

## Brands Hatch, Kent

16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2011

### **'HOPS, HURRICANES, OAST HOUSES & CASTROL R'**

*A tour of Kent's magnificent manholes...*

*There was a young Rocker from Kent  
Whose Tribsa was more than a bit bent*

*To steer it caused trouble  
Cos it was bent almost double  
So instead of going he went...*

Trad Limerick (Re-arranged)



*Look where you're going, go where you're looking...*

## ***I DON'T LIKE BRANDS...***

These words came from the lips of the Autumn Run Meister, Steve Callahan as we all packed up and said our farewells on the car park of the Whoop in April...

I had to admit to some unease at the statement as we had just been briefed by the same SC that the Autumn Run would be based in the Thistle Hotel at Brands Hatch! Turns out though our man was referring to brand logos - in response to a question as to why his luggage had the 'Oxford' name neatly covered with black racer tape. Phew, that's alright then.

Mind, those same four words were probably going through many minds as they did battle with the notorious Friday Grand Prix around the M25. As usual, stationary for many miles; many, many, miles...

## ***FIRST TIME IN KENT...***

Apparently, this was the first run ever to be based in the 'Garden of England'. Of course, I wouldn't be doing my job right if I didn't check the validity of that statement.

I *think* that it is correct but my Boys Own Gazetteer of 1977 refused to list Alveston (1964), Fowley Down (1988) or New Coundon (1994). Your Scribe would be grateful for any information as to where these mysterious places may be – or whether they are just spelling mistakes...



So, what of Kent, the 'Invicta' county?

Dating back 2.6 million years to the Lower Palaeolithic (isn't that a back pain?) period, it is occupied by 'Men of Kent' to the east of the River Medway and 'Kentish Men' to the west of the Medway.

The County Motto - Invicta - as referred to by the Run Meister in his Friday night introduction, means unvanquished, undefeated.

Legend has it that after defeating King Harold at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, William the Conqueror "*marched on to London on his way to the (then) capital, Winchester*" and whilst passing through Kent the locals chased him off with branches and twigs.

So, William was shit at geography and Walmington-on-Sea is definitely in Kent...



## ***DINNER AT 8:00, DON'T BE LATE...***

With some gentle prodding from Steve and Treasurer Rick, we repaired to the De Havilland Suite for dinner. A nice room and one which even had its own private bar - get in!

Dinner was a fixed menu: Pâté, Roast Beef and Cheesecake washed down with either a Californian Cabernet Sauvignon or a crisp Pinot Grigio. The wine was seemingly coming from under the raffle table which seemed a little peculiar.

I quizzed Run Meister Callahan who was on our table. Apparently, the hotel's wine was exorbitantly priced and so we had brought our own and were paying corkage. This accounted for the later subterfuge as rucksacks full of empty bottles were smuggled from the room before the hotel could count 'em!



*Above: The burgeoning raffle table and wine cellar*

## ***IT'S A FIX, IT'S A FIDDLE, IT'S A FARCE...***

Perhaps as a result of the aforementioned early start in the bar, coupled with a little later than usual calling to the comestibles, Chairman Dawson found it a little difficult to establish order to announce the raffle (and anything else actually), disgraceful!

The tickets had been sold for a pound a time, less than previous runs where the price had been £2. Might this be a reflection of the difficult trading conditions prevalent in the industry at large? You decide!

Master of Tat, Andrew Smith, commenced proceedings by announcing that he was: "Fed up with bribery requests – Gerald – to win their prize back – Gerald." Smith-san could not *possibly* be planning to rig the raffle now could he..?

Amongst the glorious prizes, the following were especially notable:

An umbrella for Graham Matcham for his new role with Continental "because" proclaimed Smith, "They are shite in the wet".

A pack of Guinness cans went to John Wakefield "Because he had the panniers to put them in" (no, please don't start Dave Martin off again).

A Honda shirt was won by Frank Finch because it was "xxxl".

And Dirty Dog sunglasses were rather unkindly (I thought) presented to the Chairman.

As well as the usual bottles of falling down water (various), there were edible items too. A rustic truckle was won by "Lord Cheese of Leamington" (who generously shared it around later) and kippers were won, and subsequently lost, by Alan Halford. He apparently put them behind the radiator for safe keeping...

Now, as the raffle re-distributed it's last re-eyed thoughtful gift, the Raffle Meister asked if everyone was now in possession of a prize. From the Top Table came the cry "Oi! I'm not." Club President, Dennis Bates was empty handed; surely it couldn't be so?

Well Dennis was not to be without his prize for long...



## **A WELL DESERVED 'GONG'...**

As a somewhat surprised Dennis sat at the table, Andrew launched into a speech of appreciation of Dennis' tireless work for the club.

He rightly stated that Dennis had served The Club more than any other, twice per year as Treasurer just for starters, during a period where the Industry had grown, reduced and grown again over 3 or 4 generations, from the British iron to today.

Andrew spoke for everyone – present as well as absent - when he thanked Dennis for his inestimable contribution to The Club.

And, as Chairman Dawson presented Dennis with a magnificent John Hancox pen and ink drawing of the President with his beloved Honda, the assembled group rose as one and gave Dennis a rousing “For he's a jolly good fellow...” And, surely; nobody can deny!

*Editor's Note: Dennis was planning to ride on the Run but his trusty Yamaha Diversion had a dodgy battery – much to Mrs Bates relief... (Dennis is apparently claiming a new battery under warranty)*

## **TONIGHT'S GUEST APPEARANCES...**

As the hullabaloo eventually died down, it was the turn of Run Meister Callahan to brief the eager group on the following days events, but not before the introduction of the Member's guests:

*Steve Callahan* led off by introducing an overseas chum, *Morton Agerbaek* who is Honda's Danish Business Manager.

*Norman Hyde* then introduced his guest, *Richard Yorke-Long* who, explained Norman, “Travels in timber” adding “Something we will all be doing eventually!”

*Dave Martin* introduced son *Jonathan Martin*, who with his recent elevation to Suzuki's UK Sales Manager was now eligible for membership – once he had completed the requisite number of runs. His past appearances being deemed ineligible by Dad.

*Andrew Smith* introduced *Adam Kelley*, on his third run since being promoted within Yamaha to Divisional Manager of Motorcycle Sales.

*Frank Finch* had brought along his mate Jon Fletcher who had joined us in Scotland last year.

It was good to see old friend *Lester Harris* again after a long absence. Lester had brought along his brother *Steve Harris* as his guest.

And finally, *Mad Bob McMad* introduced his guest, *Mark Davies*, a past Honda colleague who is now the Head Caerphilly at Llanelli Scarlets rugby club.

## AND SO TO THE BRIEFING...

Perhaps it is opportune to reproduce here (for the benefit of those who could not make it) the welcome letter prepared by Steve and Co-Organiser, Dave Hancock, who incidentally, would be unable to act as Tail-End Charlie owing to continuing eye problems – hopefully now sorted Dave?

This short mnemonic note told us everything we needed to know about the run, except one thing:

If Kent is the 'Garden of England' is Ashford the manure heap?

Moving swiftly on.

One other announcement was that we would be gathering earlier than usual as that awfully nice chap Stuart Higgs (see page 3, no, not that page 3!) had agreed to us doing a lap of his fine racing track before tackling the highways of Kent.



'Knees Out Mother Callahan' then had the audacity to stress to everyone else that it was purely a 'parade lap' and to watch our speed. Pot, kettle, kettle, pot...

## IT'S ALL DOWNHILL TO BED-FORDSHIRE...

Unless you had a penchant for mature cheese or nuclear chillies that is.

The former of these was very palatable and, as previously mentioned, generously shared by Andrew on behalf of Lord Cheese of Leamington. Some was saved for Norman though - we are not all savages.

Whilst other less robust souls headed off to the bar to see how the 'Big Fat Gypsy Wedding' party was getting on with their celebrations (oh, didn't I mention the other group in the hotel?) one or two brave-hearts took on the Dave Martin Dorset Naga Chilli Challenge: big mistake, huge mistake! Have you recovered now Tony J?



Your scribe has no idea how Dave managed to come by these potent little beasties but he sure as hell was not going to try them. As chillies go, these are close to being off the scale, in fact they are rated up around 1m SHUs, have a look what that means here: [www.eatmorechiles.com/Scoville\\_Heat.html](http://www.eatmorechiles.com/Scoville_Heat.html)

Pictured left is a relish, made in England from the Dorset Naga – it comes with a health warning. And, what ever you do, do NOT hold yer willy within 4 days of handling these weapons of mass digestive destruction. Some did, oh dear...

## WET & WINDY, AND THE WEATHER'S NONE TO ROSY EITHER...

Well before 08:30 on Saturday, a bunch of eager beavers were amassed in the car park awaiting the call to action. Most of us were facing the general direction of the car park exit.



Coo-ee! Maurice!

After a short delay, all but David O'Neill (see fines later) set off down the Brands Hatch drive for a quick trip around the Club circuit.

We then re-grouped back in front of the hotel entrance to wait for David O'Neill and, inevitably, the rain to start.

*Right: Norman & Dave make Stuart Higgs smile, but what about?*



*Below: Whilst talking to Nick, Maurice's head slowly morphs into the wall...*



*Right: Frank's guest, Jon Fletcher's very tidy R1 whilst in the background, Dennis prepares for his day as a Navigator.*



## AND SO TO THE ROAD...

Our route for the day was to be a figure of eight, initially running south by east by south for a coffee stop in Rye before pushing north west to lunch at Hever.

Following the mid-day repast it would be an anti-clockwise southern loop around East Grinstead and on to Chartwell for a brew and a peek at Winnie's Wall (nice of him to build one outside the caff), then a bit more B road fun before fiddling through to the A225/A20 and home.

It left one wondering whether the choice of route was inspired by Honda's Suzuka circuit - it too being a figure of eight, what price nepotism eh?

## A NEW FEATURE – OBSERVATION!

At Friday's briefing, our Leader had announced that in place of the usual quiz, there would be a new feature for this run, an observation test. As if we didn't have enough to look out for already!

So, along with keeping our eyes peeled for corner marshals and greasy manhole covers we now had four other things to look out for.

Personally, I did alright on the castles, crossings and oast houses but I gave up looking for Royal Connotation pubs as none of the signs had the brewery name on...(Pillock. Yes, it dawned on me in the evening when the results were announced)



## BRANDS TO RYE...

Within 15 minutes of departure the short, sharp downpours started and this, coupled with the Saturday morning traffic on the A20, conspired to string out the group from the off. By the time the last stragglers arrived at the coffee stop the leaders had been there an hour!



The first part of the route on the A20 had very little to commend it other than the fact that it was a quick way to get to the more interesting bits.

With the rain coming down stair-rods in places, the sheer number of Kent manhole covers soon became apparent.

The pictures left show a typical hazard and the consequences of not seeing it – and no, it's not Blakey!

*Editor's note: Come on Alan, time we saw you on a run again: ker-plunk, twist, twist...*

Mostly we travelled the open road, skirting around Paddock Wood and negotiating some unclassified roads until meeting up with the A262, a lovely flowing road where swift progress can be made. Turning east we were soon passing through Goudhurst, a straggling village built on an eccentric hill that dates back to the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> Century. We were now deep in rural Kent with white painted timber fronted buildings and oast houses a-plenty.

Soon after Goudhurst, Sissinghurst came and went. A quick look at the website [www.sissinghurst.com](http://www.sissinghurst.com) reveals a village where bugger all seems to happen, either that or the residents want to paint a picture of total boredom to keep the Grockles out. Under village history, the only thing listed is that the 1987 hurricane blocked all the roads! There is a castle to tick off though...

The next place of significance is Biddenden where your scribe, along with Graham Matcham, found himself on point duty, for a very long time!

Here, at the junction of the A262 and A274, stands a very ornate village sign, depicting the Biddenden Maids, twin sisters Elisa and Mary Chulkhurst who were born in 1100, joined at the shoulder and hip.





The above picture of said village sign was clearly not taken on the day but does show the enduring popularity of Kent as a motorcycle touring area.



Coming back to the Maids, it seems that they bequeathed the income from 20 acres of land they owned to the poor of the parish, the money kept coming for 400 years.

Apparently one died a short time before the other which conjures up a very grim image I think you will agree...

During our sojourn at what was clearly a dangerous junction (a local resident insisted I moved my bike off the road), Graham and I watched quite a few of our chums negotiate the right turn, including Lord Cheese who rolled up looking left then right and, forgetting the left again, pulled straight out in front of a car. He was *that* close to be joined at the shoulder and hip to a Vauxhall Astra!



*Above: Steve Harris on a Ducati 'Paul Smart'*

When Tail End Charlie finally arrived we pushed off in the rain (again) via Tenterden and the B2080 to Appledore where we take a right down the long, straight, Military Road which runs alongside the Royal Military Canal. Very Holland-esque I thought, quite took me back it did.

## **FINALLY! RYE, COFFEE & CAKE...**

And a fair old tramp from the car park to the Cobbles Tea Room it was too. But what a pretty town! Up past the Mermaid Fish Bar we went and my mind drifted back to when I used to go out with a mermaid - what a woman. Her vital statistics were 38-24-4 bob-a-pound...



As mentioned earlier, when the back-end arrived, the front-end had been at the coffee stop for an hour and so they were champing at the bit to move on. Shame.

Proper tea with leaves and everything was served with home made cake as the sign, seen left, purported...

Everything about 'Cobbles' was small, not the least the outside cludgy which Bob McMillan didn't so much use as wear!

Fed, watered and drained, we wandered back to the bikes and rode onwards to the next food stop!

*Left: Smith, O'Neill, Plummer and a half hidden Smart (I think) talk cobblers at Cobbles whilst below left, at least one of them is still at it!*



## RYE TO HEVER...

The route to the lunch stop looked promising on the map. Other than a couple of short sections of the A21 and A267 it was to be B and unclassified roads all the way. Lovely scenery and more oast houses to count.

Oast houses are of course, or like most things these days, that should read were, built to dry hops – an essential part of the essential industry of brewing ale.



Nowadays they are mostly converted to houses for overpaid city workers (Oaf Houses?) to buy with their obscene bonuses. What? Me? Jealous? Anyway, rant over, let's press on...

Soon after leaving Rye we pass through the hamlet of Cock Marling, in the parish of Udimore. This quaintly named place was listed in the Domesday Book but other than that I can tell you very little. Interestingly, if you 'Google' Cock Marling, the top entry reads 'Cock Marling Dating'. Is that like carbon dating then?

On along the oft-wooded B2089 we rode through an area where the Romans used to smelt iron. What I smelt though was wood smoke, I reminisced about the Boy Scout camps of my youth as I rode...



We turned right at the minor crossroads and small village of Cripps Cross which is known for the 'Gallowes of Whoorn', where smugglers and highwaymen were executed until the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and (in another reference to Dad's Army), the local Home Guard frightened the life out of army defenders in 1941 by firing a volley at the local pub they were supposed to capture - an hour after their exercise ended! Stupid Boys...

Bodiam Castle came and went (tick) as did Ticehurst, Wadhurst and Mark Cross (that's a place not a bloke) before we skirted the south west corner of Royal Tunbridge Wells with not even a glimpse of 'Angry Of', mind he probably wrote to the Thunderer the following week about 'bloody motorbikes ruinin' me peace and quiet'. Who Sir? Us Sir? No Sir!

With the sun finally smiling on us we hove-to in Hever and took over the car park of the King Henry VIII inn as well as one of its rooms for a hearty (for some) lunch. All of the tables were thoughtfully reserved for - Honda: so our organising duo duly went into the Sergeant at Arms notebook for later chastisement...



*Left: On arrival at the lunch stop, Dave Dew looks on as Run Meister Callahan adjusts his nipple clamps...*

*Right: In the car park, Dennis looks dapper, Maurice looks the wrong way, again!*



## **THE EAST GRINSTEAD LOOP...**

This is not a country folk dance (although 'Quiet Man', Dan Sager may know something I don't), nor is it a recognised jogging, cycling or marathon running route. No, it is merely a way of putting a token distance between food intakes.

Checking the distance between the King Henry VIII inn and our planned tea stop at Chartwell shows a mere 4.314 miles as the crow flies or 4.985 miles by road; barely fifteen minutes even allowing for 38 motorcycles, a Subaru Forester and an RAC van with trailer. Even the biggest eaters amongst the membership (you know who you are) would have struggled with that!

Of course, it also allows time for the rain to re-appear and molyslip the manhole covers once again.

So off around the B2028 we set, metaphorically doffing our trilbies at the gates of Lingfield Park Racecourse and passing through Newchapel, Crawley Down and Turners Hill before going off-piste at Ardingly to link up with the A275 at Danehill.



On this back-double we passed under the Bluebell Railway; sadly not seeing this magnificent sight as we did (*sighs...*).

If you are interested in trains (“*I loikes trains*”) you can re-create the dining experience of the famous Golden Arrow on this line <http://www.bluebell-railway.com/golden-arrow/> Begone you misty eyes and get on with it...

Yes, well, back to the plot. A bit of A road charging and B road blasting eventually brought us to the gates of Chartwell, just in time for tea - and to cause havoc in the car park of course.

## **NEVER HAD SO FEW BLOCKED THE PASSAGE OF SO MANY...**

No, it's not some smutty Max Miller gag (you remember, the one where he was on the narrow bridge with the beautiful girl coming the other way) but a reference to the fact that in order to maintain our Band of Brothers fraternity we abandoned our bikes in an untidy group half on and half off the exit road of Chartwell's car park.

And, after the bikes were re-positioned, we did it again – this time with our own frames as can be seen right.

*Right: Meek marches purposefully off whilst Davison sniffles that nobody loves him...*



Anyway, we eventually shuffled off in search of tea and other comestibles but not before we had been entertained by Nick

Jeffery who, in an effort to cure his rough running GT750, opened his legendary top box to look for a hammer whilst Keith Davies enquired if he “had a spare engine in there...”



*Left: Blott on a previous landscape*

*Right: A determined Dew tucks into tea & tiffin*



## **AND SO BACK TO BASE...**

Just as the black clouds rolled in again.



A fiddle back to the B2042 then up and over the snot-ravvle that is the M25/26 interchange, via Otford to pick up the A225, A20 and home.

Maybe if we had taken a more direct routing from Otford, Peter Meek would have been able to point out the location of the Knatts Valley Hill Climb...

Now, I have a question for you. In this picture left, taken at a Knatts Valley event in the 50's, who is the youthful rider on the (even then) vintage Douglas?

When you have thought about it (the answer is at the end of the report) follow this link and read the background to the picture – it had me in stitches, and very nearly the rider too!

[http://www.sidcupmotorcycleclub.co.uk/old/photo\\_gallery/archive/photo\\_archive\\_max\\_poultney.htm](http://www.sidcupmotorcycleclub.co.uk/old/photo_gallery/archive/photo_archive_max_poultney.htm)

## **DONE, DUSTED AND DOUSED; DINNER IS SERVED...**

And the usual Saturday night shenanigans began.

Following a confusion over who was to say grace - the task eventually falling to Nick Jeffery - we tucked into an horses doofers of Fruit Coulis followed by Chicken with Parma Ham and rounded it all off with Profiteroles a'plenty - it was not a wise thing to do, tot up the day's total calorific intake that is!

With stomachs replete and belts loosened, we listened as the hyper Chairman Dawson thanked Steve and Dave as Run Organisers and Cliff Wilton, a friend of Steve's who had stood in for Dave as Tail-end Charlie. Hear-hear replied one and all.



Tony then introduced the Club's Poet Laureate, Bob McMillan, who had his audience spell-bound (or asleep – hard to tell!) as he read his latest work: 'Ode to The Club', which was penned just two weeks previously.

Seriously, it was a performance of epic proportions and his words are reproduced in full at the end of this report for you to enjoy.

One suspects that the only thing coming between Bob and a standing ovation was all those pre-loosened belts: 30 odd chaps with their trousers around their ankles, clapping furiously could have been seriously misconstrued by the serving staff!

Following this cultural oasis, it was the turn of Steve Callahan to (controversially) find the winner to his observation test.

First the answers: Castles: (Including the signs to them) – 8, Royal connotation pubs – 13, Pedestrian Crossings – 11 and Oast Houses – 21. Turn over dear reader for the results...

First off, no-one had the correct answer to the Castles, not one, bugger all.

There was a fair few who had the correct answer to the pub question but when it came to pedestrian crossings, Norman scored zero. Now I can't remember if the reason was Geriatric Presbyopia or if he had confused the question with pedestrians crossing and had immediately given up at the magnitude of the task. Perhaps someone would remind me...

Your scribe was able to redeem his earlier lack of joined-up thinking re pubs, by correctly counting, along with many others, 21 Oast Houses.

So, who won? And more importantly, how? My notes of the night only reveal that David Dew won after a 7-way tie-break and that the result was 'controversial'. Perhaps Steve could prompt me as to how he arrived at his decision?

## ***AND YOU KNOW WHAT COMES NEXT...***

From the website <http://www.parliament.uk/about/mps-and-lords/principal/serjeant/>



**The Serjeant at Arms is responsible for security and keeping order within the Commons part of the parliamentary estate. There are also some ceremonial aspects to the role. The Serjeant at Arms directorate is part of the Department of Chamber and Committee Services.**

I think we would all agree that the role is ceremonial but keeping order? Not a chance, quite the reverse! Dave Martin and his Batman, Frank Finch let rip, kicking off – as is customary – with the Run Organiser...

**Steve Callahan** – For picking an hotel in the 'Garden of England' that stocked no English beer or cider.

**Adam Kelley, Morton Agerbaek, Dave Hancock and your Scribe** – For sitting before Grace on Saturday.

**Steve Callahan again** – A garbled reference to the lack of guidance on which way to ride the M25 in the joining instructions. It apparently cost some chaps a pound to go through the tunnel.

**Norman Hyde** – For wearing a suit and tie on a motorcycle without topping it off with a reversed flat cap. (Norman accuses Alan Halford of shopping him...)

**Rick Parish** – A Social Media faux-pas for not being able to update Facebook.

**Luke Plummer and Norman again** – for missing a junction. With Luke suffering 'double bubble' for not thinking of the excuse that he was "Chasing Norman to correct him".

**David O'Neill** (remember he didn't ride the parade lap?) - For tardiness at the start of the day and washing his bike on arrival.

**Rick Parish again** – For admitting that he too thought of washing his bike – but thought a fine would result. Correct Rick, kerr-ching!

**Graham Matcham (pictured right)** – New job, new bike and feeling the outdated urge to stand on the foot-pegs of same. Oh, and still sporting a natty Avon sticker on his helmet...



**Tony Jakemen** – For getting pissed too early on Friday. Nick Jeffery, unusually for a 'brief', admitted liability and paid on AJ's behalf.

**Martyn Roberts** – Similarly for over-embibing and 'feeling no pain' as early as 20.22. It must have been his own fault as he paid himself...

**Rick Parish (did we mention him?)** - For wearing his shirt *out of his trousers!!* Rick requested a receipt...

**Tony Dawson** – For blocking the passage at the tea stop (I said before, don't even go there!)

**Cliff Wilton aka Tail End Charlie** – Some trumped up charge that I failed to make a note of!

**Norman Hyde yet again** – For enquiring what he needed to do on his bike to 'get the headlights to work'.

**Andrew Smith** – For hitting the Sergeant (who was on point duty at the time) whilst riding Steve Harris' bike not a 'Smart' thing to do, or maybe it was? (see Runners and Rider at the end).

**Gerald Davison** – For brandishing an article and pictures of himself racing at Brands in 1961.

**Tony Dawson again** – For his poor explanation of the despatch rider system to Morton Agerbaek.

**Peter Meek** – Apparently also had 'nipple problems'.

**Charles Smart and Keith Davies** – Were both reprimanded for locking the back wheels of their identical Triumph Tigers at a junction.

**Richard Yorke-Long, Steve Callahan, Adam Kelley, Peter Meek and Steve Harris** – Indicators, for 3 miles in the case of the latter!

**Steve Callahan (this becoming a rout)** – For looking at a map when the battery on his sat-nav died. The fine was (surprisingly) not for map reading (he was the Run Leader!) but for failing to plan the battery life of his sat-nav...

**Martyn Roberts again** – For complaining that he had "never heard Norman moan as much".

**Norman Hyde (is this victimisation?)** - For eating Andrew Smith's dessert. (*Ed's Note, Andrew however escaped a fine for eating Norman's prize cheese on Friday, perhaps because the Sergeant helped him?*).

**Gerald Davison the sequel** – For overtaking the leader (*Ed's note as this is a regular run occurrence perhaps Gerald would like to set up a standing order?*)

**David Dew** – Signalled left and turned right.

**Steve Callahan, fast becoming a sponsor of his own run** – For the walking tour of Rye.

**Jonathan Martin and Luke Plummer again** – For poor preparation of their Press Bikes.

**Steve Callahan and Dave Hancock** – For making it a Honda Run rather than a Club Run as evidenced by the 'Reserved for Honda' table notes at lunch.

**Norman Hyde, Steve's co-sponsor** – Who had overtaken a truck before cutting it up and turning left in front of it.

**Graham Goodman** - Who had a side stand block attached to his handlebars by a length of string (no-one is sure how long it was) so he wouldn't forget it. Lack of product development. The hapless Hon Secretary was also fleeced for parking so close to another bike at Chartwell that he couldn't dismount.

**Jon Fletcher** – Was fined for enquiring what the weather would be like – why, I'm not sure.

**Wilf Harrison and Dennis Bates** – Fell foul because they reminded the Sergeant of the two old gits in the Muppet Show, plus Wilf was too close to the leader in his 'Chelsea Tractor'.

**Keith Blair** – Missed 2 junctions which resulted in a fine too for **Jon Fletcher** as he was on point duty at both.

**Steve Callahan (!)** - For having 2 'Sundays' on the Autumn Run Programme document.

**Dave Hancock** was also indicted for poor proof reading of same (*Ed's note, Dave got away with missing the heading 'Program' though*).

**Bob McMillan** – For the startling admission: "I have been a twat in the past"

**Keith Davies again** – For buying a bike for the first time in 4 years.

**Adam Kelley** - For it being his Wife's birthday on Club Run day and his the day before. He also was chastised for having no Yamaha branded wet weather gear.

**Cliff Wilton** – For parking on a footpath.

And last but not least – **Dennis Bates** – For his battery problem that prevented him riding the Run and of course, implicated in this and fined accordingly, was **Andrew Smith** for not making Yamaha OE batteries last for 20 years!

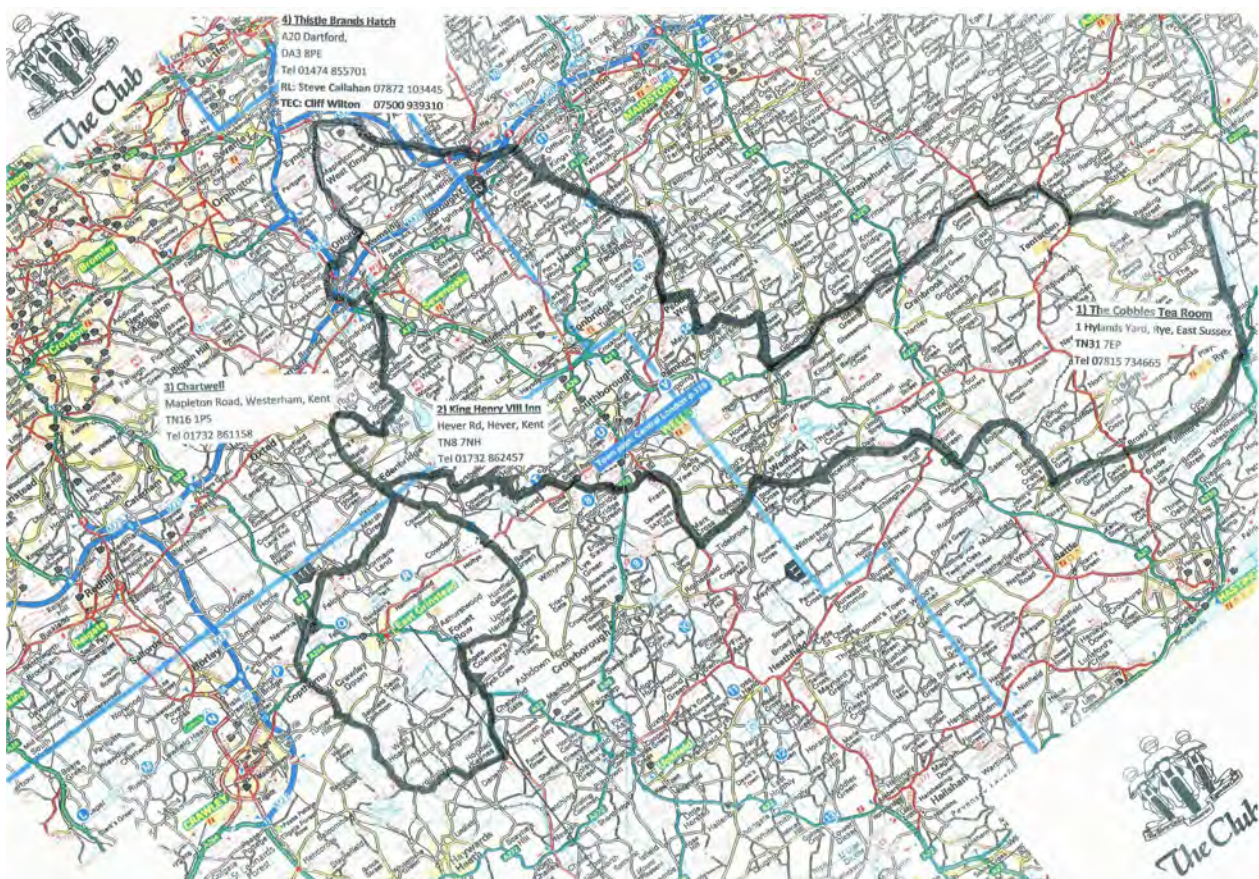
*Ed's note: It was only at the meeting on Sunday morning that your scribe learned of 'the one that got away'. Apparently, the Chairman and 'others' had left the hotel BEFORE DINNER on Friday to go to a local pub "to find a decent pint". Whomsoever assumes the role of Sergeant at Arms on the Spring Run should be licking his pencil in anticipation...*

**As the Sergeant at Arms closed his book on another super run, President Bates made a final reference to Churchill by proffering a two-fingered wave to all present and announcing gleefully that as he was going on holiday on the Sunday, he was now off home. With which the rest of us retired to the bar – to talk bollocks...**



Geoff Selvidge

\*The Douglas rider pictured at the Knatts Valley Hill Climb is a young Steve McQueen...



## **THE RUNNERS AND RIDERS...**

<b>MEMBERS</b>	
Steve Callahan – Organiser	Honda CB1000 Extreme
Dave Hancock - Organiser	Honda CR-V motor car
Dennis Bates - President	Subaru Forester motor car (passenger)
Tony Dawson - Chairman	Yamaha FJ1200
Rick Parish – Hon. Treasurer	Yamaha FJR1300A
Graham Goodman – Hon. Secretary	BMW R1150GS
David Martin – Sergeant at Arms	Yamaha V-Max
Andrew Smith – Raffle Meister	Yamaha XT1200Z Super Tenere
Geoff Selvidge - Scribe	Yamaha Fazer 600
Keith Davies	Triumph Tiger 850XC
Charles Smart	Triumph Tiger 850XC
Nick Jeffery	Kawasaki GT750
Martyn Roberts	Triumph Trident 900
Gerald Davison	Triumph Sprint 1050
Alan Halford	Suzuki GSX650F
Tony Jakeman	BMW S1000RR
Nick Hopkins	Norton Commando Fastback (Long Range)
Peter Meek	Norton Commando 850
Bob McMillan	Yamaha XT1200Z Super Tenere
Lester Harris	BMW R1200R
David O'Neill	BMW R1200GS Adventure
Maurice Knight	Suzuki GS400 De Luxe
Frank Finch	Suzuki Gladius 650
Wilf Harrison	Subaru Forester motor car
Keith Blair	BMW K75RT
Norman Hyde	Triumph Speedmaster
Luke Plummer	Suzuki Hayabusa GSX1300R
Graham Matcham	BMW R1200GS
David Dew	Suzuki GSX-R1000
John Wakefield	BMW R1200GS
<b>GUESTS</b>	
Cliff Wilton – (Steve Callahan)	Honda Fireblade
Adam Kelley (Andrew Smith)	Yamaha XT1200Z Super Tenere
Richard Yorke-Long (Norman Hyde)	Honda VFR750
Jonathan Martin (Dave Martin)	Suzuki B-King
Morton Agerbaek (Steve Callahan)	Honda CB1300
Steve Harris (Lester Harris)	Ducati 'Paul Smart'
Mark Davies (Bob McMillan)	Honda Crossrunner
Jon Fletcher	Yamaha YZF-R1



## Ode to 'The Club'

**W**hat club is that, you say!  
Let's club together one day.  
Clubbin it, is that it then?  
When men 'go to the club',  
Or working men of the north  
Escape to 'the club' after work,  
Away from the trouble and strife.  
To meet and talk, to laugh,  
Drink and just talk rubbish.

**B**ut most clubs are places for  
The like minded, sharing thoughts,  
And yes, memories or dreams.  
Then there is a club simply  
Known as, 'The Club'. A sort  
Of bike man's club. From  
An idea in those heady days,  
Of bikers battles on Brighton front,  
In studded leathers with greased  
Back hair and others with Parka's  
Mirrors and smoke.

**A** time of Brit bikes and  
Brits Are Best, of Beatles  
Of scandals, unions and  
Strikes. Of bosses who rested  
On laurels in time of need,  
For courage, vision and balls.  
To see the writing on the walls.  
To see the signs. Bikes for the  
Masses, leak free, with starters,  
Stoppers and style.

**N**ew makers, with desires, and dreams,  
And methodical ways, most  
Efficacious in every way.  
A time of excitement, exhilaration,  
Acceleration and quality high,  
Were met with calls of "Jap Crap"!  
What a tragic shower indeed they were.  
So arrogant and blinkered whilst  
Pushing the button of self destruct.

**A**nd it came to pass that the  
Board room boys, with the world  
At their feet, gave way  
To the boys from the East.  
It was also at this time,  
When a few visionary men  
Of the trade founded 'The Club'  
With a few proud 'execs' from  
Those great firms surviving,  
Still steeped in "know how"  
But what to do? What to do now?

**W**ell times roll on and on,  
From '63 to now. The makers'  
Have changed, the bosses have  
Moved, up, over and out.  
But it is surely the same  
In some ways, as markets rise

And fall with forces, some  
Beyond control, yet some within.

**W**hat of "The Biker" his needs  
His dreams and his reason to ride.  
They must know! The men at the  
Sharp end, as rise follows trough.  
So they meet and they talk,  
Drink, and they laugh and  
They drink as they talk a lot,  
Of sometime rubbish, but yet  
Some sense. They ride  
'The Run' with varying styles  
and pass people by with  
A wave, a nod and a smile.

**T**he bikes they have changed,  
From all over the world,  
But one thing has not, of this  
I am sure and that is the  
Friendship of all, as 'The Old'  
And 'The New' meet for bi-annual  
Bash. 'The Club' still provides  
'stimulating discussion', occasionally.  
A 'closer understanding', maybe!

**T**he 'Club Run' remains a mix  
Of well prepped, pre-set routes  
Along highways and byways.  
Though not quite 'a tour', it  
Remains, what you want of it.  
History revisited over and over,  
As in 'sixty three' the Club men  
Devour buns and broth while  
Munching the miles on their  
Steeds both ancient and modern.  
The run back to base for early bath  
And into the bar at the days end.

**A**fter hearty meal the end  
Draws nigh, a dram or two later  
And it's time to dwell  
On the reasons for all this.  
Thanks to 'your God' for safe run  
This day. While looking ahead  
To the next time, when like  
Minds meet, amongst 'The Bikes'.

**S**o it is after penning this piece,  
I leave you with this thought,  
Bikers do not have to ride, but  
"Boys just want to have fun".

**Bob McMillan 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2011**  
**Motorcyclist of 47 years (current bike Yam 1200 Super Tenere)**