

Editorial

No doubt most of you will be aware that Alan "Arkwright" Jones has died with his funeral service and cremation taking place on Tuesday 30th November. We were not able to attend as seemingly it was not possible to escape from our estate. It was intended to have a motorcycle procession following the hearse but if the conditions were anything like we had here that was unlikely to have taken place. Alan and myself both underwent hospitalisation for bladder cancer some eight years ago and I understand his death may have come about following an annual trip to hospital where the bladder cancer was checked.

It is a great shame that Alan did not write a series of memoirs as he was a great story teller and had a full and interesting life.

Yet another of our number who will be sorely missed.

Well this issue of T&T is my last and starting with the January issue will be under the editorship of Chris Canham. I am sure we all wish Chris the best of luck in this job which can be both very rewarding and frustrating in equal amounts.

As a parting 'gesture' I have produced this, my final T&T in almost full colour. I hope you find it enjoyable reading.

A bit of a bombshell arrived by email a couple of weeks ago. Peter Sigournay is giving up the Secretaryship of the EFA following the AGM in March. A great pity as he has proved to

be a very good and efficient ssecretary. Peter is giving up because of personal/family commitments and the Revolutionary Council fully understands his reasons.

So . . . we have a vacancy for a new Secretary to take over following the AGM. Don't all rush! But this is a very important position within the club. No doubt Peter would be pleased to advise you of what is involved.

Last month I gave some very sad news about the health of Roger Finch. Well, my latest information on his health is quite positive, the dialysis and chemo regime having been reduced. I understand that he did visit the Thumpers for a while which, considering how cold the day was, must demonstrate that he is feeling a lot better.

Dave Blanchard and his son Steve have come up with a quite worrying feature regarding insurance on bikes without lights. Dave has supplied a series of emails covering the topic and I recommend that you read the article fully especially if you use a bike without lights on the road.

This year neither myself nor Tracey were in a position to attend the 30th running of the Thumpers. This was due to illness on my part and double vision which prevents Tracey from driving the car on her part.

From talking to some of you who attended or rode I understand it was a good event even though the three brass monkeys who were observing alongside Eddie Hood were making rather a lot of noise. The sections took a wide range of marks with the winners of each class



Holiday Complaint received by Thomas Cook

A tourist at a top African game lodge overlooking a water hole, who spotted a visibly aroused elephant, complained that the sight of this rampant beast ruined his honeymoon by making him feel "inadequate".

making the trial look too easy but I guess the majority found it just about right - it was both a National and Eastern Centre Championship round you must realise. My congratulations to Chris and Karen for making the event such a success. Thorrington is still throwing up new sections which is good to see.

We were very disappointed to hear that 'Joanie' had come into rather abrupt contact with an errant branch - goodness knows what happened as I understand that the branch was well clear of the inter-section going before the trial started. Our best wishes, Joan, for a quick recovery and we hope that it hasn't put you off from competing again next year.

During my time as Editor we have sadly lost several of our members and sadly we will keep losing members as time goes by due to the ageing of our members, a great many of whom are past (or even well past) the current retirement age. I have included an article which I have entitled 'In Memorium', where I have given a brief resume of these members and friends, many of whom were real characters. My apologies if I have left anyone out.

Bob Drane has supplied an article regarding his competing in the Easter 1956 edition of the MCC's Lands End trial which he rode on a Bantam. This brings back memories to me as I was staying with relatives in Bude and having been a keen reader of the "Blue 'un", knew that the trial was having a rest/refreshment break at the Bude Cinema café. So I duly went along and met a few friends and acquaintances from the South West and I must have been there when Bob came along. I seem to remember being there from about 9 o'clock.

Bob also supplied me with the results sheet which made interesting

reading. However, I am afraid I have had to omit them because this issue is quite large enough already!

During the 200 issues of T&T which it has been my privilege to edit I have had a good number of regular contributors and perhaps an equal number of victims! It is a fact that at times I have been very short of material but I would like to thank all the contributors especially Dave Blanchard, 'Dabber' and Peter Eaves for 'helping me out'. Must not forget my 'special informant' from Waldingfield either - where would I have been without the lowdown on the latest 'scandal'.

Our Presidente has withstood the attacks very well and still talks to me!

I was hoping to have included an item on all the venues we have used over the past twenty years or so but perhaps the new Editor may appreciate this as a filler.

Mike Harden informs me that he will not be running any more trials for the foreseeable future but that the Plonkaround Practise sessions will continue as normal.

It is many years now since Olde Fred published his almanac but included with this issue are his predictions for 2011. We shall have to see if they become true!

It may interest you to know that David Smith from the Braintree club has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the ACU. I am sure we wish him well with this new venture.

Finally, a very big thankyou to all who have helped make the T&T the club magazine which I am told is envied by many and please do all you can to make Chris Canham's life as rewarding as mine has been over the past 200 issues.

Best wishes,

Jim



THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION



They keep talking about drafting a Constitution for Iraq . . .

Why don't we just give them ours? It was drawn up by a lot of really smart guys, it has worked for centuries and we're not using it anymore.



Job Opportunity

All enquiries should be addressed to the
Revolutionary Council.

Secretary

The Eastern Fourstroke Association requires a Secretary to take over from Peter Sigournay at the AGM which will be held in March.

Peter is having to give up the post because of family commitments.

For further details regarding this position please contact Chairman Ted or Peter Sigournay.

The Eastern Fourstroke Association is an equal opportunity employer

This is Important - it may affect YOU

Dave Blanchard and his son Steve have discovered that there may be a problem with insurance for classic (and modern) trials bikes. Here follows a summary of the correspondence that has recently taken place.

Dave Blanchard writes:

Hi Friends,

Below is a copy of an email that I have just sent to the VMCC office together with the responses I have received.

It is a very worrying situation so please spread the word before one of our family of friends gets stung.

Hi Pam,

I have just found out about a very worrying fact for all classic and vintage motorcycle riders who's bikes were never fitted with working lights from the factory.

I know many club members including myself who run old bikes without lights but only in daylight hours. This has never been a problem as an MOT will indicate the usage for daytime only and this is within the UK law!

I have been told by Carole Nash insurers that they do not insure bikes without lights for road use!! They claim they have 'never' insured bikes without lights! Yet I was insured with them for many years and this problem was never mentioned when form filling or in telephone conversation's. They can only insure for 'storage only' if lights are not fitted.

Their reason for this inability to insure said bikes is that they insure for a period of 24 hours on the policy, therefore as that includes night time the bikes must have lights or they are not insurable. There is no confusion with my information as I have really taxed them on this situation.

So it would seem that all the Veteran and Vintage bikes that do not have working lights are being used illegally!!!! But! The owners do not know this!!!

My son has run a 1949 AJS for the last 3 years under Carole Nash cover and he has been told that he was never insured because of the lack of lights. Even though he supplied a set of photographs to back up the condition of the AJS which clearly showed a lack of lights!! He was refused a refund on those years. He has since tried other classic and non classic insurer's but they all say "no lights no cover"!

I have been running a 1938 Ariel without lights on Vintage Club runs for the last 12 years or more and it now seems that I have never been insured. Most of my past policy's were with Equity Red Star, which is one of the more common policies used by most of the Classic Bike Brokers including Carole Nash and also Footman James.

Please investigate ASAP on behalf of the members before someone gets caught unawares!

Regards, Dave Blanchard member 26217.

From: Frank Westworth *Editor, RealClassic magazine*

To: Lynbrook Insurance

Hello there

We've received a letter from a reader who has been told by his insurer (not your good-selves) that his insurance is invalid – and has been for several years – because his bike has no lights (it's a trials Ariel). His insurer has also stated that this is universally the case, and this has come as a bit of a surprise!

Can you let me know whether in fact this is the case?

Very best Frank

From: Lynbrook Insurance

To: Frank Westworth *Editor, RealClassic magazine*

My suggestion to your reader is this –

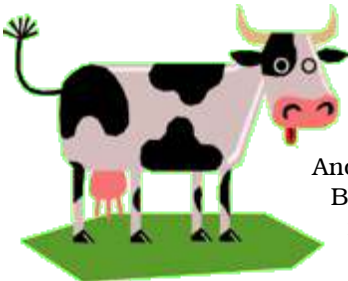
Tell him that as the Insurer is claiming that they would have refused him indemnity in the event of a claim, then “could he please have returned all the premiums he has paid them”. Next, tell him to ring 01277 206285 (or 0845 130 4662) which is the motorcycle department for Lynbrook Insurance, and request a Classic Bike quotation. He should request either Comprehensive or TPF&T cover, which will give him the essential third party cover, even if he just pushes his bike across a pavement onto a trailer, as well as whichever cover he requires for his motorcycle. When competing in events, his bike will not be covered by our policy as the ACU should be providing this (via the VMCC or whichever Club is organising the event) – for Third Party cover only. Any damage to his bike whilst competing would be his responsibility.

I would be interested to learn which Insurance Company is quoting such twaddle, because they ought to be pilloried. In reality, whilst his bike may or may not be street legal, that is irrelevant from an insurance perspective. Provided the machine is identifiable by virtue of a frame number or a number plate, then it qualifies for at least Third party cover. The final part of all of this is that in reality most insurers would NOT be prepared to insure him because that is something they do not want. However, Lynbrook Insurance cover plenty of bikes like your readers' and should have no problem.

Best wishes, Martin Pagett

continued overleaf

COWS



Is it just me, or does anyone else find it amazing that during the mad cow epidemic our government could track a single cow, born in Bourne almost three years ago, right to the stall where she slept in the county of Lincolnshire?

And, they even tracked her calves to their stalls.

But they are unable to locate 125,000 illegal immigrants wandering around our country. Maybe we should give each of them a cow!

Hi again friends,

I got too excited about my Lynbrook insurance company knowingly insuring Trials bikes without lights.

Yes they willingly insure trials bikes for road use etc. but I misread (in all the excitement) their email.

I thought the cover extended to competitions on the public highway bits, but not in the sections.

I read wrongly and you would need ACU or organisers cover for the day you are competing on. Cover available at the signing on desk for that event only.

Still, Lynbrooks seem very understanding towards us trials competition boys and that is a good thing!

I am not frightened now to tell them that my bike has no lights.

I don't want any lights cos' the bikes heavy enough to pick up as it is!

Dave.

Hi Friends,

Just had this email from John Andrew and thought you might be interested.

Lets hope that Carole Nash gets this problem sorted and hopefully informs all of her telephone operators to realise that they are giving out the wrong information regards insuring Vintage/Classic motorcycles without fitted lights. I must admit that I found the telephone conversations that my son and I had with them very unsettling indeed!

It is definitely better to talk to human beings on the end of a phone rather than talk to an automated machine. But! Those human beings have to be informative and good at what they are supposed to be selling. If not, you might just as well talk to a brick wall!

Fingers crossed for all Carole Nash devotees, (doesn't include me).

Dave Blanchard.

Hi All

Don't panic! I'm insured with Carole Nash so I emailed management there who said that they do insure bikes without lights.

I was told that if modifications to the bike are declared (which could be anything such as removal of lights, fitting of turbo charger, whatever) the proposal could be referred to underwriters for specific quote or refusal. This situation happens most often with modified modern bikes.

Where lights were never fitted, there's no modification, so no need for referral to underwriters.

I was told that a company statement would be made on Monday to clearly state the situation. Hope their staff read it!

John

Editors Comments:

Please be aware that this also applies to twin shocks. My Montesas were always supplied with a lighting kit so could have possibly been classed as having lights fitted.

Off-Road Giants Volume 2

Stars covered are Brian Curtis, Mike Guilford, Lew Coffin, Chris Cullen, Terry Cox, Bob Ray, Bill Brooker, Mary Driver, Bill Gwynne, Pat Lamper, Neil and Paul Jarman, Colin Dommett, Vic Eastwood, Ron Langston, Arthur and Lyn Pulman, Ken Sedgley, John Avery and the Rickmans.

The books will be available from Jan. 2011, available from all good bookshops but if you would like to order a signed copy direct from me then please send a cheque for £22.50, this includes postage, to :

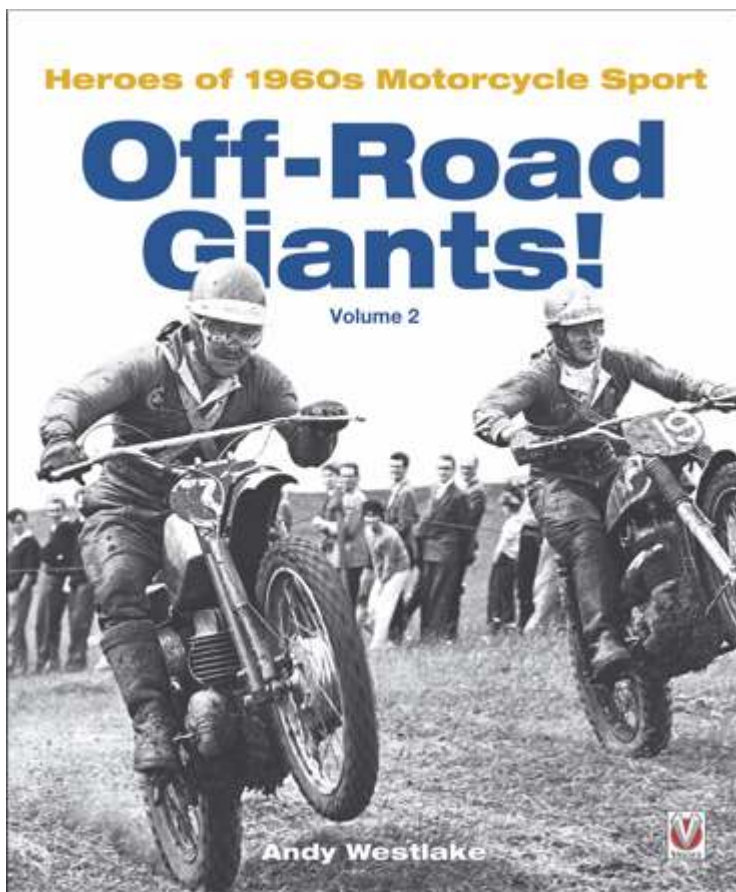
Andy Westlake,

14 Chapel Street, Buckfastleigh, Devon, TQ11 0AB

andrew westlake <andrewwestlake@yahoo.co.uk>

I need to have your order by 15th December but cheques, payable to A.M.Westlake, will not be cashed until the books have been received from the publishers.

When placing your order please mention the Trials & Tribs or the EFA.



Pedro's Patter

In the early 60's a deal was done to export Tiptree jam and Maldon salt to Devon in exchange for tin and Jim Woodmason,

Marconi Communication Systems set him on a task to produce a system enabling him to find his way back, but hey, he found Chelmsford vibrant (I wonder where that was). Then he was introduced Chelmsford Auto club. Never looked back, Montesas! Rochdale Olympic kit car (special paint finish, undetectable when parked adjacent to brick wall and no polishing required). Apart from the trials caper, a member of CDAC's National rally squad, Continental touring with young Bob Barnard and Dick Hobart.

Became very involved with electronic ignition, and always up for a debate especially regarding benefits to the club hence sitting on committees, ACU official etc.

I can't recall EFA days without T&T. However life moves us on, Jim's had some stressful times combating deteriorating health and deadlines to provide us with 200 editions of info and entertainment aided by Tracey and many contributors.

A big thank you, Jim, I'm sure the club at large appreciates your efforts and commitment not only in this area but also the bigger picture. Have a 'oliday, deadline free!

A big welcome to man about town Chris Canham, competitive trials rider and now Editor! Might I request your support in his endeavour.

On the wider front the Pre 65 scramble at Marks Tey could only be described as terrific - track, weather conditions ideal and everyone giving their all. A difficult decision! My man of the meeting, Shaun Mallows and passenger?!! Colin Dunkley. What a display of sidecar driving!

Judging by their practise efforts, Steve Daw could, should make the podium on Dad Geoff's contrived Enfield outfit In the Thumpers.

Keep warm, be happy!

Pedro E

Scottish Golf

A golfer is cupping his hand to scoop water from a Highland burn on the St Andrews course.

A groundskeeper shouts: 'Dinnae drink tha waater! Et's foo ae coo's shite an pish!'

The golfer replies: 'My Good fellow, I'm from England. Could you repeat that for me, in English!?''

The groundskeeper replies: 'I said, use two hands - you'll spill less that way!'

An electrical problem A True Story

Lawrence, Kansas, December 12, 2008

A Kansas farm wife called the local phone company to report her telephone failed to ring when her friends called - and that on the few occasions, when it did ring, her dog always moaned right before the phone rang.

The telephone repairman proceeded to the scene, curious to see this psychic dog or senile lady. He climbed a telephone pole, hooked in his test set, and dialled the subscriber's house.

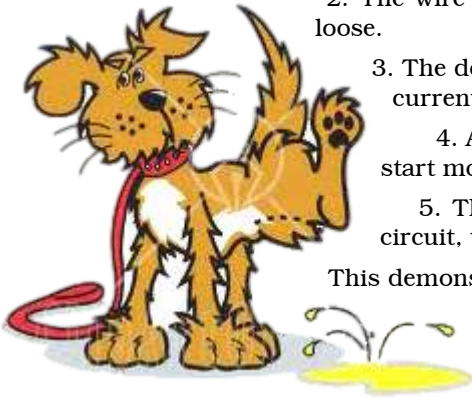
The phone didn't ring right away, but then the dog moaned and the telephone began to ring.

Climbing down from the pole, the telephone repairman found:

1. The dog was tied to the telephone system's ground wire with a steel chain and collar.
2. The wire connection to the ground rod was loose.
3. The dog was receiving 90 volts of signalling current when the number was called.
4. After a couple of jolts, the dog would start moaning and then urinate.
5. The wet ground would complete the circuit, thus causing the phone to ring.

This demonstrates that some problems CAN be fixed by pissing and moaning.

Thought you'd like to know.



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IN MEMORIAM . . .

Under my watch as editor of the T&T we have lost several of our number together with some of our friends. I have included a list of those who have come to mind but please accept my apologies if I have left someone out. Please believe me, I have not omitted any person deliberately.

In no particular order:

Jeff Fincham

Tragically died in a work related accident. Jeff was well known to us all for his friendship and individuality together with his home constructed Rariefield. I still cannot get over the fact that I shall not see that smiling face again.

Roger Birch

Roger died after a lengthy illness which restricted his ability to do everything he wanted.

Many of us are old enough to remember Roger as the T+MX photographer of trials for the South and South East - our own Eric Kitchen. On several occasions I have been greeted by that trade mark toothy grin looking out from behind a bush or tree after 'snapping' me making a fool of myself, all of this in some unlikely locations ranging from Norfolk all the way down to Hampshire.

Chris Bater

It is my understanding that Chris was a late starter in the trials scene and had been introduced to the sport by the Teager family.

Chris was well known for his ignition problems and probably possessed the largest collection of working and 'dud' magnetos in the club.

Following several years looking after his wife prior to her death, Chris was starting a new life, following retirement, with his partner but sadly cancer took his life before he could make up for lost time.

Arkwright

Alan 'Arkwright' Jones has died this November. Getting his nickname due to his ownership of a village shop, Alan was a long time worker at the old AMC factory in Woolwich before moving to Essex and starting a new life.

I understand that during his riding career he rode Ariels even though he worked for the 'enemy'.

In later years he was a well known sight on his AMC sidecar and was a well known member of the local AMC Owners club.

Ralph Venables

Although not a member of the club, 'Rafe' was a friend of the EFA and in particular the T&T. He was possibly the last of the true journalists with a good grasp of both our language and grammar. Woe betide anyone who mistyped his copy as I found to my cost. I do wish that he had 'retired' his trusty portable typewriter and entered the word processing age though!

Jim Mason

It is now 12 months since Jim died on his way home from a good ride in the Sidcup club's Jack Thomson trial. Jim, although very quiet by nature was well known to us all and is a sad loss.

Trevor Rumsey

Trevor Rumsey was well known across several branches of the sport. I first met Trevor when he was campaigning a grass track sidecar outfit.

Then there was the Pre65 trials era followed by the 'straight up' sprinting. In fact Trevor, although suffering severe ill health, was still 'sprinting' until within a few months of his demise

Roy Farmer

Roy is possibly not remembered by many as he was involved with the EFA for only a very short time. He was a Hells Angel with a heart of gold. When he joined us he realised that his days were numbered but wanted to live his life to the full before time was called. I hope that we were able to fill a part of his life in his last days.

Cyril Smith

Cyril, (aka 'big Cyril') was another who joined the trials ranks quite late in life. OK he didn't ride regularly in the Eastern Centre but when you rode in a trial with him and his friend Brian Messenger you knew you were in for an enjoyable day.

Don Smith

Don had been away from direct involvement in the trials scene for the best part of 20 years before returning to the fold on a Cub. The years had diminished his capabilities but the enthusiasm returned in buckets!

He soon renewed acquaintance with his former 'gaffer', Bill Brooker, and special builder extraordinaire Peter Gaunt.

Sadly Don died alone after a fall at his home whilst preparing for a day's riding at one of our trials at Snaque Pit.

continued overleaf



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£750

Geoff Daw

01787 378484

Jack Lee

When I first arrived in this part of the world there was a rather diminutive figure who rode a 'big' Ariel with a lot of verve. I soon found that this was a certain Jack Lee who was looked upon with a good deal of respect both for his skills at mastering the mighty Ariel and his expertise at making replica frames for the beasts. I did have the privilege of riding one of Jack's creations and found it to be a very pleasant experience.

Jack's later days were spent being involved with Pre65 scrambles.

Dave Roper

Although not a member of the EFA, Dave was well known amongst the Pre65 Motocross and Enduro scenes. A stalwart member and supporter of the Sudbury club Dave tragically died from injuries incurred at a meeting at Canada Heights. Further proof is not needed that motorcycle sport can be dangerous especially for those of us of advancing years.

Jack Thompson

The name Jack Thompson is these days associated with the trial held each December by the Sidcup club at Canada Heights.

Before his death, Jack and his wife 'Izzie' were 'fixtures' at trials held south of the river and very well known to all of us who ventured the other side of the Dartford Crossing.

Jack's untimely death came about following an 'accident' at a circus he was attending with his grandchildren.

Roger Reason

Roger suffered from ill health for many years. In the 60s he was an expert scrambler who switched to trials where he also became an expert.

After spending some years creating a C15 he was, sadly, unable to do it justice. Roger was a welcome spectator at trials and scrambles in his last years.

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Reflections on the Thumpers

Reflections on the Thumpers

Well this being Jim's final T&T, he has asked if I could write something for the magazine - specifically about the Thumpers. I suppose its appropriate particularly since we are at the time of the Thumpers and after spending around 17 or 18 years as Secretary of the Meeting I should know something of what has happened. So how did my involvement start?

It was back in 1989 that I was first introduced to trials when we were still in Friday Woods and Cliff Percival was the Secretary. The following year Cliff asked us to do some documentation and we even printed the number complete with logo. Little did we know at that time but that was to be the final Thumpers in Friday Woods and in 1991 we moved to Bures. By this time Cliff had announced his intention to stand down and was looking for a replacement Secretary. Yours truly stepped into the breach so the first of our three Thumpers at Bures I was learning the ropes from Cliff, although I was already Secretary for Chelmsford trials and a couple of EFA events. I therefore had a reasonable grasp of what was involved.



Alan Wright

photo: TaffDog

The following year (1992) I was on my own - and what a day we had! Basically it was mud glorious mud, we'd had so much rain - and I believe it rained for a good bit of the day as well. This was the year the Thumpers was chopped to just two laps due to the weather. However, by the time the message got around, Ken Carrington from Weeley had already completed his three laps and, as I understand it, broke his wrist within the first couple of sections on the first lap. Sadly we've never seen Ken again.

We ran the Thumpers at Bures for just one year after that when the venue was lost due to complaints from neighbouring properties due to "noise pollution". However, we were fortunate that the opportunity to run at Thorington arose and the chance was taken with gusto - we've been there ever since thanks to the landowner Mr Steve Sawyer.

As I'm sure most of you are aware, there are few occasions when an event is cancelled due to weather conditions. However, several years ago we were asked to postpone the event by the landowner since we'd had so much rain it was running in rivers down the slope past the signing-on point. This involved a couple of hours on the phone informing everyone and as far as I am aware no-one actually turned up to ride although I believe that some spectators may have shown up. The event was eventually rescheduled (I think) for the 14th January - I can't remember the year this happened.

As those who have been Secretary of the Meeting for both club and centre level event may realise, being Secretary is a lot of work. However, living with Jim made life a little easier as if there was anything I was uncertain of, I could ask his advice and over the years he gave me a lot of assistance not to mention encouragement. Of course as the date for the Thumpers approached so the work-load increased but it was never too much to cope with. One of the major concerns was where I would be signing riders on. To this end I was very grateful to Ray Humm who for many years brought his camper-van for me to use. In time though he dropped out of riding the Thumpers and I had to find somewhere else. To this end Ted obtained approval to use an empty Port-a-Cabin and this is what we used for many years once Ray had dropped off the scene.

Entry levels have varied over the years, the most recent years having the lowest in my memory - I believe just short of 90. However, it wasn't always like this. At one time we had an entry of 142 before the day and 139 turned up to ride! Boy, was the signing-on hectic. It always is but that year it was doubly so. Nevertheless, everyone was signed-on without too much hassle.

As far as the weather is concerned, the Thumpers has run in all sorts of conditions. We've had sun, rain, frost, snow and we've had warm and freezing temperatures as appropriate. A few years ago believe it or not we had all four conditions on the same day. Nevertheless, I believe that most have enjoyed the trials the club has put on, irrespective of the weather conditions - at least, I certainly hope so.

Becoming Secretary led ultimately to me becoming friendly with the girls at Rugby and actually



Mark Gibb suitably camouflaged

Photo: TaffDog

attending seminars there. However, so much of these revolved around the modern scene and particularly their championships that Jim and I eventually stopped attending them. Nevertheless, it gave us both the chance to make our acquaintance with Mary Kerr who is still the Trials Secretary although now assisted by Alison Devine, another lady I've come to know over the years.

Back in 2000, the licence system was scrapped by the ACU and replaced with a system where the rider pays a fee per event. With the introduction of this system, it made it possible to send a rider list to Rugby and ask the Licensing department to check who was affiliated/registered and who wasn't. This made life a lot easier on the day as I did not have to check for cards issued by Rugby and instead was able to contact those who weren't affiliated/registered before the day to make sure they were before they started. Of course there were some who complained at that, but if I'd let them ride and there had been accident, I would have been in trouble as would the club.

Overall I enjoyed my time as Secretary and one of the pleasures of the job was meeting riders from different parts of the country including some top riders within the pre-65 movement - riders like Dave Thorpe, Mick Grant and Peter Gaunt. I think the rider who came furthest to ride was Nick Smith who came up from the Exeter area although Dave Thorpe had a fair old pony trek to get to Thorrington. However, overwhelmingly, the vast majority of riders were from our own centre being primarily EFA members which although welcome, was a little disappointing since the Thumpers IS a National event. In my early years as Secretary we even had a few riders from abroad and I think of the likes of Stig Karlsson and mate Olov Hogman from Sweden and Joel Corroy from France. Unfortunately, both Olov and Stig stopped coming since the ferry stopped coming to Harwich and only went to Newcastle which in itself is a fair pony trek. Joel also stopped coming some years ago since it is some 400 miles plus to get to Thorrington. Nevertheless, I thank them for their support when they were able to make it. Interestingly, I still have a database of riders from the time I took over from Cliff Percival including the year they last entered.

Many years ago now, Jim and I started asking riders if they could bring a little something for the observers and this proved to be very successful. Since starting these requests, I don't think any observer has actually gone home without a token of appreciation for their efforts throughout the year. In fact hardly a years goes by when we don't have some gifts left over to distribute at club trials in the new year. Believe me, those gifts ARE appreciated by the observers and I hope the practice will continue under the new Secretary of the Meeting, Karen Mace, Chris' wife.

This almost brings me to the end of my piece for the T&T, and since I am writing this before this year's Thumpers, I trust that Karen did a good job. I also trust that you riders did your best to co-operate with her and I urge you all to continue in future events; please bear in mind that until this year she had never been Secretary for ANY level of trial so I'm sure that anything and everything you do to assist her would be more than welcome.

Tracey

It's the way I tell em, It's a cracker.

What is Santa's favourite pizza?
One that's deep pan, crisp and even.

Who was England's first chiroprapist?
William the Corncurer

What do you call a short sighted dinosaur?
A do-you-think-he-saw-us!

What kind of paper likes music?
(W)rapping paper.

Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?
A mince spy.

How do snowmen get around?
They ride an icicle.

What's the longest word in the English language?
Smiles, because there is a "mile" between the first and the last letters.

What do you call a man with brown paper trousers?
Russell

What do you call a man with a pole through his leg?
Rodney

Why would you invite a mushroom to a Christmas party?
He's a fun guy to be with.

What's brown and sweet and glides around an ice rink?
Bourneville and Dean

Why was Santa's little helper feeling depressed?
He had low elf-esteem.

Why should husbands make the early morning tea for their wives?
Because the Bible says He Brews

On which side do chickens have the most feathers?
The outside.

What do you call a woman who stands between two goal posts?
Annette.

What's furry and minty?
A polo bear.

What do you call a penguin in the Sahara desert?
Lost.



THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

The real reason that we can't have the Ten Commandments posted in a courthouse or Parliament, is this -

You cannot post 'Thou Shalt Not Steal', 'Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery' and 'Thou Shall Not Lie' in a building full of lawyers, judges and politicians.

It creates a hostile work environment!



Your 'new' Editor!

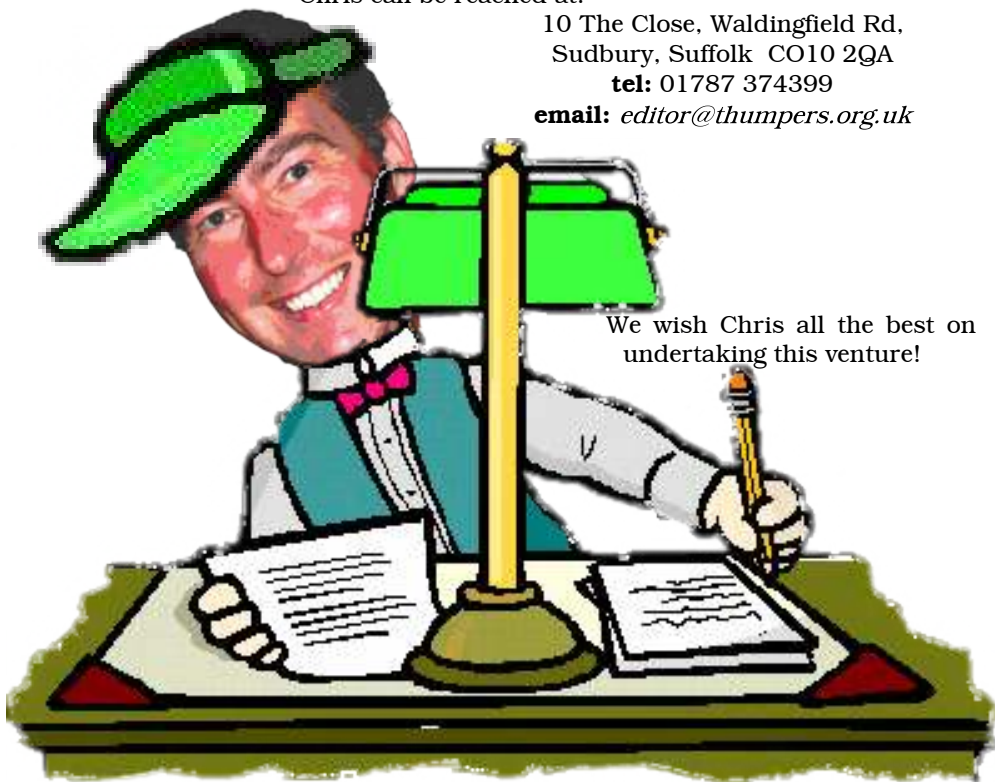
Commencing with the January 2011 issue of your club magazine/newsletter the editor will be Chris Canham.

Chris can be reached at:

10 The Close, Waldingfield Rd,
Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2QA

tel: 01787 374399

email: editor@thumpers.org.uk



We wish Chris all the best on
undertaking this venture!

Sayings...

Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people only once a year.

- Victor Borge



THE MCC THIRTY SIXTH LANDS END TRIAL

30/31 MARCH 1956

This is a Reliability Trial run by one of the oldest Motor Cycle Clubs in the country, covering a distance of 350 miles.

My entry was accepted, having chosen to start from LONDON on the A4 just beyond LONDON AIRPORT, that being the nearest starting point for me. Just a mere 50 miles added to the events mileage. Competitors have two other choices of starting points, KENILWORTH or LAUNCESTON, converging on TAUNTON from where all competitors follow the same route to the finish at the LANDS END HOTEL.

Speed as such does not enter into this trial. Regularity of running, ability to climb various hills and carry out special tests, decides the winning of an award. Speed schedule on difficult sections may be as low as 12mph.

On main roads average speeds do not exceed 30mph. Check points en-route must be visited, penalties are incurred if you are 5 minutes early, or 5 minutes late.

From Taunton onwards, all competitors have to ride 10 observed sections and special tests. Observed sections have to be ridden non-stop, a standing start is required for all sections. As sections cannot be viewed and are several hundred yards in length, a confident approach and a big handful helps.

An entry of 210 solos, 79 of which opted to start from LONDON. starting at 1 minute intervals. The first rider left at 6:31pm and being number 58 I had almost an hour to convince myself that this was much better than preparing for bed.

The starter signalled me off, and once under way all else disappeared, just try to follow the tail lights in front to the first time check at SILBURY. 67 miles ahead. After several miles the first of many competitors passed me, mostly army riders who seemed to be using the event as experience for their despatch riders, in all 28 army riders started from LONDON.

SILBURY arrived, signed the sheet and headed for BATHPOOL, 70 miles. This time check is 3 miles outside TAUNTON, from where all competitors join a common route and the trial proper starts. Having reached TAUNTON and parked as directed, I walked to MAYNARNS RESTAURANT for a midnight snack - time 12:58am.

After feeding and watering the inner man, and rested weary eyes, my restart time arrived 2:43am and I duly set off in the direction of MINEHEAD on the A358. After 39 miles of twisty undulating roads, the first observed section was reached, approximately 9 hours after leaving the start at LONDON.

Suitably named STONEY STREET this was tackled successfully which boosted morale somewhat. Four miles on, I passed through the village of PORLOCK, up the notorious hill, and down COUNTESBURY.

Having climbed LYNMOUTH HILL, section Number 2 STATION LANE, a twisty climb with a stop and restart in the middle, then non stop to the finish. Number 3, BEGGERS ROOST followed closely 2 miles - my recorded failure,

wheel spin on the loose shale needed a lot of footwork to induce forward motion, in basic english a cock up.

From this point on, 5:15am, until section Number 4, was arrived at, 8:15am, another 57 miles had to be covered. DERRACOTT HILL, non stop from start to finish. As the route makes a complete circuit to include the hill an official had the job placing a sticky yellow label to competitors head lamps as they started the climb. The gentleman as I shall call him, duly placed said marker on my head lamp, then decided to slap it hard, so hard as to dislodge head lamp glass, reflector the lot, displacing the three spring retaining clips which held everything in place.

My comments to the guy weren't exactly complimentary to his enthusiasm! Having replaced all the bits and pieces, I proceeded to record a clean climb. This caused a slight 'hiccup' on my time, but I managed to make it up before the time check at BUDE, 12 miles further on, where there was a Special Test in the CROOKLETS BEACH car park. This was the breakfast stop, 8:51am, 264 miles from the start.



Bob Drane 125 B.S.A.

Restart scheduled for 10:21am came and off we set for section Number 5 TREWORGIE, 9 miles down the road. Another non stop climb to the summit puts all the senses into a confident mood, CRACKINGTON HILL section Number 6 followed after only a 7 minutes ride, 2 miles down a rough narrow winding lane, passing through two water splashes. Yet another non stop climb to the summit. If this goes on, I should crack it. Sections are appearing thick and fast now,

Number 7, only nine miles on, called NEW MILL. This starts after crossing quite a deep ford, no problems. One mile and we reach the main road A39,

turn right and head for WADEBRIDGE. Having passed through town we took a right fork down a steep hill to HUSTY HILL section Number 8 - yet another water splash, followed by the now customary long climb to the ends card, Magic!

Rejoining the A30 we headed for PERRANPORTH - this was a time check. Tea in the local garage. Checking the old speedo 331 miles from the start, and have just arrived at section Numbers 9 and 10, BLUEHILLS MINE. These are ridden one after the other, a stop at the end of Number 9 and a restart on the marshals instructions to the end of Number 10.

This is where I became somewhat humbled by the fact that on lining up to tackle these, I suddenly heard my name and the details of the bike I was riding echoing round the old mine over a loud speaker system, to the spectators who had lined almost all the hills on this classic event. Their numbers made one feel very small. Number 9, not too difficult, on restart at marshals instructions. Once again the gradient and loose surface - I needed to foot to get going. Never mind, second failure, lets hope I can keep it that way. Only 34 miles to LANDS END, with 1 hour and 25 minutes to the last time check, passing through PORTHTOWAN, PORTREATH, GWITHIAN. All at once all hell let loose, an awful squeaking grating noise from the engine department. On pulling up as quickly as possible, with a feeling of utter despair and disappointment, removing the flywheel mag cover I found a lighting coil had dropped off its location arm and was resting on the flywheel, copper particles and shellac covered everything, points etc. etc. Removal was out of the question because of the time factor.

After walking up and down the street for what seemed like an age, looking for a match stick or something similar, I finally found one and proceeded to force it between the arm and coil. Started the bike and rode to the finish, with time to spare, but as there was no early margin I hid around the corner with other competitors until my finish time arrived.

Checked in at the control OK. removed the riding number, signed off at the Hotel and handed in the number plate, and claimed my award. Having had two failures on observed sections only, I was able to claim a 3rd class award. Time 3:21pm.

On returning to the bike, I removed the flywheel stator plate. What a mess! Whilst in the middle of this, one of the army riders, who had been a riding colleague all through the event, owing to the fact he was several riding numbers behind me, stopped to have a chat, and upon seeing the mess felt sorry for me. After replacing everything I duly started the bike, but obviously, as was to be expected no lights.

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At this point my friend, i.e. the soldier, returned to say he had seen his sergeant, and said that, if I kept it to myself, they would smuggle me and the bike into the back of one of their lorries as far as ALDERSHOT, but I would have to put up with a short stop at a pub somewhere. Well it didn't seem to be a bad deal and I duly sat down to wait their bidding. But luck ran out again. One of their riders fell off on an earlier section and broke a leg, so the lorry had to go back to pick up the bike.

Nothing else for it, ride until dusk, find bed and breakfast, and head for home in the morning. This worked OK and I arrived home at 2:00pm - a weekend to remember and reflect on for years.

Summary of solo machines and riders:

Most one make	Matchless	88	350s	4	500s
Army riders	all Matchless	40	350s		
Greeves		2			
Vincent		1	1000cc		
Two strokes		4	125s		

Summary of sidecar machines:

British	25
BMW	1 500cc
NSU	1 250cc

Bob Drane

Don't try to beat your Dad

A teenage boy had just passed his driving test and inquired of his father as to when they could discuss his use of the car.

His father said he'd make a deal with his son: 'You bring your grades up from a C to a B average, study your Bible a little, and get your hair cut. Then we'll talk about the car.'

The boy thought about that for a moment, decided he'd settle for the offer, and they agreed on it.

After about six weeks his father said, 'Son, you've brought your grades up and I've observed that you have been studying your Bible, but I'm disappointed you haven't had your hair cut.'

The boy said, 'You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that, and I've noticed in my studies of the Bible that Samson had long hair, John the Baptist had long hair, Moses had long hair...and there's even strong evidence that Jesus had long hair.'

You're going to love the Dad's reply:

To this his father replied, 'Did you also notice they walked everywhere they went?'



What a Good idea!

Let's put all OAPs in jail and the criminals in a nursing home. This way OAPs would have access to showers, hobbies and walks.

They'd receive unlimited free prescriptions, dental and medical treatment, wheel chairs etc and they'd receive money instead of paying it out.

They would have constant video monitoring, so they could be helped instantly, if they fell, or needed assistance.

Bedding would be washed twice a week, and all clothing would be ironed and returned to them. A warder would check on them every 20 minutes and bring their meals and snacks to their cell.

They would have family visits in a suite built for that purpose.

They would have access to a library, weight room, spiritual counseling, a pool table and education.

Simple clothing, shoes, slippers, pyjamas and legal aid would be free, on request . . .

Private, secure rooms for all, with an outdoor exercise yard, with gardens.

Each OAP could have a PC, a TV, a radio and daily phone calls.

There would be a board of governors to hear complaints, and the warders would have a code of conduct that would be strictly adhered to.

The "criminals" would get cold food, be left all alone and unsupervised.

Lights off at 8pm, and showers once a week.

Live in a tiny room and pay £900.00 per month for the privilege and have no hope of ever getting out.

Justice for all we say.



DID YOU KNOW THAT . . .

Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.





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DABBERS DIARY

Well here we go, my last piece for Editor Jim, and I hear it's going to be a bumper special Christmas issue! I am going to try and make this piece what I intended it to be when I started, a diary of the last months events, but it seldom turned out that way!

Early in the month a bombshell dropped through the letter box from the ACU, it was my Trials Registration Form, but without the single sheet simplified version that we were sent last year, it clearly stated that riders over 70 years of age had to provide a full medical report completed and signed by your doctor and one from your optician if you wore spectacles. I don't believe it! I cried and re-read the form and accompanying guidance notes, but there was no doubt about it, that was what they wanted. Sod the ACU was my first thought, AMCA from now on, but then I shall miss some of my favourite events, retirement was a possibility, me boots were nearly consigned to the bin and what price could I get for the bikes was considered. After some reading of the ACU rule



Dave Field 178 BSA

photo: Gary Eaves



Darrel Glover 250 BSA

photo: Chris McKenzie

book and a good nights' kip, I thought they can't do this, so at 9am sharp the next morning a phone call to the licensing department at Rugby was made. Sorry, the young lady said, we have forgotten to send you the correct form and sections 3, 4 & 5 don't apply to you anyway! I wonder how many other senior Trials Riders reacted like me!

The working party for the 30th Thumpers, on Remembrance Sunday, was well supported and the assembled troops were formed up into two squads, one under the command of Sergeant Major Smith and the other, well I'm not sure. Let's just say there seemed to be as many Chiefs as Indians, anyway, some new sections were trimmed out and a good course planned. Talking of the Thumpers reminds me of what a couple of my old Southern Centre mates said to me when I told them I was going to ride my old Girder machine, they said 'You silly old b****r, you are old enough to know better, you will be like the Ann Widdecombe of Trials'. Nice mates eh!

Next came a scare from our old mate Dave Blanchard, it seems that his son Steve tried to re-insure his Trials AJS with Carole Nash, who he has been with

I came out my house yesterday and was hit on the head by a bag of frozen sausages, a chocolate gateau and some fish fingers.

I realised it must be the fallout from Iceland .

for the last three years, and they refused on the grounds that it was not fitted with lights, even though Steve had sent a photo of the bike to them when they first insured it. They also said they definitely did not insure bikes without lights so his bike has not been covered for the last three years! As he had paid the premiums he asked for his money back, they refused! I still have not heard how this has been resolved, but I asked my insurers, Footman James, and they have no problems about insuring bikes without lights, but it might be worth checking up with your company.

Well the Thumpers turned out to be a great event and we were so lucky with the weather, cold but bright. For me the weekend started on Friday when a few of us old OAPs always mark out the car park, restricted areas and if time allows a bit of the course. Saturday morning was taken up with a final fettle of



John Beasley 250 Greeves

photo: Gary Eaves

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For further information contact:

Mike Harden 01473 310537

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You only need two tools in life - WD-40 and duct tape. If it doesn't move and should, use the WD-40. If it shouldn't move and does, use the duct tape.

the Tiger 70 and then off to Poplar Chase Farm to prepare the course map for the Thumpers. But, horror of horrors, my old bus won't start, so it's a short sharp walk instead. Map completed, Chairman Ted gives me a lift home and with some magic tinkering and a set of jump leads gets the old girl started, so I was able to complete the road marking to the trial as dusk fell, being careful not to stop the engine. Sunday morning was a different story, despite having the battery on charge all night and trying to cast the same magic as Ted, the old girl wasn't having it. So I arrived at the Thumpers in traditional style, riding my bike, just like the old days. The trial for me was great, the sidcar sections, which we girders rode, looked easy but were not. I think I was keeping up with the nippers for the first two laps, then the 'Widdecombe' effect kicked in, and just like Ann being dragged around the dance floor, I was being dragged around the sections!

The month ended with a sad occasion as several of us attended the service to celebrate the life of Alan 'Arkwright' Jones. I used to share lifts to club night with Alan and I shall miss his stories of life working for AMC at Plumstead and his time in the Army on Salisbury Plain.

Dabber



Phill Smith 350 BSA

photo: Gary Eaves



Clive Dopson 500 Norton

photo: Chris McKenzie

End Thought...

Jury -- Twelve people who determine which client has the better lawyer.