

Editors Ramblings

The year has just flown by and I cannot believe we are in August now!

It's great to see that some of you are getting out and enjoying your motorcycles, hoping to do some miles this week coming myself and actually getting a good run in as I have not had a chance to do any miles at all this year. Again, please let us know what you have been able to do so far this year either a quick picture of your bike out on a run or a little story of how you have started to get on your bike again.

Remember we have our Facebook page – please join and contribute on it - Only for club members – any weird names or business names let us know so we can allow you to join the page.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/362204533842150/>

Email me on biker5chef@yahoo.co.uk or 07590596380 for WhatsApp sending pictures or texts or phone!

The Highlander

South Cheshire Advanced Motorcyclists Newsletter August 2020



1994 to 2019



A Word from the Chair

Well we are lucky living in Cheshire that the relaxation of the lockdown has let us resume a lot of activities with social distancing in place. Not so lucky around us in the Greater Manchester area they have just had to go back to more stringent rules!

With Chris and his team working to social distancing and limited numbers they have been able to get the training up and running again and doing a fantastic job, well done to everyone involved with this.

We are also going to have our first committee meeting by Zoom Video Conferencing hopefully this week coming and if all goes well, we will be looking to hold the AGM by Zoom as well. We will communicate this by email to you all when we are able to confirm dates etc with the AGM notification.

I will be getting a break from working from home next week so will finally get out on the motorbike, thinking of a good day out and our anniversary ride-out route is calling me!



Sent in by Dave Nixon
Session 2 debrief with
Peter our youngest
Associate aged 22 along
With Chris and Dean.



Presidents Page

Well we have finally started the spring /summer training course, due to the current situation we have split the associates into three groups with three start times, 9 o'clock, 9.30. and 10 o'clock, it appears to be working well and hopefully the associates are starting to see the benefits from the course.

It feels good to be training again and for the Observers to be active and passing on a new skill set to the Associates, that is what we are all about.

I ventured into Wales the other Sunday with two friends, and we ended up at the Ponderosa via Ellesmere lake, alas the Ponderosa was closed, but we sat on the grass with many others and took in the view, I am not sure what it is when there is a crowd of people enjoying the afternoon sun, that the lunatics appear and try and impress with high speed standing starts and wheelies, fortunately nobody got hurt, but it is sure stupid, and the NHS is under enough pressure without self-inflicted injuries clogging up A&E.

Hopefully, you have been getting out there during this fine weather and relaxed restrictions and enjoying the freedom that motorcycling brings.

That is all from me for this month, so to you and your families stay safe, until next month, take care.



Chris Steel.
President.

Ellesmere Lake and
the Ponderosa, what's
not to like



Motorcycle Photo's from Yesteryear – Chris Prior



Triumph T120
Bonneville new for
£330, well that's
1965 for you

Four years later
and Chris's first
overseas
motorcycle trip
up the Sierra
Nevada. The first
of many!



New Associate: - Ray Wilde

Test Pass: - Graham Smith

Returning Member: -

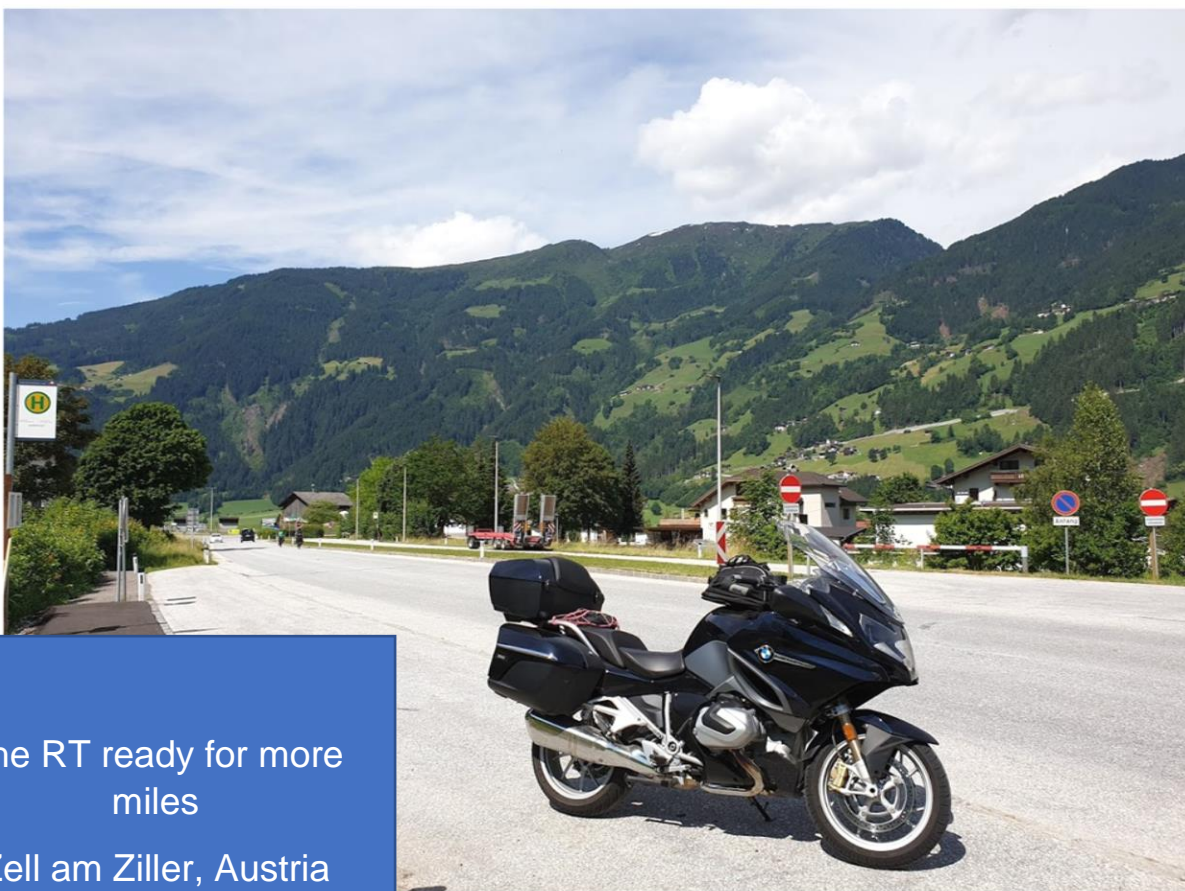
Phil Shepherd

congratulations!



My First BMW – R1250RT 10,000 Mile Review – part two

Comfort on the RT has been contested by many others and has spawned a few aftermarket seats for those with “Princess” backsides! Others will do Iron-Butt distance rides riding a thousand miles or more without having to raise a lawsuit after twenty miles! Maybe it is the upright position putting all your weight directly on your posterior that does it for some size of riders but this has not been a factor for myself apart from a little lower back twinges more than likely from my equal mileage done cycling throughout the year! You then have the electric adjustable screen that has a good level of movement from easily below your eyeline to fully up looking through it, well for a short ass like myself anyway! I found it great for most types of riding and easy to adjust from getting the most airflow to just getting air over the helmet to reduce a little noise from the buffeting you can get in the lower position then as high as you want to keep the elements off you. Like the seat there are plenty of aftermarket screens available, I would consider the Sport version, original BMW or aftermarket for use on a European holiday where the weather was going to be mainly hot and dry as this would just give a bit more airflow to the torso when needed but this is a want rather than a need. I did find in heavy rain enough water could still get in to find its way between my jacket and trousers, this may be the suits fault with a small waist etc but still surprising with the screen and fairing protection on offer.



The RT ready for more
miles

Zell am Ziller, Austria

My First BMW – R1250RT 10,000 Mile Review- part two

Talking of the fairing I was never a fan of the styling with it looking top heavy but I have got used to it now and like others will defend the ugly duckling as if it was our first born! I must say though I have grown to like the two-tone paint schemes and wish I had gone down that route. Anyway you spend most of the time looking from the riders view and although not the most high tech of dashes all TFT and bright colours it suites the style of the RT with a mixture of analogue clocks and a 5.7 inch TFT information display that can be configured to show different figures from tyre pressure to fuel consumption or suspension settings changed by the multi-controller on the left bar.

It was easy to get used to all the controls and welcome that BMW now use the same indicator switch method as other manufacturers, remember the indicator switch on both sides? Ok with baboon fingers but a pain otherwise! The cruise control worked great and easy to set when on a long stretch of motorway giving a bit of relief to the right hand and surprisingly my shoulders as well as both hands can relax together along with arms and shoulders just works and until you have tried cruise control on a very long trip you just do not know this is a thing!

Brakes are now Hayes, well I know these from my cycling and a lot of grumbling from the Brembo aficionados with this change but they have worked faultlessly with the “Dynamic Brake Control” there for any emergency braking action to control the engine torque and balances the rear wheel braking power which keeps the bike stable and for a big bike the system does work along with the suspension to bring you to a halt in a calm manner. I also like the Hill Start Pro, just gives that extra confidence when fully loaded on a slope when needed, works automatically when on a slope and manually if required.



Hayes Dual 320mm
floating discs with 4-
piston radial calipers

My First BMW – R1250RT 10,000 Mile Review – part two

Original tyres were Metzeler Roadtec Z8's and they were ok well apart from being a magnet for punctures! First at a thousand miles and again about two thousand in! had to replace one rear and plugged the other so I eventually changed to Michelin Pilot Road 4GT and these have performed well although the rear is squaring off now and the handling is not as sharp as it was. Next tyre could be the newer 5GT as that is getting good reviews.

So, what have I added? Well the BMW branded Garmin GPS to fill the blank in the fairing! Expensive as an accessory when it really should be standard, top box, useful extra luggage capacity obviously, but a back rest for the other half, expensive for a back rest! Especially as she has not been on the bike in the last year! Front mudguard extender – another frustration in another unnecessary need as this should be longer as standard but hey ho. An engine guard to help protect the engine from said front wheel spitting stones etc, not as large as I thought it was going to be but still in combination with the mudguard extension a good bit of protection. Rocker cover guards, well they did warn me to be careful when lining them up for the bolts, but I still managed to cross thread one of the bottom bolt holes! And as it goes what happens a week later when they would have protected the bike, it gets knocked over, the only damage from the fall – you guessed it the rocker cover!! Argh...at least the cost of a set of guards is nearly the cost of another rocker cover. Next item is for the first accessory and its an add on to the central locking to keep the GPS safe in its cradle to stop an opportunist from taking the nav, a bit of a faff to install but works great.

So nearly there now, servicing has been no problem, only the first running in one and 6,000 done so far with the 12,000 mile/annual one due soon which will be a higher cost but what do you expect from BMW? I have had no issues with the bike in the 10,000 miles it has ran faultlessly apart from the punctures where the tyre pressure monitor did its job in alerting me to the lack of air in the tyre before it became dangerous. The valves are a bit short for getting a garage air pump on though. The side stand is a bit hidden when down so its always worth another check before leaning the bike over, it nearly had me once before I noticed! And I'm sure its not the only bike with a screen and fairing with a section you can't get into clean it without removing it, just an extra faff.



The End

Another long and windy
road ready to be mastered
by the R1250RT

The Highlander

South India Tour by Chris Prior – 2nd part

Kerala and Tamil Nadu, February 2008

After a breakfast of scrambled egg and bacon most of us set out for the half-day backwater tour. We boarded two of the stitched boats and were punted from the broad water to narrower channels. The name *backwater* comes from the tidal backwash which causes saltwater to enter the channel. With the ebb freshwater re-enters the channel. Our first stop was at a cooperative where women spun coconut fibres into ropes. First the fibres are soaked in water for six months to soften it. It is then spun into ropes - the process we saw - and then twisted to give strength. The finished product is used to make mats and carpets. It was so peaceful being punted gently and slowly. At the water's edge women did dhobi in water that didn't look any too clean. The next stop was a spice plantation where we were shown pepper, cardamom and bay. It's spices that made the Malabar Coast so rich over the centuries.

The pretty girl in reception told us about a festival at the Pallunthy Temple, so a couple of us took a tuk-tuk. The driver offered himself as a guide, showed us the place to enter and looked after our shoes as we entered the inner sanctum. At the head of the temple a priest was carrying out a blessing. Inside the temple nine decorated elephants were lined up. In the centre drummers performed. Every now and again horn players adding to the din was the signal for the three men on each elephant to stand and wave like cheerleaders. This went on repeatedly for at least an hour. Water was distributed to the sweaty performers during a pause and then it started again. The crown cleared so that the elephant parade could begin. Led by a couple of priests and the most decorated, elephant they lined up again before setting off to add to the traffic chaos, eventually returning to the temple complex where a police contingent presented arms. At this point other police kept the crowds back using lathis. I was about to be at the receiving end until the policeman recognised me as a foreigner and backed off.

Dinner that night was spicy fish in banana leaves.

Festival in Kerala



South India Tour by Chris Prior – 2nd part

As we rode inland and into the tea growing area of the Western Ghats it became cooler. Thankfully, after the urban chaos, there was less traffic and we could now enjoy twisty mountain roads, some fairly well surfaced, others well potholed. After 133 km we came to the Westwood Riverside Garden Resort, Munnar. At roadside workshops repairs and crafts were carried out on earthen floors close to passing traffic. Elsewhere, cattle in the streets foraged through rubbish. After unpacking I went for a walk through some tea plantations. This was after 5pm with dull overcast light. Buffet dinner with two beers; delicious.

Our first tea stop the next day was at 1,700m where it was noticeably cooler. Lunch stop was a local café, eating off banana leaves. Rice is dumped on the leaf, then a selection of spicy sauces and perhaps a little veg or pulse. We ate using our fingers and rinsing them in a tub of water. Day's end was Madurai in the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu, famous for its elaborately decorated temples. The street under my balcony had the usual litter-strewn chaos, although in the morning some was being collected by tractor and trailer and some by an old woman with a sack.

Walking towards the Sri Meenakshi temple complex on the following day, we caught up with a group of painted semi-naked pilgrims following a band that was led by dancers in pantomime horse costumes, or so it seemed to me. The temple complex covers a vast area. There are huge towers at the cardinal points, each one covered with painted carvings of the gods. It was dull and overcast. Brighter light would have better brought out the intricately painted images. Opposite the north gate we left our shoes at a little tourist shop for safekeeping and entered the

vast complex. Everything, including worshippers, could be photographed without causing offence. In one area, upon payment to handlers, an elephant would bestow a blessing by laying its trunk on the heads of believers. At various points worshippers lay prostrate, often anointing themselves with coloured powder. It cost a few rupees to go into the Museum of 1,000 columns within the complex. In a wide aisle a statue of a cow in a pen was being worshipped.

Drummer at the Festival



South India Tour by Chris Prior – 1st part

Later, at a restaurant, we were ushered upstairs to the family room where we had a biryani and lassi for Rs50, about 65p. It was as tasty as would be expected. After we started eating it started to fill with families who ate with their fingers off banana leaves, whereas our meals had been served with cutlery on steel trays. I suspect that theirs was the more hygienic. I enjoyed the experience, but it has to be said that Madurai is a dirty, overcrowded city. In the streets cows scavenge the piles of litter.

During a breakfast of toast and black tea it rained heavily but eased off a little as we rode through Madurai, only to come on heavily later. At the next stop we had fresh coconut milk. The man slicing the coconut wore nothing but a lungi and held the coconuts in one hand and swung the cleaver with the other. As far as I could see, he still had all his fingers.

We then rode on twisty roads into the mountains and into the clouds. At times I could barely discern the bike in front and at best the two in front of him. In this poor visibility it was essential to keep the bike ahead in sight for clues as to how the road lies. At another refreshment stop bundles of bananas awaited transport. Locals waiting for busses were quite curious about us and were happy to be photographed. Cows wandered the road of course, and at one point we startled a troop of rhesus macaques. At about 3pm we arrived at the Villa Retreat at Kodaikanal for a two-night stop. It's about 2,000 ft above sea level and cool at night. Clouds drifted across this hill station, and then it began to rain. For a snack I had what was billed as *peanut masala*. It was peanuts with onion, tomato and chillies.

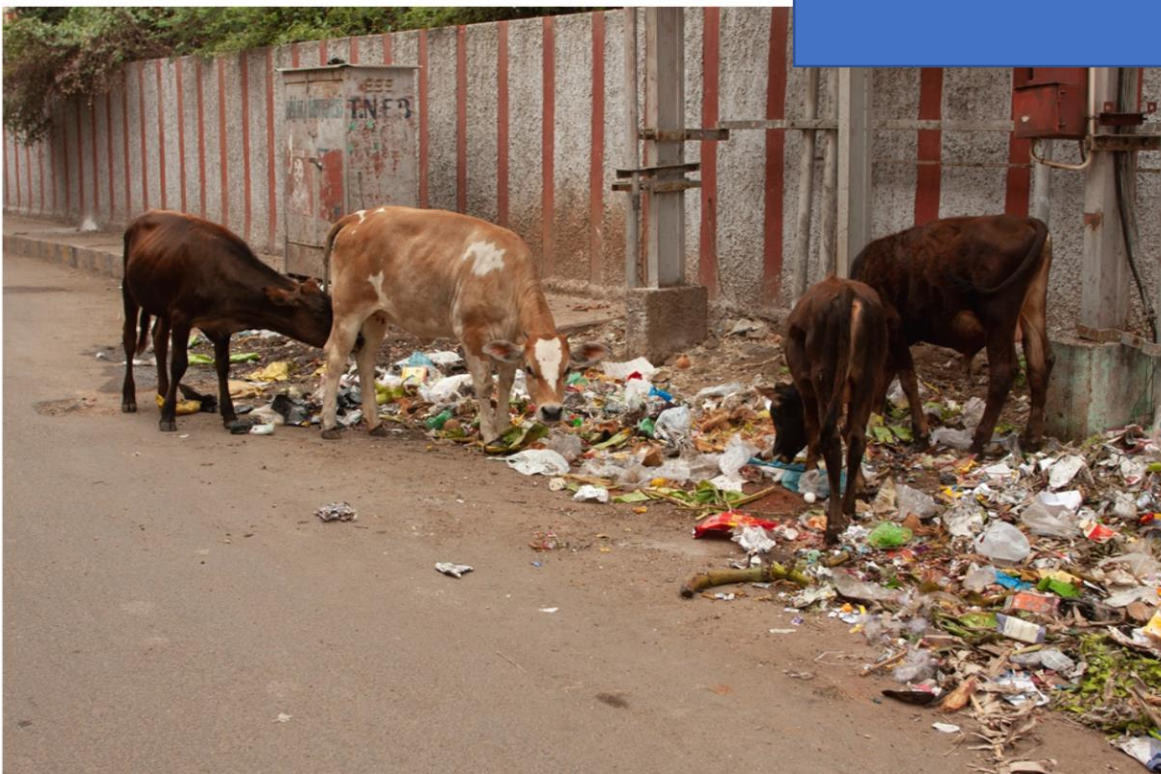
Jamal Rebuilds a
Gearbox



South India Tour by Chris Prior – 1st part



Pilgrims in Madurai



Madurai Street Scene

Club Events

MONTHLY CLUB NITE

Last Thursday of the month at the Hawk Inn in Haslington by Crewe.

Our own version of Conversation Street, I'm sure there will be plenty of discussion and maybe some of it repeatable too! 8pm onwards all welcome.



CANX

Group Events

AGM – Thursday 3rd September – by ZOOM - To Be Confirmed

Sunday Ride Outs - Now On with max 6 per group and Social Distancing in play - it's 9am from Costa Coffee at the Grand Junction Retail Park - CREWE - arrive early with a full tank of fuel. Usually 150-200 miles but if you want to do a shorter one, we will not take offence at you turning back early.

Wednesday Evening Ride Outs –

The first and third Wednesdays start from Starbucks, Holmes Chapel Road, Middlewich - next to the Shell garage. The second and fourth start from The Little Chef, Radway Green Road at junction 16, M6. All rides start at 7pm. Try to arrive about 15 minutes beforehand with a full tank of fuel. There are fuel stations close to both start points

Other Events of a two-wheeled nature

9th August – MotoGP – Automotodrom Brno – Czech Republic

9th August – BSB – Thruxton

15-16th August – Summer Cup – Olivers Mount – Scarborough

16th August – MotoGP – Red Bull Ring – Austria

23rd August – BSB – Cadwell Park



Piston Points Trophy - Reminder

Back in the day we commissioned this from Crewe Honda so we can reward members for contributing time or effort towards social activities, newsletter articles, attending club runs etc. Points are weighted towards the newsletter so 10 points for a full article and 2 points for each photo published, 2 points for responding to an article. Attending a club run will get 1 point – so lots available throughout the year there. Arranging a social event is 10 points attending one 2 points. Dave Coomber is letting me know who is out on rides so I can count these. If anyone is out on a ride without Dave let me know the date and who was out.



That's all this month

Hope you all get out on your bikes to give us some more stories

The Highlander

