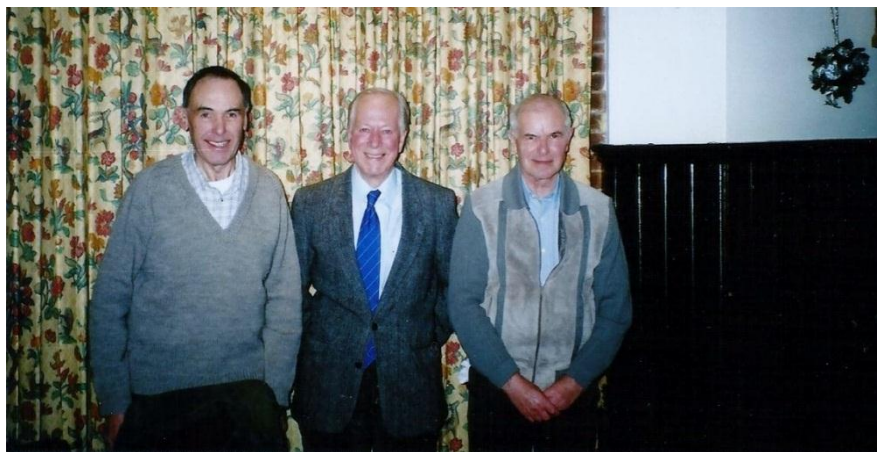


The Elderly Brothers



On a rare night out just before Christmas, this picture - taken after a hearty meal - gathers together the three appointed Trustees of the Club - left to right: Richard Sillett, Bob Drane and Tony Parkin. Aren't you glad these three "wise??" men take the rap if the Club gets in financial trouble? They are there of course to keep a distant eye on things such that nothing of the sort is allowed to happen!

NEW MEMBERS

Membership Secretary Phil Read must be campaigning hard these days as we once again welcome new members to the Club. Dave Iszard returns after about 20 years, with renewed dreams of blasting away the opposition at the Summer trials. This time he is Fantic 301 (twin shock) mounted. He and son Barry were regulars at one time. Before that, Dave was well known for his love of the British Velocette. He grasstrack raced a Velo-engined machine in the 70s and has done road racing on a variety of machinery, including Ariels. He is a former Tail Light editor/printer/distributor, and was a regular contributor under the name of "Velo Fellow". He is a seasoned road rider these days, accompanied by wife Niki. He was also my trials sidecar passenger for a while in the 70s. I almost got him fixed up with Paul Gray for our LDT in April but he was already booked for one of their road runs.

Also hoping to win some trials cups this year are father and son team Simon and Francis Lewis, and Brian Johnstone. Brian is from Cold Norton and is interested in both trials and enduro. Glad to have you all aboard!

ALLEN LEADS THE WAY

Having already secured the British Traditional Trials Championship titles for over 40s and over 50s, Allen Collier is now well on his way to getting the over 60s crown this year, leading as he is by a healthy margin. Let's hope Allen's remaining rounds continue to keep him at the top.



Braintree & District Motorcycle Club

TAIL LIGHT

www.braintree-mcc.co.uk

June 2011

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Trustees of the Club: Bob Drane, Tony Parkin, Richard Sillett

BACK TO TRIALS!

As you read this, the motocross will be either still the centre of all our attentions or all done and dusted - don't forget we need help to clear up the site (see last month's Tail Light). Ring me if in any doubt as to our needs. There's little else I can refer to regarding the MX as I am writing this on 17 May, so we'll endeavour to report on things in the July edition. Any interesting stories just give me a ring or send me an email and I will do my best to embarrass the named parties.....

Our first Summer Series trial is on Saturday 4 June at Adrian's Twinstead Hall Wood, so let's hope we are all well recovered from the MX to wind down a bit and enjoy an evening's trials riding or observing - either way, we need you there! All the Saturday trials start at 5.30pm. Dates were in last month.

I promised last month to include some snippets from our March and April trials - a bit far away now but still worth a mention for the record. Good job I scribble down notes!

RJS

DICK'S BIT

The March trial at Spansey's Wood, Gosfield (by kind permission of Adrian Parker) is admittedly a long time back now but not too long ago to recall the undignified under-water search by Jeremy Maddox for his wristwatch! He caught his arm on a branch in a watery section and the quite old, but valuable (well to him anyway) watch went flying into the stream. Jeremy, who spends his working day in the clouds as an airline pilot, was seen grubbing about below water level in an attempt to recover said watch. This man does like extremes doesn't he - above ground for work, below water for pleasure! Whether or not he ever found it, I don't know, but Adrian - if you come across it during one of your woods maintenance weekends try putting it on eBay, it might be worth a bob or two! Meanwhile, avoid Easy Jet flights as their flight times are said to be running slightly erratically.

The Long Distance trial in April was a great day for riders and observers alike - a good entry, another lovely day weather-wise, and some extra land groups for the observed sections. While Mark Hughes and Chris Cook did the lion's share of the pre-event work, praise must also go to Mark's wife Kathryn for preparing the delicious food packs, enjoyed by all the observers and officials on the day. Rumour has it that Mark over-ordered so that he could have second helpings.... It was good to see former top Club Intermediate Martin Baker, back as a member, competing, as ever with a big smile on his face. Even the fact that by lending his bike to a mate for an earlier section and having those heavy marks attributed to him didn't seem to faze him - he still had a great time. I don't know if Mark Wilson and passenger Gary Plummer have resumed diplomatic relations yet, but the air was blue when they went through Chris Cook's section at Rotten End to chalk up a five! The experienced long distance pair - who have since competed in Cornwall with the luxury of driver/minder/feeder Dave Clark on hand - were beaten on marks lost and special test time on this occasion by part timer Paul Gray, who was using an unfamiliar passenger he found on the Internet.....well, sort of (Guy Stanley from the SM Centre). Well done to all concerned, with Wesley B putting up another fine performance as best Club member, equally clean with winner Paul Belton, but half a second slower. Only one second down was our own Quenton Ramsey, also clean, so all very close at the top. Steve Butcher's leg must have given way for him to drop a mark.

James Yearley was riding as back marker on his GH/G&B Finch Husqvarna. It is a big bike - just 30cc bigger than the first machine he had been supplied with (as if that one wasn't big enough - yes, those extra cubic centimetres make a huge difference!). This one, the 511, which he rode at the Stebbing scramble on 1 May, has a mighty 480cc engine and is taking James some getting used to. He was hoping to give it a good test out at the Foxborough enduro, but this wasn't to be as the Sudbury Club were forced to cancel due to the dry track conditions. So all eyes will have been on him for our Stisted MX.

Wesley has decided to follow Dad Steve Butcher and go lame. He had a nasty crash at the dry and just a little dangerous section to avoid - eventually modified - at the Chelmsford Club's evening trial at Beazley End recently. The front wheel left the ground on the steep climb, resulting in the bike falling down on Wes and clouting his

hand, forcing a retirement. He was reluctant to let go of the handlebars apparently. I think he can still manage his emails but otherwise not much else (apart from riding still.... if helped on the bike.....).

Away from things off-road, John Boyd, who along with Roy Rush is one of our resident Club stewards, was spotted recently aboard his Suzuki trail bike and on his way to the MOT station (to get the bike tested, not him). He was also spotted, not for the first time either, on television, talking to Lady Camilla (or was it the other way round?). The event was a Desert Rats Reunion at Colchester - no he's not old enough to qualify here but was part of the Korean War Veterans Association, also in attendance. John is quite big in that, and has held various offices (and is still an active official), having travelled far and wide globally with his old colleagues. Quite separately, Bob Maiden was looking through some old programmes recently and whose name popped up? Yes, John Boyd, number 186! He was entered in a grasstrack meeting at Great Leighs in 1959, riding a 350 Ariel (a sensible choice of machine I would readily concede).

Grasstrack meetings are few and far between these days due to a lack of riders, at least in this Centre. Rider numbers I suppose must have peaked in the 70s and 80s. Before that, they were topped up and actually dominated by scramble riders, eager to get a ride having usually been turned down for scramble entries due to over-subscription (that's how/why I converted from scrambles to grasstracks). Left to the specialist grass boys, they wouldn't have been able to run a meeting. It seems we are back in this position, except motocross entries aren't over-subscribed anymore and I believe MX machines are banned from grasstracks. Maybe grasstrack can only be saved from dying altogether if some flexibility is introduced on the machinery front. How about combined events, with MX racers taking in a chicane or two in the centre of the grasstrack oval? Or getting the flat track boys to come in on things perhaps to bolster up an otherwise scantily-entered grass event. The recent High Easter meeting was a good, entertaining event, but how much longer will crowds travel to see just two or three riders in a race on a big track? Another observation was the efforts of dear old ex-sidecar grasser Geoff Moorcock, who with a couple of colleagues (one of whom is his son Paul) holds the 500cc Sidecar Association together. He does virtually all the hard physical work of staging their meetings, which at his advanced age must be a labour of love. It's a vicious circle - less riders = less clubs/personnel willing to run events = fall-off of spectators = less new recruits etc. In congratulating him on a job well done, I (tongue in cheek) invited him to join Braintree Club, where there are even more opportunities to put his skills and labours to good use! He quickly returned the invitation and reminded me that no less than 7 Braintree members were holding key official positions that day, without whom the meeting would probably have been difficult to stage! David Smith was once again in the hot seat as Clerk of Course, with deputies Chris Cook and John Yearley, and Dave Field on the start/finish line. In the lap and points scoring team were myself, Bob Maiden and a reinvigorated Tony Parkin, responding well to his latest course of Chemotherapy. There's quite a lot of skill and versatility in the old club yet! Dunmow are beginning to worry about the sustainability of running their Stebbing scramble - the olds are becoming tired and worn out, and in some cases are no longer around. Maybe they'll be after team Braintree next year (we already do the lap scoring).

Richard Sillett 17 May 2011