Not the Isle of Man... (Part 2)

GORDON HALLET

[you may remember from Part 1, in the last issue, that Gordon found himself holidaying with friends in North Yorkshire this year instead of visiting his beloved Isle of Man]

Bank Holiday Monday, A few fluffy clouds, & a prospect of that remaining so, for the rest of the day, So, (I was told), we were off to the Craven Motorcycle Museum, Warthill, just NE of York. Tiggy, again on his Guzzi V35, and Jed on a beautiful 250 Suzuki Hustler.

Following the River Rye, through Hornby, Helmsley, & Oswaldkirk before tea at Coxwold. Suitably refreshed, we carried on, through Husthwaite, rode safely through a 12" ford, near Hubby, onto Strensall,

Towthorp then to the museum.

My Benelli has never been through a ford before, and a glance at it when we parked, made me want to get the polish out, but a coat of Duck Oil (others are available) after Saturday's soaking, has kept the worst of the ford at bay; and the Hustler was no longer looking quite as pristine.

The Craven Collection is what I would call a live museum. I mean it is possible to get close to the exhibits; spares and memorabilia lay on the floor, on shelves, from beams, no order, bit like my garage!!



Unfortunately, a one-way system was in place, so too much dawdling could start a backlog, but the place is well worth a visit, and Dick Craven is always good for a tale or two.



Lunch was taken on the forecourt there. Flasks & home-made cakes appeared from rucksacks and tank bags; my cereal bars, were left sadly wanting I'm afraid.



The return leg followed the final part of the morning run, but branched off at Coxwold, passed the famed Mouseman Furniture home in Kilburn, then a stop for a photo-shoot with the White Horse in the background, with the folk tale (?) of a horse saving a Knight. A tale

similar to what I read on a plaque, next to a horse carved in stone, near my daughter's house in Alhama de Granada, Spain.



Onwards to Upsal, close to where the "golf balls" at Sutton Bank were, now replaced by modern monitoring equipment, through Cowesby, Nether Stilton, a short blast on the A19 and back to Osmotherley; 130 miles and a great day.

Maybe fish & chips tonight, or should I save that treat for Whitby on Thursday, but the village chippy was voted "The Best Chippy in Northern England 2019", so I thought I might sample a "Parmo" as advertised in their window. After consulting Tiggy for a translation, I was told it was a bread-crumbed chicken breast, coated with a bechamel sauce & cheese, then deep fried. Tiggy then assured me that it had now to do with Yorkshire, "...comes from Teesside & tastes like sh*t!!" The corned beef fritter maybe more up my street, but in the end, I booked a meal in a local pub and took advantage of the last night of the Boris "eat-out-to help-out" campaign.

On my own travels (cont'd)

BRYAN MARSH

The plan was simply to head down the coast road from my B&B in Ballygally, Northern Ireland, the five miles or so to the ferry terminal in Larne for the crossing back to Cairnryan in Scotland. As I say, that was the plan but a police-car, blue lights ablaze, parked sideways across the main road put paid to that. Thank Heavens for satnavs because I wouldn't have had a clue how to navigate an alternative route, through Larne itself, to the docks. But all was well, and I arrived in plenty of time for the boat and the usual chat with the other motorcyclists there.

Heading back through Dumfries & Galloway, I took one of my favourite roads, the A712, as an alternative to fighting with the lorry traffic on the main A75. The A712 is glorious motorcycling territory – well-surfaced, lightly-trafficked, far from straight (tee-hee) and with plenty of pull-ins to stop, get the flask and sarnies out, and enjoy the solitude of the forest.

Heading to Moffat, and my hotel for the next couple of nights, I took a short detour into Carphone Warehouse in Dumfries for, as it turned out, a very simple fix to my malfunctioning mobile phone. It hadn't been very comforting over the last few days, often being miles from anywhere with a phone that couldn't pick up a signal!

This was my third stay in Moffat but the first time in a hotel featured in the Guinness Book of Records. The 'famous' Star Hotel proudly lays claim, at 20ft, to be the world's narrowest hotel. I didn't even know they had a record for that, but I guess it's far from being the strangest record in that book. 20ft was plenty wide enough for me.

Before dinner, I took a trip up the A702 Edinburgh Road to seek out another landmark from the Round Britain Rally; a monument known as 'The Postie Stone'. Standing alongside the main road, just up from the Devil's Buttercup, whatever that might be (other than a great viewpoint), it commemorates the driver and guard of the Dumfries to Edinburgh mail coach who lost their lives in the snow, on 1st Feb 1831, heroically trying to carry the mail sacks themselves after the coach had got stuck.



The Postie Stone, near Moffat

The A702 north of Moffat is a glorious road to ride of an evening – again, well-surfaced, bendy, quiet and with wonderful scenery. About 20 miles out, however, the skies darkened so an about turn was called for before the worst of the rains came.

My luck with the weather on this trip held out and the rain moved on overnight to leave me with another dry day to have a leisurely ride exploring the highways and byways of Dumfries & Galloway, and up into Ayrshire to pick up two more landmarks: Drumlanrig Castle and the market cross & adjacent war memorial in Patna.



Drumlanrig Castle (Closed because of the virus), Dumfries & Galloway

Drumlanrig Castle was closed to the public because of the threat from Covid, but that didn't bother me as I was there to ride rather than traipse around some dreary stately home getting decidedly overheated in my bike gear.



War memorial and ancient market cross at Patna, Ayrshire

Having visited my two landmarks for that day, from Patna I had no fixed agenda so, turning off the satnav, I just followed my nose and took whatever roads looked interesting. That led me to the village of Kirkmichael where I had the honour of being the only customer in the community teashop.

Moving on from Moffat the next day, I eschewed the dreary A74(M) motorway in favour of the almost deserted B-road, running virtually alongside, and headed down to the Lake District. The original plan was to meet up with a motorcycling friend from Cheshire, but he'd been hit by local lockdown travel restrictions, leaving me to seek out yet more landmarks on my own. The first of these was the village of Seatoller, near the Honister Pass. I'd forgotten quite how tricky some of the roads around there can be, especially when you miss your target and have to attempt a u-turn on a hill on a heavy, tall bike! And, no, I didn't drop it!



Honister Pass, Lake District

And then the inevitable rain arrived, it is the *Lake District* after all, but thankfully not for long. Passing alongside Buttermere and Crummock Water, I found it hard to believe I once swam both of those, one after the other, a few years back. Made me go cold just thinking about it.

Next stop was the Blakeley Raise stone circle near Ennerdale Bridge; not quite the Middle of Nowhere but they say you could see it from there. Here I effectively got two-for-the-price-of-one because it was the same landmark in two of the different landmark rallies I was doing.



Blakeley Raise stone circle, near Ennerdale Bridge, Lake District

Another two-for-the-price-of-one was promised at my next stop, Cartmel, where I needed a photograph of the Priory for one rally, and the Market Cross for another. I found the Priory Gatehouse first (it seems that's all that's left of the Priory), parked the bike in the square and quickly took the picture as the bike was on double yellow lines.

Back on the bike and up and down through the admittedly small village of Cartmel, before finally finding the Market Cross, and realizing that I had been parked right next to it when I took the picture of the Priory Gatehouse! The people enjoying their drinks outside the pub in the square must have wondered what on Earth I was up to as I parked in exactly the same spot to take another picture. But, as you can see in the pictures, the skies were blue again and all was well with the world.



Priory Gatehouse, Cartmel, Lake District



Market Cross, Cartmel, Lake District

Heading away from Cartmel, back on the main road I sensed something wrong with the handling of the bike. Pulling into a petrol station I found the rear tyre had lost a lot of air. “Excuse me, do you have an airline”, “no, sorry, we don’t”. A petrol station with no airline – what use is that?

Being ever conscious of the risk of punctures, I already had sealant in the tube. This had stopped it going down completely but hadn’t managed to properly seal the leak. I carry a few small CO₂ gas cylinders (like used in Soda Siphons) for times like this, but not enough to get me all the way home if the tyre was going to keep losing air, as, indeed, it was going to.

By a stroke of good fortune, a few miles down the road, I came across a large John Deere agricultural shop where, to my great relief, I was able to buy their last footpump. But for the Covid restrictions (and, probably, objections on her part), I could have kissed the lovely lady who sold it to me. I might yet get home without troubling the AA.

Checking the tyre again after about 25-30 miles I found I had lost about 10psi so pump, pump, pump and off on my way again. One more stop

for similar activity got me to my overnight stop in Ingleton, on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales, and a welcome pint of Black Sheep bitter.

My morning started with some good exercise because the tyre had decided to go completely flat overnight. Fearing the rate of air loss accelerating dramatically, I decided it would be prudent to forego the North Yorkshire landmark tour I had planned and head straight for home. Which is exactly what I did, stopping every 30-35 miles to replenish the missing 10-15psi, at which point the tyre wasn’t getting too hot and I felt (relatively) safe and confident I might make it all the way home without disaster.

It was rather a shock when, a day or two later, I took the offending wheel into Flitwick Motorcycles to get a new tube fitted, only to be told that it was so badly corroded it was effectively dangerous. Oh dear! Glad I didn’t know that when I was heading down the motorway.

I could have sought out a secondhand wheel on eBay (they’re £750 new!) but at 104,000 miles I felt I’d had my money’s worth from the bike. So, I moved it on for someone else to sort out and, after 26 years on them, say goodbye to modern Triumphs (they’re made in Thailand now, anyway) and I’m now riding around on a brand-new Yamaha (made in France!).

Fancy-dancy facemasks

BRYAN MARSH

Call me extravagant but I couldn’t resist something more stylish by way of facemasks. I got these three from an outfit, called Redbubble, I found on the internet. They have a huge range, all themes not just bikes, but they’re relatively expensive, and they took quite a long time to arrive, presumably because they’re individually made to order:



I also have a couple of Triumph-themed ones, naturally, but I’ll leave those for the next issue as I don’t want to start a new page.