

# VIBRATIONS!



**The A4086 through Llanberis Pass  
Your road of choice for 18<sup>th</sup> July perhaps?**

**May 2021**



**Triumph Owners M.C.C.**

**Northants Branch**



# Scribblings

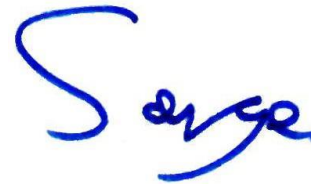
Slowly, things are getting better and, assuming that the government's aspirations stay on track, you will be able to meet indoors from the middle of this month and have all restrictions lifted on 21<sup>st</sup> June.

If that happens then club nights could resume in full as from 7<sup>th</sup> July. To get the branch up and running again the committee will be meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, so if you have any ideas for the future let one of the branch officers know before then.

The Branch AGM, which has been on hold since March last year, is scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> July. There are likely to be a number of changes to the make up of the committee – if you fancy taking a bigger role in the future of the branch now's your chance.

The National AGM is on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July in Snowdonia and all full members will get details from HQ.

Though there are no official branch events until all the Covid restrictions are lifted there is nothing to stop you paying a visit to the Crown on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays as long as you follow the pub's arrangements. Some people are also meeting up for socially-distanced ride outs; which are being advertised via our Facebook page.



33 Argyle Street, St.James, Northampton NN5 5LJ  
Tel: 01604-582468

e-mail: [Sarge.Northampton@btinternet.com](mailto:Sarge.Northampton@btinternet.com)

## New Members

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

Trevor Holman from Podington  
Stephen McEleney from Northampton  
Mark Moore from Higham Ferrers

Ben Morris from Hardingstone  
William Morris from Hardingstone  
Anthony Parkinson from Irthlingborough

---

## 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](http://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

	<b>Events List</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> May	<del>Trifest Somerset</del> Postponed until 2022
14 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup> May	<del>West Wales Rally.</del> Postponed until August
Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Distinguished Gentleman's Ride: <a href="http://www.gentlemansride.com">www.gentlemansride.com</a>
June	Isle of Man TT: cancelled
Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup> June	Committee Meeting. Starts 7.45pm. N.B. This is for branch officers only.
Wed 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Club Night at The Crown
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> July	Triumph Owners National AGM at Llanberis (moved from 6 <sup>th</sup> June)
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> July	Founders Day Rally, Stanford Hall. <a href="http://www.foundersday.co.uk">www.foundersday.co.uk</a>
<b>Wed 21<sup>st</sup> July</b>	<b>Branch AGM. Starts 7.45pm. At The Crown, Hardingstone</b>
Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> August	Club Night at The Crown
Sun 15 <sup>th</sup> August	<del>Brackley Festival of Motorcycling:</del> cancelled
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> August	Club Night at The Crown
27 <sup>th</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup> August	West Wales Branch Rally. <a href="http://www.tomcc.org/Home/Branch/WW">www.tomcc.org/Home/Branch/WW</a>
3 <sup>rd</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> September	<del>Trifest France:</del> cancelled
Wed 1 <sup>st</sup> September	Club Night at The Crown
Sat-Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> September	MCN Festival of Motorcycling at Peterborough. Last year's tickets are still valid for this. <a href="http://www.mcnfestival.com">www.mcnfestival.com</a>
Sun 5 <sup>th</sup> September	ABF The Soldiers' Charity Motorcycle Ride, with Milton Keynes TOMCC. Charity ride to the Triumph Experience. See below. <a href="https://soldierscharity.org/events/abf-the-soldiers-charity-motorcycle-ride-2021/#event">https://soldierscharity.org/events/abf-the-soldiers-charity-motorcycle-ride-2021/#event</a>
Wed 15 <sup>th</sup> September	Club Night at The Crown
8 <sup>th</sup> -11 <sup>th</sup> October	Skegfest. Several branch members have already booked. Are you going to join them? Northants Branch is sponsoring the concours trophies.

**All events are subject to alteration should the government guidelines change.**

### **The Soldiers' Charity Ride**

This event is being organised by ABF-The Soldiers' Charity, Milton Keynes Triumph Owners and The Triumph Visitor Centre in Hinckley. All the money from registration goes directly to the charity.

Open to all bike owners not just Triumphs. REGISTER YOUR INTEREST NOW to be the first to know.

Only 1000 tickets available and an early bird discount for first 300 riders registered.

All registration fee goes to the charity as this is being organised by the Soldiers' Charity and members of Milton Keynes Triumph Club.

Hope to see you there!

**Jacqui Sage-Passant, Milton Keynes TOMCC**

# Northants Branch Info and News

## Branch HQ:

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

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

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](http://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](http://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/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/northantstomcc/)

## Other Internet Links:

Triumph Owners MCC national website: [www.tomcc.org](http://www.tomcc.org)

Triumph Owners MCC events website: [www.tomccevents.co.uk](http://www.tomccevents.co.uk)

Triumph Owners Clothing: [www.tomccmerchandise.com](http://www.tomccmerchandise.com)

The club also has a page on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/groups/4526704577/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/4526704577/).

British Motorcyclists Federation: [www.bmf.co.uk](http://www.bmf.co.uk)

Motorcycle Action Group: [www.mag-uk.org](http://www.mag-uk.org)

Triumph Motorcycles: [www.triumphmotorcycles.co.uk](http://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](http://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.

## The Spanish Incursion (Part 2)

**Tuesday 19th July:** After a good night's kip I get up at nine. Pete asks me if the thunderstorm disturbed me during the night, "What thunderstorm?" I reply. Evidently Pete and Brian had been sitting outside under cover at 1 o'clock in the morning watching this terrific thunderstorm rolling around the hills. Again, I'm the only one who fancies breakfast so I sit down alone to a large coffee, half a dozen slices of lightly toasted French bread, butter, jam and two small sponge cakes. Brian has decided to head for home as he's not feeling too well. So, we pack up and say goodbye to him. Just the three of us carry on south. It's raining a bit and Phil warns us that this will make the roads a bit dodgy.

The original plan was to head for Gibraltar and then across to Altea, as shown by the dotted line on this map, but we've decided to head straight to Altea. The crosses show the overnight stops.



We head south on the N121 to Pamplona. Just south of the town we join the A15 motorway as we've got to do quite a distance today and Phil wants to press on. We fill up just after we get onto the motorway and then ride for another 60 miles or so and pull in for a very large ice-cold Coke. The slip road for the service area is opposite where some blokes are working on the hard shoulder. As I shut the throttle down the leaking exhaust blows back twice. Pete tells me it sounded just like gunfire which explains why all the workmen ducked! The motorway is almost empty - is it because it's a toll road or is it just the time of day? It's early afternoon and the thermometer on the side of the cafe building is reading 33° centigrade in the shade. It's lovely going along on the motorway. My full-face helmet has a five-position ratchet on the visor and, with the ratchet on the first click, I can get a nice draught over my face without any of the dust and bugs. However, I must get some more sunglasses as the glare from the road surface is annoying.

## The Spanish Incursion (Part 2)

The A15 joins up with the A68 which we take to the city of Zaragoza. I'm leading through the city and as we approach one set of lights they change. I brake at what I thought was a reasonable rate but the others didn't think so. Pete raised smoke from his front tyre to avoid hitting me and poor old Phil has a real struggle as his back brake isn't working – well it did this time but not anymore. As we pass through the city this flash Spanish biker comes past on a Yam 250 or 350 LC (short sleeved shirt, shorts, sandals and no lid). In sign language he asks us if we've driven all the way from England and, when we nod in affirmation, he's pretty amazed. His mode of dress made us feel pretty uncomfortable in boots, jeans, leather jackets, gloves and helmets. We stop for another drink on the south side of the city then head out on the N232 which we will follow all the way to the coast

A few miles out it absolutely pours down. One minute we are riding in glorious sunshine, then it clouds over, then whoosh. Soaked! It becomes impossible to carry on but we're out on the Plain (where the rain stays in Spain remember) and there is no cover whatsoever. We pull over on the other side of the road where there is room for the bikes and we don waterproofs just to keep some of it off. There's no drainage here so the water is just streaming down the road. As the lorries come up the hill, they push a bow-wave in front of them. Ten minutes later the rain stops and the sun comes out again. Five minutes later the road has dried out enough for us to carry on without getting wetter (apart from one place where a very muddy stream crosses the road). We stop for more petrol at a garage in the middle of nowhere and the bikes are so filthy they look as if they have just done the Paris-Dakar Rally.



It's not only the Triumph's that are suffering; one of the mirrors on Pete's R100RS has fallen off and is now residing in his panniers. A few miles later we come to a village called Daroca and we stop at a hotel but they are full (or so they say). We have a beer at a cafe just down the road and take some photos of the bikes. While we're there two Swedish registered Suzukis go past. One of them has the most horrible colour schemes I have ever seen. The tank, fairing, side panels, etc, are painted gloss black with fluorescent pink polka-dots! We catch up with them later in the village of Calamocho where they had stopped for a beer at the "Hostel Fidalgo" We stop here to ask if they have any rooms. They do so we book in. Phil and Pete share a twin room and I get a single.

## The Spanish Incursion (Part 2)

I have a shower and then the biggest disaster of the trip so far – I've run out of socks! It turns out that I only brought four pairs with me and I could have sworn that I'd packed the rest – which are probably now sitting on my living room table back in Northampton. I rinse out the dirty ones in the washbasin and hang them on the windowsill to dry. The place we'd stayed at last night was family run and, even though none of them could speak English, they had still been very friendly and helpful. This place was different. It was mostly used by Spanish truck drivers and the staff weren't really interested in us. There didn't seem to be any menu so all we ended up eating that night were a few lack-lustre sandwiches that were on display. We went to bed at eleven and we really want to get an early start tomorrow as we've got a long way to go. Despite using the motorway we've only managed to cover 212 miles today.

**Wednesday 20th July:** Up at eight, a quick wash and shave, then we work out the route for the day. We get going by nine and, as the road is a bit straighter than the last bit of yesterday's journey, the first 100-odd miles soon go by. There were plenty of places to overtake safely and even on the climbs up the hills there were crawler lanes for the slow traffic. It did threaten to rain again but luckily the clouds kept over to the east of us. We stop for petrol about 15 miles from Sagunto and then a bit further on again for beer. We timed that well as the bar opened a couple of minutes after we pulled up. Jesus, it's hot again.

Mileage wise, our journey is half over for today and once we get to Sagunto we will be following the coast road so it should be a bit cooler on the move. A few minutes after leaving the bar Pete overtakes me and pulls in. He tells me that one of my pillion footpegs has vibrated loose. A ridiculous suggestion as, on the T140, the swinging arm fouls the bolt. Anyway, I look down and lo and behold - no footpeg. This could be a problem as the footpeg bolt also acts as a mounting for one of the pannier frames. Phil pulls up after retrieving the footpeg from the road and it turns out that the mounting bolt has not vibrated loose. It's sheared off. Phil grabs a spare nut and bolt from the supply of stuff in his topbox and this goes on to provide a support for the pannier. From Sagunto we take a short stretch of the coast motorway into Valencia. This road stretches for over 400 miles from Alicante via Barcelona to the France border. The only bit missing is the stretch that would by-pass Valencia, for which we curse the Spanish Highways authority. The signposted route for through traffic goes right through all these residential streets, with traffic lights every hundred yards or so, and we are caught in heavy traffic. It's 2 o'clock in the afternoon and we're baking. We all agreed afterwards that getting through Valencia was the worst part of our holiday.

Once out of the city we pull over to the side for a much-needed rest, and also so that Phil and Pete can have a fag. The road we're on now - the N332 – will take us all the way to Derek's place. On the next stretch we come to one of the things I hate most and I'm not amused: a scoured road surface. If you can keep up a decent speed on this sort of surface then it's no problem but you try braking hard on it without your bike following the grooves! I slow down to about 45-50 for this stretch which doesn't please Pete or Phil but I just hate the road surface so much that I'm not going to take any chances with it.

We stop once more about 40 miles from Altea and finally arrive there at about 4.20. We find the block of flats that we've got as being Derek's address. Phil goes off to try and find him while I try and hide behind my bike to get some shade from the sun. I've been there about five minutes when this English chap comes along and asks if I'm having trouble. I say that we are trying to find a friend. He asks what name and, when we tell him, he says he knows Derek & Val and that he's due to meet them at 5pm for a beach barbeque. His name is John and he tells us that they have moved. We were lucky as he now has their old flat. We follow him in his car to Derek & Val's new place and it's greetings all round. They are surprised to say the least when we turn up and, over a beer, we tell them some of our adventures since leaving home.

The three of us get changed into what turns out to be our riding gear for the next week: T-shirt, shorts and trainers/sandals; plus lids as Derek tells us that although most of the locals don't bother to obey the law the Police are quite heavy on foreign bikers riding without them. We follow Derek & Val down to the beach at a place just outside Altea called Greenwich Pool where we meet some of their friends. After a swim and a chat, we get back on the bikes to move to the other end of the beach for a barbeque. As we move off my chain jumps from the rear wheel sprocket. I knew it was loose but I hadn't realised it was that bad! Still, we'd planned tomorrow to give the bikes a quick service anyway. We get the chain back onto the sprocket and ride up to the other end of the beach.

## The Spanish Incursion (Part 2)

Unlike Benidorm, just up the road, all of Altea's beaches are pebble rather than sand which perhaps explains why it has missed most of the tourist boom. Val and Derek cook up the grub and it goes down a treat with a bit of salad and a beer. We stay on the beach until about 8.30 then retreat back into town to a bar called the "Bar Nou" where we meet up again with some of the people we'd met earlier including Brian & Pat who also have a bike: a Honda CB400 Four. Plans are arranged to meet tomorrow morning for a ride up in the mountains. From the Bar Nou we head back to Derek & Val's place, stopping on the way at a Bikers Bar that Derek knows of. He's never been there before but he says that every time he drives past, they wave to him so why not try it tonight? It's a pretty ordinary place really. Apart from the mostly Japanese machines outside you wouldn't realise that it was any different to the other bars in town. Most of them just seem to hang around playing cards.

After one drink we leave there and carry on back "home" but a hundred yards down the road my chain comes off again. This time it jams between the sprocket and the rear shock. We can't just feed it back on this time so, using Pete's headlight to work by, me and Derek remove the connecting link which is luckily just near where the jam is, pull the chain clear, then feed it back onto the sprocket. As we ride back my headlight turns orange; have I got alternator troubles as well? When we finally got back, Val makes us a cup of tea and then it's bedtime. As there are only two rooms Val's son: Peter, sleeps at John's flat. Derek & Val have the bedroom. In the living room I grab some cushions and sheets on the floor, and let Pete and Phil argue over who's having the bed and who's having the sofa.

**Thursday 21st July:** We get up sometime around nine then, after breakfast, we start on the bikes. Here's the state of play... Pete's BMW is temporarily minus a mirror. Phil's Bonnie has a back brake which is seized up. Mine sounds like a disaster with a chain that needs adjusting, an alternator which appears to be on its way out, rumbling mains, clutch slip, a welded-up exhaust pipe (holding strong I might add), panniers braced with a luggage strap, a nut and bolt where the left-side pillion footpeg should go, and I'm having trouble starting the bike after it's been left out in the sun (petrol evaporating from the carbs perhaps). Oh yes, and Derek has discovered that my swinging arm has quite a bit of play in it which probably explains why the bike handled funny on some bends and why the chain has stretched so much.

We set off just before noon with Brian & Pat on their Honda, Derek & Val on their BMW R65, Peter on the back of Phil's Bonnie, John on the back of Pete's BMW and me solo (I wonder why?). With Brian in the lead, we follow some really good roads (or they would be if more of them had tarmac) up into the mountains. We climb probably about 1,000 feet up through various villages and groves of oranges, lemons, almonds and grapes; until we get to this swimming pool. It's a place where people from the local villages come and we really enjoy ourselves there. There is a bar where we have a couple of drinks and we can also watch the swifts scooping dead wasps out of the water. We stay at the pool for perhaps an hour to an hour and a half and then we carry on up the road for another half mile or so to a restaurant. Here, we have been told, we can experience a real Spanish paella and some local wine (local as in the grapes grew outside the restaurant). Well, yes, the paella was alright but I refused to eat the whole baby squid. I mean, they still looked like squid.





## The Spanish Incursion (Part 2)

From the restaurant we could see quite a way down into the valley and across to the other mountains. Most of the slopes had been built up into terraces and planted with the trees that I mentioned earlier. It's obviously the only way that anything could be grown around here apart from the goats and sheep. Just that area we could see must have taken hundreds of man years to build and, as we were to see on our travels on other days, just about every slope in the area around Altea was terraced.



Leaving the restaurant, we returned to the swimming pool and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. Suddenly it was 6.30pm. Where did all that time go? We carried on up the mountain along some more twisty roads with some incredible views to our right. All of a sudden, the road veered left and we crossed over the top of the ridge and it appeared to us as if all the ground on the left had just fallen away, because one second it had been a rising slope the next a drop of perhaps 500 Feet. A bit further on we pulled off the road and Just sat there for 10-15 minutes to admire the view. This place was called Col de Rates and when I checked on the map later its height was charted at about 1,700 feet above sea level.

On the return trip to Altea, Derek & Val showed us the public spring in the town/village of Polop to which everybody in the area has to go with bottles and jugs to get fresh water. Yep, the tap water is unsafe to drink, even for the locals. Back at base and it's starting to get cooler (compared to the middle of the afternoon). I've caught the sun a bit but hopefully not enough to burn (plenty of sun cream). My voice is getting gradually hoarser but I can't think why because I don't have a sore throat or anything. It started a couple of days ago and I can only put it down to the heat and dust when we were on the road. In the evening we head out to another bar for another late night. We leave the bikes behind this time but the only bar within walking distance is on the "Estrada" a fairly modern shopping strip which at night becomes the local red-light area. No, we didn't take up any offers!

**Friday 22nd July:** Don't know what time we got up but it was quite late. After breakfast I walked back down to the Estrada to get some stamps and envelopes from the store. Just after twelve we were ready to go into town but my bike would not start; there Just wasn't enough charge in the battery to fire it up. Rather than fiddle about with it I Jumped onto the back of Phil's bike and we headed off to the fish dock to see John who was trying to catch some fish for tonight's tea. We left him there and went to the beach for a swim (damn pebbles) for an hour or so and then onto a cafe for drinks and Bocadillos (sandwiches). Ordering the food was a trial in itself for Derek. it took him about ten minutes to get it through to the girl behind the counter what he wanted and he was telling her in Spanish! I'd picked up some postcards and got them all written out; Derek will post them later for me.

## The Spanish Incursion (Part 2)

Back to the house and it's so hot that we all strip down to our pants and get hosed down then it's a lazy afternoon indoors hiding from the sun. Suddenly it's about .8 o'clock (where did all that time go?) and supper is ready for us out on the patio. Barbequed fish, pork chops, sausages and salad; washed down with tea and beer. After the meal John drives Phil, Pete and me into Benidorm for the evening. John is blind in his left eye and he drives a right-hand drive Escort over here so that he can line the car up with the kerb.

Well, Benidorm, totally lives up to my expectations. High rise hotels, lots of "English" bars, discos, an overdose of neon signs; and English holidaymakers dressed in their trendy gear. I have to admit though, if all you want out of a holiday is a clean sandy beach, guaranteed sun and late nights then Benidorm does make a perfect resort. I'd just get bored after a couple of days. We end up in a hotel disco until it closes and at midnight it's Phil's birthday – he's aged somewhere between 47 and 50 depending on which official document you read. When the disco closes, we head back to the Estrada in Altea for a last drink and then off to bed. Derek, Val and Peter are already asleep when we come in so we try to get undressed and into bed as quietly as possible.

**Saturday 23rd July:** We try my bike with Phil's battery and it starts up okay so it's definitely the alternator that's the problem. It's a three-phase job perhaps one of the windings has burnt out. Derek says that he'll borrow a battery charger from a friend and put mine on charge overnight. Derek and Val both have to go out to do some work so the rest of us head into town to see John at the fish dock again and then set off to the bike shop to see if they can supply a set of disc pads for Phil's rear brake, and some bolts for my machine. No luck there for either of us but I do manage to get some bolts in a hardware shop just up the road.

Everybody meets up in the Bar Nou for lunch. Derek and Brian start to have an argument about the merits or otherwise of BMWs. Every so often, as the discussion starts to die down, I just throw in a comment or two to keep the entertainment going. After lunch, while the rest of us go back to the house for a siesta, Pete heads for Benidorm on his bike. When he comes back, he's a bit miffed because he says he got out-posed by a couple of blokes on Harleys. Val cooks a Spaghetti Bolognese for supper and then about half nine-ish we set off to meet Brian & Jan at a bar in a village called L'Alfas Del Pi, where we help Phil celebrate what's left of his birthday. The village is about half way between Altea and Benidorm and is named after a pine tree. Pete only stays for one drink then goes off posing in Benidorm again - I'm getting a bit worried about him! When we get back to the house, we have a cup of tea out on the patio. Must be about one in the morning and there's no way we could do that in England just in shorts and T-shirts.

**Sarge.**



**Part 3 next issue.**