

Ian's Go to Sleep Run September 16th. 2015

The weather forecast the evening before the run was not encouraging to put it mildly. Bill Danks phoned me to say that it looked like "a wall of water" was going to descend on us. Probably for that reason just 9 riders gathered at Shifnal War Memorial Club at 10am, but it was encouraging that at least for the start it was dry. Better still, it stayed dry for the day.



Brian and Pat Empsall were there with the Speed Twin, Stuart Munroe on the ES2, Rob Todd brought the Triumph Adventurer, Ron Higgins and myself on BSA A10s, Paul Harris the BSA ZB32, Dave Williams on his BSA C15, Bill Danks on a 400 Honda twin, David Gaffyne on his Honda and last but not least, run organiser Ian Harris on his 1927 Sunbeam. Martyn Griffiths

and Colin Lloyd had decided (sensibly) to come in a car rather than get wet; better than staying at home and it was good to see them.

After a pleasant half hour of gossiping and/or conspiracy we were away, with most of us latching onto the back of Ian Harris and following him rather than the route sheet he had so carefully prepared. The exceptions were Bill, Paul and



Dave Williams, who were a bit later setting off. Ian took us north from Shifnal, skirting round north of Telford through Crudginton and then across to Upton Magna where he had arranged a coffee stop at the village shop. This was in fact in a building across the car park from the Haughmond Inn and under the same ownership, and an excellent cup of coffee was had. Ian then identified where we were heading for on a Shropshire map attached to the wall.

While having coffee we wondered what had happened to the other three, finding out when Paul Harris phoned to say there had been a mishap. Dave Williams had been riding at the back but was unable to slow down in time when Paul and Bill did so to check whether they had reached a turn right point. In avoiding Bill, Dave ended up riding into a shallow ditch, coming to a very rapid halt and knocking himself about. Very unfortunate. In due course Dave went to hospital to be checked over, Bill recovered his bike to a local Police Station, and he and Paul eventually caught up with us at Sleep. Anyway, after coffee the main group continued through Shawbury and eventually to Sleep airfield, which is just to the north of Wem in Shropshire. After refuelling in the Control Tower Café, Ian had arranged for us to have a look round the Wartime Aircraft Recovery Group Museum. This Group researches and has excavated air crash sites from the Second World War, of which there are many more locally than I at least would have thought, often arising during training. Members may remember that we had a talk on the Group's activities a few years ago at a Club night.

After that we dispersed and on the way home Ron and I went to see how Dave was getting on at the hospital. I found him sitting in the waiting room waiting for the result of an x-ray. Sense of humour reasonably intact, Dave greeted me by saying "I've been living up to my nickname!" (Dangerous Dave). They kept him for a couple of days, after which Ian did a sterling job getting him home and recovering his bike. It was an interesting route and a good day, albeit spirits were dampened by Dave's mishap and we wish him a speedy recovery.

David Spencer



Above, a Rolls Royce Merlin engine from a Spitfire; Right, a Bristol Mercury Radial engine from a Westland Lysander.

