

Shetland Classic Motorcycle Club Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2015



*** FROM THE SADDLE ***

Well as the old saying goes, "Da wadder dis simmer haes been naethin ta write hame about"! Nevertheless, although some of the runs have been changed from that intended; there have been no cancellations and most, if not all, have gone according to plan. Unfortunately I have missed a few, but those I have been on have been very enjoyable and fairly well attended. I am also pleased to say that on several occasions we were joined by one or more lady riders, a trend which we hope continues in the future.

The highlights for me have been the evening run to the remote croft o Littlure in Walls and the recent marathon Four Pointer which surprisingly turned out to be one of the best attended, but more of that later. Oh and dare I mention the West Burrafirth run in May when, due to an error in communications that was mainly down to me, several of us strayed from the beaten track a bit further than intended. However, despite many a slither and swander, we all made it safely back, and I'm sure the splendid feed, so kindly provided by Laurena at Hebrista, more than made up for the misanter!

The second last run was to see Mike Mill's very interesting bike collection at Reawick – appreciation to follow! With time wearing on, we are now into autumn and fast approaching winter and club night territory, so check out the dates and make sure you don't miss out on any of them.

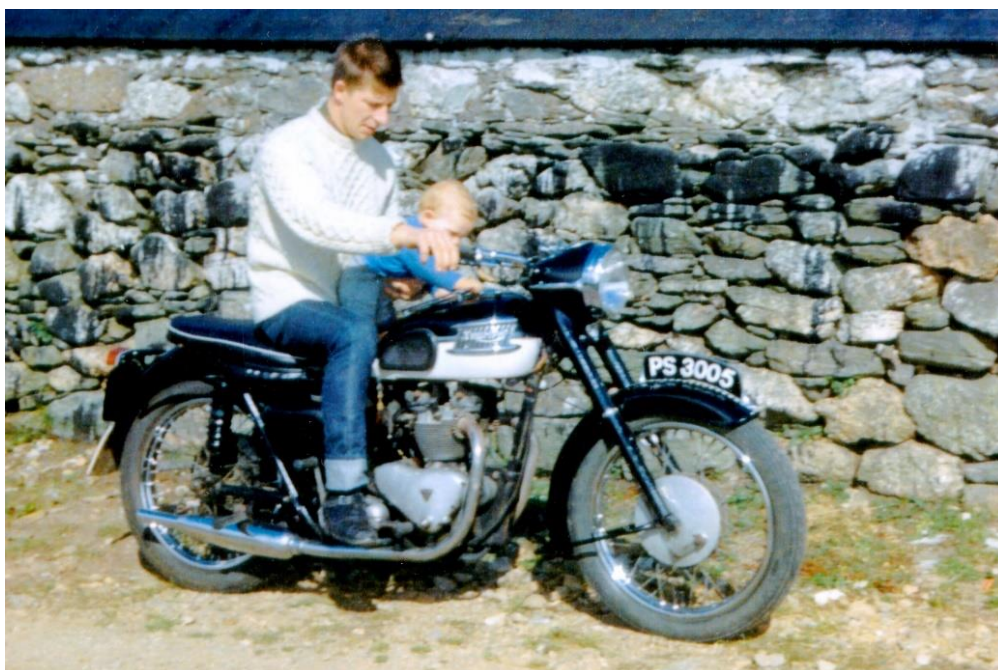
Last but not least, I would like to record the club's appreciation to Carol, who has ably managed our website and produced for so many years the excellent newsletters to which we have become accustomed, but regrettably now wishes to relinquish these duties. We wish her all the best. Fortunately Birgit has agreed to take on the newsletter and Maurice the website, so we thank them for stepping into these roles.

Look forward to seeing you at the club nights, Joe



Littlure, Walls – 6th May 2015

*** RARE BIKES IN SHETLAND No 24 ***



In late 1958 I had just got my provisional licence and was tearing around Lerwick on my, just done up, 1937, 250cc, OK Supreme, when this beauty appeared brand new in Bolt's Showroom in Commercial Road. At that time new bikes around Lerwick were few and far between, so imagine all the drooling that went on as we feasted our eyes on this delectable Triumph Tiger 100. She was finished in the recently introduced black and ivory, an alternative to the standard silver and black colours more oft associated with the Tiger models of that era. Now thereby lies a tale, as enquiries revealed that she had been ordered for a Yell man, teacher Alex Thompson, who had actually ordered the silver and black version. So the petrol tank and mudguards had to be removed and, as far as I am aware, were returned to the factory to be replaced with ones finished in the desired colour! The bike consequently lay forlorn and naked in the showroom for a considerable time.

There were no Ro/Ro ferries to the North Isles in those days, so trips to Lerwick required bikes to be manhandled on and off the small ferries operating on the sounds. It would have been on one of these that I spotted her, sometime later, parked on Commercial Street near what is now the Shetland Times Shop. Many of the Yell roads were still untarred and the stoor off the waterbound mortar surface could make a fair mess of a bike. Yes I'm afraid the Tiger had deteriorated a fair bit, but was still never the less a very desirable bike in my eyes.

After Alex she passed to Cecil Hughson of Camera Shop fame, and the colours changed again! Cecil took the original number off her and sold her to Willie Adamson in Cunningsburgh. Later Stevie Henry acquired her but sadly, as far as I am aware, she is no more.

Joe

*** SCMCC Newsletter ***

We are keen to receive newsletter contributions from everyone. If you've seen or experienced anything interesting and maybe taken some photos - do share!

Send texts, photos, for sale ads, etc. to birgit.wagner@shetland.co.uk

**** The Four Pointer Run 30th August 2015 ****

When the committee set this year's summer runs programme it was decided to attempt the Four Pointer, which had proved reasonably popular in the past. It is difficult to understand the attraction of this marathon, by Shetland standards anyway, 200 mile plus run taking in the four compass extremities of the mainland road network. However, we weren't to be disappointed as, by the time the early kick off time of 10.00 am arrived, no less that twelve bikes were lined up at Islesburgh ready for the fray.

It was hard to believe that some 31 years had passed since Robbie Burgess and I had done the same run in October 1984. The first Classic Show had been in May that year and us two, "born again bikers", both had bikes on display. Robbie and Geordie their VB Ariel, and I my re acquired Norton 19S. This was before the formation of a Classic Section of the old Islesburgh Motor Cycle Club so, as you might say, we were on our own. Our objective had been to record the highest mileage, so that meant taking in all the side loop roads on our way to and from the cardinal points. I dug out the old map that had accompanied us and on which were jotted the times of arrival and running mileages at all the main points, as it would make a good comparison with this trip. I also researched, from old newsletters when and how often this run had featured in our summer programme. In August of 1985, the Classic Sections first year, a shortened version omitting the side loops was fairly well supported. The next occasion was in June of 1997 but I missed that one and could find no write up. Finally in July 2001, Frank, Geordie Colin Fraser and I did the shortened one but this time extended it by an overnight stay in Whalsay to get a bit faerder ta da aestard!



Ready for the off at Islesburgh.

So off we went at 10.00pm on the dot and headed south. It had been decided to deploy the drop off method, where the leader indicates at a junction and the second rider stops to ensure that no one misses the turn off. This works well when you have a number of riders strung out and means that riders can go at any speed they feel comfortable with without fear of getting lost. So Gulberwick saw the first drop then Fladdabister, Cunningsburgh, Sandwick, Levenwick, Troswick, and finally Exnaboe before the south most point of Sumburgh Head was reached at 11.05 am with 34 miles on my speedo. Exactly the same mileage the Norton recorded in 1984!

Twelve bikes had set off so, being a bit superstitious, I was pleased but slightly concerned when a thirteenth, Ivor Scollay, joined us at Gulberwick. I needn't have worried as Peter Manson awaited us in da "Back Sands" and now we were fourteen!



Line up at Sumburgh Head in the sun.

After a brief natter we tramped down to Grutness where some of us oldies had what in nautical terms is known as a quick "pump ship", before kicking or whirring the bikes into life again and heading north. First drop was Toab, then round the back of the Spiggie Loch before a fair run up to Gulberwick and through the Black Gaet to the Scord o Scalloway. The weather was still favourable as we headed up the Tingwall Valley to the crossroads before turning west towards our next goal. But before that we had another pit stop at the Bixter toilets just in case! John Smith heard us coming and rushed out of his house to say he would join us when we came back again. This was a relief, as Ivor had left us at Whiteness and we were down to that unmentionable number again!

Next drop was at Parkhall where we turned off for Reawick, then through to Skeld where we stopped a while at the Marina Campsite. This proved to be a good decision as there was nice seating and tables and some of us who, either by design or use, come hell or high water must eat at one o'clock, had a bit of a nosh. Some were getting a bit concerned about petrol levels and Davie Graham had already had to get a top up from Lowrie Morrison who had come better prepared. The Walls shop would be the first source of fuel en route and was reached via Wester Skeld, Hestinsetter, Gruting an da Hamars o Houlland. Our timing was impeccable and we arrived just as club member, Kevin Smith, opened up at 2.00pm. Kevin was disappointed at not being able to accompany us on the run but hopefully the bonus sale of a fair few tank fill-ups of fuel went some way to compensate.

After heading west up the Closs o Voe we diverted through the Vesquoy loop then out to the Dale of Walls and thence to join the Sandness Road. By now the storm clouds were gathering and at one point I noticed what looked like a fairly heavy shower of rain hanging over the Sandness Hill. Not to worry we must press on. Now this section was not the route me and Robbie took in 1984 as the Dale o Walls to Sandness link did not exist at that time. So this added some distance and fine scenery to the route before we joined the Sandness road for the last bit of westerly transit. Thankfully the heavy rain never materialised and we experienced nothing more than a bit of drizzle. Entering Sandness we headed to Huxter and lined up for a photo shoot once again. The time was 2.35 pm and my speedo now showed 115 miles, some 4 more than in 1984.



A bit duller at Huxter, Sandness!

Soon we were off again and, after taking in the little loop around Melby which I don't recall taking in 1984, we retraced our track back to Bixter. As arranged, John Smith was waiting for us and took some photos of our convoy as we came out of Sandness. Turning East at Bixter we proceeded to the Aith Hall to take pre agreed advantage of their tasty fare. Nowadays "Hall Teas" are for many an essential and most welcome addition to a Sunday run in Shetland and we always include at least one such sojourn in our summer programme.

This time was no disappointment; there was everything a body could ever wish for. Those of us who had already eaten topped up with coffee and home bakes, while the previously deprived ones treated themselves to something more substantial.

Unfortunately, as we were getting ready to leave Aith, Dean said he wasn't feeling too good, and thought it prudent to head for home. I'm pleased to say he got home safely and was none the worse. In fact he asked me to email him the part of the route he missed and hopes to complete it someday on his own. Good on ya, Dean!*

Suitably refreshed and dewatered we proceed east over the "Alps" to Voe before turning north to head for our next way point. This involved riding up the main Hillswick road to Urafirth, then through Ronas Voe to join the North Roe road for the final push to the top and Isbister, which I seem to recall in years gone by was referred to as Road End! Anyway, we made it there at 4.40 pm with 169 miles on the clock. This was some 6 miles up on 1984. We all seemed to be bearing up fairly well and after all it's all downhill from here!



Dull but dry at Isbister, North Roe.

Now for the East side loops and the first was over the Leon “footpath” to Ollaberry. Here we managed to make the shop just as they closed at 5.00 pm, and some of us topped up our tanks just in case – we were after all down to 13 again and you don’t want to tempt providence do you? Next was through Sullom with one of the few tree plantation in Shetland, albeit a small one, and of course excellent views of the Sullom Voe Terminal if you like that sort of thing.

By this stage in 1984, Robbie had left me and I did the rest of the run on my own. He had to go to a Golden Wedding in Bixter that night. Better him than me, but you have to remember we were 31 years younger then and in the prime of life! Arriving back in Brae we turned off to Sullom Voe passing Voxter and Sellaness before turning right up what used to be the main loop to Firth, passed the old wartime building that many years ago served as the Graven Hotel, and finally through Laxobigging. This road is now a little used track, bypassed by the main Terminal road and consequently showing its age, fine on a fully sprung modern but by this time on a girder fork rigid rear my old frame was feeling every bump! Not to worry we were soon past Firth and heading down Dales Leas for Voe. A short touch of main road was retraced to the Vidlin junction and yet another drop to take us in passed Laxo, through Vidlin and to our furthest east point, Lunning. The weather had improved again and we enjoyed a good run in through the rugged landscape to arrive at 6.07 pm with no less than 216 miles on the clock, 5 more than in 1984. When I got there on my own last time it was too dark to get a photo with the little instamatic camera of the day but no such problem this time.

When we were leaving North Roe Birgit had advised that she wouldn’t be doing the bit into Lunning, so we weren’t concerned when she carried on home from Voe and we were down to a happy number once more!



Penultimate stop at Lunning, Vidlin.

After a bit of a leg stretch and a session picking up a lot of rusty old nails, which we hope had not been deliberately sprinkled on the turning point, we mounted up for the last leg to Lerwick.

Arriving back at Laxo we turned left down passed Dury, and North Nesting to South Nesting. Here, to keep up the mileage, we included the little loop through Brough, Vassa and Friester to join the main loop again at the Nesting Shop. From here it was out to the main road, then South through Girlsta to take in the loop from Vatster through Laxfirth to Tingwall

Gary Henderson on his BMW fun bike cum trail bike, along with Davie, John Smith, Annette and Lowrie left the pack on the last leg to head direct for home.

At the Brig o Fitch Russell and Peter headed south for home. The rest of us followed the last loop via the Ladies Drive down passed the Marts to the roundabout at Gremista. Ian Masson had left us at the junction with the Old North Road and Bobby Fullerton somewhere along Commercial Road. To squeeze in the last few additional miles, I dragged Lewie and Gordon right through South Commercial Street with its, by this time agonising traffic humps, Twageos Road, Knab Road and Sletts Road to complete our circumnavigation at the foot of Burgh Road. Thence Home!

I arrived back at Fogralea at 7.28 pm, somewhat sore but very happy, after 248 very enjoyable miles.

Finally I knew that my 70 plus year old speedo might read a little on the high side so I thought I would check with Gordon the next day to see what the super, state of the art, electronic trip analyser on his KTM had to say about it all! The figures were: Total Distance travelled – 238 miles. Total Running Time – 6hrs 30 min.

Not quite the 248 I got, but still a good day's run

Joe

**Editor's note: I can confirm that Dean has now completed the route (as have I), albeit on the BMW rather than the Square Four and with the addition of a quick detour to the top of Collafirth Hill.*

**** West-side Wanderings, 13th September ****

What's better than a run 'oot Wast' on a fine Sunday afternoon...? Not a lot really, especially if it includes a call on fellow Club member and motorcycle enthusiast Mike Mills. Always hospitable to a fault, Mike can rustle up a great pot of tea and scones for accompaniment at the drop of an HJC.

Just as well really, as there was a really good turn-out of riders and machines. I'm sure I counted 15 bikes on the hardstanding in front of Mike's house and as usual there was a big range of makes and ages (of machinery!). BMWs have become almost a default alternative to an older classic on Club runs these days but today were outnumbered by one each from the Oriental big four of Honda, Suzuki, Yamaha and Kawasaki.

However, it was good to see that British iron was much in evidence. Ian Masson, Lewie and Russel produced a Triumph each, Dean gave the Square 4 an airing and Kevin Smith's Royal Enfield came on a round trip to its west-side base! Frank's Norton and Joe's faithful old Rudge completed a fine selection of UK machinery.

Everybody accepted Mike's kind invitation to come into his garage for a hot drink and to browse over his fine collection of well-kept motorcycles. I'm guessing his own favourites would be the lovely 1930s black Sunbeams and I'm also guessing that very few of us who were there that day would disagree. These machines had a wonderful reputation for technical innovation and, of course, for the top quality lustrous paintwork for which they were equally famous. The company was owned by AMC for a time during the 1930s and they are reputed to have wisely retained and used Sunbeam's paintwork technology to endow AJS and Matchless motorcycles with the fine finish for which they too became renowned in later years. As an admitted fan of two-strokes I was very taken with the wee Velocette too!

Exploring someone else's garage is always fun and usually shames me into setting about sorting out the chaos that is my own - for a time at least! Everyone enjoyed an excellent afternoon out - the sun even put in an appearance too - so thank you again, Mike for hosting the Club on our penultimate outing of 2015.

GAJ



A good turn-out at Mike's in Reawick

*** SCMCC Winter Programme 2015/16 ***

7 th October –	Slide Show by Dean on his recent trip to the Isle of Man and the Ariel Owners' Club Rally at 7.30pm in the Bowlers' Bar, Clickimin.
4 th November	Brochure and Catalogue Night at 7.30 pm in the Anglers' Club, Burns Lane.
2 nd December	Mulled wine and Mincemeat Pies at 7.30 pm in Frank's Emporium, Market Street.
6 th January	DVD Night at 7.30 pm in the Bowlers' Bar Clickimin.
3 rd February	AGM at 7.30 pm in the Bowlers' Bar, Clickimin.
2 nd March	A Visitation to a Place of Interest! (Details Later)

*** SCMCC Regalia ***



Metal badge



Sticker



Embroidered badge



T-shirt in grey



T-shirt in black

SCMCC stickers: £1

SCMCC metal pin badges: £3.00

SCMCC t-shirts : All sizes and colours available. £10

SCMCC polo and sweatshirts can be ordered.

For regalia please contact **Russell Black**: 01950 431495

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