

North Birmingham

News

NEWSLETTER

Ian's Welsh Weekend May 2014

We duly assembled at 10am on Ludlow Town Square and under a cloudless sky for our jolly jaunt into deepest Wales. It's been too long since this event 'fell off' the North Birmingham calendar and to his credit, Ian Harris started the ball rolling and once rolling,



inertia took over. Oldest machine presented for scrutineering, I jest, was Team Leader, Ian Harris on his 1926 long stroke flat tank Sunbeam, followed by Trevor Bull's fire breathing 1939 Tiger 100 Triumph, with Paul Harris and Bill Orchard on their respective post war BSA and Ariel singles, and Ken Hayes on his delightful and much travelled 60's Velocette Viper. The Empsalls, Pat and Brian motored over from the eastern extremes of our

section on their late 50's unit construction Triumph 500 Speed Twin and yours truly on my '57 Triumph Twin. Peter Grey was astride his V50 Moto-Guzzi , chairman Martyn Round aboard his 750 Honda 4 and poor Roger Slater suffering from gout and unable kick-start his 1961 Tiger 100 arrived on his electric start Hinkley Tiger.

We motored out of Ludlow towards Wigmore, Lingen and on the sharp climb to Stonewall Hill with its stunning views, Ken Hayes snapped the chain on his Velo.



With all hands to the pump and tools flying in all directions the problem was solved in minutes and we motored on to our coffee stop a J.D's in Knighton.

Suitably refreshed we set forth for Llanbister, Bwych y Sarnau and with temperatures rising arrived at the aptly named Traveller's Rest in Llanidloes for lunch. From Llanidloes we took the 'B' road towards Machynlleth, stopping to admire the view of Llyn-Clywedog Reservoir below us.

With the scenery improving by the minute we pressed on through Corris, Tal-y-llyn, Llanegryn and onto our over-night accommodation at Pat and Mikes B&B at Cefn Coch. We, the GHA's (Geriatric Hells Angels) were despatched to the 'naughty boys corner' at Maureen's B&B half a mile down the road, but very handy for our collective evening meal at the pub in Bryncrug.

Saturday dawned clear and bright and after a huge breakfast we set forth through Tywyn, along Happy Valley, through Machynlleth, out towards Aberystwth, turning left in Tal-y-

Bont and climbing up to the Nant-y-Moch Reservoirs. Here Trevor Bull's Tiger went into ferocious mode, deciding to run flat out or stop which created an interesting ride for Trevor around the twisty turns of the lakes. A carburation problem was diagnosed and again tools flew in all directions but a solution eluded us and we limped into Devil's Bridge for a coffee stop and more fiddling. Having missed the excitement poor Peter Grey and his Guzzi had been languishing in the glorious sunshine at Devils Bridge for hours!!!

From here our route should have taken us through the Elan Valley to a lunch stop in Rhayader, followed by a return route via Llangurig, around the scenic Llyn-Clywedog Reservoir, returning to Machynlleth and along the Dovey Estuary through Aberdovey and Tywyn for a landing at Cefn Coch.

However the sulky Tiger refused to pull up the Old Coach Road out of Devils Bridge and after a further 'strip down' we 'cut our losses' and attempted our return, on the downhill



and flat roads back to Cefn Coch. Approaching Bow Street the Tiger died a death and reluctantly Trevor and Martyn decided to attack her magneto. Here I must state that Edward Turner probably designed the pre-war Twins around the magneto, and to get to it and repair it is a proverbial nightmare. On removing the points cover the elusive problem was found, the screw securing the contact assembly had come adrift and the points gap and ignition timing was just everywhere. This rectified and with the motor on 'full song' the 'black hand gang' motored swiftly off for a well-deserved cream tea in Bow Street. It had been a long, hard and frustrating day for we, the GHA's and the only solution was to re-join the route and indulge in an ice-cream cornet on Aberdovey sea-front. Here we were joined by the Empsalls and Paul Harris how had managed to attack Nant-y-Moch from both directions and consume two ice-creams enroute. News filtered through that Ian's long stroke Sunbeam had surprisingly ran out of fuel in a most inappropriate place and that Ken or Peter had scampered off for a refill.



With all members safe and sound we retired to our respective B&B's and regrouped later for a splendid BBQ at Cefn Coch laid on by our hosts, Pat and Mike.

On Sunday morning we bid our farewells to our respective hosts and headed for Dolgellau, Bala Lake, Bwlch-y-Groes with its stunning views and down the valley to the our lunch stop on balcony of the Lake Vyrmywy Hotel. Finally we set off, firing on all cylinders, the Tiger purring like a kitten, for the last leg of our adventure which took us towards Welshpool, Newtown, Montgomery, Bishops Castle and onto our finish at Craven Arms and our final ice-cream stop at Harry Tuffin's.



It were a 'bostin' weekend, great company, fabulous routes, stunning scenery and perfect weather. Our sincere thanks must go to Ian Harris for his planning and organisational skills, Oh and a final word of thanks to Chairman Martyn Round who produced every tool or piece of technology we requested from the magician's top hat

attached to the rear of his Honda!!! *Bill Danks*

Julian's Excursion from the Fishing Lodge at Patshull Park 15th June 2014

Well the day had arrived and my 2nd Excursion outing was here, at home the ground was dry so I was hopeful of things looking up and maybe some sunshine later on, alas this was not to be. As I approached the rabbit run the roads turned wet and slowly into rain, a good start to the day!

At the fishing lodge Martyn Griffiths and Peter Brind had already arrived astride their Triumphs. Within a very short space of time 18 riders signed on for the route. Using the Danks method of calibrating, this was a Triumph day, with 8 present, together with 6 BSAs and one each of AJS, Norton Ariel and Matchless. Among them was a first appearance of the very smart Triumph TR25W (below), recently acquired by Alan Bromwich.



After not too much persuasion we set off in the direction of Coalport via some of the quieter lanes and over the river on towards Broseley and Much Wenlock. We then turned in a north westerly direction on towards the Severn Way. Some of the lanes were a little thick with sand and mud making progress somewhat interesting judging by the tyre tracks as I passed by.

Things slowly improved as the drizzle had now stopped as we turned north at Cressage onto the Wroxeter Roman City and stopping at the Mytton and Mermaid opposite

Attingham Park for the coffee stop. Most people seemed content to sit outside whilst enjoying their tea/ coffee. That was probably fortunate as the establishment is smart and Bill Harley (below) arrived looking a bit like Vic Eastwood after a particularly muddy day at



Hawkstone Park. Apparently there had been what we'd best describe as 'an incident' on one of the muddy lanes. Fortunately both Bill and machine were relatively unscathed.

There was further intrigue at the coffee stop where Paul Harris, having paid £2.50 for a small cup of Americano coffee, became 'perturbed' when Dave Spencer emerged, having paid the same for a large cafetiere of filter coffee together with posh complementary chocolates. A (bar) stewards enquiry led to Paul gaining a refill and chocolates!

Thoroughly refreshed we set off again in a northerly direction on the east side of Shrewsbury towards Upton Magna and at last into some hazy sunshine and little smoother roads than in the morning. We continued on north through the villages of

Haughton, Astley, until we reached Myddle turning east to Grinshall.

After crossing the A49 we passed by Moreton Corbett Castle and onto Little Bolas. The next section of the route took us past the roman settlement remains at Chetwynd Aston and onto Weston Park where it was very busy to cross the A5.

The final section took us past RAF Cosford turning past David Austin Roses back towards the Boycott Arms at Upper Ludstone for a somewhat late lunch at around 3 o'clock. Looking at the band of happy people at the end I think the day was a success.

My thanks go Ronald, Dave and Eric for testing of the route with only the one slight mishap for which our Chairman has started a trend of "rolling in the soft verges"

Thanks for your company and see you again next year

Regards

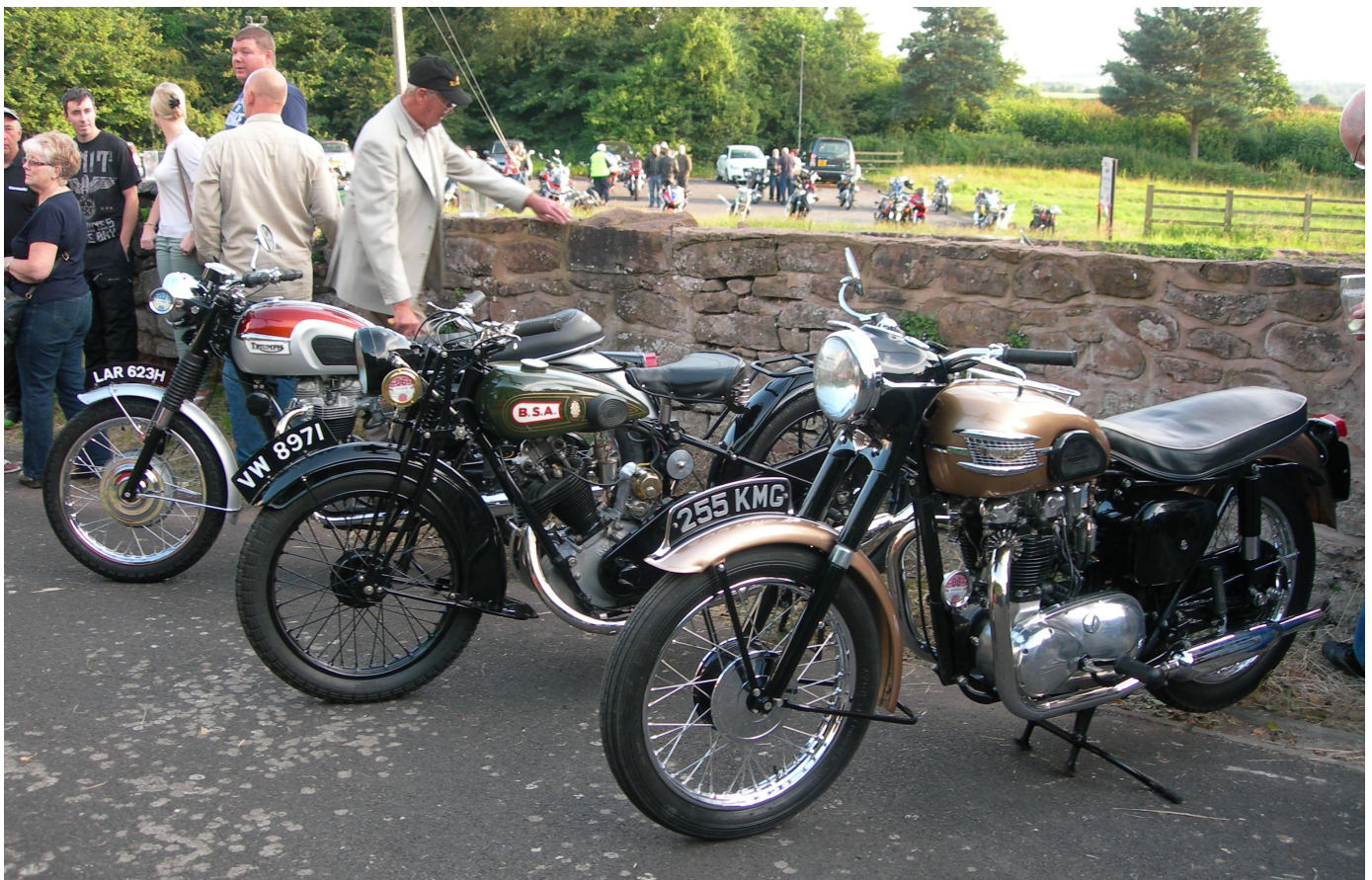
Julian

Ride a Bike Night – 25th June 2014

Gathering at The Boycott Arms in Upper Ludstone for the third year it was great to see a big turnout of 27 machines in support of our annual evening ride out and Concours. Vintage, Post Vintage, Post War and Classics being represented.

With superb midsummer weather riders set off on a circular route taking in the hamlets and villages of Badger, Stableford, Worfield, Rindleford and Claverley before returning for some light refreshment and the all-important Concours de elegance.

Our annually awarded Concours Trophies are The George Burrows Cup for earlier Vintage machines and The Harry Haddock Cup for later classic machine. Our Judges, last year's winners of these trophies, Martyn Griffiths and Julian Edwards began their challenging task with very knowledgeable assistance of Peter Ashen. They soon came to an agreement on the winning Vintage Bike but the Classic choice was certainly not an easy one with many excellently restored and maintained machines to be judged.



The results:

The George Burrow Cup – David Spencer - 1929 BSA 350cc Sloper, a magnificent restoration.

The Harry Haddock Cup – Jointly awarded to Graham Ash – 1957 Triumph Thunderbird, and Peter Brind – 1969 Triumph T120 Bonneville. Our judges just could not split these 2 superbly restored bikes so they shared the Cup, six months each. All our winners are invited to be judges at next year's event.

July Social Runs

The weather in July 2014 was by and large excellent, and certainly all three of the runs this month were fine and dry, if a little hot to be wearing riding gear and helmets, but much better than being wet.

Trent Valley Run

First run of the month, on the 13th, was the Trent Valley Run, organised by Brian and Pat Empsall and starting from the McDonalds car park at Wall Island just south of Lichfield. As ever with Brian's runs, this was a thoroughly well organised outing, a 4 page route sheet job, with stops arranged for coffee, lunch and even afternoon tea, though of course North Birmingham Section members are too careful in maintaining their honed physiques to be eating and drinking on so many occasions during the day. 14 riders signed on for a run that took us north into Staffordshire and eventually Derbyshire. The coffee stop was at the Boars Head on the A515 at Sudbury, providing a welcome break. We then continued through lovely countryside and picturesque villages to the lunch stop at the Visitor Centre at Carsington Water (below), by which time we had covered 45 miles from Lichfield and most of us being quite a bit further than that from home. I'm not saying I ate one, but the café was serving probably the largest Cornish Pasties I have ever seen, issuing them to customers in polystyrene boxes about the size of a small attache case.



After lunch the route was more or less due south back to Lichfield, but Brian had planned a route through country lanes and more scenic villages. There was a temptation to make straight for home but the morning route had been so good that my group at least followed it as far as the tea stop at

Fradley Junction, where the Trent & Mersey Canal and the Coventry Canal meet. After that we made for home and in my case a bath to ease the numb bum.

Roger's Mid-Week Run

The 23rd of July saw us at the Walton Hill car park at Clent signing on (below) for Roger Greening's mid-week run, this year billed as 'The Biggles meets the Archers Run'. It turned out that we were going south east into Warwickshire for a coffee stop at the Touch Down café at Wellesbourne airfield, going through more lovely villages and past millionaires houses, once we had negotiated the main road horror that is Redditch.



By the time we got to Wellesbourne we'd done 33 miles and I for one was ready for a coffee, but resisted the cakes (no really, I did) in view of the lunch to come. While there, Colin Lloyd entertained our table with a tutorial about the various small private aircraft parked in front of us or taking off, telling us of their flying characteristics and his experience flying what seemed like most of the types. After coffee the route continued towards Stratford, circling round through Bidford-on-

Avon and back into Worcestershire. It was a hot day and Colin was probably not the only one to leave his riding jacket neck fastener loose to get some airflow. That is until we pulled up at a T junction where Colin pulled in at the side of the road tearing at his clothing. By way of explanation he made little flapping movements with his hands and pointed at his chest. Apparently a small bity thing had got in and had a go at him. It wasn't funny, not to Colin anyway! We then continued to the lunch stop at The Old Bull at Inkberrow, (right) which Roger told us was the Archers pub. We sat around speculating which house was which and which roof Nigel Pargetter fell off



until a local told us that the 'actual' pub was the Bulls Head opposite.

The Clun Run

Final run for July was Ian Harris' Clun Run on the 27th, and another lovely day: the weather forecast said "Scorchio" and it was not wrong. At the start Ian was all of a lather. Last year he had told the landlady there would be 20 people for lunch and she had cooked an extra piece of beef. In the event we were late getting there and it was so hot that most wanted only a sandwich. The lady emerged from the pub with a stern jut in her jaw, looking for Ian.... So, this year we were told to set off promptly and not stop too long for coffee in Craven Arms if at all. Most of us kept going. 24 riders had signed on, the largest attendance of the year so far other than ride a bike night, and we enjoyed the usual excellent route. This is one of those runs where the scenery just gets better and better the further you go, particularly the section between Bishops Castle and Clun.



After the route sheet change over point (left) the route took us over hills with stupendous views and along ridges with views in every direction. Finally, as we neared Clun there was an optional green lane, which most of us went along. At one point along the lane there was an unavoidable water splash that most of us carefully potted through but I've heard tell of Maurice Trupp standing up

on the footrests of his BSA B33 and giving it plenty to dramatic effect. At another point Dave Williams on his BSA C15 had gone through a water splash that he could have gone down the side of on dry ground. In doing so he had drowned the engine and come to a halt. Following riders did stop to ask if he was OK, with most tutting supportively before leaving him to dry it out. We all arrived at The Sun Inn soon after 1pm, ordering food and restoring Ian's reputation. It was the least we could do.



Dave Spencer

Dave Giles, a Burton Section member, came on the Clun Run with his 1937 BSA Empire Star 350 (right).

Breakfast Run – 10th August 2014

It had been a good summer, better than for years, nearly all the runs had been dry, just the odd shower. Until Sunday 10th August when the UK braced itself to receive the storm that was the remains of Hurricane Bertha, or Big Bertha as everyone was calling it. Sure enough it started raining at 7.20, just as we were getting our bikes out to ride to the 8.30 start at Barr Beacon. And this wasn't just a shower, oh no, it absolutely tipped down. For hours. And hours. Barr Beacon Park was a windswept and desolate place, more so even than usual, and on arrival Ron Higgins and I found run organiser Maurice Trupp, Rob Todd and Julian Edwards taking what shelter they could under the lee of a bush. In due course we were joined by Martyn Round, Jonathan Jinks and



Maurice Hardy and his wife. So, 8 machines and 9 souls. Getting the route sheets into our

holders was entertaining as they turned immediately into papier mache and the wind tried to whip them away towards the Urals. There wasn't much hanging about and Julian was first away, clearly keen to get his machine down some muddy lanes, followed by Maurice Hardy on the Matchless. Jonathan's M20 was reluctant to start, some water having apparently run down the plug lead into the



magneto pick up. Martyn stayed behind to assist so Ron and I set off while Maurice Trupp and Rob hung on for a few minutes in case anyone else turned up. After a few miles we came upon the Hardys, their route sheet having blown away and they joined in convoy with us. At one point Ron, who was riding at the rear, flagged us down as he had smelt petrol. It turned out that the float chamber of the pre-monobloc carburettor on Maurice's Matchless had come loose and needed tightening up. Lucky Ron noticed before it fell off. Mind you, he's making a habit of this as he averted a similar disaster for me earlier in the year when the same thing happened to my Velocette. So, the lessons are 1. Tighten your float chambers and 2. Listen to Ron if he tells you he can smell petrol. I'd love to tell you where we went but I have no idea, other than it was into south Staffordshire, skirting round north of Lichfield and ending up at the Chasewater Light Railway café just off the A5 near Brownhills. The roads were very wet indeed, lots of flooding and mud, leading to the occasional trouser tightening skid but no mishaps.

We were first to arrive at the café, prompting speculation as to what had happened to Julian as he had set off in front of us, and would the others make it round OK? In due course they all turned up. Jonathan had got the M20 going OK but had a couple of other stoppages with water in the magneto. And Julian had become disorientated when the wind and rain did for his route sheet. We obviously had missed him but the others had come across him and he rode along with them. Julian produced his route sheet for us to inspect (below), hard to see what the problem was really... By that stage everything was wet and there was much wringing out of gloves and comparing wet T shirts, not something you'd want children or the faint hearted to see.

The rain eased off a bit while we were inside having breakfast, but got going again as soon as we went outside to prepare for the ride back, and in my case continued all the way home. Then, while peeling wet gear off in the garage the sun came out, and five minutes later there was a clear blue sky. Marvellous isn't it.

Thanks to Maurice for organising, and to those who turned out and made it a sociable day. Memories are made of days like this and I enjoyed it.

Dave Spencer



