



VIRUSCAST 7 Seventh issue

Being the Northumbria Nortons Bananavirus Newsletter,

The BIG NEWS!!! We actually DID something!!!

Led by the intrepid Simon, a group of very alert Northumbrian Norton lerts went on a socially distanced ride around some of Northumberland.

Yes – we were on the loose!! Social distance said we should not go in one big group, but 2 small groups were OK, so Lerts Group 1 and Lerts Group 2 set off from Morpeth. Due due a hydrocarbon anomaly, group 2 left before group 1 – who were then supposed to leave 10 minutes later.

Here group 2 has formed, and group 1 is so socially distanced you can hardly even see them gathering beyond the lorry.



In spite of lack of practise during lock-down, and in spite of the machines having stood idle for so long, nobody broke-down, nobody fell off, hit a sheep/cow/antelope – what use is a scribe if you give him nothing to report? However, the route took in Netherwitton, the Gibbett, Bellingham and Group 2 arrived by the river at Wark, for a socially distanced coffee stop. So alert had Simon’s group 1 been to leave Morpeth , that it easily made up the alleged 10 minutes delay, and arrived just behind the group 2.. Excessive, lunatic speed is suspected? Then there started a very alert, socially segregated coffee stop.

Witness:

“Why won’t anyone sit with me?????”



“I cannot hear a damned thing you say – and stop chewing on that sandwich!!”



“Nobody’s getting any of THIS!!”



Return was by pretty lanes for a final distanced assembly at Morpeth Rugby club. Somehow, Simon’s group set off first and arrived second, without having been seen on the way. The other group was accused of cheating, but you just cannot hide crap navigation.

So ended our first Virus Ride. In spite of ominous black clouds, there were only a few rain drops.

May the black clouds continue to part, and the sun shine mightily on our endeavours!

From members North of the Frontier (just North – not like Aberdeen). And a picture.

Hi folks,

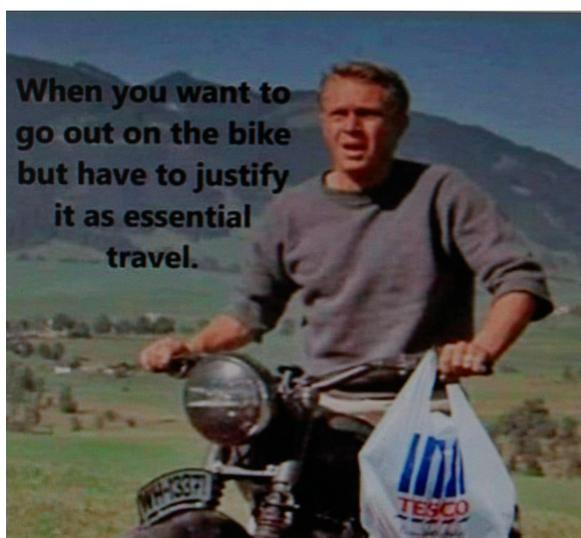
Just to confirm that the Jimmy Guthrie Run here in Denholm is definitely cancelled unless Nicola changes her advice.

At present we can journey 5 miles to take exercise, visit garden centres, or essential shopping etc, so basically nothing has changed much. We had loads of bikes through the village last weekend during the summer, we presume they were all Geordies or Cumbrians.

The French/Chinese/Honda has gone from my abode and now resides somewhere in West Yorkshire. So, a space exists within for another machine, so subject to import regulations etc, we are doing an interdepartmental transfer to create space in another garage, sadly not a Norton but interesting nevertheless being of British manufacture from 1959 so no computer chips or fuel injection to go wrong. Ok, so it's a Velocette LE !!!

The Electra awaits running in trials, again subject to SCOTGOV rules. The NATIONAL POLICE FORCE up here have been closing roads today around Loch Lomond and other areas to keep day trippers out so don't expect Carter Bar to open anytime soon.

Cheers, Ian and Joyce



Did you know that the branch actually had a HISTORY??

Well, Simon sent the following – part of all the history that is fit to print - -- in some weird file form that I managed to crow-bar into this text. I hope it appears on your screens ----

The First 20 Years:

Bob Grainger, from Heaton in Newcastle, started the "North-East" Branch of the Norton Owners Club sometime around 1979. (Anyone know the actual date?).

Meetings, at first, were described as "flexible", and were rather infrequent, being held at the Robin Hood Pub, at Shiremoor. From September 1988 meetings were held at the Northumberland Arms Pub, at West Allotment. Bob Tym took over as Secretary in 1989, and changed the branch name from "North East" to "Tyneside", and the meeting place became the Holystone Inn, at Benton. With Bob Tym in charge, the club became more active, and camping weekends were organised in Northumberland, Durham and The Lake District, which have since become fixtures in the club calendar. Branch meetings continued at the Holystone Pub, until January this year, when with Dave Wardle as Secretary, and Bob now elevated to Chairman, the meeting place was again changed, to the Three Horseshoes Pub, at Horton, Northumberland. By pure coincidence, next door to Dave's house! The branch name was also changed at this time, to become the "Northumbria" Branch.

We are famous!!! (At least, in Morpeth)

Morpeth Mayors can only serve a limited term, so Alison has been replaced (poor girl). She's the one who has been raising dosh (in fact £35000) for the Northumbria Blood bikes – including our donations. Bob sent a pic from the second page of an article in the Morpeth Times - we are picked out for praise at the bottom left hand corner.



Things that went wrong on the road - or maybe a confessional – even more!!!

(Simon said I should write about things that went wrong on the road. It's called "on the road maintenance". And it's a long list - – here are even more disasters after 2015!!!---)

The Italian Rally 2016 – near Rimini – and this almost deserves a whole Viruscast, all on its own.

This was the time the UK media were commemorating World War One. From which we were clearly informed that nobody except the British were in it, and the only action was on the Western Front. Britain's French allies, Palestine, and Laurence of Arabia, Mesopotamia, the Russian revolution, the war in the Dolomites, in Africa, the Americans, Italians, Turks, even Germans and Austrians – I could go on and on – clearly none of these were worth a mention. Someone somewhere wants to programme the Brits to be ignorant. End of rant.

So I took a route to honour the French and visited the Verdun battlefield, where the German Generals "bled the French army white", and succeeded in bleeding both armies white. After a couple of hours, suitably horrified and depressed, I took the "Voie Sacrée" (which had become a one-way road for so many French soldiers) and headed into heavy and drenching rain on the autoroute heading South. Pulling off at Dijon, and half drowned, I went into the first hotel I saw, regardless of price, and turned my bedroom into a drying room. Next day, with heavy showers, I pulled off the Autoroute further down for a coffee. Slowing down the steering went funny. Flat front tyre! For the second time in my life I had been barrelling along at just below 70 mph with a flat front tyre, but on a featherbed, and had not noticed. As I started heaving at the front wheel to get it out of the forks, a car pulled up with a French/English group going to a wedding. They helped me get the wheel out, and then, as I was heaving with tyre levers, re-appeared with a cup of coffee and huge sticky bun! Then more help, because as I was about to blow up the tyre, a lorry driver appeared – said his lorry had a big compressed air tank and I could inflate the tyre from it – easy! The good thing about breakdowns is that you meet the nicest people. The hole had been caused by a tiny bit of fine wire, like you staple paper with. Wire removed. Tube patched for spare but a replacement fitted (I carry a spare tube).

On into the Dauphiné Alps to re-visit the scene of my last big climbing holiday in my youth. Nice small hotel – full of Italian van drivers, and chatting with the bloke at the bar established that he was Bulgarian and the owner, Turkish. And, for the second time in my life, "just put the bike in the bar overnight"

On into Italy. Crossing the top of Italy is actually a long way. So – a B&B was found, run by Brits, no less. Checked tyres. Went to bed. In the morning, the back tyre is totally flat. Blow it up, have breakfast, and check pressure again. No pressure loss. Remove back wheel. And keep inserting wheel rim into a tank to see if any bubbles appear. None. Scratch head. Replace valve cap. A hissing noise!! There is a little "o" ring-like seal in the cap. It had come adrift, twisted itself into a figure of 8, and depressed the needle in the valve. Off I go.

Some miles/km further down the motorway, and any slowing down produces "phuts", "pops", and ragged running. Ok if I hold 70 mph. Pull off at a service area. Test all I can without effect. Two men appear. I can handle some French but not Italian. Anyhow, I understand that they are "mechanici" of mature years. They check all the things I would, and pronounce the distributor cap is ancient and should be replaced. I did not know how to explain that I bought a modern replacement and it was complete crap.

Also beginning to think that at the age of 74 I was getting a bit old for all this.

Slowed down to the rally site, with “pops” and “phuts”, got registered, and put up the tent. Then phoned Lizzie. Lizzie, remembering Canada said, “do you think it has inhaled a bug?”. True enough, a bug lodged in the pilot jet air way. My wife is a genius.

Return no trouble – Brenner pass (which according to the media was swamped with millions of refugees and migrants, but where there was nothing at all – I did not even slow down at the border), then through Germany to call on friends and family, and, at Ijmuiden, found Gary and Amy at the ferry. A joyful evening on board consuming our own plonk and nosh which we had brought. (prices on the ferry are rape and pillage – after all DFDS really are Vikings). Decide touring is not so bad after all. (Have I bored you to death? 2 boring pics follow, since I have them, and I am wallowing in nostalgia: the wanderlust is also killing me). (And - Am I beginning to babble incoherently?)

Essential Supplies for a French mountain walk:



La Meije, 3984m/13071 ft. A scary mountain. The one I never climbed. (In 2016 I went on foot to reach this point, at which I stopped, realising that without sun specs I was risking snow blindness - - - After all the heavy rain, much snow, and rumblings from distant avalanches.)



Look where you can get to on a Norton!!

Officers - - -

Chairman: Bob Tym. 01670 517949. robert.tym@googlemail.com

Secretary: Simon Murray. 01670 785792. mob 07483 888801 . simon@barmoor.com. E-mail will be best.

Money scrounger: Alan Millar. Tel 01670 853223 mob 07734402110 better text than e-mail, though e-mail is a_m_millar@hotmail.com

Scribe : John Powell. Tel 0191 281 8116. . Mobile:07802 257800. jnoandlizpowell@yahoo.uk