



THE AYR CLASSIC NEWSLETTER

June 2022

ISSUE 247

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From the Editor

By the time you read this the club's display at the Burns Museum will have taken place. Hopefully, a volunteer will write an article together with photos for next month's newsletter. Having attended, though not by bike, I was pleased to see that there was a good selection of vintage and modern classic bikes on display and those members who attended did the club proud. We were supported by a couple of other bike clubs who created a good display in the car park and there was also a lot of attention from members of the public who were visiting the museum. We even managed to gain two new members. Well done everybody.

I have not been out on my bike recently as I have hurt my back. This is an old injury (three burst discs) that keeps recurring if I don't watch what I am doing. Unfortunately, I caused it to recur while attending the Bamburgh run. You can read the details later in the newsletter. Hopefully I will recover in time for the Tiger Motorcycle Show on the 2nd July. This is a free event, so come along and support the club.

I had said I would write an article on the effects that Ethanol has had on my bikes, but it will be held over to next month

Many thanks to David Rowell, Jim Hamilton, Owen McGearry, Alistair MacQueen and Drew Robertson for their run reports and articles this month.

Paul Wilkinson

(Front cover: Brian Ballie's Honda 400/4)

Club Member of the Month

Name – **Brian Ballie**

Club Position – **Secretary for the last 10 years** Age - **66**

How old were you when you bought your first bike? – **40**

What was it? – **Honda 400/4.**

Do you still have it? – **Yes. Now owned for 26 years. Only used occasionally**

What do you currently ride? – **Honda CB500X 2015 Model**



How long have you been a club member? - **26 Years**

What is your favourite club event or memory? – **Winter get togethers**

What is your favourite motorcycling memory? – [Passing my test after 12 lessons](#)

Any other information – [I had never owned or ridden a motorcycle until I was 40 years of age. I have also owned a Kawasaki GPZ500 for 6 years and a Honda Cameo Moped for 2 years.](#)

[I enjoy the occasional club run, but I am not keen on the longer runs. I would say I was a fair-weather rider.](#)



Isle Of Man TT 2022 (What to expect and how much to pay) - Jim Hamilton

The Editor: Paul and Dave Rowell asked me to do an article on the IOM TT, so rather than bore you with my trip I decided to write up this guide in the hope it might spark some interest for others to attend. It's something I wish I'd had before I went the very first time.

Firstly, it's not just for motorcyclists with sports-bikes. There are thousands of visitors to the island all on bikes (and cars, campervans etc) of every type. During the week I saw everything from two beautiful Yamaha RD80 LC's, to an RD 500 LC, Suzuki Katana and two 750 Kettles (and many more classics) all the way to custom bikes and Harley Davidsons. Of course, there are thousands of modern machinery of every type, and you can spend hours walking the streets and promenade just looking at all the beautiful machinery on display. So, whatever you have on two wheels it's welcome at the TT.

Getting There – Unless you're lucky enough to have a boat (Ewan Bailey of Tam's Brig Autos I'm jealous), or an unlimited budget for airplane tickets and hotels it's STEAMPACKET all the way. For us it's Liverpool or Heysham, but note Liverpool is the fast ferry (gas turbine drive) and Heysham the one with slaves in the bottom rowing (it's the bigger vessel). The latter is 4 hours and the former 2 hours.

They do have more new vessels on order so I'm sure it will be quicker in the coming years to bring down the journey time. However, take note you need to be booking "1 YEAR in ADVANCE" which will give you plenty of time to save up. I have been on 2am ferries, mid-day and everything in-between. During TT week they are shuttling back and forth. So, when the booking website opens, you need to be faster than a teenager buying tickets for a concert, to get a sensible slot. My advice is just take whatever you can get.

Once you have booked it, a couple of months later people cancel when they realise the cost, or have other commitments and there is another slot where you can go in and change the booking if you want to. Usually to get a better or more comfortable time or more likely to make the Senior race day and not have to come back early.



Waiting at Heysham to board the ferry



They strap the bikes down with ropes over the seat and around the foot-pegs. Expect the return ferry ticket to be in the range of £350

TOP-TIP: Take an old towel to sit over the seat when they strap the bikes down.

Bikes loaded onto the Ferry

What to expect when you get there – When you roll off the ferry PC-PL0D is there in abundance. This is to catch the idiots who think they are Joey Dunlop and make sure everything stays sensible. There is a zero-tolerance policy and speeding is severely punished. Expect to get a £1000 fine for doing 40 in a 30. It's just not worth it and they are everywhere on the island. UK coppers are drafted in for the two weeks (you can easily spot them the IOM PL0D has white helmets) to ensure there is an abundance of available speed

guns etc. This is also to ensure things stay sensible in the evenings and the police are set out all over the island on race days at the viewing locations. While there last week one idiot thought he would cross the road to buy a sandwich during race day. He got a £3,400 fine, one night in jail and sent back home on steam-packet the next day. They don't mess around and safety is paramount making an example at every opportunity. Each morning the radio has a copper, the radio presenter and a minister on the show and they run through all what's happened the day before. This in itself is entertaining, its unbelievable what people do after a few sherberts.

During race days the roads generally close at 10am so you need to get where you want to view the race before this time period. They now open again at 5pm and close again at 6pm until 8.30pm if needed. This is because the weather changes and sometimes they extend the race day to get it all in. Last week this happened to us and your stuck where you started for an extra 3-4 hours there is no point heading back as the traffic is busy. There are a lot of back roads where you can move from one spot to another but the likelihood is you won't get a good viewing spot so my advice is get where you want to be between 7-8am and set up for the day to get the best spot. Although you can watch it on TV, and some clips on YOUTUBE, I can assure you until your sitting 12 inches from the racer when they go past, there is nothing like it in the world. It's incredible what these guys can do and when you see it for real and you have been on the road a few hours before them it's truly amazing.

From just after the gooseneck over the mountain to the CREG NY BAA Pub (about 10-12 miles) there is no speed limit. During TT this is a one-way route only and so if you fancy legally doing 180mph over the mountain you can legally do that. Either way don't go on it unless it's reasonably quiet. There are many riders Dutch, Belgium, Czech, Netherlands, France etc it's amazing all the different countries who attend. Because these guys probably make it once in their life they tend to be the most determined to race the mountain on non-race days. If it's too busy, it's basically dangerous. At the end near the pub PC PLOD is set up with a barrier managing the traffic as the chaos ensues when they all want to stop off for a pint etc.

Subject to weather the set-up is race day, then day off, race day etc. On the off days you can tour the island, or head up to the TT village, or head to the pub or Bushy's (more on Bushy's later on). The TT village is fantastic and it's just behind the racetrack. Unlike other motorsports events you can walk freely through all the race team garage areas. They all have drop down clear screens so if they are busy they pull down the screen so not to be disturbed but if open many don't mind you having a chat with the mechanics, taking photos etc. This is really interesting especially when you see the bikes being worked on and especially the sidecar set-up. The TT village has all the usual merchandise and food you would expect plus live bands, bar areas etc. It's a day out in itself on one of the non-race days.

Bushy's is down at the seafront, £2 to get in and has the best live music, bar's, entertainment etc. You can also try live axe throwing if you're interested (entertaining to watch after the nutters have had 10 pints). It's worth a trip and they have constant bands just like the TT Village. They vary it from rock, to 80's etc and everything in-between. One pub secret only the old school know is the "Terminus Pub". This is on the opposite end of the seafront to the harbour entrance and it's where the racers sometimes go for lunch, dinner etc. Most folk don't know it and it's a nice place with good food well set up inside

and out so this is the place to go when you want a quieter time and the chance to spot somebody famous.

Another good spot is the harbour near the ferry terminal. This has a lot of bars / restaurants and tends to be busy but worth a visit or two. Finally, *TOP TIP: What to take on race days, i.e. Battery Radio, small compact rain jacket, sun-cream, hat, waterproof blanket to sit on the grass verge, compact collapsible seat which I need, water, lunch (all the shops are geared up you buy the sandwiches in the mornings of race days), sweets, block for sidestand parking on the grass & comfortable trainers so you're not in boots all day.*

Finally, if you fancy watching from the main grandstand at the village / start-finish straight it's £50 per day. You can generally rock up the day before and buy your ticket.





Some photos from the grandstand

Accommodation – Hotel, apartments, campsites or motorhomes....Once you book the ferry ticket go get the accommodation. You can usually always manage this if your quick. If you have a motorhome, or a friend with one the campsites are great (also to view the TT) and prices per night range from £20-40 depending on availability and facilities. Many of the farmers gear up well with toilet blocks, cooking tent, scaffolding for viewing in a field and make money not only from the campers but folks driving to the field and watching the TT (see photos below). For motorhomes only, PC PLOD turns a blind eye for the TT and they allow you to park in DOUGLAS either at the harbour or the opposite end (opposite the Terminus pub) for free and no hassle. They won't allow you to stop overnight in the town centre or streets, but both are a short 10-20 minute walk. Ramsay is also a great place to stop for evening entertainment. Most fields charge anywhere from £2-15 to view the TT if you're on a bike (again depends on the facilities there)

Expect an apartment to cost you circa £1000 per head for the week, a hotel probably 10-20% more. Apartments represent the best choice if you can get a group together to lower the per-head cost.



Farmers fields, camping and setting up your spot to watch

Leaving Douglas on the Ferry - Finally on the return home you line up again for the ferry (see photo below). It's usually an early morning start and typically first on means you get a seat on the boat, but your last off the boat. It's influenced by how they load it. But last on usually means first off, but no seat indoors !!! *TOP TIP: On the top of the ferry there is a roof terrace that is three quarters covered in high glass. So, you don't get the wind but get the view and sunshine. It obviously only works on dry days but most folks don't realise it and this is a good place to wind down when leaving DOUGLAS.*



Waiting for the ferry to go home

Below are some useful WEB URL links from this year's 2022 IOM TT which will give you a good feel for events and what it's all about. I hope you enjoy this article and it's made you curious to attend, or re-attend a future IOM TT

Jim Hamilton

[Click here to view the Guest Pack](#)

[the TT Events and Entertainment](#)

[Nights Out Guide](#)

[Days Out Guide](#)

Castle Douglas & Kirkcudbright Run 29th May – Jim Hamilton

To Dumfries, Galloway and beyond ...

We had 10 bikes 10am at Dalmellington (Dave x 2, Paul, Jim, Lyn, Gordon, Robin, Alastair, Andy & John) and it was great to see the classic Triumph and Kawasaki join the more modern line-up for what was to be a sunny excellent run-out.





We headed to Kirkcudbright on the A713 twisty road with the classic bikes holding their own against the modern metal. Once there we were briefly joined by John McKay & Andy Ronnie where we all searched for a coffee shop which was the hardest part of the ride-out. The classic bikes drew the usual visitor attention, comments and feedback while we fended off our hunger.





We then headed out on the SWC300 to visit the Dumfries & Galloway vintage rally which also featured the Galloway Motorcycle Club display. It was notable how many members ran towards it when a Yamaha RD350 started up in competition with the many other vehicles (the RD won the day I'd say for nostalgia and novelty being totally original).



The show was free entry with everything on display from classic bikes, trucks (old / new), cars, tractors and a large display of steam industrial equipment were all running. The sun was shining, we all finally got something to eat and Gordon then blasted us to Girvan via Crocketford, New Galloway and Newton Stewart. Once there we reflected on the 200 mile trip, and all agreed it's a definite for the calendar next year again.



Everyone then headed home around 5pm for what was a fantastic run-out.

Ad-Hoc Run to Oban 5th June – Owen McGeary

I was running late to meet other members at Monkton for the 10 o'clock departure, I arrived with a minute or two to spare. My choice of steed for the run was my 1974 Benelli 650 Tornado. On arrival four other members were already there, which I was surprised at. It was a lovely day and a great destination assuming there would be more members, but we all lead busy lives. David Rowell, John Stewart, Robin Campbell, Davy Anderson and myself had a quick chat before heading up the coast to Gourock to catch the ferry at Hunters Quay. Leaving Monkton, David and John left first. I was delayed by traffic and never caught up with them until they stopped after Largs for the rest of us to catch up. The Benelli's not the best on Dual carriageways and I just sit around 60mph, boring riding plus at 48years old do not like to push the old



girl too much and she's quite a few decades older, and around half the cubic capacity of the other bikes on the run. The run up the coast after the end of the Ardrrossan bypass to Gourrock was very nice apart from a bad accident at Inverkip where we were delayed, a car was on its side in the road and emergency services were dealing with the situation. A short wait at the ferry terminal and we were off, on the short crossing, we had the good fortune to have the PS Waverley pass in front of the ferry, most of the ferry passengers were out with their phones to capture the event.



I always enjoy the run from Hunter Quay round to Inveraray and it was truly superb that day, sun shining, scenery great, road not busy which was a surprise. Plus, the Benelli was running very nicely. There was a slight problem with the front brake which was grabbing if I squeezed the lever too hard. Have to get the wheel off and inspect the shoes and drums for some fettling. The joy of classic bike ownership lol, it was my intention to only go as far Inveraray. But after arriving and having a short rest and something to eat, I decided to carry on to Oban. I was having too much fun and it's been quite a few years since I've been in Oban.



The town was quite busy with bikes and tourists, with various people stopping to ask about the Benelli. We took a circular route on the run back to Inveraray on superb roads. Short stop at Inveraray for a bite to eat and, nice run back to Hunter quay arriving just to miss the ferry. But time to stretch my legs and get some feeling back into my bum lol. The rundown the coast home was nice, I noticed the broken glass etc, at Inverkip where it had been swept up to the side of the road when passing after the morning's accident. I hope nobody was seriously hurt. Stopped in Largs for fuel with the rest of the group heading on home. On arriving home at just after 8pm with over 270 miles added to the Benelli, a very enjoyable day if a bit saddle sore lol.



Coffee Morning Run 8th June – Paul Wilkinson

Following the success of the club's first coffee morning for retired motorcyclists, it was decided that the venture should continue. The venue this time was the Hayes garden Centre near Symington. Unfortunately, on the day, the weather decided not to co-operate and heavy showers were a constant threat. This resulted in 11 members attending and all by car.

It was good to see George Campbell and wife Ellen present; they had missed the first one as they had written the wrong date in their calendar. Senior moments come to us all eventually! Also present this time was Brian Ballie, who can confirm that the cream scones were delicious.

Having visited venues East and North of Ayr the next one will be South. A number of cafes have been suggested by both Janice McGeechan and David Wilson. I just need to try them out, select one and let you all know where and when.





Present – Ricky Leiper, Brian Ballie, David Wilson, Owen McGeary, Ian Howie, John Stewart, “Taffy” Bee, Paul Wilkinson, Robin Campbell and George & Ellen Campbell.

Bamburgh Run 12th June – Paul Wilkinson

Last year a week before the Bamburgh Run for flat tank & girder fork motorcycles was due to take place, the event was cancelled due to new Covid-19 lockdown restrictions In England. As my friend Raymond, who was loaning me a 1928 BSA Sloper, and I had a hotel booked we decided to attend anyway. I had such an enjoyable time riding along the country lanes of Northumberland that I decided to go again this year. This time though I would be riding one of Raymond’s other bikes, a 1932 Rudge.

The Bamburgh Run starts and ends in Etal a charming village with white painted houses, a thatched pub and a castle. The first run was 34 miles and it would meander across country passing the site of the Battle of Flodden Field before arriving at Wooller where coffee and scones were being provided by the Woman’s Institute. The return to Etal could be taken either via a short route of 22 miles or a more taxing one for some of the older machines of 42 miles. Lunch was then provided in the village hall.

82 motorcycles were entered and there was an excellent selection of vintage and veteran British motorcycles. The oldest was a 1902 Clement Garrard Model B ridden by one of our former members John Shaw. The youngest was a 1946 Norton 16H.



John Shaw on his 1902 Clement Garrard

Unfortunately for me, the journey in Raymond's Ford Transit from his home in Portobello to our hotel in Coldstream proved to be a distance too far for my back. I ended up in pain and struggling to walk upright. When we ventured out for dinner on the Saturday night I felt like a teenager again – I couldn't bend over far enough to fasten my shoelaces and had resorted to tucking them inside my shoes!

On the Sunday morning I didn't feel any better, but said I would try to take part. Unluckily or perhaps in this case luckily for me the Rudge would not start. Raymond offered me his Velocette and I did ride it to the registration point, but I felt insecure and decided that it was probably best if I didn't ride. Thankfully the organisers took pity on me and I was able to travel the route with the official photographer.



Overall, I enjoyed the weekend and there were some beautiful old bikes to view, including one I had never heard of – a Duzmo. There was also a New Hudson, which seems to be the manufacturer that keeps appearing in the newsletter. It was just a pity that I wasn't fit enough to participate. Perhaps next year?





Ad-Hoc Club Run 12th June – Alastair MacQueen

It wasn't the greatest of forecasts and indeed it was pouring down at 08:30 hrs in Prestwick. Fortunately, the rain subsided and I made my way to the Monkton meeting point. Gathered there were 5 bikes and 6 hardy people who had all braved the weather;

Campbell – Triumph Tiger, Gordon – Suzuki V-Strom 1000, David Rowell – BMW R1200 GS, Alastair – HD Electra Glide Ultra Classic, Andy & Laura – Honda Blackbird with Charnwood Sidecar.

There were black clouds to the North of us but more favourable conditions to the South. So, the general consensus of opinion was to abandon the Aberfoyle run and head to Port William.

So, we headed down the A713 to New Galloway then turned right onto the A712 towards Clatteringshaws. After a brief toilet break and leg stretch at Clatteringshaws, we kept heading west on the A712 to the A75.



We came off the A75 at the southbound A714 before picking up B roads and finally reached Port William. This was my first visit to Port William and I was impressed by beauty of the place. Half the team had lunch in the 'The View' café. The food was excellent, the staff were incredibly welcoming and attentive and the café was very popular judging by number of people. I would definitely eat there again.



After lunch we headed for a petrol stop at Newton Stewart, thereafter we continued North up the A714 towards Girvan. We stopped at the beach side café at Girvan for a quick coffee before the homeward legs. Dave, Alastair and Andy continued to Ayr / Prestwick via the coast road and the Electric Brae.

All in all, a really enjoyable day out, good riding, good food, good company. We rarely got rain, usually only after we left a stop point and encountered little traffic. 151 miles in total.

Special Awards;

1. Bike of the Day – Has to go to Andy for his amazing looking sidecar setup.
2. Numpties of the Day – Has to go to Alastair, Dave & Andy for being creamed by a KTM 125 on the coast road to Ayr. In our defence we were merely meandering

The Sculptor's Oldest Apprentice (Part 1) – David Wilson

When John McKenna discovered that I had experience of metal working and welding, he suggested I might like to do a bit of work with him on his latest sculpture.

Before I got started, I was given a thorough Health and Safety briefing and a tour of the workshop.

Over the years, I've made many a thing in the school Technical Department, but never shoes!

After another full training session on the 2.5m/8ft+ width guillotine and the mechanical folding machine, John suggested that I should make the front of a giant boot from sheet stainless steel.

I was left to my own devices to figure out what to do next!

My work must have been up to scratch because John successfully welded the piece to the rest of the boot and the footwear began to take shape.

I spent many days during the next six years, marking, cutting and folding metal triangles and rectangles to be welded into place for the Shipbuilders of Port Glasgow.



Cutting box section metal pieces for the ship hulls was also time-consuming as they had to be accurately cut at compound angles for the coded welder to join together.

Being a man of many talents (or a Jack of all trades), John decided I would be able to turn my hand to statue installations too. A sculpture of a coal miner was installed at Allanton in North Lanarkshire, followed by Bobby Lennox's sculpture at Saltcoats, then recently the sculpture of World War Two hero dog Khan, at Strathaven.



John McKenna

(Part 2 next month)

Ad-Hoc Club Run 19th June – David Rowell

After our big run to Oban 5th June, a couple of the guys were excited to go north again on Sunday. I only got responses from Alex MacQueen and Jim Hamilton on WhatsApp and recognising members might be going to the Drumlannrig Motorsport Festival, the three of us set out from Monkton promptly at 10:00h. Alistair was riding AL03 HOG another Harley Davidson, whereas Jim was taking his Ducati Multistrada V4 on its maiden voyage. Concern about new bike issues were quickly dispelled once we realised even 'running in' he outperformed both of us, not that we were in any hurry.



No way to hurry through the slow-moving traffic alongside Loch Lomond so we were ready for a wee leisure break at The Green Welly Stop, to relax and reflect upon the next part of our journey through Glencoe and beyond. It was overcast when we set off up the glen, but although rain threatened it never fell on us and we were blessed with easy passes and steady progress. Alistair had previously suggested we loop around to Kinlochleven, but after a fuel stop we decided it was best to keep moving, taking the A828 to Oban. We stopped for lunch at the Appin View overlooking Castle Stalker, which featured in Monty Python's Search for the Holy Grail in the role of *Castle Aaaaarrrrrrggghh* <https://youtu.be/2PckeXD7Xyc>

We bypassed Oban heading straight down to Inveraray in light traffic taking full advantage of the sweeping bends on the A85 and always engaging A816. Another rest stop in Inveraray, where Alistair assumed celebrity status amongst the grannies who were impressed with his big 'chopper'. There were just too many BMW's and even the magnificence of Jim's Ducati were eclipsed by Alistair, so he was definitely our star turn.



We missed buying ferry tickets at Cairndow, so expected to have to pay £11.70 for a single return journey, but we were able to buy books of tickets on board for £29.70 or less than £6 per journey and better than online, avoiding postage.

The promised sunshine greeted us when we landed at McInroy's Point, so Alistair suggested one last leisure break on the seafront at Largs, which didn't disappoint - thanks for the ice cream Jim. This was a good way to end our 255-mile glorious run through the glen, which by some strange coincidence was the same mileage as we covered on our Oban round trip.

I saw from Facebook there was at least one other group of grumpy old men out and about in the borders, great to see more ad hoc club run activity.

Technical Article – Drew Robertson

We can't lay claim to being the healthiest club in the land, someone even suggested we should change our name to the Ayr Bypass Motorcycle Club. Kicking and screaming I too recently joined the ranks of ACMC pill-poppers. However herein lies a problem, many people have difficulty swallowing handfuls of pills. I don't know why even in nursing circles the simple remedy is not known -- use blood temperature tepid water to wash pills down. Bit obvious really, the oesophagus doesn't tighten or react. Not only is this trick efficacious with 'seniors' such as ourselves, but also with kiddies -- though I'm finding the distinction more and more blurred as years progress.

Events Calendar

Date	Event
26th June 2022	Glenbuck Heritage Village Approx 40 miles Cumnock Bus Station at 10:00
2 nd July 2022*	Tiger Motorcycle Show Kilmarnock Rugby Club, Queens Drive, Kilmarnock
10th July 2022	Isle of Whithorn Approx 120 miles Dalmellington lay-by at 10:00
17 th July 2022*	Sound of Singles VMCC Clyde Valley Meet at Big Red Barn Café (junction A702 & A721) at 10:00am
24th July 2022	Inveraray Approx 150 miles Girvan at 9:00 and Monkton at 10:00
7 th August 2022*	Dam Bike Run Lothian & Borders Classic & Vintage Motorcycle Club Eastgate Car Park, Peebles
7th August 2022	Peebles & St Mary's Loch Approx 160 miles Cumnock Bus Station at 10:00

Items in **bold** are club events. * Alternative event, sometimes on club run days.

Club Tools

The club owns a selection of tools which are available for borrowing by club members.

To borrow tools, please contact Ian Howie (pictured)
M: 07792 827 835

In addition, some members may have specific workshop tools that are relevant to the marques they are interested in. Contact the specialist for more information.



Valve Lifter
Engine compression tester
Battery Charger
Oil Filter Wrench
3 Jaw Ratchet Wrench
Multimeter
Carb Balancer (4,3 or 2)
Impact Driver
Norton Clutch Tool
Tyre Bead Breaker
Motor Cycle Wheel balancer

Gudgeon Pin Remover
Torque Wrenches, Med& Large
Voltmeter Ohmmeter (self powered)
3 Prong Puller
Set of Circlip pliers
2 Micrometers
Timing Disc
Set of Taps
Norton Exhaust C Spanner
Chain Breaker and Riveter
Valve Grinders (suction cups with paste)

Contacts / Useful Links

Chairman	Ricky Leiper E: rix37@hotmail.com T: 07866 468 222
Vice Chairman	Robert Mitchell E: Robert.mitchell@bt.com T: 01292 443 891
Secretary	Brian Ballie E: bbaille44@yahoo.co.uk T: 01292 289 518
Treasurer	Stuart Miller E: stuartmiller3@hotmail.com T: 01292 475 909
Membership Secretary	Paul Wilkinson 5 Roebank Road, Beith KA15 2DX E: membershipsecretary@ayrclassicmc.com T: 07753 951 061
Newsletter Editor	Paul Wilkinson E: newslettereditor@ayrclassicmc.com
Runs Co-ordinator	David Rowell E: rowell-d@sky.com T: 07836 573 743
Show Co-ordinator	Robin Burnside E: jan.ayr@sky.com T: 01292 284 174

Club Website – <https://ayrclassicmc.com/>

Club Facebook Page – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AyrClassicMotorcycleClub/>

Club Flickr Photo Stream – <https://www.flickr.com/photos/ayrclassic>