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# WHAM! NEWS

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SEPT / OCT 2008



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# Introduction

Welcome to the September / October 2008 edition of your WHAM! News.

At last, some nice weather! We got the Indian summer that we were all hoping for in September and early October and I finally got a few good days out on the Hayabusa. The highlight of the last few weeks was WHAM's trip to the Peak District, where the weather was fabulous, company even better and the famed roads more than met my expectations, more on that later in Derek's report.

As you may have noticed, the Newsletter frequency has reduced over the last few months. We have decided that the newsletter will now be published bi-monthly instead of monthly. As compensation we have improved our website which is now hosted by Richard Stillwell, content remains broadly similar but the layout is updated and improved. Some of you may have had problems reaching the site via bookmarks if so just copy this link into your browser and you should be OK

<http://www.wham-motorcycling.org/>

Remember that our website is constantly updated by Derek and Richard so keep checking back for up to date news, reports, program of events and general information. The Observer's page is now located in the Library section where you will find archived newsletters and training documentation.

## WHAM Xmas Dinner

It's that time of the year again where our biking is curtailed by the dark nights and cold weather, so to brighten up your December we are holding our annual WHAM christmas dinner at the Falcon Hotel on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December. Dinner is £15.95 per head; please email Barbara and Steve Dalloway on [barbandsteve@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:barbandsteve@blueyonder.co.uk) to reserve your place (Barbara will respond with payment details). A copy of the menu can be found on page 8, please

let Barbara know your choice by email ASAP.

Note that the Falcon has a number of rooms available at very reasonable rates if you wish to stay over. Call the Falcon on their booking line 0845 4566399 for reservations.

## Successes

Another good period for test passes with some great results for some of WHAM's newest Observers and youngest Associates. Congratulations to all.

### IAM Test Passes:



Dan Rover-Parks

Observer:

Guy Jenkins

Gary Barnes

Observer:

Ken shaw



Roger Blower

Observer:

Tim Hutt

Guy Butcher

Observers:

Cliff McFarlane & John Hodges





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Rob Stevens – Observer: John Hodges

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Steve Anstey – Observer: Steve Edwards

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And congratulations to our Blue Group Senior Observer **Eric Reynolds** on passing his Senior Observer's retest.

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### Chairman's note.



Chairman's Itch (Part 2)

The BMW saga continues; my "GT" has now had the Final drive, the gearbox and the timing chain replaced; in my darker moments I wonder if something safety related is going to fail at a critical moment. On top of that BMW in the UK are completely unable to stop the front brake of my "R" from squeaking – it drives me nuts! I'm now questioning the sanity of paying premium prices as I'm clearly not getting a premium quality bike. There is a lot of comment that there were quality problems in 2006 (when I bought them both) and later bikes are all "A1". To be fair to BMW (after a little negotiation!) they have paid for all of this work so far completed and it's my intention that they will continue to do so until the bikes are "right".

Enough moaning! What's the alternative? Well Honda's CB1000R was a perfectly nice bike – nothing really

to complain about but equally nothing to excite.

To my surprise Newsletter Editor Tony suggested I really should try a V-Rod, yes a Harley Davidson! Initially I thought he'd perhaps eaten something which didn't agree with him – but that's just my natural prejudice against "Hogs". Co-incidence conspired against me in that Blade Group have just opened a Harley dealership in Cheltenham – so I booked the test ride. Are all HD sales staff either full-on Americans or ageing fugitives from the UK Hell's Angels scene?

Succinctly, I did not enjoy the ride! The best thing I can find to say is what a great idea to have a "keyless go" fob somewhere about your motorcycle suit and you can start the bike – no fumbling for the key.

So why did Tony suggest the ride? He's usually well informed on bikes; why would he suggest such a machine? Eventually I got there: You thought you'd be able to keep up if I was riding a V-Rod. You'll have to try harder!

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### Worcester County Council Motorcycle Forum

Better for Motorcyclists....Can you believe it? WHAM have been approached by the Worcester Road Safety Forum to give our views on what's good and what's not so good for motorcyclists in and around Worcester and throughout the County. Yes, that's right they really want motorcyclists opinions on what works and what does not; so this is our opportunity!

The recent "Natter" discussion led by **Ant Clerici** provoked some hot





debate. Now we are now committing a Sunday morning rideout to gathering as much photographic evidence as possible of road layouts, signage, parking facilities, etc., etc. so that we can present as full and balanced a set of recommendations as we can. This will take place on Sunday November 16<sup>th</sup>, meet at McDonalds Worcester 9am.

So before the day think of all the issues you're aware of, get photos if you can, and bring your camera with you.

## Committee Changes

Please note that [Andy Peckston](#) has now taken over as the Group's Contact and Membership Secretary. I don't have a current photo of Andy but he usually looks something like this:



We also welcome [Richard Stilwell](#) as our new webmaster and Press / Publicity Officer, again I don't have a current photo but this is a very close likeness:



## "IAM" Insurers are favourite with Motorcycle riders

Adelaide, the insurance broker who runs the IAM Surety Insurance Scheme, has been voted the favourite insurance agent in the recent RIDE magazine "Rider Power" survey. For those members that haven't yet tried Adelaide (IAM Surety) then I can strongly recommend that you contact them when you need to re-insure your bike. I found them very good to deal with. Not only that, but they reduced my insurance by £90. They only use reputable insurance companies so you may get cheaper quotes elsewhere but you need to consider the whole package and value for money.

In the survey Adelaide scored:

- 1<sup>st</sup> for Customer Service
- 4<sup>th</sup> for Price
- 2<sup>nd</sup> for Claims Handling

And 1<sup>st</sup> overall.

So, please give them a try – the more IAM members who use them, the better deals they can get us. (They also are very generous IAM sponsors.) IAM Surety (Adelaide Insurance) contact details are in the IAM "Advanced Driving" magazine.

John Hodges  
Secretary

I can vouch for that.. Adelaide matched the best quote for my insurance this year and included protected no claims and business use, remember to shop around and don't accept the first quote you are given.

Tony.



## 2009 IAM Diary

The 2009 IAM Diary is a better looking version than last year with a burgundy leather(ette) cover i.e. darker than in the below picture. The diary contains excellent general information with 2008/2010 calendars, International holidays and dialling codes, Wine Vintage Chart, International clothing sizes, conversion tables, Oct/Nov/Dec 08 pages for easy reference, tear off corners for quick reference, forwards planner for 2010, address section, atlas section,. UK Route planning map, London Underground and London Orbital Motorway map.



**Mmmm Leatherette...**

The diary is excellent value and costs £3-50. If you'd like one please contact: John Hodges on 01432 890606 or [whamsec@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:whamsec@tiscali.co.uk)

## WHAM Air Unit Visit, Sat 4<sup>th</sup> October.



Thanks to Barbara Dalloway for organising our visit to the West Mercia Police Helicopter Unit at Halfpenny Green Airport last month. We got the chance to crawl all over the Helicopter and try out the on board camera, an incredible piece of kit that employs thermal imaging to track suspects on the ground and record incidents as they happen. The visit gave us a fascinating insight into life at the air unit and reassures that the helicopter is not routinely used as a speed detection device!



**Caught on camera..**

There is to be another visit to the Air Unit. This visit has been arranged for Saturday 22 November, leaving the Food Stop just outside Bridgnorth at 10.00. The tour starts at 10.30 and if you want to reserve a place please e-mail Barbara Dalloway on [barbandsteve@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:barbandsteve@blueyonder.co.uk).

Places are limited but family members are welcome so if you want to come please contact Barbara and Steve straight away. The usual 'if operational requirements demand then the tour may be cancelled at short notice' applies!

## WHAMBIKES! - An update on Ant Clerici's affair with the planet saving Vectrix..

The other woman...(or 1000 miles and counting)....



**Vectrix**

I must have a little French ancestry in my DNA because although I love my 1200GS I also have another who vies for my affections. The GS and I have been together for many many miles, we go on holiday together and she is my pride and joy...but the other one is lovely...we can only go on quickie journeys but she is quiet, very comfortable with a roomy boot, younger, bright red and totally electric. We have just celebrated our 1000<sup>th</sup> mile anniversary (somewhere in the rain on the A38 near Droitwich) and our feelings grow stronger each trip as we learn more about how best to have fun on every journey together.

Vectrix (her American name) will go up to around 40 miles. This is not trickling along in the gutter being overtaken by every other vehicle, but to speed limits with overtakes (an 1150 BMW and a Hayabusa [*not mine..! Ed*]) to name but two victims), filtering and fun. Most journeys are local but twice now we've gone 30 miles and plugged in at other people's houses (thank you Christina and Ruth). We haven't been all the way until her red light blazes, but on occasions we've come close – just 3 miles left. We avoid

motorways and often prepare for an outing by checking the “shortest” route so end up exploring the Worcestershire lanes. Hills become interesting in that climbs noticeably reduce the range but she excels on descents where “miles to go” can exceed 77 and, with use of regenerative braking, there's more energy in her batteries at the bottom than at the top.

Unlike the GS servicing is minimal and cheap:

- Do the lights work?
- Are the tyre pressures correct? (Important for range)
- Brakes? I can't envisage needing new pads because of the regenerative braking



But surely “love is blind”? Yes, Vectrix doesn't have heated grips and sounds like a milk float. But these are nothing compared to having such a beautiful red but green mistress.

Ant Clerici

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### “First Bike on Scene” magazine

Herefordshire County Council have an advert in this nationally issued magazine which will be available at



the Bike Show. The advert is on page 10, photo taken by Derek and featuring a couple of WHAM's better looking members.

## Oops – Nobody's perfect

We all (hopefully) learn from experience and here we share our near misses..

### Mud, mud and more mud....

It's the potato harvest season. Then it's ploughing time, then drilling, there seems to be a never ending seasonal reason why our farmer friends need to smear mud all over our rural roads. This time of the year is the worst and, for some reason 2008 it is worse than ever. Last Sunday's ride took us down the Bromyard to Tenbury road, usually a great bit of tarmac but this week it was a great splodge of mud, up to 4 inches thick in places and as slippery as ice. One of our group discovered just how slippery it was the hard and expensive way. So, look out for it, it can fetch you off in a blink of an eye, slow down and follow the golden rule, always make sure you can stop in the distance you can see to be clear ahead.



Ant's GS felt at home in Tenbury..

NOTE: When the conditions are like they were last week a decision will be

made on Sunday mornings to change the route if it takes in roads that are likely to be affected,

### Coasting to disaster...

I'd arranged to meet David Curzon at Morrison's filling station in Evesham. For those of you who don't know it is a typical supermarket layout allowing six lines of vehicles to fuel simultaneously and with the obligatory car-wash, air-line and car vacuum around the edges. Like most supermarket filling stations its busy and 10.30 on a Friday morning was no exception. I was first to arrive and pulled in to the corner normally reserved for the tanker to refill the tanks – fortunately no tanker there then. David arrived shortly after and we had a good chat about BMW reliability; a bit of a hot topic with me at the moment!

After discussing the route we started up and David set off down the aisles to follow the same route a car would take after filling up. I headed straight across the flow of traffic keeping a weather eye on the entrance for late arrivals screaming into the pumps. David seemed to have got lost! He was nowhere to be seen so I continued to the side of the station to park near the car vacuum and just behind a white Transit van. Just as I moved in behind the Transit it started reversing. Fortunately the bike was in gear and I quickly shot out of the way; an object lesson in why we're always taught not to "coast" in neutral. If I'd had to select a gear I'd have been too late to get out of the path of white van man.

Oh.....David? He ended up at the far end of the site and rode through the car wash, with no ill effect!

Derek McMullan.





# The Falcon Hotel Christmas Party Menu 2008

Three courses and coffee £15.95

## To Start

- Y Cream of mushroom soup with croutons*
- Y Victorian Style pate with spiced apple chutney*
- Y Fan of melons with winter fruits*
- Y Warm duck, pancetta and black olive salad*

## Main Course

- Y Local Turkey with sage stuffing and a baby sausage*
- Y Herefordshire Roast beef with Yorkshire pudding*
- Y Steamed salmon with spring onion mash, dill cream sauce*
- Y Cheese and red onion raised pie, ratatouille, sun-dried  
tomato pesto*

## For Dessert

- Y Christmas pudding and brandy sauce*
- Y Poached pear with ginger ice cream*
- Y White Chocolate tart with port plums*
- Y Cheese plate with apple and grapes*
- Y Coffee*

*Please let Barbara Dalloway know your preference when booking.*







## Your WHAM Committee..

### Chairman:



Derek McMullan..

Bikes: BMW K1200GT;  
BMW K1200R email:  
d.mcmullan@tiscali.co.uk

### Group Secretary:



John Hodges Bike:  
Honda STX1300 Pan  
European email:  
whamsec@tiscali.co.uk

### Chief Observer:



Ken Shaw.. Bike: BMW  
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### Contacts & Membership Secretary:



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### Events:



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# Worcester and Hereford Advanced Motorcyclists

[www.wham-motorcycling.org](http://www.wham-motorcycling.org)



**WHAM! is affiliated to the Institute  
of Advanced Motorists.**

**Stack the odds in your favour; get an  
edge with advanced skills.**

**You can contact WHAM! on the web  
or by telephoning John Hodges,  
Group Secretary on 01432 890606.**



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COUNCIL**