



## MOJACAR MOTORCYCLE TOURING CLUB

# bulletin

A Club for Touring Motorcyclists founded by the late Ken Craven.  
www.mojacarmtc.org.uk

January 2010  
Issue 180

### SECRETARIES BIT

A HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE.

Included with this edition is the 2010 members address list. Also included is the members email address list, only sent to members who have agreed to publication so you can communicate with each other if you want to.

This request is important – If you have not already done so, please send Paul Weston the remaining balance for the weekend you have booked at Abergavenny, Paul has to pay the total invoice by the beginning of February.

I mentioned in the last bulletin that if you plan to join Martin Heuter on his weekend near Malvern he does need to know by the end of January the reservations he needs at the hotel he has selected. He has negotiated a deal at the hotel but, they need full payment by end of January. With the increase in the VAT rate up 2.5% this will add £1.50 per person (see Martins article for figures). Camping is available but it's around 2 to 3 miles from the hotel, if you prefer camping contact Martin for details of the site. Don't forget there is a tour around the Morgan car factory on the Friday. It looks like a good weekend and in a lovely area we do not visit often.

Updates on the summer tour to Italy and the September tour of Britain with information on the weekend at Bungay are published in this edition.

Finally an article from a member who has reached OAP status and, how to cope with it i.e. ignore aches and pains and "go for it" etc.

All correspondence on subjects other than events to:  
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### NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to new members:- Leslie John Piper from Weston Super Mare, Graham & Sylvia Davies from Newport Monmouthshire, Edward Yarker from Doddington Cambridgeshire. Their full address details are

in the new 2010 members address list attached. We look forward to meeting them on an event this year.

### MEMBERSHIP

The club membership stands at 112 at the start of 2010. Twenty two people have not renewed. Many of these folk have not been to a club event for many years - some not at all. Although it is sad to lose members, in my view our membership number is still healthy. Although we lost 22 members we have recruited 6 new members for this New Year.

### LIABILITY INSURANCE

The club has renewed its liability insurance through the BMF for 2010; this entitles all members in the club to affiliation membership. You are entitled to discounts for BMF events and, discounts on bike and travel insurance using the companies listed:- NCI Insurance services, for bike insurance and European breakdown; 0800 0217824. Perkins Slade for travel and break down insurance, 0121 6988050. Motorsport Travel provides discount channel crossings, 01759 301010. Travelex are currently offering all bmf members discounts throughout their UK network. Either call 0208 5385540 to pre order or turn up at any Travelex bureau and show your membership card for a 50% discount on commission.

To obtain any discount the club has a unique discount code which must be quoted. **The discount code for our club is MTC10A445.**

### AN INVITE TO SUNDAY LUNCH

After the success of last years Sunday lunch organised by Arthur & Lyn Spain, they have offered to repeat the invite. The invitation to join them is at the White hart pub Stockbridge, the date 7<sup>th</sup> February at 12.00 noon, the same venue as last year. If you fancy a break from the winter "blues" and a meet up with friends for a "chat" over a meal please ring Arthur & Lyn.

Arthur & Lyn have provided a menu choice – Roast Beef with Yorkshire pud, served with roast potatoes and vegetables £8.95.

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Lamb hot pot topped with sliced new potatoes, served with bread & butter £11.95.  
Creamy mushroom & vegetable risotto £9.95.  
Please tell Arthur & Lyn your choice when you contact them, this is to help the pub cook all the meals at the same time.  
*Hon Sec*

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EVENTS FOR 2010 in Date order with details where available.

**4 Peaks weekend based at Mulberry House Hostel (Ty'r Morwydd) Abergavenny. Date: 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> March.** Organiser Paul Weston.

As before the accommodation is in the hostel. The cost per night for B&B with dinner is £35.50; total cost for two nights £71 per person. Please complete the application slip and send £20 per person deposit made payable to P Weston. **I require the balance at the latest by 4<sup>th</sup> January 2010** (I have to pay the full bill by 1<sup>st</sup> February).

**Kirkby Lonsdale – camping/B&B weekend. Date: 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> April.** Organiser Alan Simister;

I have done a bit of canvassing since talking to Mike Lacey about a change of venue, the general view seems to be to stay in Kirkby and the campsite just out of town.

The format will be similar to the past years. I have a new Saturday run already on the drawing board, depending on the depth of the snow. Kirkby is a very popular village for tourists, even as early as April, so if you are intending to B&B contact me soon for accommodation addresses and telephone nos; the same goes for the hardy campers and caravaners. Take a look on the Woodclose Caravan Park website you might fancy sharing a wigwam!!!!!!!

**May Re-union weekend Lyme Regis – B&B/camping weekend. Date: 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> May.** Organiser Tony Maidens. Detail to follow.

**Tour to Italy. Dates 5<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> June.** Organisers Tony & Christine Maidens. Please see details in bulletin.

**Bungay Suffolk – Camping/B&B weekend. Date: 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> July.** Organisers Colin Purches & Colin Pegram.

We will be using the Outney meadow Caravan Park which is a 5 minute walk from the centre of Bungay. There is ample accommodation in the town at varying prices, of which we will give details in a future issue. The river Waveney runs through the campsite and, it is possible to hire Canadian Canoes by the day or half day. The run will be a ride along the Suffolk Coast stopping at the sunken village of Dunwich for coffee. Lunch will be by the river Deben on the south of the county. The ride after lunch will be through the beautiful countryside of inland Suffolk. Distance, approx 130 miles.

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**Malvern Worcester – B&B/ camping weekend. Date: 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> August.** Organiser Martin Heuter.

I can't give away the route - top secret,... (I haven't done it yet) but, I can say it's going to take in the

Malvern Hills, the countryside between Malvern, Worcester and up the Severn Valley, stopping in Bewdley (famous motorcycle haunt by the river). Beautiful views, scenery and roads.

I have made a booking for the Morgan Car Factory visitor centre for those who feel like stepping back in time (or leaving their cash).. As the centre doesn't do anything after Friday 12 noon a visit is for those who want to arrive early (i.e. Friday morning). Price to be confirmed (I think its £5 pp). Now - accommodation. I've found a hotel in Bromyard, a small market town, 15 minutes away from Malvern which is going to do us a deal - £30.75 per person per night B&B sharing with secure parking, etc. etc. However, tough times for tourism, so they need to know whether or not we are coming and how many. I need to know by the end of January who wants to join us and the full amount (£61.50 per person) at the same time. I know this is an early commitment but it's a sign of the times. So please, send me a cheque and secure your place.

*Early payments may become a feature for future events, especially during peak season. This event is "slap bang" in the middle of the school holidays.*

*Hon Sec*

**Tour of Britain – Using Hostels. Dates: 3<sup>rd</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> September.** Organiser David Gilligan. Please see details in bulletin.

**Autumn re-union and AGM weekend – B&B/camping. Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> October.** Organiser Tony Maidens. Detail to follow.

**Winter Closer weekend Coalport – Using Hostel. Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> October.** Organiser Alan Simister;

The hostel is booked, no need for money yet. Lots to do and see, good pubs within walking distance, make that staggering for Mr Weston and an excellent hostel. There are only 4 DOUBLES AVAILABLE for couples, so its first come first served. If you intend to join us, let me know in plenty of time, it also insures that you have a bed. A run will be organised but I will be putting that out to tender nor being a native of the area.

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## SUMMER TOUR TO ITALY

The tour will take us through four countries and finish on the Mediterranean coast of Italy i.e. France, Germany, Austria and Italy. After crossing France and the Rhine our route takes us on a ride through rural southern Germany, we then continue our tour into Vorarlberg/Arlberg in Austria. After crossing the Finstermunzpass we enter Italy. Our route then continues over the Stelvio pass to eventually arrive at the lovely Lago D Iseo for a 3 night 2 day stay. We then ride on to and finish at the Mediterranean coast of Tuscany for a 2 night 1 day stay just north of La Spezia. Our mileage from the first night in France to our final destination is approximately 970 miles.

Our planned itinerary is as follows:

Saturday 5 June; Group meets at a hotel in Beauvais Normandy France.

Sunday 6 June; Ride to the southern Ardenne to a hotel in Rethel.

Monday 7 June; Ride on for a one night stay to a hotel in the village of Urmatt Alsace Loraine.

Tuesday 8 June; Crossing the Rhine we ride to Southern Germany for a one night stop at the village of Ostrach.

Wednesday 9 June; Into Austria to base the group in or around St Anton for one night.

Thursday 9 June; Ride into Italy to Lago d' Iseo for a three night stay. This lake is one of the smaller Italian lakes. It is surrounded by mountains and has a mini mountain of its own in the form of the island of Monte Isola, a boat sails regularly from a pier not far from our hotel. On the east bank of the lake a road leads to the village of Cislano, here an extraordinary spire-like rock formation rises from the ground, each spire is topped by a boulder, these are considered to be one of the most strangest wonders in Lombardy known as "Fairies of the Forest". Our hotel is situated adjacent to the lake and is about a quarter of a mile from the nearest village centre. There is also a railway station about the same distance from the hotel.

Sunday 12. Continue on to finish at the old port town of La Spezia on the Mediterranean coast for a 2 night stay.

La Spezia sits on the edge of the Mediterranean, it is an old port. The water front is surrounded by pastel coloured houses with many café's and restaurants. It is overlooked by a medieval castle.

Tuesday 14 June group breaks up and folk find their own way home.

Costs - difficult one this - prices have increased in euro land. Assume at the moment that 1£ = 1€ If the pound increases in value during the booking process then costs will be cheaper. Work on approx £53 per person per night Dinner bed & breakfast

**Tony & Christine Maidens.**

### AUTUMN TOUR 2010 September 3<sup>rd</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> (UPDATE)

To date fifteen Club members have joined this nine day tour of Britain. The accommodation in both the English and Scottish hostels has been booked. Two of the original chosen hostels St Briavels and Monorbier were found to be full therefore the group will now be using Cheddar and Broad Haven hostels instead. This will allow a little more time for exploring both Exmoor and Dartmoor on the first day.

I am currently working on the suggested daily routes which will pass through twelve of our National Parks and total nearly 2000 miles. Researching the places on route, that could be of interest to members, is generating a growing list - castles, cathedrals, coracle centre, micro brewery etc.

Depending upon accommodation being available additional members to the group will be welcome.

**Dave Gilligan**  
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### DEBIT/CREDIT CARDS IN FRANCE

While motoring back from Bergerac in November, I was telling my wife Jan about the problems that we have getting fuel on a Sunday. It was the 11<sup>th</sup> November (Armistice Day) and everything was closed. We had been using my normal nationwide Credit card all holiday using the pin all the time. All of the minor peage exits

are now unmanned and require a card plus pin so it did seem strange that the fuel station did not take our cards. We went into a small Champion Supermarket about 50 miles south Calais. It had modern pumps with tele type instructions but the process was the same as our local Tesco. VOILA - 50 euro's of diesel plus receipt. So maybe things have changed. I don't know how wide spread these pumps are but if you are over there check out the pumps. It could be that our Small Tank French Sunday Blues is a thing of the past.

**Laurie Shephard**

### MORE ON FUEL IN FRANCE

*This information will be of use to members riding in France on older machines (prior to 2002). It was sent to me by Mike Lacey.*

From the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs.

#### **Beware 10% Ethanol in Petrol in France.**

"We have published a number of articles in our newsletter in the last few months about the effects of ethanol in petrol. The maximum amount of ethanol that is permissible in fuel in the UK is 5%. However in France it is now a different story as the Daily Telegraph reports. "British tourists holidaying abroad this summer have been warned a new "environmentally friendly" fuel on sale in French petrol stations could damage their cars and even cause breakdowns. The petrol called '95-E10' is a mixture of regular unleaded fuel and ethanol. It is suitable for new cars but can damage vehicles registered before the year 2000, motoring bodies have warned.

The bio fuel sits alongside the commonly used and similarly named unleaded Euro 95 in many garages across France and while a public awareness campaign in the country has avoided confusion amongst the French, British holidaymakers face a prospect of unwittingly picking the wrong pump. Motoring associations, including the RAC warned those preparing to travel to France to be aware of the bio fuel, which is 90 per cent regular unleaded and 10% ethanol."

*If in doubt about the suitability of 95-E10 I suggest using the super 98 unleaded, the cost is minimal and not worth the expense of major engine repairs.*

*Hon Sec.*  
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### AN OAP's FIRST TRACK DAY

In March I reached 65. Last year I bought my first sports bike though, in deference to incipient arthritis, I opted for a naked SV1000 with straight bars. Not cutting edge but great value and a good way to have fun without provoking cardiac arrest. It was always going to end up on track. I intend to grow old disgracefully so what better way to celebrate becoming an OAP than my first track day? Barbara, in keeping with our "do it today - you never know about tomorrow" lifestyle, was quite encouraging. Courtesy of the State Pension Fund, I booked a day at Pembrey circuit where, unsurprisingly, I opted for the novice group.

I started my 100 mile journey to Pembrey in the early hours with everything I needed in a large tank bag. The paddock was a shock. There were vans, trailers, awnings and generators everywhere. I was

one of only five people who rode there. My paddock neighbour was a novice too but his unregistered bike came equipped with semi-slicks, full racing wets on spare wheels and tyre warmers. What kind of novice was that?

I signed on and was surprised that no one wanted to check clothing or bike. Perhaps, by not "scrutineering", the organisers avoid legal responsibility. They seemed keen to refute any connection with racing or testing. They can't be watching the fast group in action! There were no rules but road bike owners generally removed mirrors, taped headlights and covered the speedo. The majority were on track day specials so they didn't have that stuff anyway.

The briefing was comprehensive, covering all the track procedures. It was re-assuring that there were track marshals, paramedics and recovery vehicles and at least two instructors on track with each group. There was an additional briefing for novices when the instructor pointed out that, if you felt tired, you could always return to the paddock before the end of the session. I didn't like the way he was looking at me when he said that!

Soon it was time for my first 20 minute session. Every bike was noise tested with some loud exhausts turned away. The first two laps of every session were run behind an instructor with no passing to ensure tyres were warm before riders became too ambitious. The organisers had put coloured cones at the peel off, apex and exit points of every bend – a great idea. As a novice, it kept me on line every lap and I am sure I would have turned too early without them. It was immediately clear that my SV1000 was 50 bhp down on the four cylinder bikes that passed on the straights. Though I caught a few going into bends, I was too inexperienced to re-pass. I was surprised at how inconsistent I was in selecting a gear for each part of the circuit and consequently how rarely I used the engine to its maximum. Forty-five years road riding isn't much help on a race circuit. Everything happens so much faster on the track but there is conversely so much more room that it is an environment with no road equivalent. That's what is so exciting about it after all. It seemed no more than ten laps but was, in fact, seventeen when the chequered flag brought us in.

A cup of tea allowed time for reflection about how to approach the next session and soon the novices were out again. I concentrated on reducing the braking distances and using full throttle for longer and, as Rossi says, "I make a good rhythm". Just before the third session, it started to spit with rain so I followed the justifiably cautious instructor. It got wetter by the minute and several riders fell before they had adjusted to the deteriorating conditions so the session was brought to a premature halt for lunch.

The rain became heavy so the rest of the day looked miserable. Probably a third of the paddock went home. For the first wet session, I followed the instructor closely. He had similar tyres to me so, trusting that "if he can - I can", I took several laps to

gain confidence then overtook the instructor and pressed on. My road-riding stance didn't seem so inappropriate now as I used the flexibility and drive of the twin engine to cover the whole circuit in just two gears. It worked well enough that only two GSXR riders on full racing wets passed me. In the next session I concentrated on riding as smoothly as possible and found the angle of lean possible on road tyres in the wet quite a surprise. So far, no "oh my gawd" moments and, despite the conditions, I was enjoying myself. Even so, I was mindful of my 2½ hour ride home in the downpour so I called it a day and missed the final session.

What did I learn? At my level of riding, how well a modern bike handles on a smooth circuit, how well road tyres perform and how hard you can brake, even in the wet. The grip was re-assuring but, like most of what you learn on track, isn't terribly relevant to road riding where the limiting factors are forward vision and road surfaces not simple angles of lean. Nevertheless I can't wait to go back and sort out some of my shortcomings. Oh and I was so diverted by the challenge that I forgot about the arthritis.

Postscript: A month later, I returned for a completely dry day. Now more familiar with the circuit and with tyre pressures dropped by 5psi, I really enjoyed myself, gaining speed and confidence with every session. I also witnessed some nasty crashes - a reminder that pushing hard can be risky as well as fun. The question now is – does this become a regular activity or do I quit while I'm ahead? Stupid question!

David Bexley

## MOJACAR

Ian & Morag Fitzsimons spend most of the year riding/driving in France and Spain. During 2009 they say they covered 4020 miles touring France and Spain over a period of many weeks - several days through pouring rain and howling storms. Through all of this they remained totally dry so "we thought our wet weather gear would be of interest to readers of the bulletin." *Contact Ian for details of suits etc Hon Sec..*

On a recent trip to Spain they came across an advert for the Virgin Del Mar Hotel in Mojacar (*used by the club many times Hon Sec*) and thought members may be interested in the discounts offered by the hotel if they would like to visit Mojacar.

*Please contact Ian & Morag if you require details of the Virgin Del Mar discounts.*

*Hon Sec*