



THE AYR CLASSIC NEWSLETTER

May 2023

ISSUE 258

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From the Editor

I have just returned from a week's holiday in Italy. Stresa on Lake Maggiore to be exact. During my time there, I saw lots of motorcycles. BMW with GS's and a few K's being the most prominent. Harley Davidson were next and then there was a plethora of multi cylinder Japanese, followed by Triumph and Royal Enfield twins. I only saw two Italian bikes, both being Moto Guzzis and one of those was in a restaurant! Where were Ducati, Aprilia, Benelli, MV Augusta and the rest?



Unfortunately, this month's newsletter does not contain the usual variety of articles and is heavily reliant on the run reports. I have included all of the articles that I have been provided with, so, perhaps for next month some of you might be inclined to put finger to keyboard or pen to paper in the interests of maintaining our earlier standards.

And finally, I would like to thank the following for their contributions this month – David Rowell and Niall Sommerville.

Paul Wilkinson

(Front cover: Colin McKeller on his Yamaha XJ900)

Club Member of the Month

Name – **Colin McKeller** Club Position – **Member**

How old were you when you bought your first bike? – **I was 19 years old and living in London. I decided that I wanted my own transport and thought that a motorbike was a good idea.**

What was it? – **It was a 1967 BSA Bantam D7. It's a 175cc two stroke with a 3 speed gearbox and direct lighting.**

Do you still have it? – **No. Even at 19 years old and totally inexperienced in anything mechanical I knew it was a dreadful bike and I traded in it after 6 weeks to the same dealer in exchange for a 1963 Panther Model 45 with a Villiers 2 stroke twin engine. What a difference it was. The Panther was a fab bike. The BSA cost £55 and I got back £30 as a trade in against the £90 Panther**

What do you currently ride? – **I have two bikes. The first is a 1987 Yamaha FJ1200 and I've had that for 14 years and done 28K miles on it.**



The other is a 1999 Yamaha XJ900 and I've had that one for about 6 years and done about 19K miles on it.



How long have you been a club member? – **Not sure. Ask the membership secretary lol**

What is your favourite club event? - **I've always enjoyed the club runs to the Kirkcudbright shows**

What is your favourite motorcycling memory? – **It was with my Panther Model 45. I had only been riding for about 4 months on L plates when I decided to take the bike home to Glasgow from London. I was 19 years old and those were the days before sat-navs and mobile phones.**

I set off with nothing more than a book of AA maps and youthful innocence as I didn't pack any tools or spares. As I was on L plates I couldn't go on the motorways so had to use all the back roads.

Amazingly about 12 hours later I arrived at my parent's house, a bit saddle sore, after covering over 500 miles in that day.

On the way home, I split it into two days. On the first leg I got caught in torrential rain so I stopped off at a pub for lunch. I emptied the water out of the cowboy boots that I was wearing and filled my boots with beer mats before heading out again. The sun then came out and there was steam coming off my clothes as they dried out. I got back to London and the chain snapped. Hardly surprising as I never knew to lubricate or adjust the chain.

Any other information – **I've fitted new Hagon shocks to both of my Yamahas so I might be able to keep up with the other riders this year as the handling is now much improved.**

A previous motorcycle I owned was a Mark 3 Norton Commando that I bought in 1981 for £800. I used to do 14,000 miles a year on it for a few years.



I also owned a 1957 Panther Model 600 which I passed my test on after quickly adding a sidecar the day before my test. I upgraded the Panther as I was using it daily, so I made an instrument panel to which I fitted a clock, voltmeter and ammeter. It had 12v electrics, coil ignition, Japanese switchgear and indicators, as well as a new Amal carb and it would do 80mpg.



Wanlockhead & Leadhills Run Sunday 30th April – David Rowell

Wanlockhead Wild & Wet probably sums this one up! It was a nice surprise to see the magnificent 7 riders at muster in Cumnock. We only have 6 in most of the photo's because there were no members of the public available to take our picture.

Thanks to Taff Bee; John Stewart; Andy Chalmers; Lyn Dorrington; David Tudhope; Alistair Hamilton (and me) for turning out and heading off down the road to the Leadhills. On our way down the A76 we could see that the cloud base was low and the hills were shrouded in mist & rain, but we carried on anyway.



Without question the Menzies Pass is one of the most stunning roads in Scotland, but to fully appreciate it - you have to see it! We took the turn off the A76 anyway and headed for the hills, surprised to encounter several groups of wild campers. My earliest memory of the Menzies Pass is being pulled out of Menzies Water by the ankles as a toddler, after looking too closely for gold in the gravel.

No gold panning for us though, we were only concerned to get out of the wet & into the dry of the Museum of Lead Mining Cafeteria, which was like an oasis in the desert, except it was still wet outside. There's something special about getting back on your bike with a soggy bottom, but despite all of these deprivations we made our way back to Cumnock via Abington and Douglas in good spirits.

It was a relatively short run, just over 100 miles for me door-to-door and I would be happy to do it all again tomorrow, weather permitting!?

Ad Hoc Sunday 7th May – David Rowell

I almost didn't bother posting advance notice of ad hoc Sunday, the weather forecast for the weekend was not good! My first forecast Thursday was still hopeful, seeing as in the past days forecast good days were usually bad and bad days not much better. I had

actually passed up a run up to Oban on Thursday, because of the forecast - then spent a mostly sunny day regretting my decision.

So, on Friday I posted again on Facebook M&F "ACMC Ad hoc Sunday 7th May at 10:30h we are heading north, subject to weather, into Argyll" and repeated this determination through WhatsApp to the informal runs group. I'll take this opportunity to remind members that we are into our runs season, so let's focus 'chat' on outings.

On Sunday there were 9 motorcycles and 10 riders at muster in Monkton, namely Alistair Hamilton; Daniel Gourlay; Gordon & Jackie Fodder; Gordon McNair; Lyn Dorrington; David Tudhope; John Stewart; and myself. We enjoyed a brief encounter with Dave Anderson and Robin Campbell in Inveraray, so you could say we had 11 riders on ad hoc Sunday!



We enjoyed some additional tactical challenges in planning, because Alistair's wee Aprilia RX125 had limited fuel capacity and despite recorded fuel economy up to 100mpg we didn't want to leave him at the roadside 🚗 or having to pay big John's price premium for his reserve fuel. Speaking of John Stewart this was his first serious outing on his Honda X-ADV 750 Adventure ~~Scouter~~ sorry motorcycle. Much as expected the only real problems encountered were restraint, as John was having a great deal of fun swinging his 'new' bike through the bends, jumping away from traffic controls thanks to the DCT transmission AND fighting off admirers whenever we stopped - they liked his new Honda too!

I had minor (major) disappointment just beyond Largs to discover the twisties on the A78 had been limited to 40mph, you didn't need to speed to have great fun on this section of road and even 50mph could be challenging, but we have to move with the times and observe road safety measures. Just a wee reminder that when new speed limits are introduced, enforcement measures follow.



Anyway, straight off the boat we were greeted by sunshine in Argyll and it just got better, so much so that by the time we got to Inveraray we didn't want to turn around and go home. So, after a brief discussion, we decided to go to Oban and our day just got better.



After a brief stopover for 'seefood' an old joke about my diet, we set out on the A816 back to Inveraray through Lochgilhead. I can't fully describe how fabulous that road can be as the sun is dropping and the views over Loch Melfort take your breath away, then you have to focus back on the road as the tight bends require your full attention.

After another brief stop in Inveraray, we got back on the road only to discover that the fuel station in Strachur was shut, anyway Alistair made it down to Dunoon and John didn't extort any money for his reserve fuel - he is another worrier, or an entrepreneur - remember oil prices are falling.



Just like on our way we drove straight onto the ferry and reflected on how great a day we had just had, made even better by the fact it was not expected!

Coffee Run, 10th May – Paul Wilkinson

Nine members, plus Owen's wife Jacqueline, were present at the Puffers Café, Irvine. We were also joined by Barry Sharrock and three of his Cumbrian friends who were touring the West of Scotland from a base at Largs. As usual good company and food.



Kirkcudbright & Dumfries 14th May – David Rowell

This run was originally scheduled to go to Kirkcudbright and then come home taking in the Dumfries Motor Show, except for the fact this show is scheduled 13th August and not 14th May. Furthermore, the weather forecast for this run was not so good, so I was pleasantly surprised that we had 12 motorcycles and 13 riders at muster in the A713 lay-by outside Dalmellington.



First to arrive were Fred & Pat Parslow on his venerable Honda Goldwing, which he treats with the utmost respect - see later. Next in was Alan Johnson, then Taff Bee, followed by Campbell McCreath, Kevin McGuire, Colin Grant (new), Gordon McNair (old), John Stewart, David McLeman, Mark Cairns, Andy Chalmers and myself. Fred headed off early, recognising we might have difficulty keeping up with his steady pace, which was true - we didn't catch up until just after Bates Motel (not really but it always reminds of somewhere crazy people might live). Talking about crazy people, before the group had the opportunity to 'safe pass' Fred & Pat three outriders elected to strike out ahead, but we managed to lose them by taking the B795 while they waited patiently for us to arrive at their drop-off at a different junction with the A75 and we arrived in Kirkcudbright before them.





Talking about late arrivals it was good to see Robin Campbell rolling into town, as we were queuing up for our bacon rolls - why are the cafes in Kirkcudbright always shut - they were good rolls though. We enjoyed our brunch al fresco, since despite uncertain weather being forecast, we only saw a slight 'spotting' of rain on the way down and it was blue skies & sunshine in the 'artists town'.

I did a wee circuit of the historic buildings on my way out of town, but Gordon & Kevin were waiting patiently for us on the A711 to Dundrennan, so we didn't lose much time - until we got to Dalbeattie, when Taff went straight onto the A711 to Dumfries, while the rest of us headed onto the A710 along the Solway Coastal route to Dumfries, or so we thought? Gordon had dropped off at the A711 & A710 junction in time to see Alan, Mark,

Colin and Andy taking the direct route to Dumfries, while myself David, John and Kevin headed east along a potholed A710, until Kevan pulled us back to Dalbeattie saying we must have taken the wrong road!?

Of course, back in Dalbeattie, meeting up again with Campbell & Gordon, we realised our 'wrong road' was the 'right road', so we set back along the A710 Solway Coastal route with the added bonus of knowing where the worst pot holes were located - they were very bad pot holes and we swore at a lot of them, but this did not make them any better. It was on this leg of our journey we noticed many of the cars coming towards us had wipers feverishly clearing windscreens of 'heavy' rain, but none of it was falling on our heads, so we stayed dry! We arrived in Dumfries, just in time to meet up with Fred & Pat again - they were staying ahead of us all the way.

At least they were, until a battery fault shut their Goldwing down. I managed to see this from afar, on my way back from the public toilets, so was able to maintain my dignity while Gordon and the guys bump started over 300kgs of Honda. Fred & Pat then gingerly set off for home and seeing as we didn't see them again, I'm assuming they made it back without requiring assistance.

Then we set about helping big John find the cafe he was looking for, until we realised his cafe was in Newton Stewart and we were in Dumfries, such an easy mistake to make. So, we found a cafe that was open and had more tea & cakes, before setting off for home, parting company with those guys from Girvan, when they stopped for fuel.



David, John and myself then enjoyed a brisk run up the A76 heading home on wet roads and although I couldn't run with my visor open, it was still not wet. This was another club run that greatly exceeded expectations, proving once again that any day is a good day to ride a motorcycle.

Ad Hoc 21st May – David Rowell

Just another Sunday with an uncertain weather forecast ... we were riding our luck on our scheduled run the prior week, despite staying mostly dry - it might be more accurate to say we stayed 'moistly' dry. Despite riding under dark skies, we enjoyed running along parts of the South West Coastal 300 and dispersed in good spirits just north of Dumfries.

Amongst thirty-four (34) WhatsApp chats on Sunday night was a discreet suggestion from Alan Johnson to go up Glencoe on Ad Hoc Sunday 21st May? This idea was picked up by regular runners, despite adverse weather forecasts - so starting Monday we promoted heading for the Highlands on both Facebook and WhatsApp.

On Saturday the weather forecast had not improved and I mustered at 10:30h on Sunday half expecting to be home by 11:00h. Thankfully Alan Johnson; Mark Cairns; Lyn Dorrington; John Stewart; Jim Hamilton and David Tudhope thought differently and showed up ready to go. Except for Dave Tudhope who discovered on his way up from Girvan that the old tyres on his newly acquired 1993 Kawasaki KLE500 had an aversion to wet roads, so he did head straight home.



The rest of us headed north, with our hopes exceeding our expectations, but right from the start we stayed dry, as the weather improved mile by glorious mile, until we were

cruising along under blue skies, enduring temperatures approaching 20c.

I think we enjoyed the dividend of the uncertain weather, because traffic was light and progress was good - until Tarbet when I turned left on the A83 towards Oban, instead of right on the A82 beside Loch Lomond. I then spent 5 miles arguing with my SatNav, before pulling in to apologise to the group and turning around to get back on the right road. In fact, this error meant we caught a cloud and for 5 minutes were spotted with rain, but not enough to get wet!

We endured the customary holiday tour buses and camper vans until Ardlui, then the A82 opened up and the sun shone down, until we stopped for refreshments and fraternisation at the Green Welly Stop, in Tyndrum.



From there we enjoyed ideal weather for motorcycling, stopping at the Loch Tulla viewpoint to entertain the tourists by getting them to take our pictures - I think you can see some highland scenery in the background, we were having fun!





I'll not attempt to replicate our impressions of the drive through the glorious Glen' but it was even better than I remembered and a new experience for some of the guys! We stopped for fuel in Glencoe Village, then followed the A828 past the Ballachulish Hotel, heading for Oban, taking in the Appin views and Castle Stalker.



We stopped again in Oban, before continuing down the coast to Lochgilphead, taking on the 'twelve bends' and taking in the stunning views of Loch Melfort. After a welfare stop in Lochgilphead, we passed straight through Inveraray to catch the ferry from Dunoon to Gourock, crossing the wake of PS Waverley. Thereafter I had 42 miles to get back to Monkton, Alan had 56 miles to Cumnock and Lyn 68 miles to reach Girvan. My run was 300 miles and Lyn must have covered nearly 350 miles, but everyone was happy to have ignored the sensible options and gone for glory.



Coffee Run, 24th April – Niall Sommerville

Another good event was held at the Coo Shed. 21 members attended and most were on bikes with just Ian and spouse, plus a couple more in cars.







For Sale

Matchless G3LS

Owned by Club Member, the late Jim Corney, since 1976 and seen at many Club runs and Shows over the years. Always well maintained and reliable, this 1957 350cc machine starts and runs well, shifts through the gears easily, and with all electrics working (new battery installed), although may need a new headlamp bulb. Not concourse by any means, but a solid genuine bike which would tidy up nicely. Walkaround video available with engine running. Various untested parts available (some NOS). £3300. On behalf of the family, in first instance contact Nigel on 07714182437.







Events Calendar

Date	Event
7 th June 2023	Coffee Morning Run to Boswells Coach House Café Meet at 11:00am
11th June 2023	Glenbuck Heritage Village Run Approx 40 miles Meet at Cumnock Bus Station at 10:00
17 th June 2023	31st Scottish Classic Motorcycle Show The Princess Suite, Ayr Racecourse, Ayr 10:00 to 16:00
17 th June 2023*	Rock "n" Roll Run VMCC Clyde Valley Meet at the Oven, Overton Farm, Rosebank at 10:00
18 th June 2023*	Father's Day Vintage Vehicle Rally Scottish Railway Preservation Society Bo'ness & Kinnell Railway EH51 9AQ
18 th June 2023*	62 nd Annual Jimmie Guthrie Memorial Run Hawick & Border Motorcycle Club The Green, Denholm, Hawick
21 st June 2023	Coffee Morning Run. Venue to be confirmed.
25th June 2023	Tyndrum and the Green Welly Stop Run Approx 180 miles

	Meet at Monkton at 10:00
23 rd , 24 th & 25 th June*	Bob McIntyre Memorial Classic races East Fortune Raceway
24 th & 25 th June 2023*	Moffat Classic Car Rally Moffat & District Motor Club Showground, Hammerlands, Moffat
9th July 2023	Isle of Whithorn Run Approx 120 miles Meet at Dalmellington 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

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

Club Facebook Members and Friends Group –
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ClassicMCCMembersAndFriends>

Club Community Page - <https://www.facebook.com/AyrClassicMotorcycleClub>

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