

February 2005

Hello to one and all. Here we are into the second month new year.

Firstly some comments. As we all know the Christmas period arrived with the biggest disaster known in recent history. Many people have been affected, not only in the region itself, but throughout the world. One member of the club has not stood by and just looked on. Phil Hawksley our webmaster for the Midlands Section arranged at short notice an auction. He donated a 1982 R80 which raised £400 he has received further donations to date of £240 and the section has donated a further £100. I'm sure more will follow. Many thanks Phil.

On a further sad note, Graham Cluley informs me that a long serving member Phil Russell passed away before Christmas. Our thoughts go to his wife Dawn and family.

Staying with Graham. He and wife Sally again organised the Xmas dinner at Greetham - it was a most splendid affair the food lived up to their usual high standard. Those attending I'm sure enjoyed themselves. The raffle was a success despite the best efforts of yours truly and raised in the region of £130 for the Air Ambulance. Thank you to my ticket folders. That will teach you to sit with me. Many thanks to Graham and Sally and to all your helpers. We look forward to the next one.

So what else has gone on? There was a Christmas dinner at Towcester which I'm sure went well as it was in the capable hands of Dinah.

The rest of the month passed with the usual pub meets. Nothing to report from there so we must assume all is well.

So to the new year. Martin Ellis brought forward his New Year's Day run from next years calendar to this year and despite the short notice it was an outstanding success. There were 28 bikes some double crewed who turned up. The original destination was unavailable due to last minute problems but Martin came up trumps with an alternative. I understand that he has put together a more in-depth write up so I will leave the rest to him. A photo is attached showing some of the New Year revellers.



So what else is forthcoming. At the February Towcester meet Dinah has arranged a talk by a member of the Northamptonshire Constabulary. More details are in the diary of events.

I will close for now.
Ride safe Rob H

March 2005

Hello one and all, Two down ten to go.

So what's been going on? Not a lot really. The Sunday meets are progressing. Those of you who attended the Towcester meet were entertained, hopefully, by PC John Spencer who will have given you an insight into Northamptonshire's Road Safety partnership and the current thinking into ways of reducing collisions (not allowed to call them accidents anymore) on our roads. Did you go away with a warm fuzzy feeling towards speed cameras? Maybe not but joking aside I'm sure you were left with food for thought and a reflection of 'there but for the grace of my god', maybe you learnt something that will prevent you becoming one of those statistics we all read about.

Dinah has another talk lined up along the same theme, this time from the advanced Motorcycle Group. Give her a call if you wish to attend on 07742 114453, so she knows how many to expect.

Just after Christmas, 55 members got together at Ropsley for another meal arranged by Bill Rodgers and a mighty fine do it was as well. Thanks Bill.

What else? The pub meets are progressing - if anyone has attended a meet only to find it wasn't happening please let me know.

On a similar theme I recently received correspondence from a newish member who attended a meet for the first time and was ignored. Please, please, please, if you see an unfamiliar face at a meet, make yourself known to them, they may be a new member or a prospective one but if they are neither then nothing is lost. I should also ask of those who are new to remember that it is a two way street, don't be bashful in introducing yourselves. Staying with this for a bit longer, a warm welcome to those who attended at Ropsley for the first time. I will remember your names eventually.

Some of you may have heard that the Louth Lions run on the 1st may is cancelled. I have been assured that it is still on although the start point has changed to Horncastle. If you want more details contact Bill Rodgers, details in the calendar of events.

Now to the ladies day on the 26th June. To date I have only had two suggestions for destinations. COME ON LADIES. This is your chance to dictate the day. I need your polite suggestions by the end of March.

With that thought I will leave you in peace.

Ride Safe

April 2005

Here we are into the month of April. The rides are underway and the weather is improving, well we can think positively, can't we? February with the exception of the Rhino Rally, a brief summary from Garth follows, was a quiet month and I expect that March will be the same.

Rhino Rally: The sixteenth Rhino saw Heinz57 weather, a composite of most of the varieties enjoyed during the previous fifteen years. Attendance appeared to be slightly less than in recent years but all enjoyed a good mix of activities and socialising both nights in the local hostelrys. Sunday brought dry weather, apart from intermittent sleet showers, for prompt departures before the rumoured lunchtime arrival of snow. Thank you Garth.

Dinah had another of her specialist speakers organised for Towcester. Hopefully a report will be sent to me so I can pass it on to you.

On the subject of the Sunday lunches I'm sure those of you who attend the Towcester and Greetham events will wish to say a big thank you to the ladies at Greetham who prepare the soup, Christa, Gill and Janet for the time and effort that they have put into keeping you fed and watered. A special thank you goes to Dinah who has informed me that this will be her last winter of organising the Towcester meets. She has done the club proud with the events she has organised to keep you entertained and the local charities have benefited by the funds she has raised. This does not mean that Towcester is at an end, I am assured that a volunteer has been found who will carry on the good work.

So to the future. What is lined up for April?

There's the run to STARCOM. The National AGM organised by your Midlands committee. The Mystery Brunch Run. Stafford Bike Show and Blenheim Palace. Not bad for a start.

At the beginning of May there is an item shown as the Louth Lions Run. This event is still on but the name and venue have changed. It is now called The Charity Lincolnshire Wolds Run. Further details can be found on the section website, by phoning the organisers on 01507 523456, contacting Bill Rodgers on 01526 834480 or by contacting myself via any of the means shown in the journal. It is a good day out with the opportunity to ride around some lovely countryside in the company of riders and machines some of whom have been around a lot longer than you or I.

On a final note, to date I have only received two idea's for the Ladies Day. If no more idea's are forthcoming by April the 6th then those two will be the ones put forward for consideration. Ladies the ball is in your court.

LATE

ADDITION

An extra run is on for Saturday 30th April this is to East Kirkby in Lincolnshire. It is the home of a restored WW11 Lancaster bomber " Just Jane " Having visited this site a number of times I can say it is well worth a visit - there is a modest entrance charge, which with sufficient numbers can be reduced and there is also an excellent cafe and snack bar plus the usual facilities. The organiser Dave Clayton has done his homework and an excellent day will be had. The arrangements are as follows: meet at 9.30 am Donnington M1 services for a prompt departure at 10, scenic route to Holdingham services junction of the A15 and A17 just north of Sleaford, arriving there at about 11, picking up those from that area and departing at 11.30 for the final leg to East Kirkby. The route to Holdingham is to be finalised, it may offer the chance to those who live east of Donnington to join on the way on the understanding that it will be a moving pick up. When I have been notified of the finalised route by Dave then I should be able to let anyone know who contacts me via an email or phone call.

Well I think that is all for now, hopefully I haven't used up all my word allowance
Ride Safe Rob Harvey

May 2005

As I sit here at the keyboard contemplating my words I will beg your indulgence for I am suffering. I have MANFLU. Those of you who have suffered will understand. The need for the ever present box of tissues, the wistful looks to partners for some sympathy, only to receive the taunt "Pull yourself together it's only a COLD" Ah well.

Easter has come and gone I spent it in the Inverness area revisiting old haunts and seeing it in a new light with all its magnificent riding roads. Those in the Northern section don't know how lucky they are, there again perhaps they do but don't want us down south to know.

So what's been going on? Not a lot really. March was a quiet month and the final Sunday meets have been held until next autumn. Again, a big thank you to those who put so much time and effort into making these meets a success.

Not sure if I've mentioned this before. Two Midlands members have won the prize of a biking holiday in the USA. Congratulations to Ian Griffin and Anne Pacey. Having been there myself and ridden Route 66 I know they will enjoy themselves.

Whilst mentioning Ian, or Griff to those who know him, he has taken it upon himself to lead a run to the Founders Day at Stanford Hall. I will let you have more details nearer the time.

The run to the East Kirkby on Saturday 30th April to see Just Jane is finalised. There is a full itinerary and route posted on the Section Website. Alternatively email Dave Clayton at phatzeppelin@ntlworld.com or phone me.

There are a lot of events occurring now so you need to pay special attention to the calendar of events you received at the beginning of the year. I have picked up on some diary entries going into the journal that do not match the calendar of events that I submitted. I have corrected those that I have seen but unfortunately some got through. My apologies if anyone has been misled but we are only human. As to other changes, those received with sufficient notice will be published in the journal, late changes will go onto the website, anything else will be by word of mouth. If you need any clarification regarding an event, in the first instance contact the member whose details are listed with the event or contact me by any of the means listed in the Journal.

So with that I will gather up my tissues and sniff off.

Ride safe, Rob Harvey

June 2005

As I sit here on this May Bank Holiday Monday the rain is hammering against the window accompanied by thunder and lightning. At least Saturday and Sunday were nice days which made the two trips out enjoyable. But more of those later.

April started with the run to Starcom which was an even bigger success than last year. Speaking to one of their reps at the AGM, Starcom estimated that over the course of the day 100 riders from all points of the compass visited their premises. Thanks to Martin Ellis who as the co-ordinator looked after the arrangements and even persuaded them to donate a system to the raffle for the AGM.

The following weekend was the AGM. I'm sure a fuller article will appear in due course so I won't dwell on it except to say that it was organised by your local committee and if the comments made on Sunday morning are anything to go by then I think we got it right.

The 17th was the mystery brunch run. There were two start points. At the appointed time I led one group from Peterborough on a circular scenic route and Richard Filipczak led another from Donnington. Both groups arrived at Graffam Water just before midday where refreshments and conversation was had. The weather held fair. Numbers totalled 15 riders and 10 pillions.

The 24th was Richard's run to Blenheim Palace near Oxford. Again the dual start points were used with a meet at Chevely services from which both groups rode as one to the Palace. There was some confusion by a small group regarding the start time but we were able to sort them out. Better late than not at all. Richard had arranged special parking for the group, who

numbered 20 bikes, some with pillion, an area next to the Palace gates was cordoned off for us. For anyone who has contemplated a visit but not yet done so then I can only say don't delay. But do allow yourself a full day if you wish to take in all that the Palace has to offer. Thanks to Richard for organising the day.

On the 30th a late additional run was arranged by Dave Clayton to East Kirkby in Lincolnshire. The home of WW II Lancaster 'Just Jane' A report from Dave will appear next month.

Sunday 1st May was the Wolds Charity Run a large contingent from the Midland section joined the 300 plus other riders at Horncastle and at 11am the run commenced with a staggered start, Oldest bike first, having been built in 1911. The idea was to follow the route as per the map provided covering 50 miles on some very minor roads through the Wolds countryside. The event organiser had done a splendid job, no detail was missed, from arranging signing of the route, for those who couldn't read a map, to providing staff to open and close some farm gates on a section that ran along a farm road. At the end of the run as riders returned food and drink was supplied for all in the form of a hog roast, no they didn't burn the Harley's, for those not into pork a large selection of sandwiches were available. Whilst this was going on the judging of the bikes took place. I am pleased to report that two Midlands members, Gilbert Thomas and Bill Rodgers were awarded 2nd and 3rd places in the classes entered. On both these days the weather was good which added to the overall enjoyment.

So for June, check out the diary as it is another busy month. The Ladies run on the 26th will be to Stowe House and Gardens near Buckingham. The run will commence from the two points as on previous occasions Peterborough and Donnington at 9.30. PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS THE DEPARTURE TIME. For further times and any additional pick up points please contact me.

On a more sombre note you will have read of the passing of Chris Lawrence in last months Journal. There was a good turn out for his funeral. A request was made for no flowers but for donations to the Lincolnshire Air Ambulance a charity favoured by Chris. As a result a donation was sent for £150. Chris would have appreciated it.

In the time I have spent sitting here, the rain has stopped, the clouds have blown away and the sun is shining. Isn't it nice to be in England now that spring is here.

So with that I will sign off for now. Ride safe, Rob H

July 2005

Hello folks, this months jottings will be short as I have been a bit busy with new job, finalising a wedding and holiday.

There has been a lot going on in May. At the beginning of the month was the Wolds run. This was followed by Bills Edinburgh weekend. Then there was the Belvoir Steam Weekend and finally the camping weekend at Dolgellau.

When I return I will have time, new wife permitting, to contact the organisers of these various events and get the low-down on what went on. In the meantime for July there is the camping weekend at Ancaster, the run to Bletchley Park, the Founders day at Stanford Hall - if interested Ian Griffin is Leading a run from Peterborough, details in last months calendar. Finally at the end of the month there is the camping weekend at Long Eaton.

Please check the calendar and web site for the latest info on these events.

As I said this would be short I will make it up to you
Ride safe Rob H

August 2005

Well, folks I'm back and still allowed to come out to play.

I promised you a fuller account this month so here it is. Over the weekend of the 12th to 15th of May Bill Rodgers led an intrepid band of followers up the A1 and other sundry roads on the annual pilgrimage to Edinburgh. There was the obligatory meal break at a truck stop courtesy of George Gibson. Then the journey continued at a pace, fuel permitting and despite the efforts of the local constabulary in plain Volvo's (is there another story to be told here?) the group arrived at their retreat for the weekend, The Sonas Hotel, where once again the proprietor made our band welcome. The weekend consisted of a do your own thing on Friday. Some of the group went on a tour of Mary King Close. In the words of Bill, a warren of hidden "closes" beneath the Royal Mile that have been opened up with recreations to show how the citizens of Edinburgh lived in the middle ages. Apparently it was one giant cess pit. On the Saturday there was a ride out. The local knowledge of Ian and Wendy Rolston was put to good use with a ride via Creiff, Gleneagles, Auchterarder, Lochearnhead, Callender and finishing off at the Falkirk Wheel, apparently a visit to a distillery was squeezed in as well. I'm assured that all refrained from sampling the products. Sunday was home time and a scenic route was chosen. Avoiding the Volvo's. Thanks to Bill for organising the weekend, There may be a repeat performance next year.

On the 27th to 30th May there was George Gibsons camping weekend at Dolgellau, Wales. There was a good turn out for this first visit to the area with some members pitching their piece of canvas and others taking advantage of the bunkhouse accommodation. Although George thought he may have some explaining to do when he arrived and found that there was a work in progress involving the shower block and some JCB's. Saturday consisted of a ride out led by Graham Parker - I believe a visit to that place featured in the classic 60's TV series "The Prisoner" was also included. Where, in order to gain a favourable entrance rate some members of the group had to age very quickly. Not all grasped the concept. There was a minor mishap with one of the bikes and another had to be recovered to the owners home. But overall a good weekend. Thanks to George for organising it.

The beginning of June saw the dirty social weekend at Finedon, Northants. Organised by David Watson assisted by Rodger Bensley. I'm sure a report will appear in the Sporting column so I wont dwell on it here.

The 12th of June was Bills run to the RAF Museum at Hendon. Nine riders took part. There have been a number of changes to the Museum over the past couple of years all of which have improved the overall experience of visiting this magnificent collection of aircraft covering the role of the RAF since its beginnings as the RFC up to the present day.

The 16th to the 19th was the visit to Fort William to date and I am still awaiting a report from the organiser Sam Soutar. I'm sure I will receive one for inclusion in next months jottings.

Finally to the end of June and the Ladies day. The chosen venue put forward by Hazel was the gardens at Stowe House in Buckinghamshire. Despite a conflict of times, depending on where you read about the day, two groups set out and without any prior co-ordination arrived at Stowe within a few minutes of each other although one group lost a couple who turned off at a round about near Daventry. The rest had an enjoyable stroll around the gardens looking at the various Temples and Theatre's that the original owners had built in the 1800's. The weather improved over the course of the day resulting in a very pleasant ride home at the close.

So what of future events? Well if you receive your journals before the end of July there is Martin's camping weekend at West Park Long Eaton in Notts. If you still have time you can pre-book your pitch at no cost in exchange for some assistance on the club stand or turn up on the day when there will be some form of cost or just visit for the day.

On the 21st of August there is the visit to the Raptor centre at Huntingdon. Start and pickup times are as per the Section diary sent out at the beginning of the year.

On the subject of start times and places, My apologies to anyone who has been confused lately, cos I am. There have been a number of discrepancies recently that I cannot explain it, as the details I am sending for inclusion are not the same as what appears in print. Perhaps the editor can shed some light on this.

With that I will leave you in peace and remember. Ride safe. Rob H.

September 2005

The year moves steadily on, I was going to work out how many shopping days left to Christmas but have decided against it. So, what has been happening so far?

The beginning of July witnessed the camping weekend at Ancaster. I will leave it to the organiser George Gibson to tell all or not as the case seems. Just a quick report on Ancaster weekend, we had a good attendance for a first event in having 19 tents 1 caravan and 1 campervan, everybody seemed to enjoy themselves in the good weather and the BBQ went down very well with good comments all round, thanks to Graham and Anne Parker for doing the cooking. Saturday evening continued in the marquee with beer and wine flowing very well, We had an unusual visitor dressed in a 1920s outfit demanding money with menaces for the BBQ, prostrating herself over the motorbikes for photos and stuff but soon disappeared when threatened with a de-bagging. Overall a very successful weekend and a warm thank you to everybody for helping out and to all who attended. De-bagging indeed, What next?

The month continued. On the 17th there was a run to Bletchley Park. The wartime home of the code breakers. There was a good turn out with two groups setting off from Donnington and Peterborough arriving within a few minutes of one another at Bletchley. More by luck than judgement on my part, but I trusted a road sign and it took a sat nav equipped rider to put us back on the right track. Thank you Ian. Also thanks to Richard for organising the day. If you want to see what the original computer looked like, then I would recommend a visit, also to immerse yourself in this piece of our history. Overall despite the heat an enjoyable day out.

The Bletchley Computer



Bikes at Bletchley



On to the 27th, Founders day, I'm sure those of you who got there enjoyed yourselves despite the weather. I set off with the best of intentions but turned back as the weather deteriorated. Ah well there's always next year.

The month finished off with the camping week end at Long Eaton, another success. A short report from Martin. The Long Eaton Steam and Country show was a huge success, with the weather behaving itself, despite dire warnings in the press. Almost 20 bikes camped free with us for the weekend, and gained free entry to the show, simply for turning up. Others turned up as day visitors on both days, and the organiser has invited us back next year, same weekend, the last in July. Put it in your diary. Who knows, it may become another St Audries? Thanks to all who turned up and helped but special thanks to Paul Straw, Bill Clark and Gilbert Thomas, and the team who stayed behind on Sunday to dismantle the stand. A full report is on the Midland section website. Thanks Martin.

Well, that rounds off July. What of September?

There's the Sleaford classic show on the 3rd. On the 18th there is the Brunch run. The destination is Carsington Reservoir just north of Ashbourne. Here is the Plan. Depart 9am from little Chef at Colsterworth Services A1/A151, route via Melton Mowbray to Donnington services jct 24 M1 for approx. pick up and depart 10.15. For more info then contact myself. More importantly in between these two dates is the RUTLAND CAMPING WEEKEND at Greetham on the 9th to the 11th. The main event will be the Bar B Que on Saturday night along with entertainment in the community centre. For more information then contact Gilbert Thomas, details in the diary.

Almost finished, two points of house keeping. Firstly the time is upon me to start preparing next years Calendar so if you have a plan for a day, weekend or week then send me all the details, Remember I need the finalised proposal. Don't delay as proposals are coming in already. CLOSING DATE IS OCTOBER 8TH.

Finally. On the 9th of October it is the section AGM. Therefore if you have any matters that you wish to be considered then please forward them to the secretary Dale Marchant (details in the Journal) by no later than the 1st of October. Part of the AGM concerns the election of the committee and all posts are open to anyone so if you wish to be a part of the team then get yourself proposed and seconded and details forwarded to Dale, again by the 1st. We are looking this year to create an additional position of membership secretary. Interested?

So folks till the next time. Ride safe.

Rob H

Pictures show the innards of the first computer and some of the Bikes at Bletchley

October 2005

As you no doubt noticed the jottings were missing from last month (Journal only. The editor assures me this was an oversight and it won't happen again. Hopefully this month we will get a double helping. Perhaps he didn't like the early mention of Christmas so I won't mention it this month. Got the sprouts on the boil yet?

As to the notice last month re the section AGM, please ignore the date for submission of items, etc. If there is anything you wish discussing, etc. then either let Dale Marchant or myself know before the actual AGM begins. Also please let me have any researched proposals for next years calendar by then.

So what of past events.

Sam Souter has sent me a write up for the Fort William trip. **Fort William 16th - 19th July.** Our Small band of 5 bikes merrily set off only to be hit by typical Scottish weather of pouring rain and we turned quite a few heads when we stopped at Jedburgh for lunch leaving pools of water wherever we stood. Anyway we couldn't get any wetter (so we thought) so after a lovely lunch we set off once again into the rain to our hotel where we met up with Barry and Hazel who had joined us from the Yorkshire section.

The following day we all set off under blue sky's to Oban where we then split into two groups with some staying for some retail therapy whilst the rest took the twisty route to Inverary Jail where we were thrown in the slammer. In the evening we all met up again for a hearty meal and plenty of wine.

On Saturday we took a trip out to the point of Ardnamurchan, the most Westerly point on the mainland but unfortunately all we could see was mist and drizzle so decided to take a ferry over to Toblamorey (Better known to Toddlers as Ballamory!), where we indulged ourselves in the local chocolate shop.

We had a great time the hotel was lovely and we just missed the floods in Yorkshire on the way home. Thanks to Sam for her efforts in organising this weekend.

On the 6th of August a large group made their way to Ireland where I believe a good time was had. Gilbert has promised me a write up to include in a future issue.

On the 21st there was the ride to the Raptor Centre near to Huntingdon. The turnout was a bit disappointing, there were several members either new to the club or taking the opportunity to partake of a first rideout. It is a fascinating place with the opportunity to learn about our birds of prey and to join in some of the demonstrations. To have one of these birds fly to you and take food from your hand is quite an experience,

A few words from Richard about the day and his ride to Huntingdon which wasn't without incident. Six left Donnington, 1 bike broke down within a few miles; suspect carburettor problems. The "main" event was near Collyweston where poor old Nick Fearn from Selston, Nott's had a tumble. Bike in front of him braked on gravel but stayed upright, but Nick braked on the same piece of gravel but wasn't so lucky. Nick's 3 year old F650F sustained damage to the front forks smashed and lots of fork oil on road, various panels and panniers became scratched/damaged; and a few aching limbs; many thanks go to all my party for their help. Nick attended A&E at his local hospital - a badly sprained wrist seemed to have been the only bodily damage. Unfortunately it was Nicks FIRST run out having only passed his test some 3 months ago. Hope everything is ok Nick and this hasn't put you off riding with us.

So to the future.

The Sunday meets are upon us again. I still have not been informed as to who is organising the Towcester meet. If someone out there knows perhaps they could let me know.

I know I said I wasn't going to mention Christmas again, but Sally and Graham Cluley are taking bookings for the Greatham Dinner so if you want a place at this popular event get in there soon.

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On the 6th of August a large group made their way to Ireland where I believe a good time was had. Gilbert has promised me a write up to include in a future issue.

On the 21st there was the ride to the Raptor Centre near to Huntingdon. The turnout was a bit disappointing, there were several members either new to the club or taking the opportunity to partake of a first rideout. It is a fascinating place with the opportunity to learn about our birds of prey and to join in some of the demonstrations. To have one of these birds fly to you and take food from your hand is quite an experience,

A few words from Richard about the day and his ride to Huntingdon which wasn't without incident. Six left Donnington, 1 bike broke down within a few miles; suspect carburettor problems. The "main" event was near Collyweston where poor old Nick Fearn from Selston, Nott's had a tumble. Bike in front of him braked on gravel but stayed upright, but Nick braked on the same piece of gravel but wasn't so lucky. Nick's 3 year old F650F sustained damage to the front forks smashed and lots of fork oil on road, various panels and panniers became scratched/damaged; and a few aching limbs; many thanks go to all my party for their help. Nick attended A&E at his local hospital - a badly sprained wrist seemed to have been the only bodily damage. Unfortunately it was Nicks FIRST run out having only passed his test some 3 months ago. Hope everything is ok Nick and this hasn't put you off riding with us.

So to the future.

November 2006

Well, folks the year is almost over, almost but not quite. What went on in September?

On the 3rd was the Sleaford classic show, whilst not a club event it was well attended by a large number of section members who with a good turn out from Joe Public had an enjoyable day.

On the 9th to 11th was the camping weekend. Due to poor weather and the missing jottings attendance was not as hoped for. However those who did attend, campers and day visitors made the most of things and enjoyed themselves. The BBQ went down well and the evenings entertainment was excellent, many thanks to Gilbert, Graham and their helpers for putting their time and effort into the weekend. Maybe next year we'll have mastered the art of putting up the big tent.

On the 18th was the final run of the year. The venue was Carsington Water near Ashbourne. The turn out was low, three bikes met at Colsterworth and were joined by a further seven at Donnington. After tea and stickies, kindly paid for by those who don't attend section runs, some of the group moved on for a ride to Matlock and the remainder checked out the attractions at Carsington. The weather held fair and those who attended enjoyed their day.

The 22nd to 25th was the French weekend. I have not received a report on this as yet so will save it for the next time.

So what of the rest of the year.

The Sunday meets are underway. The Towcester meet has a change of leadership. Welcome to John and Janet Winn, not connected to the Terry Wogan radio show are you? If you have any questions re this meet they can be contacted on 01604 631043.

Don't forget about the Greetham Dinner (wont mention the X word just yet) bookings being taken by Graham and Sally Cluley, contact on 01572 813639.

Also there is the post X dinner on Sat 14th Jan at Ropsley bookings to Bill Rodgers on 01526 834480.

Also by popular demand, Martin Ellis will be leading another NYD ride. More details to follow.

Finally a theme I will be returning to in the final jottings of 2005. The section committee and others work hard to provide you with an active and varied calendar, but we need your support to make it worthwhile.

Ride safe.

Rob H (bomber pilot)

December 2005

Well, folks it's almost the end of the year and certainly the end of an era, only a short era mind you. More of that later. Now in last months jottings I mentioned a subject that I would return to, it was also discussed at the AGM. The subject, Rideouts and attendance or as is the case the lack of it. This past year the committee took on board the comments regarding the rideouts, i.e. where we went, start points and duration. Therefore a comprehensive and varied calendar was put together including a ladies Day. With a couple of exceptions I can only describe the turnout as poor. A lot of time and effort went into researching these days and some personal expense on the part of run leaders. Now I'm not suggesting that the whole section should turn up, but it would be nice to get back to the numbers that we used to see a couple of years ago. So come on folks what's stopping you, what is it you would like to do, what format would you like the rideouts to take? So now to the end of the era. In order to try and bring fresh blood so to speak to your social calendar I have decided to stand aside and let someone else take over the handlebars. However, I'm not going far, as Dale Marchant, who was the secretary, has had to step aside due to work commitments. A big thank you to Dale for the work he has done and the things he has had to put up with. As there was no other lamb with knowledge of the section who wished to step up to the block, so to speak. I have taken over as secretary, so all those who kept sending me their membership renewals will now be sending them to the right person. So who is taking over as Social Secretary? Martin, it's over to you.

Rob Harvey (outgoing social secretary, incoming secretary)

So it's goodbye from him...and er...hello from me. The committee would like to thank Rob for his efforts over the last three years, and to wish him success in his new position as section secretary.

The AGM was a very involving, and dare I say, interesting affair with comments on a wide range of subjects coming from the floor. As Rob said, Dale Marchant has reluctantly stepped down due to increasing work commitments and I feel sure that we would all like to thank him for his contribution as secretary. There were a few personnel changes which has resulted in the following situation : Secretary – Rob Harvey : Treasurer – Graham Parker : Social Secretary/National Committee member (yours truly) – Martin Ellis : Committee members – Dale Marchant, Bill Rodgers, Gilbert Thomas, Richard Filpczak, Alan Edgar and new recruit Wayne Gunn (welcome Wayne). Lack of space this month prevents me from going into much detail from the AGM but I will attempt to rectify that next month. In the meantime, those of you with internet access can see the minutes on the Midland section website at

<http://www.bmwccc.co.uk/midland> where you'll also find much more detailed information on next year's events, reports on past events and much, much more of interest to section members. Our new secretary, Rob Harvey, will be happy to provide a printed copy as an alternative (details at front of Journal).

My first real job is unfortunately to make you aware that the team responsible for the catering and organisation of our Winter meets at Greetham, are stepping down after 5 years. I'm sure that we'd all like to thank Gilbert and Janet Thomas, along with Christa Edgar and all of the regular and occasional helpers who have produced such a varied range of soups and cakes for us over the years. The upshot of this is that we desperately need a few volunteers to take over from where the current team leave off, or regular meets at Greetham community centre will cease to be. This is happening NOW, so replacements are needed urgently. Please contact Gilbert Thomas on (01572) 812734 if you think you can help.

The Christmas lunch at Greetham on Dec 4th is not affected by the above situation and is still going ahead as planned, but may well be fully booked by now. It is still worth contacting Sally Cluley on (01572) 813639 to see if there are any spaces available. The bar opens at mid-day and lunch is at 1.00pm. A good meal in good company, with a glass of wine, followed by dessert, then biscuits with tea or coffee, all for well under a tenner, how good does it get?

Don't forget to contact Bill Rodgers (quickly) on 01526 834480 to book your place for the post-Christmas meal (Jan 14th) at The Fox, Ropsley. It will be filling up now so don't delay. This really is a good night out with top quality food and a chance to discuss what Santa gave you. Don't miss it.

Next year's calendar/year card is packed with events and will be with you as soon as it can be arranged. Among other things, we will be experimenting with a regular series of midweek runs, led by section member Tony Kingston – watch this space. We do still have a couple of runs which need leaders, and events which need helpers. If you think you can assist with any aspect of section events, please contact me on (01623) 401405 or midlandsocsec@ntlworld.com so we can discuss how best you could help us.

Finally, don't miss the New Year's day ride (see the diary section or the website), and this time we *will* be going to Papplewick pumping station, as we should have done last time!

Many thanks to the editor for allowing us extra space for our combined jottings this month.

Martin Ellis