

2018 AGM and a Foray into Four Counties with Richard and Celia



For some, the weekend started at the Triumph Motorcycle Factory at Hinckley where we met up with Richard Parker and Neil Hardwick to partake of lunch and a quick tour of the museum.

It must be noted that at one-point Terry Crandon was heard to ask the assistant in the Triumph merchandise shop if they stocked anything with Yamaha written on it. Richard then led us onto The Lea Marston Hotel to meet up with the rest of the group making sure we all had enough fuel for the following day...how thoughtful, I thought.

The Lea Marston Hotel did us proud regarding service, comfort and food; although we did detect a slight irritation when they ran out of draft beer...maybe it was several of our group that drank them??

Richard gave us the usual pre-ride briefing at dinner on Friday evening and drew our attention to the photo albums that he and Celia had compiled and brought along.

Browsing the old IFMR pictures amassed over the years everyone seems amazed how young they all looked apart from Nev who hasn't aged at all.

A record turnout of 72 people and 29 bikes turned out for the weekend and were rewarded with perfect weather (well almost). Saturday's route took us through lots of pretty villages and scenic, sweeping biking roads, what a way to start the biking season.

Navigation was excellent apart from one erroneous tour around a rather large roundabout... not sure whose fault that was but I'm certain someone will put me wise. Lunch at The Royal Oak, Long Whatton was mainly taken outside in the sunshine and the pleasant amble back to the hotel went without a hitch...apart from our newest member Caroline Beresford getting lost on her bright green machine.

On arrival back at the hotel car park Colin Wade put on an impressive show, loading his Pan European (What is he going to call it after Brexit?) onto his flat pack trailer. Gordon Johnston quickly leapt aboard the bike on the trailer obviously trying out what it will be like when he is too old to balance on two wheels. He obviously intends to get Jill to tow him around with his beloved Yamaha on a trailer!

The revered AGM was conducted with typical efficiency by our esteemed secretary, Rob Gittings, with succinct reports from John Williams (Treasurer). President David's report, assisted on numerous occasions by Jeff Watkins, was informative and meandering but none the less well received.

David is in his third year as president and had obviously been working very hard to shed the burden of responsibility as he proudly announced that he had found a willing and enthusiastic successor in the guise of Phil Watson.

Phil gave a brief resume of his hopes, ideas and plans for 2019 and onwards and outlined his thoughts on a trip down the Rhine in Germany (well next to it on motorbikes). The meeting wholeheartedly endorsed Phil's appointment and breathed a sigh of relief.

Both secretary and treasurer expressed the wish to take life slightly easier after the next AGM and proposed Jill Johnston to take over as Treasurer and John Crossman as Secretary as from April 2019. (Full training will be given...hopefully) The meeting again breathed a sigh of relief and endorsed both appointments. Gordon, of course, didn't breathe a sigh of relief and continues his excellent work as editor of the worthiest IFMR Newsletter.

The meeting was completed in under half an hour...something of a record I'm told. There followed a pleasant evening meal punctuated by numerous people wishing to take wine with other people and a low murmuring from the assembled masses complaining of stiff knees etc.

Sunday morning saw us riding north through Warwickshire and Staffordshire to The National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas where most of us attended the Daily Act of Remembrance in the Millennium Chapel which included a two-minute silence...quite sobering.

A short walk through the grounds took us to the Walls of the Armed Forces Memorial where the names of more than 16,000 service personnel who have died since the ending of World War II are carved.

A quick visit to the Classic Car Rally taking place in the grounds (with at least one motor bike) followed by a cup of coffee then we all "bogged orf 'ome"! Thanks, once again to Richard and Celia for a superb weekend in the midlands.

John C