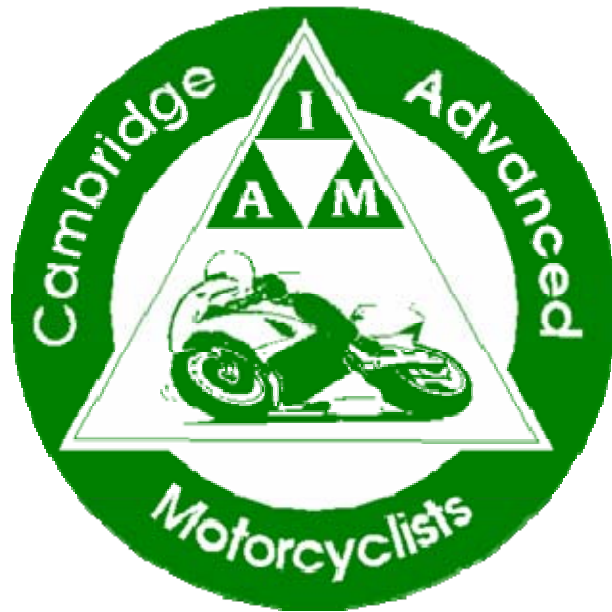


# CAMunicate



The Newsletter  
of  
Cambridge Advanced Motorcyclists

[www.cambsiam.org.uk](http://www.cambsiam.org.uk)

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### Editorial

Well those two months went very quickly and here we are with another issue of CAMunicate. Many thanks to those of you who have sent in articles for this edition.

So what can you expect this time?.....Well, did you know that CAMunicate can serve many functions?

We can celebrate the fact that we have four more associates who have passed their Advanced Test in the last two months. Well done to you all.

CAMunicate can be educational. Do you often get it wrong when joining motorways or dual carriageways? Read David Parnell's article "Observer Observations" - it may have the answer.

CAMunicate can be a puzzle (especially near to publication.) Do you know where there is a picture of the world famous Larry in this issue? He's been clocking up the miles recently. Can you find him?

CAMunicate can also be revealing! Not many of you will know that one of us rides his bike dressed only in only his underpants while on holiday. Read the full confession in this issue!

And lastly, we can use CAMunicate to challenge our fixed ideas. I had my tourer serviced recently and asked that it be done early on the list as I was stranded at the dealership without a lift. To their credit they immediately appeared with a brand new 600cc demo bike for me to use. Now I was pleased to have a bike but owning a large capacity tourer I felt somewhat sniffy about this bike 'only' being a 600cc commuter. How wrong could I be! It was such a hoot! Light and flickable making it great fun in the twisties. Power there if you wanted it, you just needed to wind up the revs. To top it all you didn't need to worry too much about putting the power down too early coming out of a bend and losing grip on the rear. This was so much fun. It got me thinking. I like the look of cruisers but would never try one. I don't consider BMW's because everyone seems to have one. Perhaps you would only have an all out sports bike and never try a tourer. The lesson here is get down to your dealership and try something different. You never know you might like it!

## **From the Chairman's Bike**

It's been a busy few months, both from a CAM and a personal perspective. Back in June I received the unfortunate news from our secretary, Peter Ingram, that he felt it necessary to resign from his post given his increasing work commitments. Whilst it was great to hear that his sales role was going so well in what we so often hear to be difficult times, it came as a blow to lose him from the committee after a relatively short period in post. However, I appreciated Peter's honesty in explaining the difficulties he was likely to find in balancing his time, and would like to thank him on behalf of the wider committee for the time that he put in to helping run the group.

I am delighted to announce that following a short talent search we now have a new secretary. Phil Duffy has kindly volunteered to take on the role, and immediately demonstrated his aptitude by bringing a pen with him to his first committee meeting – after which there was no turning back. It is with gratitude that we welcome Phil to the ranks of the committee and look forward to helping him settle in to the secretary post in the coming months.

Over the past few months we have been busy with a number of events. These have included the annual Meldreth Manor Show, for which Matthew Coles, Ian Glenn and Guy Pell organised and manned a superb stand. Matthew maintains that the position opposite the burger vans was chosen to strategically tempt people to visit us, but I have other theories over his motivation for picking such a prime spot within easy reach of the food. The show was a great success and we are already signing up members who visited us that evening.

We have also been running our usual Sunday Rides, which have continued to prove popular for both the quality of the roads chosen and the breakfast venues visited. These rides have been supplemented by All Day Rides, which we run for full members, and a London Early Morning Ride. Should you be interested there is another All Day Ride on 19<sup>th</sup> September, but you will need to sign up soon as places are limited. Thanks to all of our run leaders that have put in the effort to organising these events. We are looking for more full members that may be interested in leading Sunday Rides – there are more details later in this edition, but if you are interested please do get in touch.

The coming month is looking no less hectic, with our annual Maintenance Day on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September (a few places still available) and our second Assessment Day on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September. Please do publicise both to any biking friends that you have outside of CAM that you think may be interested in attending to learn more about what we do.

My own few months have been no less hectic, with the organisation of the CAM Lake District Tour being followed shortly after by a two week touring trip around Scotland with my wife Sarah. We should have acknowledged that our previous experience a couple of years back of two weeks in Scotland with only one day of rain was never to be beaten, and quit whilst we were ahead, but the combination of foolish optimism and the desire to test out a new tent led us on a foolhardy trip north during the July heatwave. I can report that the heatwave ended somewhere south of the border, and our time in Scotland was characterised by heavy rain and gale force winds – not the best combination for a biking camping tour! The tent did survive in conditions where many others didn't but we did have to modify our plans as the ferries out to Harris and Lewis weren't running due to the high winds. It wasn't all negative; the roads were superb, the scenery was as awe-inspiring as ever, and we found some rather cosy pubs that we may not have discovered otherwise. We also had an unexpected moment acting as ambassadors for CAM when we were approached at the Green Welly at Tyndrum by some nice chaps that wanted to know if we fancied signing up for Skills for Life with the IAM!

I'll close by reminding you to please drop me a line if you wish to comment, have any ideas that you think would be good for us to try or if you would like to suggest anything concerning the group or our activities. I can be reached on [chairman@cambsiam.org.uk](mailto:chairman@cambsiam.org.uk)

I hope to see you all very soon – ride safely.

**Peter Burge, CAM Chairman**

## **Test Passes**

Congratulation to the following for passing their Advanced Motorcycle Test recently

### **Associate**

Vanessa Turney  
Mark Butcher  
Barry Dickinson  
Roger Chatterton

### **Observer**

Ian Glenn and David Parnell  
Chris Curryer  
Ian Beeby  
Mac Lewis

## **Observer's Contacts**

If an Associate has not heard from his or her Observer then please use the list in the 'members section' of the CAM website to make contact. Any problems then get in touch with Chris Curryer [chris.curryer@bt.com](mailto:chris.curryer@bt.com)

## **Future Events, September October (and a little bit of November)**

Remember to check the local group website for the latest information on all of the events for July and August.

[www.cambsiam.org.uk/events.php](http://www.cambsiam.org.uk/events.php)

### **CAM Bike Maintenance Day - Saturday 4th September**

As advanced motorcyclists we all spend a lot of time thinking about the standards of our riding, but do you know how to check the condition of your motorcycle to make sure that it is fit to ride?

This event is designed for those of all abilities, from those with little or no mechanical experience through to those who know a bit more but would value an opportunity to pick up some new hints and tips. Demonstrations will be given to small groups throughout the day by our most knowledgeable observers and members.

This year we have a new venue, and are kindly being given access to the vehicle maintenance hanger at Cambridgeshire Constabulary Headquarters in Huntingdon.

Amongst other things, we will be covering tyres, chains/sprockets, chain tension, brakes, cleaning, laying up your bike for winter, getting your bike out in the spring, care of batteries, adjusting the bike controls. This will be a chance to meet other members of the group socially as well as receiving some practical advice on the maintenance of your machine. The day will run from 10am until 2pm and light refreshments will be included in the fee of £10.

### **Assessment Day – 12<sup>th</sup> September 10:00 until 13:00**

Calling all Observers, Senior Observers and Trainee Observers. This has been very popular in the past in recruiting new members into the IAM and this year we are again being supported by the Bikesafe trailer. Also we would appreciate a few full members to come along and help out with greeting our visitors and explain the benefits of signing up both before and after their observed ride. The venue is BT Exchange, 109-117 Long Road, Cambridge. CB2 8HG.

Please let Chris Curryer [chris.curryer@bt.com](mailto:chris.curryer@bt.com) if you can help out.

### **Sunday Ride Leader Course – 7<sup>th</sup> October (evening)**

Steve Bradshaw, a Senior Observer of Cambridge Advanced Motorcyclists, will be running an evening training course for those that are interested in becoming Sunday Ride Leaders.

This course is a necessary prerequisite to either leading or tailing our Sunday Rides, and will provide an overview of the issues that we ask the ride organisers to take in to account, the steps involved in making sure that the rides run smoothly, and how to deal with complications that may arise on the day.

Please let Peter Burge know [chairman@cambsiam.org.uk](mailto:chairman@cambsiam.org.uk) if you would like to be considered as a prospective ride leader and would like to attend this training.

## **First Aid Course for Motorcyclists – 6<sup>th</sup> Nov, 9:00am – 5:00pm Highfields School, Ely**

This course is specifically aimed at issues relevant for motorcyclists and, in addition to the fundamental principles of first aid, will also cover how to respond when faced with a road traffic accident that has involved a fellow motorcyclist. This is a formal first aid course being run by a qualified instructor and all participants will receive a certificate marking their attendance.

There are a number of similar courses offered commercially, and these tend to cost in the region of £70 per person. However, the committee of Cambridge Advanced Motorcyclists has taken the decision that it would be of significant benefit to our members and the region's motorcycling community if we were to offer this at a reduced, more affordable rate of £15 per person.

The course numbers will be strictly limited to 15 attendees to ensure an appropriate instructor to attendee ratio. Places will be allocated on a "first come" basis and must be booked in advance.

We would encourage all of our associates and members to seriously consider attending this course - it will teach you skills that could help save the life of a fellow motorcyclist. Please also bring this to the attention of any motorcyclists that you know outside of CAM that may be interested - we will all benefit from a wide cross-section of the region's motorcyclists holding such knowledge so are also opening this course to any non-members who may wish to attend.

If you would like to reserve a place on this course contact the secretary for a booking form at [secretary@camsiam.org.uk](mailto:secretary@camsiam.org.uk)

We will also be organising a refresher course later in the year for those who have previously attended one of our first aid courses in the past few years and who would like an update on their previous training.

## **Event Reports**

### **All Day ride 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010**

Just want to make all you peeps out there jealous and tell you about the great time everyone had on the all day ride to Stratford upon Avon and the Cotswolds. We had a very good turnout of 7 bikes and 12 people as most of us arrived with our partners.

On the Start up grid in reverse order we had:

Jim Roberts	Honda Blackbird
Andy Stone	Honda Pan European
Trevor and Joan Murton	BMW LT
Peter & Catharene Kidney	Yamaha FJR 1300
Gary & Linda Ellwood	BMW GS 1200 Adventure
David & Jill Martindale	BMW RT
Chris & Sue Curryer	Yamaha Fazer 1000

On what turned out to be the best day of the weekend, having had heavy rain showers the day before the weather was warm and sunny. Setting off from Milton Tesco promptly at 08:30 we travelled west through Woburn Abbey, Milton Keynes, Buckingham, Aynho and Banbury where we were ready for a fuel stop. About an hour later through a mix of town and some scenic roads through the North Oxfordshire and Warwickshire countryside we were approaching Stratford Upon Avon. Having found a convenient bike park nearby we set off towards the City Centre. After a relaxing stroll along the

riverside accompanied by a Steel band playing and visiting the little boats selling ice cream and coffee the ladies were set up to explore a nearby craft market, after managing to drag them away back towards the bikes . I just took a moment to admire a couple of Honda CBX's. These were 1000cc, 6 cylinder bikes from the mid 1980's. They were in really good condition and looked really nice with the six shiny exhaust pipes lined up across the frame. After this we were soon heading off towards Evesham, then Broadway and towards Stow on the Wold we ended up at the delightful town of Bourton on the Water. After a bit of an effort we got the bikes parked up reasonably close to our lunch time venue. The place was absolutely heaving with little parking available but we managed to squeeze 7 bikes in quite a few small spaces.

It was a relaxing time enjoying lunch, sat almost on the river's edge watching the people, either walking around or children and dogs paddling in the shallow waters. As we chatted away we were treated to a gathering of the Alvis owners club arriving at the Motor Museum just across the road, each of them having to reverse around a tight corner to park on the driveway of the Museum. Incidentally if you ever decide on a trip to Bourton on the Water the Museum is well worth a visit as they have a few bikes on display, including a 1936 Brough Superior.

So after lunch it was back on the bikes ready to finish off the day touring through the Wolds through the delightful towns of Bibury, Burford and Charlbury, then towards Bicester. We then headed back again towards Buckingham then a faster route through the many roundabouts of Milton Keynes. All of these are dual carriageways and subject to National Speed Limit so could be taken at a spirited, progressive pace. After an enjoyable day we were all pleased to arrive back in Cambridge at around 7:30 pm.

## **Observers Observations**

I see lots of people struggling with motorway riding – especially joining motorways. It is as if the task is tackled in a series of discrete and unrelated stages rather than one in which each stage must be integrated with the next.

Riders get on the slip road and accelerate to motorway speeds. Then they will look to see how they can join the traffic on the motorway. However, if there is a hold-up on the motorway the traffic may be doing substantially less than 70 mph. The car in front of them on the slip road may be making a mess of joining. The space in the traffic they can safely slot into may be a few cars back from where they are. In all these circumstances accelerating to 70 mph on the slip road may be entirely inappropriate.

In a way the clue is in the name slip road. To be able to slip into the traffic requires good observation, careful planning and crisp execution.

IPSGA – the System, applied to motorway joining.

It starts with Information – what is there that you can see on the slip road and on the motorway? Get the information by looking using a combination of rear view, use of mirrors and shoulder check. You need to continue to gather information throughout because the situation is so dynamic. Your planning will be dependent upon the quality of the information you gather.

Position yourself to be safe relative to the traffic around you and to get a view. Plan your speed to put you in the right position both on the slip road relative to the traffic on the slip and so that by the time you get to the motorway you are able to slip into the gap.

The situation you face may require you to speed up or slow down and may well involve continuous adjustment so that you end up at the right place at the right time. The traffic on the slip road and the

motorway is often changing its own position and may be changing speed too. Certainly the traffic on the slip road is likely to be dynamic as the vehicles in front adjust their own speed and position to get on the motorway – and not always in a predictable manner. The key thing is to preserve your bubble of safety space so you can accommodate that which you can see, that which you can reasonably expect to happen and any unknowns such as vehicles hidden behind lorries already on the motorway.

The right gear is the one that allows you to adjust your speed to execute these manoeuvres. Engage it in good time. The other aspect of preparation is to consider what signal, if any, is appropriate. If you are going down a slip road then you have nowhere else to go but on the motorway but if it confirms that you intend to slip into a particular gap then it may be helpful.

The final step is to accelerate to adjust the speed so that without major change of speed, up or down, you can merge into the traffic after doing a final check that the space you planned is exactly as expected.

Long stretches of motorway riding can be soporific. Joining and leaving a motorway is often a period of frenetic activity. Enjoy the challenge.

David Parnell

## Touring

### Part 1 - Touring in Norway.



I'm not sure when the Norway trip evolved inside Robin's head, I think it may have been as early as the last few days of our great Austrian adventure, ( CAMunicate Sept./Oct. 09.)

Anyway, Norway was suggested and agreed without much discussion as our next trip together ( we obviously needed at least one more trip before we were thoroughly fed up with each others company!) Nothing much happened for a while, then long before the suggested date of departure, a great folder was delivered with every conceivable detail, departure dates, ferry costs, daily mileage's, total mileage's, back up plans, daily routes on individual pages, etc. etc. I suggested Robin, even at his great age, should find gainful employment somewhere because he obviously had too much time to himself for his own good! This was going to be a big trip for me, but I must confess right now that without his meticulous planning, it wouldn't have happened.

Our rendezvous on Saturday evening at Sutton Bridge was greeted with stupid grins and handshakes. We knew we were embarking on something special. Things didn't go quite to plan as Robin dropped his bike at the petrol station in Immingham, thankfully only breaking an indicator glass. Tough old things these GS's! The side stand hadn't locked and he went right over with the bike. Our trip could have ended right there but thankfully he was uninjured! Checking in with DFDS, [www.dfdstorline.com](http://www.dfdstorline.com) at 12:45 am we finally boarded at 5:00am after falling asleep on the bikes on the quay side. After lashing our bikes in the hold we were shown to our cabin. Food and sleep took up most of the 27 hour crossing on this freight ferry, ( only twelve fare paying passengers per trip allowed. ) We docked in Brevic, just south



of Oslo, around 7:00am Monday 28th July, our trip had truly begun!



Everything we had heard about Norway's scenery and roads was true. Around every bend, ( and there were many, in fact straights were hard to come by!) you wanted to stop and reach for the camera. Initially I was paranoid about the ridiculous speed limit, but the Garmin speedo set for Kilometers kept us on the right side of the law. Over the coming days I became much more relaxed simply because it turned out going fast was the last thing on your mind and secondly there was no one to enforce the regulations anyway! I have to say the Adventure BMW was my perfect partner, excluding Robin of course, carrying a huge amount of gear (I've never been accused of travelling light,). The bike performed impeccably

whether fast, slow, rough, smooth and the many gravel sections undergoing repair, with never a moments worry!

Three hundred odd miles due West to Bergen and our first camp in someone's garden. After visiting the town next day we set off up and across, zig zagging our way up the West coast over bridges and boarding ferry after ferry.

Stopping for photographs or cuppa soup, or tea and bickies, day after day relishing the freedom, the country, the weather, roads, the camping and one and others company. Bike to bike radios occasionally broke the silence to discuss the fuel or food situation, or remark on the view. Making camp became second nature, stocking with water from the rivers and streams, cooking chatting in the evening and trying to sleep in almost normal daylight. Finding somewhere to pitch the tents sometimes proved difficult but we managed fairly well, sometimes congratulating ourselves on the location, set for example in the woods out of sight of anyone. To me this was motorcycling adventure at its best. The weather played a big part being mostly dry. Rain didn't really affect us but it would be easy to see how it could have so we were lucky!



We eventually arrived at Nordcapp, the most northerly part of the trip, and after the usual photo's and post cards we headed back, running into heavy rain. Wet gear in place I suggested we 'ride until it stops', I don't mind riding in the stuff but not making camp! So we rode on back to the previous nights camp spot which we liked, making that days riding over 400 miles, and set up in the dry. We were going to cut off through Sweden and south on faster roads at this point but such was our progress we had made enough time to keep to the west coast of Norway's much



more scenic route until Trondheim where we finally struck off towards Sweden and much hotter weather.

Putting too much detail in this story could easily turn it into a short novel so I must resist, but a couple of incidences are worth reporting, all involving Robin I'm afraid. After Robins rear tyre had gone well past its sell by date we managed to find a BMW dealer in Tromso who for an undisclosed sum, ( to me anyway ) replaced both tyres. So far so good. Within two days he picked up a 4 inch nail, new and straight and for all the world looking as if it had been banged in with a hammer! No one in Norway would repair this so our emergency repair had to last the rest of the trip! I'm pleased to report it did last, all the way through Sweden, Denmark and half way across east Anglia to his back door! The second incident involved his top box. Before I recall this sorry tale may I beg your indulgence to quote from my travel log, just one night's notes?



Wed. 7th July. Tent was a bit wet from overnight shower. Packed up in the dry and continued all day. 341 miles today, good day all round. Stayed on E6 past Trondheim for another 60 odd miles then left on no. 3. Pulled off that road onto a smaller road, and found a nice clearing in the woods, very quiet! We cooked pasta and sauce with sliced frankfurter sausages. I then rode about a mile and a half in my underwear, ( hot weather!) to get water from the river we had crossed. Just mossies and the odd sheep for company. We are making good progress, will get to the ferry far too early if not careful!



OK back to Robin's top box.

Thurs. 8th July. After a lovely night in the forest we rode about 60 miles then stopped for an ice cream. We bought meat etc. for that night's dinner then travelled another 33 miles and stopped for a frankfurter sandwich and coffee lunch. When we packed up Robin noticed his top box had gone! He then, rode the 93 miles back to camp, found his box and rode the 93 miles back! We then rode another 77 miles to a campsite where we took a Hytte, ( wooden hut,) just to try one, for one night only! It was here, in the morning that we discovered the nail!

Sat. 10th July. Hot start to the day, travelled through lovely woods on back roads and found a picnic place next to a well used lake. Only 47 miles today but no need to do any more. Diving off the jetty into the slightly peaty water was pure heaven! The temperature had quickly reached 33 degrees and riding was becoming uncomfortable. The lake area gradually filled with locals and we spent the rest of the day swimming and lazing. Pitching the tents after most people had left, we had a peaceful night followed by an early morning swim and breakfast.

A very hot, long motorway stint brought us to Denmark and our third and final paying camp sight. On the coast, beautiful clear water, no tide with a jetty in place, skinny dipping was the way to go! Next day we had time to kill so more swimming, lounging and cold showers to cool us in the heat but eventually we had to pack the bikes for the last time and head for the ferry at Esbjerg. The weather wasn't quite finished with us yet though as it got cooler as we travelled West. After passport check in we waited on the dockside with other bikers of different nationalities, and the heavens opened! Quickly donning wet gear we had to just stand and wait to be called on. There then followed a wonderful evening meal, far more wine than is good for rational thought, a very good entertainer in the shape of a singer/guitarist and when we finally managed to unlock the door to the cabin, falling into the room laughing hysterically like a couple of kids. I think I descended into unconsciousness rather than fall asleep!



A very grey day greeted us as we docked at Harwich but the ride home proved uneventful. Saying our farewells over the radio as we past Robin's turnoff I continued home. Felt quite low for the next couple of days as the euphoria wore off. How do you beat that? Will I ever get another pass I wonder?

## Part 2 : Camping on a Bike

I will start by saying this account of mine and Robin's camping experiences are just that. This is not a definitive method of biker / camping. I should also add, anyone with a weak disposition or a tendency towards hot showers and gin and tonics ( Meg?) should move swiftly on.

When Robin and I started the serious discussions of this trip, one of the main things to get right was the tents. After I had researched and found what I thought was the perfect tent for our purpose, Robin craftily added it to his Christmas list, leading us to a front room erection while on a post Christmas visit. The chosen item was a Vango Omega 350. It had good water repellent qualities, a 2 metre sleeping area and ditto living ( cooking ) area, weighed in at 5 kilo's and fit easily on the back of the bikes. It was suggested that now Robin had this masterpiece, for the princely sum of £140, I could manage with my two man Tesco's affair, sharing the Vango if the weather turned nasty! The thought of sharing the cosy confines of Robins tent during inclement weather didn't exactly fill me with excitement so I eventually bought my own!

My other proven comfort bits included a 3/4 seasons sleeping bag of the square variety, and a self inflating mattress 4" thick. So when my bike was loaded, the heap on the seat was just clothes bag, tent, sleeping bag and bed role. ( Not to mention Larry of course. ed ).

That just left cooking and food. Left pannier, stove, saucepan, small frying pan and utensiles. One pint plastic mug, tea, coffee, milk and sugar. Then anything you might want for a midday stop like cuppa soup, biscuits, cake etc. The right pannier ( the biggest on the GS,) just food! I packed



enough food in there to last the fortnight, although I brought half of it home because we bought fresh, and more appetising things to eat while there! If I packed the luggage just right, it made a good backrest. Comfort wins over aesthetics every time!

Other essentials were phone and charger, sat nav of course, leatherman plus a myriad of other things, none of which I used!



I thought when we left we would need a campsite at least every third day to shower etc. But I quickly developed a washing system that I could use almost indefinitely. This is where ladies and other sensitive mortals should move on to the next subject!

I found I could make one saucepan do it all. Now I have to admit that I have reached my 59th year on this earth without spending even one night in a hospital, thereby denying myself the opportunity of being bed bathed by some sexy young nurse! Alright, reality might be slightly different but you can't deny me the dream!!! ( I found I could do a very good imitation of a bed bath by

placing a saucepan just in front of the ground sheet on the grass, no, inside the tent you Muppet! ) then place a polythene bag over said pan and fill with water. I could then have a nice wash all over, without contaminating my cooking pot! Liberal use of deodorant and foot powder meant I undressed that night smelling as sweet as when I started out that morning! They say necessity is the mother of invention. Well someone did, anyway. It's marvellous what you can do on a motorbike. If it was a nice day and I had things to dry while on site, I would string a bungee cord from handle bar or somewhere on the front to the pannier frame at the rear and put them on the line. If we were travelling and I had wet stuff I would trap it under a bungee cord on top of the luggage to take the full wind blast. If gloves got wet, when we stopped they could be laid on the cylinders to get warm, (BMW's only here.) I could go into the cooking, but that's more Robins department. Suffice to say you eat out of whatever you cooked in so no plates to wash up, and my pans are none stick and almost clean themselves!

I hope this has been useful to one or two of you, and to the rest if you don't bike and camp, you probably shouldn't start now! And don't forget, you can always get B&B!

**Happy camping!**

**Garry Ellwood.**

### **Europe End-to-End 2010**

On the 4th of August 2010 John Lewis set off from the peaceful north Norfolk town of Holt and via Harwich and latterly via the Channel Tunnel rode solo some 6806 miles from North Cape in Norway to Europa Point in Gibraltar, the most northerly and southerly points of the European mainland. John did this ride in support of 'Help for Heroes'. You can read how he got on by following this link [www.k2asv.co.uk](http://www.k2asv.co.uk) His diary is very interesting. The following text is from John's website.

Help for Heroes was founded in 2007 out of a desire to help the wounded Service Personnel returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The message from Help for Heroes is simple; it is strictly non political and non critical; the charity simply wants to help. Anyone who volunteers to serve in time of war, knowing that they may risk all, is a *hero*. These are ordinary people doing extraordinary things and some of them are living with the consequences of their service for life. Help for Heroes may not be able to prevent our soldiers from being wounded, but together we can give them a better life.

There is a link on John's website if you wish to donate.

## Crash Helmets

This is something we have all to had to make a decision about: which one to buy. Those of you who have ridden for a number of years must have gone through the process several times. We are told that helmets do deteriorate over time so we are encouraged to replace them regularly

Why do we choose the helmet that we wear? Is it because we like the styling or it's endorsed by a famous Moto GP rider? Clearly we choose one that is comfortable and suits our requirement whether that be flip front or traditional full face. Do we think of the one that might offer us protection in case the unfortunate happens. Did you know that the government has conducted tests on over 200 helmets under the Safety Helmet and Rating Programme, or SHARP?

They explain how to choose the right helmet, the tests they perform and general advice on how to look after your helmet once you have purchased it.

Their results are published on <http://sharp.direct.gov.uk/>

**Chris Curryer**

## Useful Information

### Group Contact

If you require information for a friend about the Group's activities or have other queries please contact:

Phil Duffy  
**Club Secretary**  
PO Box 1159, Comberton  
Cambridge, CB23 7WH

[secretary@camsiam.org.uk](mailto:secretary@camsiam.org.uk)

## Tall Tales

### Maintenance. Did this really happen? Oh yes.

As Maintenance day is nearly upon us and it reminded me of a few things my friends ☺ tried in our misspent youth. If they sound stupid that is because they are and you should not try copying them.

1. Maintenance in a rush. We were due to go away for the weekend and arrived at a friend's house ready to go only to find that he had picked that evening to change the camshaft on an old BSA single. We of course instead of helping were very impatient, mercilessly teased him about being late and generally larked around. The camshaft was removed in a rush and replaced in double quick time. It was only when clearing up that our friend realised he had taken the worn camshaft out, cleaned everything up and then put the worn camshaft back in. The shiny new one was still lying on the ground next to the bike. So if you are doing maintenance, take your time, check everything carefully and don't invite friends like us around.
2. When you have finished maintaining your bike, If you have parts left over, ask yourself why? I got a lift in my friend's sidecar. Off we went towards the town centre. We took a right at the first roundabout and the chair I was sitting in suddenly lurched to the left and was stopped only by the sidecar mudguard assembly. My friend looked down and immediately realised that after

having the sidecar body off to do some maintenance he had only dropped the four bolts through the floor and then got sidetracked and forgot to put the nuts on. We crept back at a snail's pace and did the job properly. This time there were no parts left over and the body was now securely fixed to the frame. Much better.

3. Quick puncture repair. Again a sidecar outfit this time with a puncture in the sidecar wheel. In the middle of nowhere, no spare, no repair kit and no mobile phones for another twenty years. However there was a cornfield. The innertube was quickly removed and the tyre was stuffed with as much straw as you could possibly get in followed by another slow crawl home. Please please don't try this.
4. You won't believe this but it is true. Yes I know it's another sidecar story. This time the tyre was worn out, no tread to speak of, bald. So how to you fix this if you have very little money? Well you remember Woolworths, that well known motorcycle spares retailer? They sold quite reasonably priced Phillips Stick-a-Soles to re tread your shoes. My friend bought a number of these and stuck them around the outside of the bald tyre instantly giving the tyre a new tread albeit of a somewhat unusual, for bikes, pattern. After leaving the Stick-a-Soles to cure for a couple of hours he went out for a trial run only to find out that they flew off like a Catherine wheel after only a few hundred yards. On the plus side Stick-a-Soles were cheap but on the minus side they returned very low mileage.
5. How do you start a highly tuned 500cc single? Do you really need to use the valve lifter? It all started as a light hearted discussion, which developed into an argument to be settled by a challenge. "If you think it can be done without using the valve lifter then show me". Now for those of you who have missed the joys of the kick start I need to explain that if you didn't get the engine spinning fast enough there was a chance that it could try to start up in reverse. If that happens and the kick start is still engaged it will be propelled back by the engine in the opposite direction to which you want it to go with huge force. Large capacity high compression single cylinder bikes were sometimes fitted with a valve lifter, operated from a lever on the handlebars which would be held in while you gave the kickstart a firm 'kick'. Just as the engine was spinning as fast as it would go you released the valve lifter and got your foot off the kickstart and your shin out of the way! Of course my friend didn't need to use this! He teased the engine over top dead centre on the compression stroke and then gave the bike an almighty kick by leaping up in the air and putting his full weight on the kickstart. Predictably the engine fired, in reverse driving the kickstart back the way it came with him still on it. For a couple of seconds he flew quite gracefully before landing on the ground a few feet away. The ambulance men were very nice and helped him into the back of their clean white van to go to the hospital and get his broken foot sorted. Now it was him who needed a bit of maintenance.

I warned you that my youth was misspent but some of us have grown older while not growing up. I am still looking for your funny stories to feature in Tall Tales. So far you have all been very quiet about what you used to get up to, or maybe you're embarrassed now that you are a pillar of the community but don't worry. It is really very easy to write these stories up. Just pick up a pen, write the story down, (ok you can use email) and then send it to me at [editor@camsiam.org.uk](mailto:editor@camsiam.org.uk). Depending on the story it may be wise to remember to leave out your own name. That way no one but you and I will ever know it was you, and you know you can trust me and the rest of the membership not to tell. So pick up the pen!