OBITUARY

John Nicholas Jeffery

1948-2025

The funeral of John Nicholas Jeffery, known to everyone in the trade as Nick, took place at Aylesbury Vale Natural Burial Meadow on 2 September. Those in attendance celebrated his life and achievements. Family, friends, former colleagues, and members of the trade gathered to pay their respects to a man who had an unwavering love for motorcycles and the motorcycle industry. He was 78 years old.

Born in Wallington, Surrey, Nick was bright and intelligent as a lad, easily securing a place at Wallington Grammar School. He later earned an apprenticeship with Morris Motors and became the first student to be sponsored as a Nuffield Scholar in mechanical engineering.

During the vibrant era of the 'Swinging 60s,' Nick enrolled at Oxford University, where he found himself juggling many interests, often detracting from his studies. Nevertheless, he excelled in subjects that captured his attention, and motorcycles were his greatest passion, inspired by his older brother Richard. Though they shared a love for biking, rivalry existed; Richard favoured Nortons while Nick preferred Vincents.

He was never slow on a motorcycle. One of his proudest achievements during his time at university was riding from Oxford to John O'Groats, then from John O'Groats to Land's End, and back to Oxford – a journey he completed in around 40 hours, stopping only for fuel and to unfreeze his leg when he could no longer change gears!

His love of speed inevitably caught up with him. By his mid-20s, after receiving four speeding tickets, he lost his driving license. However, he still managed to earn a degree in mechanical engineering in 1976 with minimal studying.

He started his career with British Leyland, later moving to Suzuki GB, where he served as national service manager, and then to Kawasaki UK as technical service manager, where he even learned Japanese.

During this time, Nick courted Ellie, whom he'd met at Oxford. When Ellie moved to Australia, Nick wrote to her regularly, and when she returned to the UK, their bond deepened, and they married in 1977, settling in Bledlow, Buckinghamshire.

In the early 1980s, now in his mid-30s, Nick left Kawasaki to pursue an MBA in business administration and German at Cranfield University. During a dinner conversation, a friend challenged him; "If you know the law so well, why aren't you a lawyer?" That motivated Nick to go on to study law at Wolverhampton Polytechnic, which he completed in half the usual time.

He went on to join Renault Trucks as an in-house legal executive and, eager to enhance his professional skills, learned French and Swedish. His thirst for knowledge and remarkable capacity to learn were truly phenomenal.

Nick remained with Renault Trucks until the company announced it would be moving north to Warwick. Unwilling to relocate, Nick opted for retirement. However, retirement did not mean slowing down. He was never bored; he didn't know the meaning of the word! His interests expanded, and his quest for knowledge deepened. An avid reader, Nick could often be found opening his Kindle in a queue or at the roadside on biker ride-outs while others tended to lesser things!

Throughout his life, he collected books, motorcycles, and cars; spent hours tinkering in his workshop; and dedicated his time to riding and campaigning. His unwavering commitment to campaigning for rights of way earned him wide respect. Known for his anti-establishment views, he possessed a strong sense of right and wrong and displayed incredible stamina when fighting for what he believed in.

Beneath his passionate exterior, Nick had a gentle side. He was always willing to help others, exhibiting kindness and thoughtfulness that often went unnoticed, except by those he assisted. Reliable, dependable, and generous, his legacy will surely be shared by family and friends as they remember him with affection and respect.