

VIBRATIONS!



Pete Stimpson's T100. See Page 4

January 2021



Triumph Owners M.C.C.

Northants Branch



Scribblings

Happy new year to all readers.

We can but hope that 2021 will turn out to be completely different to 2020, though I guess that the first few months at least will still be problematic. Fingers crossed that the roll-out of the various vaccines will be swift enough for the spread of this damned virus to be finally brought under control.

My New Year's Resolution will be the same as it has been every year since 1999: To do something I've never done before and to go somewhere I've never been before. April should have seen both parts of that fulfilled. I'm hoping that the former still will be but it's likely that that latter will have to be put back by 12 months (better late than never).

Those of you intending to ride abroad are strongly advised to check up on what's now required for European travel with the UK's Brexit transition almost complete. EHIC cards are about to become redundant so you will need good personal travel insurance. You will be allowed up to 90 days in the EU without having to apply for a visa but you may find that you need at least six months left on your passport. You will probably need a green card from your motorcycle insurer. Then here is the question of whether an existing Euro-Style numberplate (page 8) will still be accepted by the local police, or whether you need to affix a GB sticker.

Hopefully, the website of one of the government departments, or one of the motoring organisations, will produce an easy to read guide to the changes.



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New Members

Welcome to the following new Branch members, who have joined the branch in the last couple of months.

Martin Crook of Brackley

Kevin Gee of Middleton Cheney

Membership Renewals

If your club membership is due for renewal here are the best ways of dealing with it...

- 1) Renew on-line via tomcc.org/Home/Membership with a credit card, debit card or PayPal account. You can also get a £2 discount using this method.
- 2) Fill in the membership form that was sent to you, then post it direct to the HQ Membership address at Horley, as shown on the form. Include a cheque made payable to Triumph Owners MCC.
- 3) Fill in the membership form and hand it to the Branch Membership Secretary at a club night. Payment by cheque or cash. Memberships renewed this way are only sent to HQ a couple of times a month, so will take longer to process than 1 or 2 above.

Don't worry about the money as the Branch receives the same amount per member regardless of the method used to renew.

Northants Branch Info and News

	Events List
All Northants Branch events cancelled until such time as the county moves into a Covid Tier that allows them to take place. Those shown below should be treated as provisional.	
January	The "Chilly Willy" charity ride: cancelled.
Sat 8 th March	Branch Dinner
Wed 17 th March	Branch AGM
Wed 31 st March	5 th Wednesday meeting at Melchbourne
Sun 4 th April	Triumph Owners National AGM
1 st -3 rd May	Trifest Somerset
15 th -16 th May	MCN Show at Peterborough
23 rd May	BSA Open Day
June	Isle of Man TT: cancelled
Wed 16 th June	Branch Concours d'Elegance
Sun 15 th August	Brackley Festival of Motorcycling
Sun 5 th September	Milton Keynes Triumph Owners motorcycle show

Branch HQ:

The Crown, High Street, Hardington, Northampton, NN4 6BZ.

The main access to Hardington village is from the roundabout at the junction of the A45, A508 and A5076 (ring road). Other access from the Newport Pagnell Road (B526).

1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month, starting at 8pm.

Pure Triumph:

Our local Triumph dealer is based at The Embankment, Wellingborough, NN8 1LD. The company's website can be found at www.puretriumph.co.uk.

On production of a current Triumph Owners membership card, Pure Triumph at Wellingborough will give a 10% discount on the following items: Clothing, Oxford Products, Helmets, Oil products, Labour on Servicing.

The Branch on the Internet:

Our website can be found at: www.northantstomcc.org.uk. Most pages are public but there is one small section that is restricted to branch members only, accessed via the password that is advised separately.

We also have Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/northantstomcc/

Northants Branch Info and News

Other Internet Links:

Triumph Owners MCC national website: www.tomcc.org

Triumph Owners MCC events website: www.tomccevents.co.uk

Triumph Owners Clothing: www.tomccmerchandise.com

The club also has a page on Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/4526704577/.

British Motorcyclists Federation: www.bmf.co.uk

Triumph Motorcycles: www.triumphmotorcycles.co.uk

Northants Branch Clothing Range

The range of Northants Branch clothing: T-Shirt, Polo Shirt. Sweatshirt, Hoodie, Fleece, Business Shirt and Baseball Cap; can be purchased on-line.

Some items can also be done with a large back-print for an additional fee.

To order click on this link:

www.customkit.co.uk/northants-triumph-owners-club-52-c.asp

Club Night Ordering: If you would prefer not to go on-line you can place an order with Les Barras at one of our club nights. Your selection should then be ready for collection at the next club night.



I used to wonder why AC/DC had written a song about the M62.

Then I found out that they weren't singing "Highway to Hull".

Honda's 2021 Fireblade is designated as CBR1000RR-R. Try saying all that without sounding like a pirate.

2020: A Marmite Year

Looking back at 2020 from a motorcycling perspective it has certainly been mixed with pleasure and disappointment. No shows, no events and lots of restrictions on us. But great weather and empty roads and, as I was furloughed, the best luxury of all was some time to get out and ride when normally I would be behind a hot laptop rather than a motorcycle.

I didn't go anywhere in particular just enjoyed riding around Northamptonshire with a brief run out into Lincolnshire on my T100 Bonneville.

It also gave me the opportunity to make a few changes, the bike came with Norman Hyde dropped bars, which I did not find comfortable in the dropped position. Fitting upside down worked really well, like we used to do in the 70's with upside down ace bars. These stayed on for early summer.

Surfing the net one evening came up with a rear rack, something I had been thinking about for a while, snapped up at a very reasonable price, it was delivered and was like new. On it went. Which then made me think, one trip to B&Q for the inevitable decorating essentials (a summer of decorating as well!) how was I to bring them home on the bike.

Finding my old top box 1977 vintage, cleaned up it fitted on the rack with minor modifications, even still had a Triumph sticker on from back then. I admit it is a marmite modification, comments ranging from "what is that relic" to "you have ruined the bike". For me the practicality and nostalgia overruled the negative comments and after all it simply unbolts so 5 minutes and the so-called abomination can be removed.

More ride outs and, as it got cooler, I decided to put a screen on I have and back to the original high bars. Now it has been a love/hate relationship with the screen, I bought it after a ride last year when riding in an open face helmet I was hit by a wasp. At first, I thought it had bounced off my face but it had got stuck inside the helmet and made its presence known by stinging me five times on the side of my face. Stopping as quickly as I could to vent my feelings on it that ride was a swift turnaround to put ice on my swollen face.

With the screen fitted and no more wasp problems, I have experienced buffeting at speeds of more than 50 mph which become tedious the faster and further you go. I saw a clip-on wind deflector screen in MCN advertised so sent for the cheapest smallest version. It fitted easily and does not damage the existing screen,

it does look a bit strange but it has been brilliant, adjusted to the highest it has taken away the turbulence up to 75-80 which for the Bonneville is fast enough for me to cruise around on. Again, it seems to be a marmite modification with the same people making similar derogatory comments, it works for me and again takes minutes to remove to turn it back to standard and restore the retro bike looks.



It was not all playing with bike, there were a couple of problems I had. On one ride-out I stopped in Oundle for a drink on a hot day to find the rear number plate swinging in the breeze by one very loose plastic bolt. With almost nothing open I saw a Stationary shop and found some self-adhesive Velcro. The lady was very helpful and cut it to size for me. Sticking the plate back on the bike and with one plastic bolt finger tight it worked perfectly. Back home I added another plastic bolt and have left the Velcro on.

If I ever get another modern bike, I will do this again to fix the plate on as losing a plate would be real nuisance.

2020: A Marmite Year

Another problem was on hot day an engine management warning light came on. I stopped and checked the oil level window, that was ok and it was running well so I ignored it and carried on riding till I returned home. Looking it up on the net the advice was to run the bike three times from cold to hot and it would reset itself, seemed a bit bizarre to me but I tried it and it worked, for a week. Then it came on again and stayed on.

The only thing to do was for a diagnostic check, not wishing to take it in and pay, what seemed a fortune to me, for a laptop jockey my friend had a gadget and app on his phone. He called in and plugging it in read the error codes and reset them. Looking them up it indicated the air pressure altitude sensor was the problem which we found under the seat. Taking it off and blowing through with a bicycle pump then refitting it seems to have cured it, no more warning lights.

What caused this I have no idea and the altitude changes I went through in Northamptonshire can only be a difference of 100-200 feet above sea level, hardly challenging. I will be investing in a similar gadget, possibly a Christmas present to myself.

My worst moment which looking back would have looked very funny to any onlookers involved me taking my old 5T out, starting it up on the stand. I shut the garage door, sat on the bike pushed it off the stand. It then put itself in gear as it hit the ground and I rode straight into the garage door with a bang!

No damage done to the bike, big dent in the door which has mostly pushed back out, huge hit to my pride. Looks like a winter job to see what the problem is. How is it you can put an old bike away working perfectly, not touch it and then, when you come to use it, it has developed a problem? Must be the garage gremlins having fun.

Overall a pleasurable riding year, I know it has been difficult for many and we had our challenging times but motorcycling has been a very welcome distraction and gave me the feelgood factor.

I also added to my Triumph stable with a 3HW dispatch rider's bike, it is only 1/9th scale of the real thing but gave me hours of enjoyment and looks good on the mantelpiece above the fire, motorcycling substitute in the dark nights



Safe riding.

Pete Stimpson



Motorcycling in the Pandemic

A pandemic of unprecedented proportions grips the country affecting just about everything one could think of and no less the motorcycling fraternity.

It is possibly reasonable to assume that, from a health perspective, we bikers have for the most part been keeping in reasonable shape with our heads down and hoping every day to see that glimmer of light in the distance which could just be heralding an end to all this misery. Sadly, not so for everyone, particularly those with an underlying health issue or indeed supporting another family member with similar problems.

Covid 19 rose to the surface about the third week last March when we began the first period of 'lockdown' which as we all know lasted the best part of four months. During this time many sheds and fences were painted, concrete paths laid and decorating projects completed in the home amongst a raft of other things. For some there was the preparation of the bike for the Summer months when things would surely get better?

We all know that for the most part and probably for all the right reasons the events calendar was torn up and we could only participate in a very limited number of outings. For my part it was more than just annoying having taken delivery of a brand-new bike in exchange for a skip full of money at the start of March. I had big plans for touring over the water but alas this was not going to happen and likewise with my long-anticipated trip to watch the TT. Well at least I got my money back but that wasn't really the point.

Here I was with a bike built for touring and nowhere to go but I was a little fortunate to hear an appeal from Northants Advanced Motorcyclists. They were seeking volunteer riders to deliver prescription medicines from Abington Pharmacy to private addresses around that end of Northampton. I joined the team and regularly attended the Pharmacy after lunch to collect a consignment of prescriptions to be delivered during the afternoon. Alight, I wasn't cruising down the Auto routes in France but at least I was legitimately using the bike.

Come the end of August the restrictions had eased and like many others I was able to enjoy some longer rides away from our area but the respite was short lived and by the beginning of November my services were being called upon again. As I am resident in East Northants it made more sense for me to make deliveries from a Pharmacy more local to home and I arranged a transfer to PeCam. (Peterborough Advanced Motorcyclists) and began prescription deliveries around the villages closer to home.



The last of these deliveries was made on the 18th December when the four week second 'lockdown' period had ended but as I write this on 21st December, I am again holding my breath as it appears there is every likelihood of a third period of severe restrictions will be imposed and who knows where it will all end? We are facing a very different Christmas for sure and have all our aspirations pinned on the success of the Covid vaccine in 2021.

As for the Advanced Motorcyclists groups, and there are several in the immediate area, I would advocate that everyone could benefit from further training. No-one knows everything and, in my experience, I did not find the groups I've met to be elitist. Good advice is freely given and passing the advanced test has financial benefits with insurance, it would be for most money well spent.

Keep safe and enjoy your riding in 2021.

Paul Ollett

Road Numbering

A, B and C roads were introduced in 1920's by Sir Eric Geddes, the first Minister for Transport. These denoted importance and, in turn, the budget available to maintain the road (or rather as a means of reducing road maintenance cost! – some things don't change!!).

But the road numbering? Well imagine a clock from London, the A1 heads north at 12 o'clock, and heads to Newcastle and Edinburgh, then we go clockwise, with....

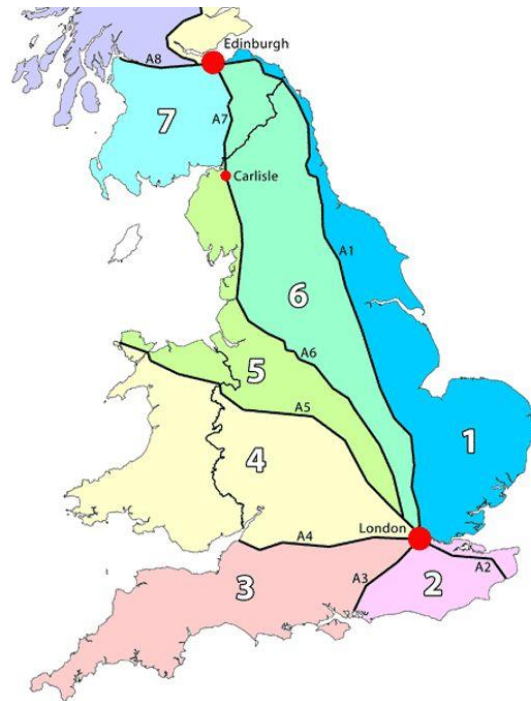
A2 London to Dover

A3 London to Portsmouth

A4 London to Avonmouth

A5 London to Holyhead

A6 London to Carlisle



Motorways, where possible, follow the system too.

On the clockwise side of each road is a zone (the exception being the A2, which uses the Thames estuary!) the further you head out of London the higher the numbers are, with all A-roads starting in zone 1 starting with a 1. For example, A10 London to King's Lynn, increasing up to A19 Doncaster to Newcastle. So, the A66 starts in zone 6.

And roads coming off each of these having a 3 or 4-digit number.

With lots of roads being either renumbered or downgraded over the years there are some exceptions to these, but the general principles still hold true.

Black & Silver Numberplates and Euro Symbol Number Plates

Information released by the DVLA...

Following the change in definition of a historic vehicle for vehicle tax exemption purposes in 2015, an issue was identified in the regulatory requirements for the valid display of a black and silver number plate. This resulted in an unintended consequence where any vehicle over 40 years old and registered in the historic tax class would be permitted to display an old style black and silver number plate. This was despite the law previously requiring all vehicles first registered after 1 January 1973 to only display the yellow and white number plates with black characters.

As this was never the intention, we have sought to rectify this through a legal correction which will shortly be implemented. **The change seeks to prevent any vehicle constructed after 1 January 1980** from the ability to display the black and silver number plate despite being recorded in the DVLA's historic tax class. Those vehicles with a construction date prior to 1 January 1980 will continue to be able to legally display black and silver number plates to avoid any undue costs of replacement.

From 1 January it will no longer be permissible to fix a new number plate displaying a Euro symbol. Number plates already fixed to vehicles are unaffected. We will also be introducing a new British Standard for number plates produced from 1 September 2021 which will mean all current style number plates that are first fixed to a vehicle from that date must meet the technical requirements contained in that standard.