



# Thunderbird Times

April 2009

Newsletter of the Mighty South London branch of the **TRIUMPH** Owners Motor Cycle Club

## A.G.M.

Thirtyone stalwarts turned out for the annual bunfight. A proposal that we should look at ways of using some of the reasonably healthy club funds (although not healthy enough to bail out HBOS) to support other charity/s brought about a lengthy debate. There seemed to be as many views as there were attenders, so it was finally decided the committee would narrow it down to two or three options and come back to the branch with these options. No volunteers were forthcoming for committee posts, so that stays as it was. Awards - Rider of the Year, Dean Goddard, Clubman of the Year John Flower. Well done, keep them polished!

## The Website

Dave L. has been beavering away on this, there's now more pictures on there. Still a minor problem with some of them, hopefully soon resolved. It's getting looked at, too - I had a nice e-mail from a previous incumbent of my job - that will be in next months TT.

## Stafford Show

Unfortunately the bus trip is off. We can't get the bus until 8.30am, which means we couldn't get to Stafford before 1300, unless we get the bus the night before and pay an extra days hire, which in turn makes an expensive day out.

## The Runs:

### Sunday 6th April



The Charlie Goddard Memorial Run to the Last Chance Animal Rescue centre saw 47 bikes turn out, the run being well supported by the BSAOC, Two-Stroke Club, the Surrey branch. Dinosaurs, and other supporters. Between everybody there & with £70 from club funds, £750 was raised. And nobody got lost this time.

## Good Friday Bun Run



A damp start to the day but 15 bikes were out for a run down to Copthorne to see the VMCC riders off on their run. Unfortunately most of them had left by the time we got there, but a coffee and a bacon sandwich eased the disappointment. Then some of us went on to The Rat for a couple of beers (non-alcoholic, of course officer). Look at those people in the photo, all smiles, realising their privilege at being in the company of such a wonderful motorcycle!

### Easter Sunday - Tadworth



Twentytwo bikes assembled at Rykas on a misty damp Sunday morning. We set off en mass around 11 o'clock for the short ride to Tadworth childrens hospital. On arrival we were met by Rosemary and a few of the carers. We parked the bikes so that the children could be wheeled around them. After a while Rosemary said that there was tea, coffee and Hot crossed buns in the hall. After we were fed and watered some of the carers sat on some of the bikes, two of the carers in particular took a liking to Jims trike. Rosemary took a few photos, we then organised a collection using an old measuring jug which raised £300 , Malcolm donated a cheque on behalf of the club. Rosemary thanked us all for the donation and told us that the money would be used for taking the children on a specially adapted boat on the River Wey near Guildford to give the children a day out on the river. Upon leaving we were asked to come back in the summer for a cream tea , I think we can make that ! **Bob Simmonds**

(Bob is too much of a gentleman to mention that Charlie fell off again. Of course, I'm not..... M.)

### Sunday, 19 - Club Run to Haselmere Fire Station – “Ride it Right” - Report from June Flower

A good turnout of 19 bikes set off from Charrington Bowl for the first leg of the run for a breakfast stop at the Devil's Punchbowl. All fed and watered we set off for the final leg to Haselmere. On arrival, we were greeted with hundreds of bikers all out to enjoy this unique event. There were various talks given on bike maintenance and safety and even the most knowledgeable amongst us would have learned something, plus free tea/coffee and bikkies on tap, who could ask for more. I was personally bowled over by a “little Chinese Monkey Bike”, no bigger than a toy bike. Phil the owner and a Firefighter at the Fire Station owns this adorable bike and has just started up a business called “Scoot2U”. He will arrive at your requested pick-up point on this specially designed folding bike that fits neatly into a protective bag in the boot of your car. Your comprehensively insured Chauffeur will then drive you and your car safely home. Interested then either call him on 07541-827455 or email him on [phil@scoot2u.co.uk](mailto:phil@scoot2u.co.uk) – website: [www.scoot2U.co.uk](http://www.scoot2U.co.uk). Well done to Andrew, the Organiser and who was the brainchild for this event, and to the other Firefighters for this splendid day.

## South African Trip (Paul Skeet)

If you can handle the long flights - the empty country roads, wonderfully varying scenery, cheaper food & beer, cheaper accommodation, petrol at 45% off our prices, and fresher air, make it all worthwhile. Bike hire is expensive out there at the moment, but we're working on that!

I had 11 blissful days out there, courtesy of Brian Benn & his wife Pat, staying at their place approx 35kms SW of Cape Town, in Somerset West, a well-to-do suburb. I was glad of the summer airtex jacket & gloves I took, as you'd have died in leathers since the sun shone every day, and the temperature was always around the early 30'sC rising to 40C whilst I was riding across the Little Karoo plains!

I had not made any plans when I left the UK, but was determined to do the Garden Route as far as 4-5 days would allow me. During the first few days I was there, we bumped into other biker groups being shown around by a guide, and they were taking a lot longer than I was - twice the time - which would be the better way to do it really. The steeds available were mainly either BMW's or Harleys, the latter being much more expensive.

Day 1 - picked up bike at Cape Bike Rentals, CT, and said my goodbyes with a full tank of gas. The BMWGS2 (twin 800) proved very capable, a Godsend with no fairing, & the panniers were a worthwhile extra. It's 15 litre tank range on unleaded was around 280-300kms max. (c. 160-180m) which was adequate. I headed East on the N1, picking up the Route 62, as recommended by Brian, and it got hotter & hotter as the day went on! I wondered how I was coping in 33 to 40C when in the UK, anything above 23C in the office and the aircon goes on! Who was I to complain I thought! Riding on 'our side of the road' was the easiest to deal with, but the number of empty roads, and general courteousness of other drivers, surprised me. I quickly realised just how stuffed you'd be if anything happened to you - like a puncture - so I had my fingers & toes crossed (& my St Christopher with me) the whole time!

Highlights of the day - visiting the Karoo Saloon! - out in the middle of nowhere - just when you're thinking you could kill for a beer! it appears like a wild west saloon, slightly off the beaten track, with brown corrugated metal roof, metal-bladed, constantly-rotating windmill in the coral and the atmosphere when you walk in, like the piano player's just stopped! Then later on, the now infamous Ronnies Sex Shop! More signatures & graffiti on the walls than a back street of Belfast, but congenial service & delightfully cold beer!

I made Oudtshoorn (pron. Oatswerren) after a tough 420kms, & then got lucky & found the Oudtshoorn Yot Club B&B! - which of course wasn't a yacht club at all, but did have a large pond in the back garden! At about £18 for the night I was pleasantly surprised, & made full use of the facility of their s/pool in the back garden & the locked gated safe compound for the bike. The local restaurant did me proud with pan-fried ostrich chips & 3 veg.(very tasty!) and after a walk down the high st, I was surprised I still had enough stamina not to retire until around midnight. Oudtshoorn was a nice town with mainly Afrikaans people as its populace.

### Day 2 - Oudtshoorn to Titsikamma National . Park

After a full breakfast at the 'Yot Club', I set off on the 2nd stage of the Route 62 leg of the journey, & settled into the firm seat of the BMW, blasting out of town to the amusement of some local kids. (The BMW did sound good when you gave it a bit of a handful). Some while later on the open road, I was doing about 120kmh and closing on a truck coming the other way - also moving at a pace - but forgot to put my visor down. The turbulent blast of the air off the truck tore the visor from my helmet in an instant, & as I looked back, thinking about a retrieval, the only other vehicle for miles, behind me, was going over it in the road! From then on, my life was to be bug-spattered!

I pushed on until I got to a road junction which was to be a turning point in my route, but when looking at the sign telling me the options for the next towns, and looking at the bikes trip computer saying there wasn't enough fuel left to get to either of them the way I needed to go, it was detour time! I headed for Uniondale, the nearest town, sure that there would be a garage there - there was luckily. I became concerned when before filling my bike, the attendant (you don't put petrol in yourself) emptied the first half cupful of fuel onto the floor. "Watah in dem tanks boss" he said. I should have realised - the garage itself had no roof! How good are Bee Ems at running with a fuel-water mix I wondered?! It behaved itself that day.

The quaint tea rooms in Uniondale had some filming going on - for a documentary it transpired - but I was allowed a cream soda at a table out front & asked to turn my mobile off. The place had an eclectic mix of decor amassed by some enthusiastic owner no doubt. An interesting stop. I grabbed the opportunity to get some cash out of a hole-in-the-wall across the road, at one of their banks that hasn't gone bust yet, and moved on before I got too comfy.

Making up for lost time after my detour, I decided to take a road that was signposted 'Road partially collapsed due to subsidence'. This would save me about 50kms, & seemed like a challenge. As they hadn't had rain for months, it was good bet. The road was merely missing armco barrier into a shallow gorge, and there were bloody great cracks across the road!

I turned onto the N2 main Garden Route road, heading back West towards Cape Town, & was soon confronted by about 10 baboons, strolling along either side of the road! Hope the little sods don't rush at me I thought. The BMW horn didn't phase them.

I made Storms River Village by early evening, recounting the considerable changes of scenery I'd encountered already on the journey, but particularly within the last few hours.

Paul

### Expats Corner

In case you have either forgotten, or didn't know him, this is Ray Charrington, an erstwhile stalwart of the MSL who moved out to New Zealand a few years ago. Still into bikes, but these are the new love of his life, a herd (flock? gaggle? whatever) of Alpacas - Di (Mrs Ray) now sits on the veranda spinning wool, a much safer bet than riding on Ray's pillion.



### FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

- 26th April - ~~Stafford Classic Motorcycle Show~~ OFF - see above.
- 28th April - Club Run, The Rat (aka The Bell) Walton-on-the-Hill
- 4th May - Fleet Lions Run. meet Tolworth Bowl 0930.
- 9th May - Southern Classic Show, Kempton Park
- 26th May - Club Run, The Compass, Gomshall

### THE CLUB:

Meets at the Princess of Wales, **98 Morden Road, London SW19 3BP**  
(020 8542 0573) every Tuesday from 8.30 pm.

Runs leave the pub at 8.00pm sharp, 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month, April to Sept.  
Please ensure you have a full tank of petrol.

### CLUB CONTACTS:

<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Mog Pharoah</b>	<b>020 8947 7727</b> (day)
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Malcolm Orpin</b>	<b>020 8640 2608</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Doddie Kent</b>	<b>020 8660 5227</b>
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	<b>Dave Kent</b>	<b>Ditto</b>
<b>Show Secretary</b>	<b>John Flower</b>	<b>020 8942 9976</b>
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