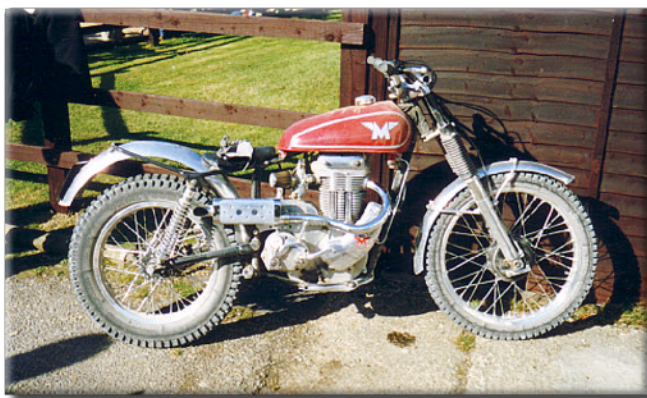


# Editorial

What a wonderful Thumpers we enjoyed, even though the rain fell and it was bitterly cold. Without exception, everybody, that I spoke to had thoroughly enjoyed themselves, even those who are normally grudging in their words of congratulation and also those who normally don't like getting their machinery muddied.

Following on from the 'super dry' weather we have experienced for the last several months, the week running up to the trial gave us a pretty fair amount of dampness. Not enough to fill the ponds but enough to enable us to use sections hitherto unavailable due to depth of water etc and excessive depth of mud. But, this year everything seemed to go in our favour and we had a fantastic trial. Even the car parking etc ran well without any hitches as far as I know.



*A very tidy Matchless at the Arbuthnot*

Due to the inclement weather and very poor light levels I am afraid that there are no piccys this year. I believe Dick Law to have had trouble with the available light which reduced his photo opportunities.

As you will see from the display advert on page 2, Mike Harden and his merry men are running another Plonkers at Raydon on Sunday 14th December. All being well, we shall be there. Don't know whether I shall be riding, will have to

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# *The Christmas Plonkers*

Raydon Pit, Wades Lane, Raydon, Nr Ipswich, Suffolk

Sunday 14th December 2003

Start: 10.30 am

A Trial for:

Pre 65 solos • Pre 65 sidecars • Twin Shocks

Youths • Twin Shock sidecars

see how I feel and how it all fits in with likely forthcoming visits and stays in Broomfield Hospital. Hardly a day seems to go by without some correspondence of one sort or another from the Mid Essex Health Authority. One of the latest is to go back in to hospital on December 23rd! This is to be followed by another visit to Broomfield on New Years Eve.

As has become the norm, there is a post Christmas Plonkaround on the 27th December where Mike and his merry men are encouraging you to join them at Raydon for sherry and mince pies.

*The latest in presidential transport*

The President and his good lady seem to be giving the presidential transport a good airing. They arrived at the Chelmsford trial aboard the Harley with her Ladyship being a mite disappointed that they had found Broomfield first time without having the necessity of doing a round trip of the Essex by-ways before reaching the venue for the trial. I must admit that I don't think I could cope with following said Harley too closely, I fear it would give A-C.U. sound inspectors (noise meter operators they used to be called) a field day! Was also intrigued by the 'poofy' little screen fitted to the machine - a sort of half hearted attempt at keeping the draught off following his American experiences.

But now I receive a photo of the open top presidential vehicle. Some uncouth member of our fraternity was heard to ask "Why hasn't Noddy got Big Ears with him?"

Sorry to hear that our favourite traffic warden has handed in her book of parking tickets following the problems she has been suffering from since the assault which took place on her during the course of her work. But, worst of all, she is emigrating! Not too far perhaps, but going south of the great divide to Sussex, near Hastings. Best wishes to you, Peter and Joan, in your 'retirement'.

I understand that something amazing happened in the antipodes a couple of weekends ago - something to do with grown men chasing an oval ball around and putting the noses of the local population out of joint. To this end I have included a selection of Aussie bashing jokes dotted throughout this edition of your favourite monthly. I feel completely at ease in including these jokes as they were supplied me by Australians! Perhaps they do have a sense of humour after all!

This year you are spoilt for choice for riding your machine in the period immediately after Christmas.

The Triangle club are holding their Boxing Day trial at Raydon as usual - that is on the 26th. The following day, you have the choice of the Plonkaround (with sherry and mince pies) again at Raydon whilst the Chelmsford 'do' has been moved to the 27th by special request. So, this year you will have the chance to get out of the way of the mother-in-law on two days running! Don't say that trials organisers don't have your feelings in mind when arranging the dates!



Matured over several years, this robust performer has been enjoyed by the English for some time.

Australians may find it hard to swallow due to its bitter aftertaste, which can last for four years or more.

Best served cold with humble pie or barbecued wings.

Available from:

*Down Underwins*

**thrasher**

Seems that Southend haven't quite lost Royal Oak Pits as yet but it would appear that this fateful day is fast approaching.

I received a call from Dave Spurgeon earlier in the week where he spelt out the plans for the February Pre-70 and Twin Shock event that the Southend club are putting on.

It will be Pre-70 and Twin Shock - no monoshocks under any circumstances I have been told and it will be using the 'new' and expanded area of the pit which was so well received at last years event.

I believe the trial will be a round of the Eastern Centre Pre-70 championship and entries in that class will have to be made using the Eastern Centre Gazette as usual but as in previous years an entry form will be included with your T&T to allow 'Gentlemen' to enter without having to purchase the EC Gazette.

I feel I must include something which has disturbed me over the last week or so. I understand that all is not happy and wonderful with regard to members and friends submitting items for inclusion in this magazine. I feel that if any of our members feel strongly about the inclusion of an item in the magazine then that person has only two options available to himself and they are:

To complain to me, the editor of Trials & Tribulations

To cease subscribing to the Trials and Tribulations

What I cannot accept is that members and friends who have taken time and effort to write for the majority of us are subjected to verbal abuse. Perhaps the abuser should write something for the magazine!

Finally, I should like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from myself and 'er indoors.

For those of who are web enabled please visit

[www.seasoft.co.uk/xmascard/card.html](http://www.seasoft.co.uk/xmascard/card.html)

for our christmas wishes to you.

*Jim*



*Dick Hobart at the Arbuthnot*



## *Secretarys Scribblings*

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Hope you've all dried out after the Thumpers, how many of you have added new waterproofs to your Christmas list? Pedro Eaves had designed a rather stylish hat using a plastic bag and Garry Plummer turned up in his "works" jacket, on which the largest word was "Water"!

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who observed, your efforts were greatly appreciated and thanks to the riders for keeping us entertained and not hanging around.

At the time of writing have only seen the provisional results but congratulations to Sam Appleton and Little Eric on winning the Tele-Rigid Class on 9 marks lost, closely followed by Roger Finch on 12. Mark and Mandy Kemp had a good ride in the Sidecar class only losing two single dabs on, I hate to say it, a Greeves - we'll have to ban it for next year!

Lost & Found - At the end of the day some leggings were left beside our van along with the remains of some section markers. If the leggings belong to you and you would like them returned, please give us a ring on 01621 892606.

Received some advertising bumph from a Company called G.T. Motorsports about their plastic and metal repair kits (which some of you might be glad of after the Thumpers!). They are based in Long Eaton and have a website: [www.plastex-UK.com](http://www.plastex-UK.com), or you can telephone 0115 875 7490. Sounds too good to be true but you never know, might just work.

Were a bit fed up to get a letter from the Talmag Club saying that they would not be running their trial in January 2004 due mainly to the safety, hazard and risk assessment required by the military landowners and the freedom of the public to roam freely on the land at all times, giving rise to doubts about the insurance cover on Hungry Hill. They are looking into all this and hope to be in a position to run the event again in 2005 - just when we were planning to become once a year Talmag poseurs as well!

Mid Anglia are busy in December with a trial on the 14th and practice on 27th. The Woodbridge Club are at Tunstall on the 28th so there's plenty there to take our minds off Christmas.

Whatever you're doing over the Festive Season, have a good time.

*Heather*



A woman walks into a chemist shop and tells the pharmacist she wants to buy some arsenic.

He says "What do you want with arsenic?"

She says "I want to kill my husband because he cheats on me by having sex with another woman."

The pharmacist says "I can't sell you arsenic so you can't kill your husband, even if he is having sex with another woman."

So she reaches into her pocket and pulls out a picture of her husband having sex with the pharmacist's wife.

The pharmacist says "Oh, I didn't realise you had a prescription."

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# The Old Codgers Classic Trial

Unlike our editor, Jim and a few other Eastern heroes, I did not compete in the first 'Old Codgers' which was held on Don Barrett's land at Betchworth, near Dorking. I understand it was a tad damp! This years programme tells me that there are only six riders who have ridden in all ten 'Old Codgers'. They include an old friend of the EFA, Dave Blanchard, and John Greygoose. Both these stalwarts are riding in the Eastern Thumpers this year (Ed - Dave hasn't ridden the Thumpers for years, sorry Mick).

I rode in the second event, like the first under ACU rules, and witnessed Mike Peach and 'his one' man protest of the helmet rule, he didn't wear one! and was excluded! I must then have been destined to join the EFA as the programme shows me shoehorned between Dick Hobart on his Ambassador and Terry Clements on his Cub. The results show that El P won the Girder-Fork Rigid class. Bob Spencer won the 200-250cc. Dave Spurgeon was second in the 251-350cc class on an AJS! Roger French second in the 351cc+ class on the Noriel. I should also mention that Graham Braybrook won a £50 spares voucher but he didn't win an award! Have you spent it all yet Graham?

The running of the third 'Codgers' brought about a major change, which both Mike Peach and myself would have enjoyed if we had not been sidelined with illness. The event was run under AMCA rules so no need to wear helmets! Although it was recommended that you should, many didn't (this year, 2003, most riders did, funny what you get used to!). I took my camera to the event and was lucky to get an article and three photographs published by Deryk Wylde in Off-Road Review. El P had to settle for second in the Girder Rigid this year, Dave Spurgeon slipped to third, but in the 250cc class on a Greeves.

The 'Codgers' continued over the years with breaks for Foot and Mouth and land use problems. This year was the Tenth Anniversary. Well, the weather men got it right and just like the first 'Codgers', it p\*\*\*\*d down most of the night before and all of Sunday morning. Despite it clashing with an EFA event, half a dozen or so riders from the Eastern Centre had entered. I don't know if the organisers got caught out by the weather, but despite a beautiful Saturday, the downpour was well forecast. I fear they won't attract many of the older 'Codgers' if the event follows this year's



*Doug Theobald  
at the 'Codgers'*

severity. The middle route that I rode reminded me of the Talmag that I rode a few years ago. The severity of the event I think is reflected in the number of retirements. For example, half of the Girder-Rigid Class and ten out of thirty-five in the up to 250cc route that I rode. I finished on a cricket score, but keeping it under 100 although several unfortunates didn't! John Kendall kept the East to the front by tying with Len Hutty on 20, but lost the premier on the most cleans tyebreaker. Having said all this, I still think the 'Old Codgers' is a good trial and I'm sure that the organising club, the 'Reigate and Redhill North Downs Motorcycle Club' will take note of all the comments that they will receive from this year's event.

*Mick Brown*

## emails... to the editor...



Richard and I feel we must say a big THANK YOU for all those responsible for an excellent "Thumpers" Trial and thanks to all the observers who stood out in the rain to allow us competitors to enjoy our ride.

Also we must not forget Ted (C of C) and all his helpers who marked out on the Saturday, again in the rain (not very pleasant). The gentlemen's route which we rode was spot on for severity, I cannot speak about the championship route but I saw a lot of the riders enjoying it and having a real spirited go especially on section 16 (Sylvia Preedys).

So...once again, thanks to all those involved with the trial and although we are all getting older let's hope we have many more "Thumper" trials.

Eddie Hood & Richard Challis

## Talking Clock . . .

Proudly showing off his new apartment to a couple of his friends late one night the drunk led the way to his bedroom where there was a big brass gong hanging on the wall.

"What's that big brass gong for?" one of the guests asked.

"It's not a gong . . . It's a talking clock" the drunk slurred.

A talking clock? Seriously?" asked his astonished friend.

"Yup" replied the drunk, "A talking clock."

"How's it work?" the second guest asked, squinting at the lifeless gong.

"Watch," the man said.

He picked up a hammer, gave it an ear shattering pound and stepped back.

The three stood looking at one another for a moment.

Suddenly, someone on the other side of the wall screamed, "FOR GOD'S SAKE, YOU \*\$@&%+£\$&\*@ . . . IT'S TEN PAST THREE IN THE MORNING!"

## ***Believe it or not . . .***

### ***These were sent me by an Australian!***

What's the difference between yoghurt and Australians?

At least yoghurt starts with a little culture.

There's a Japanese firm that has developed a camera with a shutter speed so fast it can actually catch an Aussie with his mouth shut.

What's the difference between Aussies and pigs?

Pigs don't turn into Aussies when they drink.

What's the difference between an Australian and a computer?

You only have to punch information into a computer once.

Why was the Christ child not born in Australia?

You'd have a job finding three wise men, much less a virgin!!!

What do you call a field full of Australians?

A vacant lot.

How do you define 144 Australians?

Gross stupidity.

The Aussie pilot, when asked for his height and position, replied, "I'm 5'11" and sitting in the front seat."

What do you call an Aussie who scores well in an IQ test?

A cheat.

What do you call an Aussie with half a brain?

Gifted

If Santa Claus, a smart Aussie and a dumb blonde were in a room, and you tossed in a hundred dollar note, who would grab it first?

The blonde - the other two don't exist.

What should you do if an Aussie throws a grenade at you?

Pull the pin and throw it back.

Did you hear about the Aussie who had a brain transplant?

The brain rejected him a week later.

An Englishman wanted to become an Irishman, so he visited a doctor to find out how to go about this.

"Well", said the doctor, "This is a very delicate operation and there is a lot that can go wrong. I will have to remove half your brain." "That's OK" said the Englishman. "I've always wanted to be Irish and I'm prepared to take the risk."

The operation went ahead but the Englishman woke to find a look of horror on the face of the doctor.

"I'm so terribly sorry!" the doctor said "Instead of removing half the brain, I've taken the whole brain out!"

The patient replied, "It's all right mate, I'll settle for being Australian instead"

Newsflash! Prime Minister Howard's library burned down at the weekend and two books were destroyed! The real tragedy was that he hadn't finished colouring in one of them.

# Thorrington Times

incorporating the  
**Brightlingsea Bugle**

ISSUE 65732

Friday 28th November 2003

## **LOCAL MAN TRIUMPHS**

Local man, John Kendall, showed over a hundred riders the way home last Sunday at the Eastern Fourstroke motorcycle club's trial at Poplars Chase Farm, Thorrington. John, riding his 350cc Triumph put up best performance of the day and in so doing won the class for unit construction machines, narrowly beating Len Hutty and his 410cc Matchless from Frimley, into second place overall.

Yes, the 23rd Thumpers has been and gone.

No doubt some of you, those who were in some of the more exposed positions during the trial are glad that it is over but I think we must look back at this edition of the Eastern Thumpers as being one of the best if not THE best Thumpers so far.

Normally at the end of the event we get a good few favourable comments regarding the event but this year I think it was almost an unanimous feeling that a great day had been had by all whether riding with an outrigger or without feeling the need to utilise this modern suspension thing.

I know many people were sorry not to be able to see Don Smith have his first ride in our 'classic' but equally there were many who were anxious to see how 'our men' would fare against the likes of Alan Wright, Len Hutty, Peter Gaunt and co.

Mark 'RNLI' Wilson loaned the OFS to Mark and Mandy Kemp for the event and I think everyone was amazed how well the machine went - mind you it was under the control of arguably the best driver and passenger currently within the centre - shame they don't ride together more often, I think a few eyes would be opened!

As mentioned in the 'local rag' above, John Kendall put it across the rest of the aces riding the Triumph. Now what did Pompous say before the event? Something about a Triumph not being the right bike for todays conditions or did I miss interpret the dialect.

The head man of the Triangle Tribe was out on his Small Devonian Chicken and has expressed himself delighted with the event - see his email elsewhere in this magazine. I do wonder what his thoughts would have been if he had been riding three hundred weights of Redditch engineering!

Something that did not escape notice was that a certain gentleman from Haverhill who has been known to arrive at a trial with enough machinery to cope with a machine failure on each lap, did in fact complete the trial on the same machine he started the event with. Yes, John, we did notice that you finished the trial - congratulations!

Once again the riding entry must be congratulated on providing a supply of goodies for presentation to our hardworking observers and officials. The 'left overs' will be put to good use and will be offered to observers at our forthcoming trials throughout the year as usual.

The experiment didn't appear to work. Family Fletcher, it has been reported, decided, or so it has been described to me, to come to the trial straight from a night club feeling that a lack of sleep would mean that the results of the previous evening's lager intake would not have taken effect. Sorry to say it, but the leg flaying that I witnessed would not appear to have born out the success of the experiment.

Section 16, 'er Ladyships mud 'ole, must go down in the annals of Thumpers lore as a scene of all out combat with the mud. Sadly, I missed the 'clean' recorded by Dave Spurgeon which was awarded the accolade of ride of the day by Chairman Ted but I did see some very spirited attempts many of which didn't gain the result they deserved.

Back to the charioteers. I am forever amazed at the skill of Ian Allaway. For those of you not aware of it, he is the blind passenger who was riding on this occasion with Karl Jarvis (No 3). How anyone who is blind can passenger an outfit, especially with the success he, and whoever is driving the outfit, achieves just beggars belief, especially if you have had the experience of passengering one of these fiendish things that have a mind of their own.

Sorry there are no photos - blame the weather!

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## QUICKIE:

Two little boys are in the hospital, lying on beds next to each other outside the operating room.

The first boy leans over and asks, "What are you in for?"

The second boy says, "I'm in here to get my tonsils out and I'm a little nervous."

The first boy says, "You've got nothing to worry about. I had that done when I was four. They put you to sleep, and when you wake up they give you lots of Jelly and ice cream. It's a breeze."

The second boy then says, "What are you here for?"

The first boy says, "A circumcision."

And the second boy says, "Whoa, I had that done when I was born. Couldn't walk for a year!"

## BOOK REVIEW OR STOCKING FILLERS

### 'MEN AND SHEDS' By Gordon Thorborn.

A wonderful little book that sheds (sorry!) a little light on the history of sheds and sheddists. It tells us that in the dark ages, the word shed came from the Anglo-Saxon word for shade, scead (pronounced 'shay-ed') which is still how they say it up north! Scead, means 'partial darkness or comparative obscurity'! Sound familiar? A sheddist was a kind of wise man, a hermit, an oracle. He was partially dark and comparatively obscure but ordinary folk knew he was different. In a special way, he sounds even more familiar - reckon there are a few genuine sheddists over Boxford way!

No true motorcyclists shed in the book but one chap who owns up to having 'a single pot BSA and a Noddy Velocette' and the most famous shed, is probably owned by the man who invented the wind-up radio. An amusing read with lots of good black and white photographs and published by New Holland(UK) Ltd - ISBN 84330 329 9 and obtainable through 'the Book People' on 0870 607 7740 or on the web at [www.thebookpeople.co.uk](http://www.thebookpeople.co.uk) or try you local book shop.

### 'MADE IN REDDITCH' by Gordon May

A pictorial archive of Royal Enfield and its motorcycles. They also manufactured bicycles, lawn mowers and industrial engines. Royal Enfields were made in Redditch from 1900 until 1967 when the final production was switched to Bradford-on-Avon for a couple of years. The photographs record all those years with good shots of the machines, factory scenes and advertising material, here are some good shots of Johnny Brittain on the Bullet in 1950's trim. Not a cheap book, an A5 soft-back publication, but as an historical record, priceless to the Enfield enthusiast. The author, Gordon May has also produced 'Made in India - The Royal Enfield Bullet' and can supply other Enfield material, including Bullet T-shirts and even a Bullet service manual on CD(!) and other Enfield related books. Made In Redditch is published by SIX & SIX PUBLISHING, PO Box 34864, London, W8 5WE 0161 612 5172

or on the web at [www.royalenfieldbooks.com](http://www.royalenfieldbooks.com).

(Did you know that Enfields were owned by the Smith family throughout most of their history! Any relation Ted?)

#### **Please Note:**

The closing date by which all articles and adverts to be included in the January issue of Trials & Tribulations should reach the editorial office is Tuesday 30th December.

Material for inclusion in the magazine may be supplied in the following forms:

handwritten • typed • computer hard copy • fax • email • floppy disc

If providing computer hard copy, a font size of 12pt minimum is preferred whilst articles supplied on floppy disc should be saved in text format.

# *Ruthys Racing Revival*

## **Part One**



My return to racing on two wheels again after an 11 year sabbatical all started with an invitation in 1998 by John Surtees on behalf of Lord March to run my Arter AJ5 7R at the first Goodwood revival meeting in 1998.

At first it was not fully agreed whether it would be in the form of a celebrity parade, in which I would ride - or - a full- blown race in which I would not ride as my racing was by then strictly limited to 4 wheels only.

As the time drew closer to the event it became clear that a full blown race it was going to be, so my long term racing mate David was offered the ride as he had the appropriate licence and was "only to willing" to oblige! (What are friends for after all!)

This was the first revival meeting to be run on the newly rebuilt circuit. In fact the first race meeting to be held there since its closure in 1966 so nobody knew just what to expect and had no idea just what a fantastically successful and emotional 4 days it would turn out to be.

The whole weekend proved to be a complete step back in time starting with cricket, cream teas and strawberries on the lawn in front of the stately home after scrutineering on the Thursday followed by a champagne party at the big house after practice on the Friday.

The fantastic racing over the subsequent two days has now gone down in history, as being something that those who were lucky enough to be part of will never forget.

While the celebrity ball on the Saturday evening, complete with spitfires at dusk till the final awards presentation late on the Sunday, meant nobody wanted to step back through the freshly reopened tunnel under the circuit back into the real world again as the meeting came to an end.

Driving home that evening in a state of euphoria I promised myself that somehow I had to be part of it again next year preferably with me back in the saddle for one last fling, as well as escorting the lady wife to next years ball which defied description.

The celebrity ball was held in a world war two hangar dressed out as an exact replica of the Café de Paris in 1945 to film set standards complete with live scantily clad women sprayed gold posing round a 30ft high fountain accompa-



nied by a Glen Miller style band while everywhere you looked celebrity faces beamed back.

Now you can't just enter the revival meeting, you have to be invited and as the weeks ticked by leading up to the 99 revival, I waited for that magic invitation to arrive on the doormat but none came.

I was invited along though, in a non riding capacity, getting involved instead with various team activities over the next few years (Barry Sheenes dads minder being but one!) as well as generally drinking in the atmosphere, not to mention liberal quantities of champagne as well, all courtesy of Lord March.

I was doing just this again in 2002 when a chance remark by Alan Cathcart about what bikes and riders to invite to next years event lead to the suggestion that he thought the legendary Beart Aermacchi should be included in the line up for 2003.

Now it just so happens that the owner of this one off piece of racing history is none other than my long term racing mate Dave, and that, yes he was willing to run it but who would be the rider!

Well we soon got the list down to two i.e. him or me!!

Being the gentleman that he is (what are friends for after all!) he kindly offered me the ride if we were invited. So it looked like maybe my 5-year dream was about to come true after all.

At this point it must be said that the two bike races at an otherwise predominantly classic car event had become very much synonymous with Barry Sheene riding a 500 Manx Norton.



## The Wit of Tommy Cooper R.I.P.

Tommy Cooperisms. . . . . to brighten up the day.

Police arrested two kids yesterday, one was drinking battery acid, the other was eating fireworks.

They charged one and let the other one off.

The crowds just loved Barry and always gave him a huge round of applause every time he crossed the line, and had cheered him on to a very emotional victory in what was to be his last race before loosing his fight to beat the big C but a few months later.

With this in mind the Goodwood estate were having a re-think on the structure of the 2003 event and the final format would not be known for sure until after the festival of speed in June.

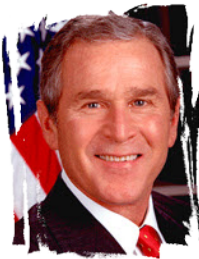
July brought the news that we had been waiting to hear,

They wanted both the Aermacchi and me and that we would be competing in both the races so the whole operation moved up a gear with machine preparation to be organised as well as a test day at Snetterton.

Although I stopped racing in 1992 I had "kept my hand in" so to speak with some spirited rides in the past masters parades that I am invited to and which have gained popularity over the last few years.

In between these, I had also been racing various four wheeled projectiles around the circuits with varying degrees of success,

The most character building of these being in the quick but quirky Fury at Goodwood in 98 when it displayed one of its many little handling traits by going into snap oversteer on the 90 mph exit of Woodcote just before the chicane with spectacular results, bringing an abrupt end to the day. But at least I would know which way to turn out of the paddock.



## Bush Visit

George Bush met The Queen, and he turns round and says: "As I'm the President, I'm thinking of changing how the country is referred to, and I'm thinking that it should be a Kingdom".

To which the Queen replies, "I'm sorry Mr Bush, but to be a Kingdom, you have to have a King in charge - and you're not a King."

George Bush thought a while and then said: "How about a Principality then?", to which the Queen replied "Again, to be a Principality you have

to be a Prince - and you're not a Prince, Mr Bush".

Bush thought long and hard and came up with "How about an Empire then?"

The Queen, getting a little T'ed off by now replied " Sorry again, Mr Bush, but to be an Empire you must have an Emperor in charge - and you are not an Emperor."

Before George Bush could utter another word, The Queen said: "I think you're doing quite nicely as a Country".



Snetterton practice day dawned bright and sunny and as Dave fired up the immaculately prepared Beart Aermacchi a small crowd of admirers ran across the paddock to give the little beauty a closer look.

Now all I had to do was to do it justice!

The last time I had ridden this bike was at this very circuit 15 years before with old tyres fitted which made the handling a bit unpredictable to say the least. And would you believe it! The tyres were past their best this time as well as the new rubber had not been delivered in time, so no change there then!

After a few adjustments to both bike and rider it was time to do the business and we pulled out of the pits past an appreciative audience with the bike sounding as sweet as a nut as I slipped the clutch into the rev band as we accelerated out onto the circuit.

But as soon as the revs went over 6k the motor started to run very erratically going in fits and starts as I wound it up down the Norwich straight. The same thing was happening exiting corners as well which meant you tended to drift out wide leaving little room for error and a few exciting moments as you hovered on the threshold between tarmac and grass.

At first I thought it might clear but it steadily got worse to the point of just making it back into the pit area before dying completely, much to the annoyance of the mystified owner Dave who set to work with the spanners.

In spit of changing just about every thing over the next 3 hours, every time I got up to racing speed out on the circuit the erratic running would return with a vengeance which meant that not only did I have very little useful riding time but we also had a non raceworthy Aermacchi and limited time to sort out before the big day.

Plan "B" was formulated over dinner on the way home and it was agreed that Dave, who had a few more ideas up his sleeve in the ignition and Gardner carburettor area would try to sort things out for the C.R.M.C. meeting at Lydden Hill the following weekend when a friend who had an entry might be able to give it a run.

A very welcome phone call on the following Monday confirmed that although initially the malady was still there the problem had eventually been solved and that we were all systems go complete with some sticky tyres for the revival meeting on the 4th till 7th September.

Meanwhile, the time leading up to the event was spent organising where to stay and who would be invited over the four days as well as scratching around the lanes on my Trophy to get back in the groove.

*TO BE CONTINUED.*

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## ***End Thought . . .***

They've taken Australian wine off supermarket shelves . . .  
Its made of sour grapes!