

THE SPRING RUN 1987

It all began on Wednesday evening. Pleasant weather had lured me into the garden for a spot of weeding, when I was called to answer the 'phone. "It's Mike Riley" - "What's he want?" - "Don't know, but he seems to be a bit out of puff". So, into the house - dirt and all - to see what I could do.

"I'm in terrible trouble" said Mike, "My Guzzi won't go - no sparks." Suitable sympathy from me and a request to know what I could do. Yes, I would try to get a nearby (40 miles away!) Guzzi dealer to go and have a look on Thursday. Can you imagine - "Just drive over to Wolverhampton and fix my friend's V50 - no, you won't get paid - all in the game old man."

Back to the garden - telephone rings again! This time it's Ron Watson. Ron had just driven back from the South of France and was thinking he might like someone else to give him a lift, to Pembroke. Obviously I was delighted to offer, but felt I must tell Ron that Mike Riley may also be with us. "Put a No Smoking sign in your car" said Ron.

Thursday morning 7.30 - telephone. Oh not another! "It's Mike again" - "Very good news Wilf, I've got it going". Somehow this seemed unlikely, as the previous day the electrics had been torn apart - generator off, etc. etc. with no result. However, you have to ask don't you - "How?" ...pause, "Switched it on!" said Mike. Well, you know how easy it is to forget these little things!!

So - No non-smoking sign, a super afternoon and soon after lunch I was outside Ron's lovely home near Shipston. We had a good run down and I only hope Ron enjoyed the journey as much as I did - he was excellent company, and my new Squire trailer towed extremely well. One day, Peter Rivers Fletcher will again find the time to join us - he may sell a lot of trailers.

Well before dinner all were safely gathered in, except Tony Dennis. On enquiring of Doug Hele where Tony might be, it seemed likely that he was still somewhere near Birmingham looking for Doug. You would think with all that Police Equipment aboard, two people would be able to keep in touch on a motorway wouldn't you? Good job Peter Sheen never got round to buying two-way radios for the Club.

However, the good old telephone was put to good use and contrary to our fears, Tony soon arrived. Rumour has it that Doug really lost him deliberately, but who believes rumours these days?

Dinner, preceded by a little light refreshment, and followed by Hugh Palin's expose of Saturday's run, saw some of us in bed by midnight. Not so Bill Smith and his usual accomplices. Some time about 3 a.m. I think he retired reluctantly to his sheets. Derrick Norton must be getting old, because at breakfast he announced that our President is a social liability which is just another way of saying "I can't stay with him". By now, we have all got a feel for the super Hotel Hugh has found for us. Excellent welcome, very comfortable accommodation and equally good food. Altogether just the sort of place to relax and enjoy the weekend.

Saturday morning - I couldn't believe it - again dawned clear and bright. We were in for another dry run and this time not even early morning fog to spoil the first few miles.

A lazy 9.00 o'clock start and after two miles a fuel stop! Presumably for those very thirsty "Hokasuyas" - certainly not for Triumphs, Morinis or Ajays. Then down an apparent cul-de-sac -surely that was a dead end sign I saw - passed a lady who seemed to give our leader refreshment on the move. "Oh yes - that was my wife" said Hugh later. Actually, I shouted Hello to Peggy, but she hadn't the faintest idea who it was beneath the helmet.

Down the gears and down through Amroth. Bob Norton waved to one beautiful young lady with little result - I tried my luck with the next - and her father waved back "Oh well, you can't win 'em all".

Coffee at Pendire but the beach was too wet and bumpy for any record breaking attempts. Now, if Nick Jeffrey had been on his Honda scooter, things might have been different. Anyway, downstairs in the bar of the Beach Hotel there were photos aplenty to stimulate our memories, but do you know - our President never rode at Pendine. He knew a lot of people who did however, and as always guided a few of us through history that we are not quite young enough to remember.

Was it between Pendire and Cenarth that we lost our first genuine policeman, yes, we started with two - one in full dress, the other along for the ride. Somewhere out of Pendine the 'unofficial' escort made off. We enjoyed having him and wished he could stay longer. Our other 'visitor' stayed the whole course.

We viewed the river, and increased its volume a little, at Cenarth, then on to lunch at the Sergeants Inn at Eglwysrw - "Where?" (I can't even begin to pronounce it, can you?)

Now justice was done - at the Sergeants Inn our troublesome sergeant at arms who rejoices in fining us for the smallest misdemeanour, lost his sparks. The RAC crew - to whom we also extend our thanks - gave their best technical advice, but did I hear the Ace Triumph tuner say something like "If we put this wire back on this post do you think it would start on one cylinder?" No, I can't have done. Anyway, we left Norman in the hands of the RAC (who better) and pressed on.

Many twists and turns but some quick sections took us finally to Martin's Haven. Just after we arrived, the healthy crackle of Norman's Triumph - apparently after a very quick run across country - told us that he had caught us up.

No, not a lifeboat this time - Hugh had laid on a sedate boat trip round Skomer Island with refreshments on board. It was a very pleasant hour and although the water was choppy (to me at least - Maurice Knight thought it was like a mill pond) no one was sick.

Our local guide gave us a very good commentary on the boards we could see on the island - but as so often happens had one very unlucky moment. "You see all those holes on the cliffs - well they are all made by puffins and only puffins use them to lay their eggs" - we look on fascinated, when out of one of the holes hops a rabbit! As I said earlier, you can't win 'em all.

Just a few miles left back to the Hotel - good quick miles except for Mike Riley who needs fuel - at least that comes out of a pump Mike, spares are more difficult.

And would you believe it, Maurice Knight runs out of petrol at the Hotel entrance and pushes home. Not the first Ajay to be pushed over the line I guess.

.....And so to dinner.