



THE OILY RAG

ESTABLISHED 1988



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Dates



| | | |
|--|---------------|------------------|
| Sammy Miller jumble | May | 4th |
| Easter ride out | May | 6th |
| Broadclyst fun day 2014 | June | 28th |
| Ride your bike night and ride out | July | 1st |
| Powderham | July | 12th/13th |
| Dartmoor run | July | 27th |
| Classic vehicle gathering Exmouth | August | 17th |
| Newton Abbot Autojumble | Sept | 15th |
| Christmas Bedford Square | Dec | 13th |

Was anyone confused with dates etc. in the last magazine? Well I certainly got the year we were established wrong, blame it on being married for 50 years. The autojumble dates were wrong because an anonymous contributor (John Davey) was looking at dates for last year. Not his fault really because the website he visited had not been updated.

Regalia

New stock, see Peter White for latest styles and prices.

Enamel lapel badges £4:00

Round sticker £0:50

Car Sticker £1:00

Chrome licence holder £7:00

**All available from Pete White. Please check prices,
and order on club night, arrange payment with
him**

Membership

£10 per year. August to August.

Cheques should be made payable to: ECMC

Dartmoor Run.

David Denham has already received applications for this year's run. If you want a form let us know.

For Sale

BSA C 15. Clean but has not run for a year or so. Jumps out of first gear if ridden hard. Clutch slips on occasions. Engine is V good very few miles since overhaul.

Kawasaki ER 500 twin 55 BHP. 11000 miles from new, rather to big and heavy for me. I have only done 100 miles on it See Ray who has too many bikes to maintain.

This Magazine.

On pages 6,7,8,9, and 10 there is the story of the trip to India by Trish. It is quite fascinating . What a brave soul!!, Maybe we can borrow a data projector so that her photos can be seen on the big screen one club night.



Meeting April 1st

Apologies; Mike Norton, Mike Wellsman, Bryn Churchward, Chris Ellis Malcolm Mc Mullan.

The auction of riding gear on behalf of Debbie the daughter of Dennis Saunders and our raffle raised £50. proceeds from the auction have been donated to club funds. Cards were signed for both Bryn and Malcolm both of whom have been quite unwell for a while. Once again Nic called the raffle numbers and he also ran the auction. I reckon in a previous life he was a Sgt. Major. Thanks to all who helped Margaret and I to finish off our 50th anniversary cake. What a relief, we thought it would be with us for ever. The visit to the Sammy Miller museum and autojumble has been called off because of a lack of numbers.

Ray asked for admin help on the Quay for the Dartmoor Run, he is hoping to ride this year and cannot be in two places at once. The tasks are quite simple. He also asked for volunteers to marshal suggesting that any club member who is on the run could do the task. It is quite simple and a knowledge of the area is not really required. You are dropped off at a point, given directions and then stay until the breakdown van arrives. You then continue the run being directed by the marshals along the route. One advantage of being a marshal is that by being stationary for a while you actually see all of the bikes and you get a chance to give your posterior a rest!

Powderham

Numbers please for Powderham, at present we are short of volunteers.

It was February 2014. While the rain poured down back in England, there was me, a grin from ear to ear, the sun on my face, riding beautiful twisty roads up in the tea plantations of Southern India on an Enfield Bullet with the awesome sound of ten singles thudding away and breathtaking scenery all around me! A trip across India on an Indian Enfield had been on my bucket list, but something I thought I would never do as I was too scared on my own. So when I found an English tour company who had their own fleet of bikes in India, who knew the country well and would organise all the accommodation etc I thought "this is for me". All I had to do was to get my inoculations, travel insurance, international driving permit, and visa sorted, book my flight and turn up!

I landed in Dubai on February the 2nd where I met up with my fellow adventurers for the first time as they had flown from various UK airports. There were five lady riders including myself and six men including Pete the tour leader. We flew on to Calicut on the same plane where a coach was waiting to take us to our hotel. I have never seen so many coconut trees!

A warm greeting awaited us as we walked into the hotel reception, cold drinks on a tray and a fresh flower garland was placed around our necks. I was shown my room where I showered and had a beautiful sleep. Later I met some of my new mates down by the pool before choosing food from the delicious buffet and settling down around a big round table for beer (I drank mine with lemonade) and got to know my new mates better.

The next day after breakfast I sunned myself and read my book then we pulled on our bike gear and at 1pm we met our bikes for the first time. We got to choose our own steed which we kept for the whole trip. They were 350cc with kick start (except for Pete's which was an electric start!), five speed gearboxes one down and four up on the left hand side. I chose mine as the number plate was my age so easy to remember! Jane rode a 100cc four stroke Honda as she found the Enfield heavy.

In India they drive on the left, the same as us. There are so many vehicles on the road, mainly small motorbikes and scooters, hundred of tukk tukks (three wheeled yellow taxis), bicycles, cars, and lorries. There doesn't appear to be any highway code, but the traffic rarely stops, you keep moving and overtaking all the time on the right hand side, or if you can't on the inside. The most important thing on the bike is the horn which is used all the time to warn the vehicle you are overtaking, they toot back in reply to say that know you are there. It reminded me of a waltz, everything moves slowly, but all the traffic makes progress without all the stopping and starting we get at home with all the traffic lights and often a clear road!

All of a sudden you get it and realise that they are not just driving like maniacs, the horn blowing is not aggressive in any way, it is a sort of vehicle dialect! There are so many vehicles on the road that if they drove like we do at home, the roads would be gridlocked, it is just a different way of driving which suits the volume of traffic. You then start to relax and enjoy the ride. When a lorry is hurtling towards you on your side of the road sounding his horn you just ride calmly off the road until he has passed, and then back on. Most of the main roads have a white line along the left hand side, with half a lane width the other side like half a hard shoulder, then rough ground.

If you wish to turn right at a T junction and there is nothing coming from the right, you can simply pullout on the wrong side of the road, and then pull over to the left when you can. You sometimes see a vehicle driving merrily along towards you on the wrong side of the road keeping close to the side of the road. He has come out of a side road, turned right and is intending to turn right again so he just keeps on and drives towards you on the right (wrong) side of the road, you learn to ignore him as if he is a pedestrian. In busy towns when you approach a side road you just sound your horn and keep going, if you hesitate someone will pull out! On a 350cc Enfield you are the king of the road and not much gets to overtake you, just the occasional car!

The following morning after another delicious meal and a good nights rest our tour started and we were off to the mountains and away from the traffic. As we made our way out of the bustle and heat the scenery got better as the roads got quieter.

There is so much to see, cows wandering around (even as you drive through town you see cows making their way casually between people and traffic or maybe even lying in the middle of a busy road chewing the cud).

I have never seen so many different things being carried on a bike or moped. It is quite common to see a man riding a bike with his wife sitting side saddle in her sari, one child under her arm or sitting behind, baby riding on the tank, no crash helmets on. One baby was actually fast asleep lying on the tank. There are plenty of teenagers riding along usually with their crash helmet under their arm, rarely on their head. They often waved to us and I had one riding in front of me taking photos on his mobile phone. I saw a man riding a step through carrying about eight calor gas bottles, another with a big bag of corn lying across the step through bit, he had his legs so wide open I nearly fell off my bike laughing. I have seen a goat riding sideways across the tank looking quite contented as if this was a common occurrence. I saw a man carrying a long pipe or pole the size of a long ladder, many times the length of the bike he was riding. If only I had brought a head cam.

As we climbed up the mountains we saw plenty of monkeys at the side of the road a bit like we get rabbits in Devon. We rode through animal reservations (I kept an eye out for tigers but saw none). Every hundred yards there was a speed bump. We saw a wild elephant, deer and warthogs.

The higher up we got the cooler the air which was the perfect climate, beautiful sunshine and not too hot. The roads up in the mountains are quiet, just the occasional vehicle. Overtaking the big lorries could be a bit of a challenge. If you could not see to get past you would nip up on the inside when the vehicle swung out to take a left bend, sounding your horn beep beep beep to make sure he knew you were there.

I quite enjoyed riding at the back with the two mechanics who were riding two up on a 200cc two stroke. If I hesitated with my overtaking they would ride up beside me both waving their arms in encouragement. Behind them was "Irene" our back up vehicle which carried all of our luggage.

A couple of times one of the riders got tired on the mountain roads so one of the mechanics would ride his Bullet with him as pillion. He found the mechanics to be very skilled riders, they didn't hit one pothole.

My Bullet did not miss a beat. Most days we were in the saddle for six hours. Some mountain roads were badly potholed so you would ride around them the best you could. Sometimes it was impossible, if it was on a bend with a vehicle coming towards you so it was a case of standing on the foot pegs and riding through. The dear little bike took everything that was thrown at it. We only had one clutch cable snap which was repaired by the mechanics on the roadside. No other bike problems, they were very well maintained. If the bike did not start first kick in the morning one of the mechanics would be there beside you ready to kick start it for you.

We stayed in some lovely hotels, the food was excellent and provided in the price of the trip. We only needed rupees for petrol, beer, chaa, (sweet creamy tea) and coconuts which we would stop and drink by the roadside. At lunchtime we just didn't feel hungry, I think I bought a peanut brittle one day, a bag of crisps another, or on other days maybe had a biscuit or crisp from one of the other riders.

There is a 500 Rupee note valued at approximately £5.00, 10 rupee notes are about 10p. Everything is so cheap to buy. Four of us jumped into a tukk tukk in Kochi and took a longish ride to the sea, I think it cost about 80 rupees. I joined the lady queue to buy tickets for the four of us (the others were way back in the man queue) to take the boat to Kochi old town. I was told it was 160, gave the man a 200 rupee note and he said no, so I gave him a 2000 rupee note worth about £20, he said "no small money". It turned out he wanted 16 rupees for the four of us, four rupees each, about 4p.

I loved the people in India, they were so friendly. We had people waving at us as we rode along, we never felt threatened in any way. I left my tank bag on my bike when I stopped for a drink or a wee but it was still there when I got back, the only time I was concerned was when the monkeys were near.

They snatched my mate Angie's peanut brittle out of her hand and ran off once when we had stopped. I had three of them on my balcony one morning, good job I did not hang my swimming costume out to dry as I think a monkey would have run off with it.

My favourite place was the tea plantations. The twisty roads had fresh tarmac, the scenery was beautiful, and there was not much traffic. I would certainly love to visit again.. We covered about 1250kms about 800 miles on our tour, the most we covered in one day was 300kms about 186 miles. We rode our bikes to our last hotel of eight at Kochi on February 11th. Photos and a big thank you to the mechanics and driver and good-byes to our bikes. We then had a day to rest, sunbathe, read and do a bit of sightseeing before flying out of Kochi airport on the 13th to Dubai, and then on to Gatwick. On the flight there is no longer the need to have a window seat to see out so I chose an aisle seat so I could get up and walk around if I wanted. On the screen in front of you not only can you choose from dozens of films which can be paused or stopped but you can also see how many miles have been covered at what speed. There is also a camera located in front of the plane and underneath so that it is possible to see the view from the front and below.

My visit to India was a truly fantastic experience, I love Enfields. I actually have a 350cc Indian Enfield in trials trim which I can't wait to get back on the road. I made great new friends from Dundee, Newcastle, London, Shropshire and other places. I hope to keep in touch with them and, I am looking forward to my next adventure.



Who's who in the ECMC

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