

GOOD VIBRATIONS

NEWSLETTER of the WESTCOAST BRITISH MOTORCYCLE OWNERS CLUB

August 2021



Group Rides have started again. Above:
Shakedown run, Right Top: Ride N Tune at
Geoff's; Middle: Sunshine Coast; Right Riondel.

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Cover photos George Fenning, Peter Dent, Peter Vanderkooy and Bevin Jones

We are always looking for articles and if you have a bike and a story, write it and send it to the Editor at: gveditor2019@gmail.com.

We will publish member to member adverts which will have to be a very brief description of the item(s) together with a single contact number or email. As this newsletter is a public document your contact information should be considered to be NOT private so caution is advised.



Member Ads

For Sale. 1973 Norton 850cc Roadster, 44700 miles, Alton E-Start, Very good condition. Asking \$10,000. Phone 778 298 3096
Email: dmchaney@shaw.ca

Bevin Jones has a few items for member consideration: Free home made, welded paddock stand. It came with my V-Strom but no longer needed since I installed a centre-stand. Canadian Tire Motomaster Bike Jack 1500 Lb Capacity, Lift 4 5/8" to 14 1/2" \$75. Canadian Tire Motomaster Impact Wrench 1/2" Drive, 110V, 7.5A, 240 Ft/Lb Torque Only used once to change snow tires \$55. Contact Bevin.

BMOC ADMINISTRATION FOR 2020-2021

BMOC EXECUTIVE

Past President, Nigel Spaxman, nigelspaxman@gmail.com

President, Geoff May, geoffmay@telus.net

Vice President, Patrick Jaune, patrick.jaune@shaw.ca

Secretary, Robert Smith, t695sprint@icloud.com

Treasurer, Ian Bardsley, bmoc.treasurer@gmail.com

Review Committee: Daryl Brown, Todd Copan, Peter Vanderkooy and Jim Bush.

MEETINGS

General meetings are held monthly on the second Thursday at 7:30 PM at the Burnaby Rugby Club at the east end of Sprott Street one block east of Kensington Avenue. Informal breakfast meetings are held every Sunday at 8:00 AM at Jim's Café located at 6th Street and 5th Avenue in New Westminster. Informal rides depart following breakfast, weather permitting. Both are subject to COVID-19 regulations and currently postponed.

The West Coast British Motorcycle Club (BMOC) was established in 1985 and is a registered not for profit society dedicated to the preservation, restoration and use of British motorcycles. Our newsletter, Good Vibrations, is published five times a year and is intended to inform and entertain our members. Articles appearing in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the BMOC. Technical tips, views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent or reflect the position or policy of the editor or any other BMOC officers.

We welcome all contributions from our members; 'want' ads and 'for sale' ads are free to members. They must be limited to motorcycles or motorcycle related items. 'For Sale' ads are printed with the good faith that the seller's description of the goods is fair and accurate. The BMOC assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the advertisements.

Articles, reports, photographs and ads may be Emailed to: gveditor2019@gmail.com

Visit the BMOC website, BMOC.ca for a full colour version of the Good Vibrations and the latest event calendar. Help us keep in touch. If you have changed your mailing address, phone number or email please inform the Club Secretary

BMOC is a member and supports AIM & BCCOM



BRITISH COLUMBIA COALITION
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2021 UPCOMING BMOC ACTIVITIES

All upcoming events are dependent on Health guidelines and status of the COVID 19 pandemic. Email and website notification of upcoming rides or events will be circulated as and when conditions allow. Ride safe/Stay safe. Good Health to all. Please refer to latest Executive Minutes for current proposed events. Norton International Rally proposed for September 6-10. NOTE DATES ARE SUBJECT TO ALL FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL COVID RESTRICTIONS AND MAY BE POSPONED OR CANCELLED ACCORDINGLY.

Area 27 Track Day Experience with OPP

Nigel Whittaker

It had been 20 years plus since I had last done a track day in the UK with the Norton Owners Club. Back then we all tended to be on period machinery e.g., Commandos, Featherbed specials, the occasional Manx and then a few interlopers who bought their Rob North Triples, the odd Ducati, Laverda, Guzzi and Beemers. It was a chance to get the Commando to go a little faster than sensible on the street, remind you that the clutch plates needed attending to as you got into the upper rev range, and all in a relatively controlled environment. It was seriously good fun, and my wife even facilitated the outings with new leathers for my 40TH.

When we emigrated to Kelowna, we fell in love with everything that the Okanagan had to offer. The one thing that the Interior seemed to be lacking was a track. Yes, there were ovals for stock car racing, hit to pass etc., but not too much to get excited about if you had your race suit hanging in the bike cupboard getting stiff lack of use.

However, in 2016 this all changed when a consortium came together to design and build Area 27 just to the south of Oliver on Osoyoos Indian Band land. The three principles behind the initiative, Bill Drossos, Trevor Siebert, and legendary Canadian Formula 1 driver Jacques Villeneuve, envisioned a world class track that would blend into the Okanagan landscape. The end result is a demanding 3.2-mile track with 16 turns, 3 of them which are blind and with two long straights. While principally designed for cars, run offs are generous with very little track furniture (barriers, walls etc.) so it was also “bike friendly”.

This raised my interest, but it was quickly dashed when it became clear the original business model was to encourage private membership – maybe ok for some but it seemed this would limit access, at least for me. Through a soccer buddy, I did however have a good chat with a member who was also kind enough to invite me to use a guest pass. This generous offer deserved serious consideration, but I was also aware that it would be a “car” day and that the bike session would be 20 mins max and that it would be up to me to find my way round the circuit, while not being an impediment to any other riders. Still, it was enough for me to start scanning the classifieds for a bike that could work on the track.

My last “fast bike” was a 2002 ZX9R which I loved apart from the fact that I found the smooth 4-cylinder motor didn’t really feel like it was going until you got past 7000rpm – by which time you started going very quickly. I was now 10 years older, and in addition to the faithful Commando had been through a Bandit 1250 (with a stage 1 kit) and a Moto Guzzi Norge, so I was not really looking for a 600 with limited torque and similarly wanted to avoid anything with razor sharp handling. In short, I was looking for something that would handle well, be stable at speed, be fast enough and would forgive a poor choice of gear.

In Nov 2020 just as the classified adverts were dropping off, my son Luke sent me a text to look at advert on Castanet. The advert was for 2003 Triumph 955i Daytona that was already in track trim. It had been in storage for 2 years after the owner moved from Ontario to BC. We went to look at it and the bike appeared tidy enough although the battery was dead and the fumes from the gas tank indicated stale fuel.

Continued on Page 16

Shakedown Ride

Peter Dent

And they're off; the first BMOC ride for a long time saw an enthusiastic bunch of members hurtling along the sinuously country roads of the Fraser Valley with their customary aplomb. Old and new Brit bikes along with some interesting machines manufactured somewhat east of the Greenwich longitude carved past weathered and often, a tad askew, farm buildings and designer, yuppie mansion interlopers with equal gusto. It was a perfect day for riding motorbikes and our relatively early start gave us sole possession of the Valley's back roads and country lanes. I am happy to report no mechanical hiccups and we all made it to the various regroup points without undue drama. We even had a couple of father and son riders in the group which, given that this all took place on Father's day seemed a bit special.



We met at Kanaka River Front regional park in Maple Ridge. A first for us I believe; it worked well enough with its washrooms and generous, if somewhat potted, parking lot. 14 or so bikes then wound their way to Bear Mountain Park where we could kick some tyres before taking the Stave Lake and Sylvester Road loop to Mission. Once over the bridge we regrouped at Matsqui Park before taking off for a, by then, jam packed Fort Langley via yet more country roads for a final kick of the old road rubber before wandering off in our different directions.



It was a great day out and it was good to see faces that I hadn't seen in a while and it was good to get caught up with their lives after all our social distancing. I certainly enjoyed this year's BMOC Shakedown Ride and I got the strong impression that I wasn't alone in that; my thanks to all those who contributed with

their good company and cheerful conversation. We should do that again.

Photos George Fenning and Peter Vanderkooy



The BMOC annual **Ride 'n Tune** was held Sunday, July 4 at Geoff May's garage.

For newer members, the idea of the Ride 'n Tune is for you to RIDE (or push) your British bike to the venue, where knowledgeable BMOC members will help you TUNE your bike so it starts or runs better. At least, that's the idea. (Sorry if you live outside the Lower Mainland...)

The club provided coffee and weather-appropriate food and beverage.

Text Robert Smith. Photos: Eric Hutton, Peter Dent and Peter Vanderkooy



Riondel Vintage Rally 2021

text and photos Bevin Jones

“... round up the usual suspects.” Claude Rains as Inspector Louis Renault in *Casablanca* 1942



This quote aptly describes my take on this year's Riondel "Vintage Motorcycle Rally", a gathering frequented by a predictable group of suspects. This is not negative comment by any means, it's an annual gathering of old friends and it's as comfortable as an old tee shirt. It's a place to renew old acquaintances and establish new camaraderie's, a place to kick back, laugh and kick a few bike tires. As you know, the Riondel camp ground was closed last year due to Covid so the event moved to a temporary home across Kootenay

Lake in Kaslo, but all systems were go for 2021, both the camp ground and Bob's Bar and Grill were open for business.

Howard was the first of the Friday arrivals on his Indian Roadmaster but each docking of the Kootenay Bay ferry brought a wave of new arrivals. Norton's and Hinkley Bonneville's and Thruxton's were plentiful along with a single BSA. Italians, Germans and Japanese also turned up in number just to rub our noses in it as to who won the war.

Brad from Elkford rode his trick 850 Norton to the event and his friend drove the truck and camper which became the centre of morning coffee and the propane fire pit meant we could circumvent the campfire ban. Brad also provided "test rides" on his 2 electric fat tire bicycles (great fun but they take some getting used to).

For many participants, Friday night means fish and chips at Bob's where a "Fawltly Towers" moment played out when Brad's order of fish and chips was snatched away by the server just as his knife and fork were about to descend, calling out, "That's not yours!". Back at the campground the rest of the evening was taken up by the usual frivolity.

Many late arrivals and day trippers turned up on Saturday. Unfortunately the craft market wasn't held this year so no cinnamon buns for breakfast, instead many headed to the golf course or to Crawford Bay (The comment was made that it would be nice to have a food truck on site).



The weather was outstanding and many cooled off in the lake, the beach was crowded with families of locals and campers alike.

An anticipated Riondel highlight is when Bob pulls in with his VW van towing his 1915 James, and he didn't disappoint us. The James did several laps and Bob patiently described the 100 plus year old technology to several wide eyed bystanders.

Another much anticipated more recent tradition is the barbecue burger and salad spread put on by Sandra, Elma, Sherrill, Mark, Nigel and



Chris including Sherrill's home baked brownies and squares for dessert. Thirty five diners enjoyed a great meal!

After dinner the crowd separated into a few small groups for a time subdued frivolity.

Sunday morning's tear down began at 5:30 am for those who wanted the first ferry and by 9:30 the sites were vacant and clean.

I for one can't wait till the usual suspects are rounded up in Riondel next year.

Letter to the Editor

Sunshine Coast Ride and other ride impressions Peter Vanderkooy

The essence of motorcycling is in the 'ride', as was the case on the latest BMOC Sunshine Coast Ride.

Like many of us, I caught the 'disease' of all things motorcycles in adolescence. More recently after a hiatus attending to family and children I re-entered ownership. After some experimentation with various brands, I am the proud owner of a '09 T100 Bonneville, a modern classic, as I am told.

Sure, true confession, I did ride throughout the Covid Pandemic, even snuck in a trip to the Icefields Parkway (wrought with guilt) last summer. On the discovery that good mental health is an anecdote to the inevitable feelings of isolation, boredom, even depression my guilt of riding during the Pandemic all but disappeared.

Slowly coming out of the Covid and the variants' restrictions the BMOC announced a commitment of scheduled rides this year, even though not officially sanctioned.

So, I have submitted to the GV Editor four albums of rides that I had the pleasure to attend this year; Isle of Lamb / Ride and Tune the ice cream run and finally most re-

cently the BMOC Sunshine Coast Ride. There may have been others and there will be more, I invite members to comment, report, explore what I consider a very compelling reason to be a BMOC member.

Special thanks to Peter Dent, his intimate knowledge of the Fraser Valley and all the undulating nooks and crannies epitomizes the equivalent of charging through the English country side albeit in British Columbia. T.E. Lawrence would be proud. Also Ian Clement and Pete MacKenzie and others of the Saltspring Island BMOC Guild. Even under the 'heat dome', Saltspring was a great event. Finally Alan Comfort out at Robert's Creek on the Sunshine Coast. A most congenial host and author of an amazing collection of bikes, autos and memorabilia and a lot of it British. I'm hopefully not speaking out of turn, it appears you don't need an invite, one can drop by anytime at 'Moto Largo' enjoy a coffee or borrow a spanner or other tools, if needed. Incidentally, it's good to know that there are many members scattered around British Columbia and like Peter Dent's venerable knowledge of the Fraser Valley roadways there are pockets of members, local knowledge and events and interesting cross section of all things 'British Motorcycles'.

Enjoy your next ride, do it for you mental health, or, since we are adults perhaps we don't really need a reason?

Saltspring Island (Isle of Lamb)

Photos by Peter Vanderkooy



Sunshine Coast

Photos Peter Vanderkooy

Many thanks to Alan and Judith Comfort for their gracious hospitality.



As the following picture by Bevin Jones shows, motorcycle travelling maintenance entails more than just fettling the bike. Creative solutions to bike and equipment repairs are oftimes needed as this very

experienced expert motorcyclist demonstrated at the Saltspring campout. Rumour has it that with the repair, the boots are now a matching pair.



Speed Wobbles

text and photos Bob Crosthwaite

I certainly did not know what to do the first time I experienced one. I was riding my 1926 longstroke model Sunbeam, down a rural road named Copperkins lane when the handlebars started wobbling from one side to the other. I slowed down gradually, this did not help as the wobble got worse and worse, going from one side to the other, until it was too much and I went over the handlebars. I picked myself up and found that my left wrist was rather sore. As I was not too far from home, I walked back there, leaving the Sunbeam in someone's driveway. They were a nice middle-aged couple who said I could leave the bike in their driveway, and they would keep an eye on it.

At home I decided to go to the hospital to get my wrist checked out. To get there I got out my 1932 model 9 Sunbeam that had a sidecar. At the hospital it was discovered that I had broken a bone in my wrist. Talking to the doctor, he asked me what I had been riding. He then said the same thing had happened to him on the same model of motorcycle. He told me that to get out of a speed wobble one should accelerate and that would pull the motorcycle out of the wobble. This advice probably saved me serious injury, or worse.

I was doing my National Service in the British Army and was posted to Cyprus. This was during the time when the Greek Cypriots were trying to get independence, and to get a union with Greece. I had volunteered to search the camp sewage works for bombs. To do that I would be given a motorcycle so I could do those inspections. As a 20-year-old, I was a keen motorcyclist, and the offer of a motorcycle was too good to resist. The machine supplied to me was a military 500cc side valve BSA. This was a rather gutless machine that had a top speed of not much more than 40 MPH, but at least it was a motorcycle. A picture of this bike is at the end of this article.

One day going down a hill to do my inspection I got into a speed wobble. I remembered about that doctor's advice and accelerated and managed to pull out of the wobble on the gravel at the side of the road. If I had not managed to do that I might have gone over a small cliff.

The next time I encountered someone in a speed wobble was on the Monashee pass, Highway 6 in BC interior on the windy section just below Angel Falls. This time we were in a car going up the hill and someone came round a corner towards us on a Harley, and he went into a speed wobble and did not seem to know what to do as he went off the road into the ditch and into a rock wall. We stopped to help him, the only obvious damage was to the front mudguard, which was a bit bent. The problem was to get his bike out of the ditch. This is where I discovered how heavy those Harleys are. Luckily someone else also stopped, and with the rider trying to ride the bike out of the ditch and with us lifting and pushing we got him back on the road. It was not till a bit later that I, realized that he had gone into a speed wobble, so I was not able to pass on to him what I had learned the hard way.

The first photo is of my 1932 model 9 Sunbeam with a "Swallow" sidecar, taken at the farm of a friend just outside Chesham in Southern England. The second is





of my military BSA in Cyprus. The third photo is of a 1926 longstroke Sunbeam. And I have to admit that I got this photo from the internet as I did not have any photos of that bike.



Product Evaluation: MotionPro Beadpro Tire Levers Text and Photos Peter Dent

I was watching TV the other day - well, not actually 'watching' as such, I was actually flicking through a newish edition of Classic Bike, but the TV was on and I was vaguely paying attention to it. The programming content suggested it was on the Knowledge Network; a group of aging hippies had decided to shun all modern conveniences and live out in the woods in self-made shelters where they would forage for food or take up basic farming practices - keep chickens and so on. To this end they had secured the use of some remote woodland deep in the English countryside. They seemed to be enjoying the experience as they sat around the campfire singing and laughing. Over this fire hung a large clay pot in which simmered the roots and weeds that was to be their evening meal. They had sourced the clay locally and fired it themselves some time before the experiment had begun - all in the name of authenticity and the true Dark Ages experience.

Then disaster! There was a dull thud followed by a collective cry of dismay which very soon morphed into groans of despair. A great cloud of steam had enveloped the revelers.

At this point I started paying attention. It seemed the pot had cracked, dumping their hard-won food onto the fire. In one fell swoop they had lost their meal, their pot, and their fire - no small loss in an age with no matches.

The committee called an emergency meeting. After some, oftentimes, heated discussion it was decided that remaking the clay pot would be too time consuming and, probably more importantly, there was no guarantee that the same fate would not befall the next pot too. The firing of a clay pot to suit their requirements, they concluded, was beyond their available knowledge. For them at least, it was a 'lost skill'.

The next day a runner was dispatched to a local ironmonger for the purchase of a generously large aluminium pot and - I am very much guessing here - a quantity of matches and quite possibly a fish and chip takeout, no point in taking this stuff too seriously.

Yes, 'lost skills' we lose them all the time of course. Perhaps you remember feeding a floppy disc into your Commodore SX 64 or setting the ignition timing on your '61 Econoline with 2 thou feeler gauges - no wait, actually I still do that, but anyway, you get the idea right? Things change and as like as not you have to change with them. I was lurking on a motorcycle website the other day where I happened upon an archived discussion. It was prompted by KawiZowi79. He asked what kind of payment a dealer would charge to mount a tire on a rim - the tire in question having been bought elsewhere. A dialogue followed of personal experiences in this very matter. All was going smoothly when 69Sandcast asked: 'Why don't you just do it yourself at home?'. 'Good question' I muttered to myself. KawiZowi79 replied that he didn't have the necessary equipment to perform such a task. 69Sandcast then asked: 'Well, what do you do when you get a flat tire when out on the road then?' The reply, sadly, was: 'I wait for the tow truck'.

Now at this point the conversation took a sharp turn down a rabbit hole when the question of whether you should be supporting your local dealer verses getting your tires from the internet consumed everyone's attention and no further useful information could be gained, so we won't follow them down that particular burrow of insults and general internet mayhem.

Nevertheless, 'waiting for the tow truck', whilst perhaps a good plan sometimes, is rather going to limit the rider to not venturing out of cell phone range or, at least, to riding with a willing partner who is happy to go off in search of signal bars on your behalf. There you are, three days up a corduroy road with an ever-emboldening wolf-pack circling your stricken machine, you might just wonder whether your rescuer has himself had a flat tire.....

'I wait for the tow truck'; are we looking at another endangered skill here? The ability to repair a flat tire was always part of a motorcyclist's basic skill set. Without that you were just a kid with a bike. It was never a pleasant task, but it went with the territory. I certainly remember my first tire. What a struggle it was too. I refused all help; this was a feud between me and that ancient Dunlop Universal and it became bitterly personal. I soon learned you need an angry determination and a high pain threshold - small fingers would have helped too.

To take advantage of a legal loophole I was fitting a sidecar to my motorbike. All I needed in the end was a tire for the third wheel. As it happened, a fellow apprentice came up with the very thing I needed. He presented it to me one day and what caught my eye straight away was the seaweed growing inside it - and, are those barnacles!?

It turned out that this thing had done a couple of seasons as a mooring fender on a local fishing boat. It wasn't exactly round either; it had adopted an oval droop after all those months/years hanging from an old, frayed, painter lashed to the gunwales. I suspect it was bone hard rubber even coming straight from Dunlop's tire mould but after all that time to age and harden in the sun and sea water it had assumed the flexibility of Bakelite.

I got there though, it wasn't pretty and there was tangible blood loss in the process, but it was on the rim with no pinched tube and it held air - I never did get it to go to its proper round profile however; it was like riding a cam.

But, as I said, things change and as like as not we have to change with them. Most bikes come with tubeless tires these days and have done so for quite a while now; many Collector Plate eligible bikes even have them. A person could ride a wide variety of really nice, classic machines and never have to own a set of tire levers in their entire motorcycling lives. There are even those riders who seal the rim and spoke end connection and run a tubeless set-up on their regular, hitherto tubed, rims.



Tire levers can go on the same debris pile as cracked clay pots from the Dark Ages and Commodore SX 65 computers then?

It depends I would say; depends on what you want to do and where you want to go.

In 2010 I bought a brand new, straight-out-of-the-box, 1050 Triumph Tiger. It's awesome. It won Cycle Worlds 'Best Bike 2010' in its category that year. Prior to owning this fabulous machine the newest bike I had ever owned or ridden was my 1969 Bonneville. Things had changed in motorcycle development I soon learned and, clearly, I had to make some changes in my tool kit to keep up with progress - there were tubeless tires for one thing. I bought a plug and play repair kit and even a small air compressor. I was making the requisite changes.



I bought the Tiger with a view to wandering off-road a bit; getting adventurous you might say. I started taking dirt road cut-offs and even went to places like the old Osceoda abandoned gold mine in Nevada, then there were some old charcoal kilns somewhere in Idaho..... It opened up whole new horizons.

Then I got interested in Canada's great north. I rode from Fort Providence to Fort Simpson in the Northwest Territories one day. 330km, dirt and gravel virtually all the way; and other than some homemade aluminium saddle panniers it was all but a stock bike too. I even ran with regular Michelin Pilot tubeless tires - I had my tire plug kit with me at all times.

Months later, getting home after a brief turn up the Fraser Valley farm roads I went down to the bike the next morning to find, to my great surprise, that my rear tire was flat. Close inspection revealed a large gash made by a sharp stone. The stone was still wedged in it which probably is what got me home. I had only been on regular blacktop roads and yet the tire was cut to the point it was junk. I could possibly have crammed enough plugs in it to eke out a few more rotations but with only a minimal amount of mileage left in its tread life I simply opted for a new tire.

I had no idea that modern tires were so prone to damage. Things had changed alright but not for the better necessarily. I shuddered to think of the remote places I had ventured to on those fragile things - that Osceoda gold mine was not actually abandoned it turned out, no, it was occupied by some very strange old school

prospectors with picks, shovels and *guns!* No place to get a flat tire, much less to get a tire so badly damaged it can't be plugged. Yikes! And then there was the MacKenzie Hwy to Fort Simpson, remote indeed; yikes again. In all my years with cross-ply Avons, Dunlops and Yokohamas - I even had Goodyear Eagles once - I never had to throw one away because of carcass damage. Many many roofing nails, wood screws, self-tapping screws and an amazing assortment of roadside sharp things, but never was it terminal - I patched the tube and I was on my way. Things had changed alright but I wasn't keeping up.

And I needed to. I had a run up to Inuvik on my mind. After my cut tire episode, thereafter, I only bought tires with a 'trail' designation on them - I gathered they have a reinforced carcass to resist such penetration as sharp stones. I also bought a radial tire patch repair kit. Should I sustain such damage in future I could, in an emergency, patch the tire from the inside. But first of course, I would have to remove said tire from its rim; and there's your problem. So, I could conclude; even with modern tubeless tires there is still a place in my tool kit for tire levers.

My off road excursions had taught me that the stock Tiger needed a bit of help. The sound of a steady fusillade of rocks and stones taking pot-shots at the underside of the bike inspired me to wrap the more vulnerable components in a shiny armour of sheet aluminium.

For the Inuvik run I would ride to Dawson City - where the dirt section begins - on road tires, there I would pry off the Michelin Pilots, spoon on a fresh pair of Continental TKC80 knobbies for the ride to, what was then, the end of the road before reversing this rather laborious procedure back in Dawson for the long ride home. This would involve some serious tire lever work.

The MotionPro Beadpro, tire levers I had purchased for the task in hand worked just fine. Encouraging a tubeless tire to part company with the rim is a laborious affair I find. It is best given to industrial strength hydraulics but, without such luxuries, I had to use old fashioned leverage in its stead and these levers helped provide the necessary forces to do the job and they have found a permanent home in my toolbox.

Tire removal remains a struggle when performed on the roadside but with these things, allied with some considerable physical input on the operator's part and an immovable object like a tree or earth bank to keep the wheel from sliding away from you and the job can be done. Top tips - don't use lubricant when breaking the bead and if you are performing this task alone and three days up that corduroy road I mentioned, it would be well to remember that, to those circling wolves, you are looking tastier by the minute so don't make this your first attempt at tubeless tire removal. No, practice at home and know exactly what tools you will need for the job. If they ever make a longer version of these handy little items, I think I might just have to invest in them; leverage is power and power is good. They work well on regular, tubed rims too and these days I choose them over my old Canadian Tire specials which have now been condemned to the drawer where I keep the things that I only use when I can't find the things I really want to use. Hey, things change.



OPP Track Day Continued from Page 4

On the plus side the fairing still had the Mosport scrutineering sticker, the engine turned over, gears appeared to select, and the running gear and brakes all looked good, although new tires would be needed. It was a little bit of a gamble, but we decided to go for it and agreed a price close to asking and brought the bike home.

My previous 2 Hinckley Triumphs had been good ownership experiences and I was hopeful that with the fuel system cleaned out and a new fuel filter, a thorough service including changing all fluids and new tires we would be in business. And so, it proved, although I was amazed that the injectors responded to DIY cleaning as the fuel had more of a resemblance to jelly rather than liquid. Still by early March 2020 I had a bike that I thought would be suitable for an Area 27 outing.

So, the next thing was to try and schedule an event around work commitments. I had also been thinking about whether it was a good idea to go out on an unfamiliar track, on an unfamiliar bike with new tires and a rusty rider. When a friend mentioned that a firm from Vancouver (OPP) was now running track days at Area 27 with opportunity to be mentored this seemed like a good solution. Then March 12 happened, and BC started ever more stringent public health measures to try and contain Covid. Things were not looking good.



However, in anticipation of the public health situation getting better I booked a track day for a Mon in July. Surely the pandemic would be contained by then.... April, and May went by then in Jun the news came through that the track day was on. Time for some final prep. I checked the website again for requirements for bike and rider and with the addition of having to buy a separate back protector we complied. I also dug out my dog-eared copy of Keith Code's useful book *Twist of the Wrist*. To get an initial idea of the track a few hours of YouTube video were consumed.

The big day arrived. I had stolen the wife's car to pull the trailer with the 955i on and booked into a Motel in Oliver opposite the Fire Station Brewery the previous night. From the other trailers, pick ups and Vans in Oliver containing a wide variety of bikes, it was clear that there would be a good turn-out for the track day.

And so it proved. Registration starts early at 6.30AM and there was a long line of cars getting checked in. The check in did three things, first it reminded you on social distancing, second you had to sign the waiver before you entered the track and thirdly Area 27 took another \$50 from you for each pit helper that joined you in the paddock. So, my son cost me money... somethings never change. Seriously it was good to have a helper to do things like talk to the tire guy about pressures (a low 30psi front and rear for the Michelins) and set up the Gazebo while I went to the rider's area. The support area was good with tire and suspension specialists set up to provide advice/service if needed. There also a few vendors willing to sell carbon fibre and titanium for current bikes.

OPP ask you to self identify as to which of 3 groups you want to ride with e.g., expert,

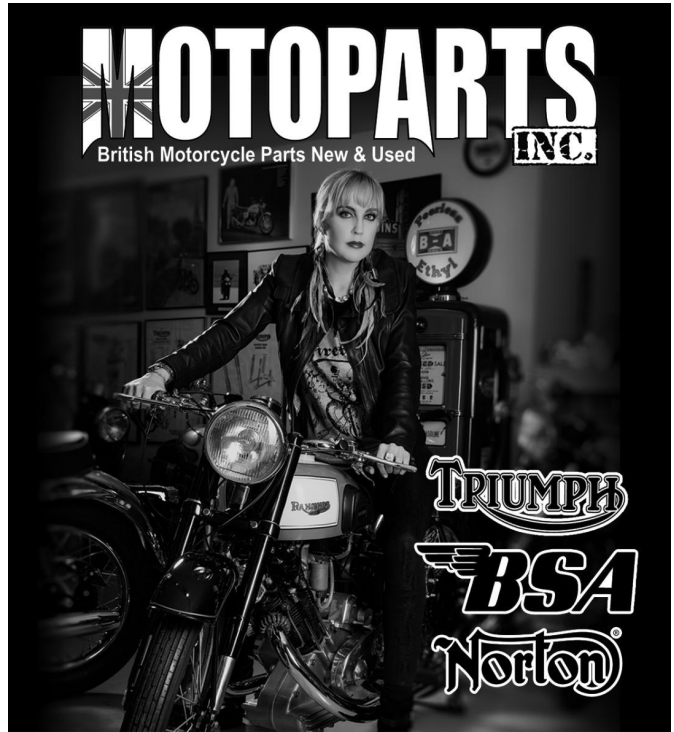
intermediate and “relaxed”. Like most other newbies to Area 27 I opted for the latter. It was clear that the expert group took their sport pretty seriously, not just in terms of bikes (Panigales, RSV4s, S1000RRs and R1s etc.) but also set ups (tire warmers, RVs etc.) and top of the range leathers. I think my old black, rather tired but still functional riding suit stood out...

The OPP staff then gave a safety and orientation brief which drove home the message that we are here to have fun but that does not include meeting the track paramedics. Groups would be divided up by class and then released. The calling note to get ready was blasts on the airhorn. The first blast was the 5-minute warning with the second a move to the assembly area. For those of us who had paid for coaching we were then given an additional 20-minute brief that talked us through the circuit and allocated us to our coaches (the blue bibs). This was on a ratio of 1 instructor to 5 or 6 of us. The coaches then explained their approach that would begin with the instructor doing the first lap at a touring pace and then rotating the following rider after each lap so that everyone got a chance to see the line the instructor took. The sessions would then develop with the instructor switching to number 2 and following each rider for a session with the pace increasingly gradually. Each 20 min session was then debriefed and Patrick our coach (one of OPPs’ principles) providing good advice. Used to a more traditional riding style on the Norton, I was encouraged to get my butt off the seat and not to touch the rear brake (ironically not something I do on the Norton!). This all worked and gave me real confidence on how hard you could brake with good tires, and also made me more comfortable particularly on the tighter corners.

As the day wore on the sessions got faster with permission to pass on straights (keeping 6ft apart) but not in corners. It was at this stage that I was impressed when the OPP guys black flagged a rider who despite having the latest leathers, helmet etc. had clearly only just begun a riding career. Relaxed does not mean beginner... A catered lunch came and went and now in the heat of the day meant I was drinking a litre and a half of water after each session. Each time I came in I was somewhat pleased to see the shoulders of the tires getting worked more and more. We had been warned to be careful as we got into the 5th and 6th session as people would start getting tired and make mistakes. This proved to be the case and a few people ended up off the track, fortunately without serious injury. Our coach was unfortunately caught up in such an incident (not his fault) and his gorgeous MV came back looking worse for wear. So, for our last session we were allowed out on our own and it was probably good to have seen folk going off track as we kept it fast but sensible.

So, what were my thoughts after my first track day in 20 years? First Area 27 is an excellent track, with demanding corners, changes in elevation and enough straightaway to get well above 200KM/Hr in a relatively controlled environment. The OPP organizers did a good job, and I only had a couple of very minor observations on how the day could be even better. The Triumph was great and provided the stability at speed and under braking that I was hoping for and is enough bike for me! However, it was also apparent how much quicker the latest sports-bikes are with another 50HP, less weight along with electronic stability aids, traction control etc. Of course, the lighter, braver riders of both genders may also have had something to do with it! So, in summary would I do it again? The answer is a definite yes, although I note 2021 OPP prices have crept up a little for the basic track day and significantly for the new VIP package. Nevertheless, how do you value something that can keep you smiling for days. If you are interested check out their video at <https://www.opptrackdays.com/>.

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