



The Club

Club Run Report.

High Peak, Autumn 2000.

I found the bike in the garage covered in dust. I had decided to take the day off from writing "A Guide to Twenty Five Things That Have Not Yet Been Discovered" as I was stuck on the index. I was determined to arrive in good time and good heart for a Club Run so I even washed the bike and reminded myself what horrible things they are to clean and got to Buxton at tea time. As each arrival checked in, he remarked how good the ride was until a few miles from Buxton and then it started raining. It does on peaks, you know.

I took tea with Peter Agg and his guest, John Sangster. Peter is such a huge character. He has obviously concluded that emigrating from this world is not an option so he attacks life with gusto. I remember Tom Waterer telling me that Peter was the most inspirational person with whom he had ever worked and I can believe it. Maurice Knight was in attendance so early that Suzuki was better represented in the Peak District than at Head Office. Apparently, Maurice had asked Simon Hill if he was going to organise another Blois, only to be told, "I'm not bloody Thompsons, you know. Why don't you do it?"

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I asked John Sangster a gentle question regarding his past and - BAMM - the shutters went up and his face suddenly resembled that of a U-Boat Kommander - VEE DON'T GO DER, OK? I later discovered that he was a main board director of Lonrho, that most successful trading company built by Tiny Rowland. For those fans of Wilbur Smith, you can picture John as the central character in a tale of carving an empire in the harsh reality of central Africa. I remember vividly grasping his paw on meeting and I could not close my hand round it - oh, cripes! It was the sort of paw that had dug a diamond mine single handed, beat off Zulu warriors intent on skinning him and organised the voting in Cape Town. His face furniture was rough hewn. I want him on my side in a rumble, please. He loosened up during the weekend - as they do - and was a delight.

The rain abated so Peter Meek and I took off for a trimble around the Pavilion Gardens. These occupy 25 acres right in the centre of town and straddle the River Wye. They were developed, as were the main buildings in Buxton, by the Dukes of Devonshire.

Not content with building the estate at Chatsworth, in their spare time they created a wonderful set of buildings in the middle of Buxton. I particularly liked the majesty of the Crescent and the Devonshire Royal Hospital. It is sad that the town has no use for the magnificent Crescent and it was empty. All the development of Buxton has gone on in "super sheds" at the edge of town and the fine buildings in the centre are left with no purpose, save the hospital.

This also applied to the incredible Buxton Opera House (opened in 1903) adjacent to the Hotel. It was designed by Frank Matcham who has been described as the greatest of British theatre architects. The cost of the project, excluding land, was £25,000. The theatre seats 937 people and the pit can hold 85 musicians. We were only able to take a quick look at the foyer as there was a performance that night and most impressive it was in its use of marble, scrolls and "foll de rolls". The Buxton Festival ranks quite highly on the increasing list of festivals in this country. Quite an achievement for such a small town.

Regular performances were held in the theatre until the advent of cinema. It then yielded to popular demand and doubled as a picture house in 1927. The arrival of talking movies in 1932 effectively closed the live performances.

Audiences dwindled until it was closed in the late 70s. By this time, it was in a sorry state. The High Peak Theatre Trust was formed in 1978 and, on July 30th 1979, it reopened after restoration work costing £504,488. I was delighted

to see it in good condition and with a full programme.

I know I bang on about quondam times but Buxton is a magnificent example of endeavour with style and I loved it. Art should demonstrate intellectual skill with craftsmanship. For those interested, the architect of the fine buildings such as the Crescent was John Carr, known simply as Carr of York. He had more buildings listed in *Vitruvius Britannicus* than any of his contemporaries and that included Adam, Chambers and Wyatt. He worked principally in Yorkshire and for fifty years dominated the architecture of the north building scores of country houses, dozens of bridges (only in stone, mind), 10 churches and countless town houses, farm houses and cottages. He even designed and paid for himself a church in his home town. Rising from very humble beginnings he wound up with his own coat of arms and a country seat worth £150,000 in 1807 when he died. I recommend a book by Brian Wragg called "The life and Works of John Carr".

Returning to the hotel, we bumped into Graham Goodman. Peter and he continued their joshing and sparring and verbally trying to knock lumps off each other. I've yet to see a better impersonation of the Odd Couple. We watched Mike Jackson unloading his W650 (he calls it a Kawalski for some unknown reason). He had a "height adjuster" for the ramp. It was a house brick which promptly broke into two neat pieces. Chris Ventress had a most impressive

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aerospace quality, aluminium alloy, custom-made ramp to show how to do it properly.

We had previously stayed at The Old Hall Hotel during the Spring Run in 1993 so the staff knew what to expect. Louise and George Potter were our hosts then and were known motor sport enthusiasts so it was sad to hear that George had died in a motoring accident in 1994. I remember George and my guest, John Burton, getting stuck into the throat oil in the nightclub next door, well into the early hours of Sunday morning. Louise has carried on running the hotel and they laid on fine fare and excellent service all weekend.

The current Hotel was built in 1550 by the Earl of Shrewsbury who was the fourth husband of Bess of Hardwick. Bess' second husband was Sir William Cavendish who built Chatsworth so she was obviously enamoured of builders. Mary, Queen of Scots had apartments in the hotel for several summers from 1573 and had scratched a message on a window, "Buxton, whose warm waters have made thy name famous, perchance I shall visit you no more". Decapitation is too good for vandals.

The run was so well attended that we had virtually all the 38 rooms. I was sharing with David Dew (Bob Macmillan's guest) of Honda. I remember him from Llandrindrod Wells when he was riding an RC45. Tom Waterer was gagging to have a go on it and swapped his ER-5 for the RC45. David sat up his chuff on the ER-5 for miles much to everyone's amazement. David was entertaining on life at Corporate Honda in their plush new offices at Heathrow and his journey from

MCN to Honda. Sorry, chaps, nothing salacious to report. Tom, true to form, had blagged a ZX-9R from Kawasaki and was most complimentary about it. I note that, just after the run, Geoff Selvidge had the lead-letter in MCN, defending KMUK and their range, including the refined ZX-9R but all MCN could do was print a snotty response asking where the new model is. Is that it? It must be new or it is no good? Look at Buxton and understand, oh ye juvenile scribblers.

Wandering down to the bar, I met up with Ken Sprayson, the legendary chassis man, here as Peter Sheen's guest. He has just completed his umpteenth National Rally and won a special Gold for the combination of age, age of machine, distance and time or something like that. It involves riding 600 miles around England, all through the night. All this on an unsprung Norton Model 18 of 1948 vintage. He made this his last National Rally "because I have done it so many times and won so many Gold's, it is no longer fun". Quite. He was thinking about bringing his Honda on this run "but the carburation is a bit dicky so I brought along the Norton because I can trust that". Quite. What a star!

Chairman Hyde had brought along Dan Sagar of the youthful visage. He runs his own PR agency for the trade and his enthusiasm was very infectious. I am sure his clients get good value. He raised a few eyebrows by using a grey import 400cc Honda. Bad form in front of club members from the official importers, don't you know. Nick Jeffery was in full solicitor's fig this evening and muttered on all weekend about "no sign of intelligent life" in the Scottish

report. If I say I am sorry, would it help? No, stuff it. Not if you are going to turn up on a pizza delivery bike. Tony Jakeman (David Hill's guest) introduced himself which surprised me as we have met and chatted at shows and on Club runs and I can only assume I am so insignificant that he did not remember me. Yup, that fits. Tony was trying out an R6 to give him background as he has set his heart on a new GSXR600.

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What a delight to have Hugh Palin back with Matt Lowe and the RAC van. Matt has left the RAC and has set up his own business, running a web site at www.bikersweb.co.uk and employs 8 people. From time to time, the RAC recalls him to train mechanics. He was in fine form, brimming with confidence, enthusing about his business and rightly so. One minor point. Why does his business card introduce him as Matt Black? Is this whimsy? A bijou pun? Must ask him next run.

Nick Hopkins had fallen in love with an octagonal post box opposite the Opera House. It was a superb piece of cast iron craftsmanship made by Clancey and Company with much filigree finery around the "VR". Lovely to see that the Victorian era allowed designers to supply post boxes and claim ownership rather than the bland Gilbert Scott design, so well known in latter years. On my earlier walk around the Gardens, I had waxed lyrically about cast iron work, pointing to the band stand as a fine example ("they don't make 'em like that any more") only to find it was erected in 1997. Damn it! At least it was in a traditional style.

I sat next to Bob Macmillan at dinner and have to remark on the difference in our Bob since moving to competition and out of the commercial front line. He used to be wound up as tight as a drum skin and now his face is in repose and he looks years younger. Still as pugnacious as ever, having just come back from a car Grand Prix where he challenged the head of BAR as to the reasons they are not winning when they have the best motor on the grid and a World Champion driving the car. That's our Bob. The conversation flowed easily. He was riding an F6C pre-production model that should have been crushed. He said it was his own bike but did confess that no coin of the realm had passed hands nor was likely to. It was on six open pipes and did sound gorgeous if a little loud for my taste.

Sitting opposite was Keith Davies whom I swear is getting sleeker every time I see him. He was most relaxed about the loss of Moto Guzzi to Aprilia and pretty scathing about the Guzzi decision forcing dealers to order their spares from Italy, even down to one oil filter. Seems crazy to me but Keith said he will still acquire Guzzi spares directly from Italy and keep that side of his empire flowing. He has sold over 400 of the F4S MV 750cc - about the same number as Triumph have sold of their TT600. Dave Hill had blagged a Raptor from Keith and was surprised about the absence of wind in the face. I quizzed Keith about it and he could only put it down to the funny little instrument binnacle but agreed that the Raptor and V Raptor are surprisingly free of the wind blast associated with muscle bikes.

It is a great feature of the runs to see Keith and son and heir, Richard, zooming past everybody on the products they sell.

No surprise these days to see the verbose, mellifluous and otiose language on the menu. Many souls pounced on the seasonal melon offering and were trying out of devilment to order unseasonal melon. Seriously though, it was a good, full menu with sufficient variety to be tempting and the tucker was not too bad for mass catering. The staff were well on the case this evening when it came to keeping the wine flowing. I know this because Dennis was starting to blow a gasket very early on the first night. Anyone would think it is his money or Club funds, not ours. Just go round again, Dennis, if funds are running low. Talking of funds, it is incredibly generous of Doug Hele and John Nelson to send in donations when they cannot make a run and I am sure you will permit me to mention it in this report. Thank you, both. Please join us again as soon as possible. John Nelson was indulging himself driving a double decker, an artic and other large lumps. Sounds fun, does that.

Tony Dawson and Frank Finch introduced the run which was an attack on every one of the passes in the Peak District. Setting off north to the High Peak, looping round to Sheffield, back down towards Matlock, round the bottom of Buxton and then out to Jodrell Bank for tea and back via Macclesfield and over the Cat and Fiddle pass. The team had continued the idea introduced in Fort William of a small card which

had the relevant telephone numbers of the stops and was a pass at the bar to prove legitimacy.

The role of rafflemeister has now been usurped by Martin Lambert with Geoff Selvidge acting as his gopher. Could this be a CLM? (Career Limiting Move). Nice to see that tickets were notional in the grand scheme of things. Martin called out a number and then found a prize to fit the recipient. Thus, I am now the proud owner of a Harris Race Pipe Tee shirt. Thanks a bunch. Martin's ready wit was in full flow during the dispensing of the geegaws.

I have the impression that the bench racing later on in the bar was a fairly muted affair and I was in bed by about 1 am. Maybe nobody speaks to me now for fear of getting a dishonourable mention in despatches? While I was being a good virgin and keeping my wick truly trimmed, the zealots Dave Martin, Norman Hyde and Dan Sagar went to see what - if anything - goes on in Buxton at 1 am. They fell into conversation with a local and explained their craving for a kebab or similar. He took them to a kebab and pizza house that was world class. They settled on pizza and chips. (pizza and chips? Yuk). Dave Martin dropped his so he ate Dan's instead. Welcome to the club, Dan.

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The weather was misty with a hint of drizzle in the air as we lined up for the "off" but the forecast had promised an improvement later. Before setting off, Tony Dawson put a round, white sticker on everyone's number plate - including Frank Finch, run leader. Umm, why? The sticker concept is a good and

sensible idea but the run leader and David Strathcarron's Grinnall? How many Grinnalls were you expecting? Plus the fact that if Tony caught up with Frank, something has gone horribly wrong. Frank was sporting a full race, wet weather rear tyre which made me ponder the pace he was to set. He also mentioned that he had spent a full day in the IoM setting up the suspension to his satisfaction.

Now, chaps. Can we please be more courteous when setting off on a Run? We effectively blocked the road outside the inn. Some poor chap was stuck behind David Strathcarron for a full three minutes. David was even facing the wrong way so he should have moved off and turned round to let the chap by. Tom Waterer resisted moving even when alerted. This is not the first time I have observed our selfish behaviour which does us no credit.

Heading up to Chapel-en-le-Frith, we encountered the first of many 40 mph limits on roads which did not appear to justify such restrictions. The Peak District is such a tourist magnet, I suppose some traffic calming is necessary but it is damned frustrating. Dan Sagar rode this section without lights until reminded by Martin Lambert. He then rode the next 20 miles with them on full beam. By the way, Chapel-en-le-Frith (Anglo-Saxon for church in the forest) is the historic capital of the area. According to the Domesday Book, it was a royal forest and achieved notoriety before becoming the HQ of Ferodo and their fearsome green AM4 linings of the sixties. For completeness,

the boundaries are formed by the rivers Wye, Derwent, Etherow and Goyt.

After Chapel, we ascended the edge of the High Peak and arrived on the outskirts of Glossop. This town was developed by the Howard family who are Dukes of Norfolk and was originally called Howard Town. They obtained the land as a dowry in 1606 and spent the next 300 years building fine houses, the Town Hall and the railway station. There is a hint of rivalry between the Norfolks and the Devonshires with both families slugging it out, building their monuments in Glossop and Buxton. Thank God they did and without the parish council, focus groups and the planners interfering, I bet.

The industrial revolution led to the development of many water mills and we had passed a town on our left called New Mills. At one time, there were mills all over the Peak District and according to local brochures, they are all a tourist stop not to be missed. On every Club Run, I collect fistfuls of brochures and all of them are excellent. Tourism is a huge and worthy industry and what is the Club if not a touring institution, taking all of us to exciting reminders of our heritage?

Heading for Sheffield after Glossop, we climbed up to the 500m peak of Featherbed Top. Was it in honour of Ken Sprayson that we passed over a peak with a name so associated with a breakthrough in chassis design? Thence down the Snake Pass which was enjoyed by those keen road riders. Martin Lambert came storming by on the ZX-12R which simply exploded past in an awesome demonstration of power. In

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the vale, we had Ladybower reservoir straddling the road. A couple of miles on, we turned left into a single track road and disappeared into the clouds before arriving at the Strines Inn. That was a weird feeling, riding in thick mist on a very rough road. It was most disorienting on a bike whereas I quite like skiing in the clouds as I can't see the horrors that would be daunting in clear light. Frank proudly proclaimed that the Inn was chosen because of the fabulous views over Derwent Water where the Dambusters practised. As I could not see across the road at that point, I took Frank's word for it.

The Strines Inn has a fabulous provenance. It was originally built as a manor house for the Worrall family in 1275 though most of the building now dates from the sixteenth century. It became an Inn in 1771 when it was owned by the Earl FitzWilliam. Strines is an old English word meaning "meeting of the water", quite appropriate as it now overlooks the Strines reservoir. Below the Strines lies the Dale Dyke reservoir which burst its banks in 1864, killing 240 people. Across the Strines reservoir, one can see a tower known as Boot's Folly. Henry Boot was a builder and to keep his workers employed during the depression, he started building the tower with the idea of it being high enough to see his wife's grave in Bradfield. Happily the depression ended before the tower was finished so it is too short to see Bradfield. According to the Landlord, the Inn is a regular site for UFO spotting and there is a tale of a private jet aircraft crashing into the bog behind the Inn and disappearing. What a splendid microcosm of things English is in the Strines Inn and surrounding area.

Just as we were ready to pull away, the weather cleared and there was a fabulous view as promised - but not of Derwent Water. That was over the hill behind the Inn. Backtracking for a short way then cutting south and west, we went up the incredibly steep cutting between the Blue John Cavern and the Speedwell and Peak Caverns and came out at the top with the imposing Mam Tor (meaning mother hill) on our right. All around this area were hundreds of people with stout boots and coils of rope setting out to enjoy a day of potholing. The thought makes me go cold but each to his own.

After hitting Chapel again, we turned onto the A625 for a good, easy blast down to Calver, a wiggle woggle round Hassop, Pilsey and Baslow and then a jaw-dropping ride through the grounds of Chatsworth. What magnificence! Keith Blair summed it up - location, location and location. To which I add execution, execution and execution. The scale and magnificence of the place is breathtaking and the husbandry of the grounds exquisite. There are so many demonstrations of fabulous wealth in the area with Hardwick Hall, Kedleston Hall, Calke Abbey, Sudbury Hall and Haddon Hall dotted around, it makes one appreciate the power and might of the industrial revolution added to old money.

We were now in the Peak District National Park for a gentle loop round, enjoying the scenery, when Mike Jackson thought it was damned unfair of his W650 to run out of fuel without warning, just like that. The fact that he had been riding on reserve had little to do with it in his mind. The RAC was

nowhere to be seen so Tony Dawson stopped his FJ on a bank, found a "surplus" bit of breather tubing on the W650 and did the time honoured siphoning trick. Mike asked Tony to put the bit of tubing back and I gather Tony's riposte was short and sharp.

Meantime, Peter Meek was not to be Moutdone so he opened a Norton Breakers business with the first offering being a complete rear brake operating system. I was a couple of bikes behind Frank at the lunch stop. We waited outside in the sun, taking a beer and wondering where everyone had got to. It was the thick end of an hour before the last one arrived. Martin Lambert claims that, while waiting, he was offered a good rate from a local B&B and an estate agent gave him details on local barns just ripe for conversion. The RAC van appeared from the wrong direction and set off again in the wrong direction. A rider stopped briefly to inform him that he might have to wait some time and rode off again. When finally waved off by tail end charlie, he had to use choke and reckons he should have reread the Highway Code to check on the laws of the land. Oh, he does exaggerate. I took the opportunity to wander through the village of Hartington and noted the sign to the next village, Sheen. Family seat of PRTS or that Bazzar chappy?

I got the impression of a closed community that would not welcome people moving in. Sure, you could visit the Cheese Shop (and many did and loaded the RAC van with pounds of Stilton) or the souvenir shops but please go home at night. The sort of

community with a maximum of three surnames. This was typified by the bar staff at the Charles Cotton Hotel. They were the weirdest looking collection of people I had seen in many a month.

The "yoof" behind the bar T complained to anyone who would listen about the difficulty of insuring a secondhand sports bike. This is a real problem for the industry. I feel a lot of bikes are sold only because the OEMs will offer insurance. After one year, the bike has to be dumped because of the reinsuring problem. Nick Hopkins kept up his affection for octagonal post boxes by spotting one outside the Devonshire Arms. It was a reproduction but nice to see that they are able to cling on to individual tastes in this day of the Rev. Blair trying to get us all to be good standard comrades.

Matt had fixed the Commando rear Mbrake with a cable that looked better than standard so we set off to see Jodrell Bank but, by now, running late. We routed south west to the extreme edge of the Peak District National Park and then turned up towards Buxton before heading west to Jodrell Bank. I rode along in a dream-like state, completely out of it for no particular reason. I scared myself half to death by not concentrating and then, having done the maths, reasoned that I could not afford to scare myself half to death again. Maybe I was recollecting the Internot at Munich. I went to see a client from whom I had not heard for a few months and asked for the chairman. Dead from cancer. Undaunted, I visited another client and asked for my correspondent. Dead in a car crash. At another stand, I was informed that the

The RAC van appeared from the wrong direction and set off again in the wrong direction.

chairman had had a heart attack. The only common thread was me. Oh dear.

I found it quite pleasant just ambling along, looking at the scenery and not giving a damn about going quickly. I now subscribe to the Wilf Harrison, Keith Blair and Maurice Knight school of Club Runs. I hope none of these chaps thinks this is a slur for it is not meant as such but an observation as to how we can each enjoy the run for different reasons and perhaps these reasons change per run.

Jodrell Bank is very impressive close to. Mike Jackson nearly did not see it for he missed the left turn into the car park and wound up in Macclesfield until some kind soul chased him down and brought him back. David Strathcarron, Wilf Harrison and Maurice Knight decided they were going back for an early bath. For some time, they debated the best route to the hotel. Dave Martin took charge and plotted a route (one of the two possible) onto the main road back to Buxton. He did point out that this was the same as the club route save one small detour to pass by "some old codger's house". The old codger's house was the family seat of the Hill family. You know, Dave, the chap who pays your wages. Another CLM, I feel.

Tony Dawson was delighted that the only company who claimed it could make Jodrell Bank was a Sheffield firm. Yes, Tony, but it was late and over budget - the English Disease. It was sad to see rust showing through in various places. This promoted a discussion on how to paint it. The solution agreed upon was to tip up the dish until the rim and the centre into a horizontal position, pour in a few gallons of paint and spin it

vigorously. Job done. The other side? Turn the dish upside down, pour the paint on at the centre and spin. Cracked it. We were chided by a curator for being late but he did a good gallop over the history and current work at the centre including the fact that the resolution is accurate enough to spot a tennis ball in New York. Out of all the things in New York to look at - a tennis ball - come now, you can do better. Off to the cinema to watch a film on the sky and heavenly bodies. This was a very clever piece of film work. They had managed to include many good dream sequences, tailored individually, I gather, after talking to members rubbing their eyes in amazement (?). This is a nice new feature of the runs; a kip in the middle of the afternoon. It was grating that the commentary was American and PRTS handed in a protest on this matter.

From the centre, it was a tootle round the south of Macclesfield and then an attack on the Cat and Fiddle pass. Interesting to note the number of bikes on the pass, all of them super sports and all the riders in full leathers. Riding gear like that costs 20% of the price of the bike yet they whinge about the latter rather than the former. This is a crazy world where a bit of *schmutter* is valued more highly (or costed more realistically in the supply chain) than the technological marvel of a modern bike.

Before we got back to the Hotel, Bob Mac and Peter Dew had left us to go about Mr Honda's business. I had a quiet ale with Geoff Selvidge and discussed the merits of the ZRX1100 he was riding. He thought it was a bit weird when he first rode it and asked Peter Perrin to give it a go. Peter disappeared at a rate of knots and came

back, grinning from ear to ear, saying what a superb, easy-handling bike it is. I sympathise, Geoff. It happens to me all the time. Nothing fits my riding style so the bike is wrong, right?

Martyn Roberts was waxing ecstatically about his new job with Pro Drive. He was suffering at Cosworth with the German take-over and not being able to do things the way he wished. So he was revelling in his newly found freedom. He told me that Pro Drive has bought the airfield belonging to AP. This was used by the industry for some of the noise test evaluations back in 1982 that led to the current noise laws. Now you have a company that makes race and rally cars buying a serious piece of real estate from a main stream automotive component supplier which shows how times must change in UK manufacturing.

Why real estate? Is that like real time in as much as I cannot conceive of unreal estate or unreal time? Again, did you know that there has been a nett increase in manufacturing jobs in the UK over the past year but this fact does not fit main stream perception so it is not reported, save in the specialist press? Oh these times where the media, unchecked, is the only source of information.

Matt Lowe stunned everybody by producing a rolling picture show of the day on a laptop so we could all see how macho we look. What happened to my neck, usually noted for sticking out? I say this for I received a CD of the shots in the mail after the run and was able to examine each shot in detail. Wow, what a wonderful world the engineers are

bringing us - digital pictures, immediate viewing in real time - oh, bugger it, slipped into the vernacular.

Ambling into dinner quite late, I found that there was only one seat left and that at top table. I don't like that. I would much rather be among the rabble on the floor with all the joshing going on. (Must remember to get in on time next run). Dinner proceeded well until about the pudding stage when the waiters seemed to have lost the plot. I mused on whether 'twas time to bring back the box marked *To Improve Promptitude*, once used in ale houses to obtain good service by *TIPping*.

Dennis Bates had a fit when he was denied the first pudding to arrive and snatched it from Norman. Dennis had shown a naughty streak earlier by suggesting that Peter Bolton should not be driving around in a Mercedes estate as he has bikes at home and, failing that, why did he not ride passenger in David's Grinall? Norman announced the royal toast and Peter, Mike Jackson, your scribe and John were straight into the stogies. There was some kerfuffle emanating from Keith Blair whether permission had been given to light up but the toast is the signal, dear boy. Do you not understand addiction?

I met Wilf Harrison at the TTRA luncheon and he was chuffed and annoyed that he had not been fined.

Keith put on his usual bravura performance in fining everybody at least once for some footling act of folly during the day. Well, nearly everybody, as I met Wilf Harrison at the TTRA luncheon and he was chuffed and annoyed that he had not been fined. This was the first thing he mentioned about the run. There is something

incredibly endearing about the English psyche here. Why do we find it so comforting to be made a fool of publicly? Long may it continue. The quiz was won by Dennis Bates and Tony had some difficulty explaining a question that was "humorous".

Hugh was persuaded by Norman to give his homily on keys and the safe use of such as first delivered in Blandford Forum, I believe. He delivers it with such a light touch and it is so cleverly crafted that, without use of smut or innuendo, he tackles a delicate subject in a polished manner that had the room helpless with laughter. May this tradition of enjoying our language by word play continue for a long time as so well demonstrated all weekend, individually or at the meal stops.

On Sunday morning, I took my usual constitutional around the town before breakfast and noted the railway station which had a service to Manchester. That is it, Manchester. John Prescott, please order the good people of Buxton to use public transport to fit your requirements because it looks to me as if they want to go to other places and therefore the only mode available is a car. Thus your taxes are not discretionary but are a tax, plain and simple.

Bemusing to see notices forbidding ingress to the station by any other than the main entrance except when the station is unmanned in which case you can go through the prohibited ones. Have you spotted the notice mania around in our society? My local social club has gone into "notice overload" with notices on notices to the point where they are ignored as nobody has

got enough time to read them. It is rather similar to buying a brand new bike. It would take all day to read the stickers about helmets, fuel etc. but the manufacturers have to cover themselves in these litigious times. I was recently accosted in our local market town by a firm of ambulance-chasing lawyers. They were trying to screw a buck out of personal tragedy in this blame-centred culture of ours (imported from the Yanks. What a role model! They can't even have an election without the lawyers topping up their pension funds).

On my way back, I noted that PRTS has a new Jaguar saloon to tow his Honda. On the front was a rather fine badge bolted to the radiator grill. Curiosity got the better of me. Apparently it is the RAC badge appertaining to the Club in Pall Mall (not the rescue service) and the membership is ascribed to the MCIA or the Club or something. As a member of the Club and the MCIA, does this mean I am a member of the RAC Club? I used to go there regularly with my stockbroker and the steam room, swimming pool and squash courts are fabulous so please tell. I think it was on the Blandford Run that PRTS recounted to me the story of setting off on honeymoon on a Francis Barnett with wife and luggage for two weeks in Monte Carlo. His transport has changed somewhat.

It was good to reinstate the Club meeting on Sunday morning as it rounds off the event nicely. The chairman's summary was memorised to form the club report. I was surprised about the reaction to my suggestion to e-mail members. It just seems a way of being more efficient, that's all. Nothing

would change for those who do not subscribe to the Internet. I write this drivel, send it to Graham Goodman on the net, he edits it, turns it into column format and adds the pictures. He then prints it on glossy paper and stuffs it into envelopes, prints labels and mails it. My suggestion is that he could e-mail it to members who have Internet access as a file attachment. They can then download and print it at their leisure or even just file it in their Club Folder or dump it (and who could blame them?). At 10 pages and possibly 30 members taking e-mail, what a saving of time, effort and paper. Just a thought. The

committee will discuss it so we should have an answer by the next meeting.

Maybe, in comparison with the heady excitement of Fort William, it was always a hard act to follow. The run was, as ever, a great way of visiting parts of Britain not otherwise seen in the normal course of events. Who would have thought it possible to have a run on such excellent roads in the centre of England within a gnat's knacker of Sheffield and Macclesfield. Many thanks from all to Tony and Frank. See you in Kirby Lonsdale on April 21st. 2001.

AlanBaker

Members and their machines

Graham Goodman R1100GS	1085cc	BMW	Dave Martin	1084cc	Honda
Peter Sheen SLR650	644cc	Honda	Tom Waterer	889cc	Kawasaki
Martin Lambert Ninja ZX-12R	1199cc	Kawasaki	Nick Hopkins	944cc	Ducati 944
Dennis Bates XJ600S Diversion	598cc	Yamaha	Peter Meek	829cc	Norton
Nick Jeffery GT550	553cc	Kawasaki	Frank Finch	1002cc	Yamaha
Alan Baker XJ 900 Diversion	892cc	Yamaha	David Hill	996cc	Cagiva
Wilf Harrison	798cc	BMW R80	Mike Jackson	649cc	Kawasaki
Keith Davies Navigator	996cc	Cagiva	Geoff Selvidge	1052cc	Kawasaki
Richard Davies Raptor	996 cc	Cagiva	Keith Blair	740cc	BMW K75
Norman Hyde GSF1200S Bandit	1157cc	Suzuki	Peter Agg	1170cc	BMW
Maurice Knight R850R	848cc	BMW	Chris Ventress	984cc	BMW K1
Tony Dawson FJ1200	1188cc	Yamaha	David Strathcarron	948cc	Grinnall
Bob McMillan F6C Valkyrie	1520cc	Honda	Martyn Roberts	1157cc	Suzuki
Hugh Palin	(Navigator)	Ford Transit RAC Rescue Unit			
Matt Lowe	(RAC)				
Peter Bolton		Mercedes C300 Estate turbo-diesel.			

Guests and their machines

Tony Jakeman	599cc	Yamaha YZF-R6
Ken Sprayson	490cc	Norton Model 18
John Sangster	1340cc	Harley-Davidson FLHTC
Dan Sagar	399cc	Honda Aero
David Dew	1137cc	Honda CBR1100XX Blackbird

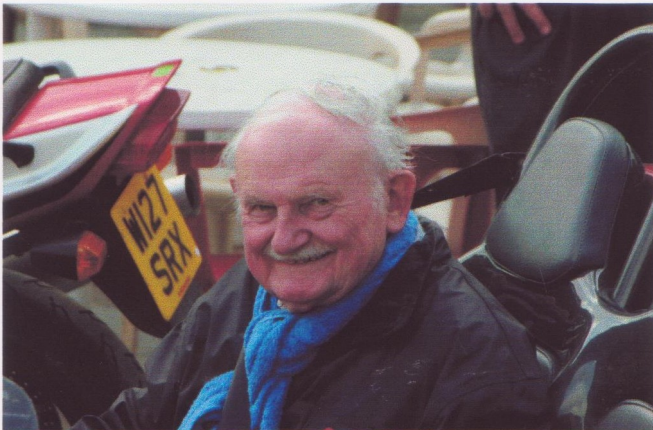
Club Run, High Peak. Autumn 2000



Mr Martin takes instructions. (From Mrs Martin?)



Alan Baker, Nick Hopkins & Martyn Roberts relax



David Strathcarron, all smiles



Ken Sprayson with weekend luggage



Frank Finch leads away from coffee stop



Classroom at Jodrell Bank