



Horizontal View

The magazine of the Cossack Owners' Club

July August 2025

The New Guys edition - number five



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Please Note:

There's no regalia page in this edition due to space constraints. For regalia information, please visit the website or refer to a previous edition. Don't worry—it'll be back in the next issue of Horizontal View!

Front cover

Noni's Dnepr first registered in 1998 by Neval, a Dnepr M-11

Finland Part Two

Paul Codling

Mike rode to Kaustinen across Germany and Poland, then up the Baltics. By the time we met him at the rally he'd worn out a tyre and a pair of final drive gears. He'd had his final drive rebuilt in Lithuania but with solo gears which were all there was available instantly, he needed to press on. He told me an oil leak made attention necessary, then he discovered the mashed teeth.

Very cleverly I thought, he'd brought a list of all the East European parts suppliers on the way with him. Once at the Rally, he made friends with Sasu, the Finnish Ural importer and Finland's first call for all Ural bits, whose premises is actually in Kaustinen. Sasu told me he'd sold only one Ural in 2023 and none so far in 2024. He worried the future looks bleak for Ural in Europe.

By the time Serenity arrived, Mike had enlisted the help of those on site already, to slip his sidecar and his right hand cylinder head off, because there were mysterious bits of metal in the rocker cover. I think these used to be a valve spring retainer. He'd swapped tyres and found the right ratio final drive gears and a spare case to put them in, all to be assembled as part of Ural Roikka's entertainment, after the crankshaft rebuilding demonstration.

Apparently, Ural Club Finland relies for their cranks on one particular expert who's taken it upon himself to make pullers, pushers and jigs for his hydraulic press. He set up his workshop under a gazebo for us all to gather round. The foreigners amongst us marvelled at the depth of knowledge available in Finland after the deal to save Finland from the Soviets forced them to ride Urals for so long.

In Picture No 1, a brand new Chinese Ural rod is pressed onto a brand new



Picture No 1

Chinese crank pin, sandwiched between a brand new Chinese centre and end webs. Note the jig bolted to the centre web which guides it down onto the end web in exactly the right place. I was sure it was only to get it near enough to begin the truing process, in with a chance.



Picture No 2

In Picture No 2, the complete assembly is in the run out testing jig. I was shocked to discover it was perfect, both dial gauges showing hardly a needle flicker. The pressing jig was that good. Our man



Picture No 3

smiled at his awestruck audience, each of us appreciative of engineering enough to know that this was a truly remarkable achievement. I'm not sure it always

works like this. I think I detected relief in our hero's smugness.

In Picture No 3, the new wonder crank is in the balance jig. Here, a gudgeon pin is pushed through both small ends and the distance of the outside edge from the crankshaft centre line is measured. Then, the rods are swung 180 degrees and the test is performed again. Both measurements should be the same. If they're not, it means that the crank pins are not 180 degrees apart and the crank will vibrate worse than anything in her ladyship's bedside cabinet. Note the jig is welded up, because the measurement should always be the same, but this one is what could be 4/5mm short, meaning 180 degrees away, it's 4/5mm long. "What can you do about that?" The Finns asked, in Finnish. One of them translated for me, "Nothing, it's scrap, useless. Most of the Chinese ones are."



Picture No 4

Picture No 4 is the local, Finnish alternative. Our crankshaft guru relines the original rods with bearing quality inserts, presumably available in Finland, and rebuilds the old Soviet cranks.

I knew the M66 featured wider big ends and that this was achieved by slimming down the M63's centre web. The Finns, their experience coloured by hundreds of

thousands of miles, took a dim view of this. Picture No 5 is an M63 crank. Note that the crankpin is clear of the shoulder behind the main bearing journal. In an M66, not only is the big end wider, it's a



Picture No 5

larger diameter and encroaches on the shoulder, taking a horribly sharp edged scallop out of it. In Finland, this stress raiser snaps the crank between the scallop and one of the oil catcher screws, which is the reason the later ones are riveted on. I'd never heard of a Ural



Picture No 6

crank snapping, not like Dnepr's do. That's because I'm English and we don't drift to work on the ice every day, in the dark. Picture No 6, he brought loads of bits to play with. There are lots of bits in Finland.

Saturday morning, traditionally ride out time all over the world, the Finns formed up in a line stretching back from the site entrance, all the way across it. I wondered if they might use a drop off system or if the guy at the back knew the route like the guy at the front. Were they issuing route cards? "Here's a map." They said, handing out a blurred print out which could have been of anywhere in Finland. "Don't worry, you won't get lost, just follow him." They said, pointing at the bloke up front. They were all going to do that. What, fifty outfits all in a bunch,



Picture No 7

what about the traffic? But this is Finland, what traffic?

Picture No 7. We went to somewhere called Rajaseudun Saluuna, 40km away and met four cars, all of which stopped to let us stay in formation. The Saluuna is a bizarre Wild West Saloon in the middle of nowhere in Finland. We rode the last few miles on dirt roads out to what looks like a farm. The farmer, who lives in an ocean of wood, knocked together a replica street in Tombstone Arizona, complete with a Gaol, a Store and a little house, in a lush, green field in Finland.



Picture No 8 some of the waiting queue, ready for the ride out



Picture No 9, Serenity and myself in the Wild West, of Finland



Picture No 10, Mike Rowe as seen by Lovely Hazel, perched on Serenity.



Picture No 11, yet more ride out queue



I'm delighted to introduce myself as a new member of the Cossack Owners

New Member Spotlight
A Jupiter Rises in Carluke
Gibby Gobson

Club. My name is Alan Gibson, and I live in Carluke, a small town about 35 miles south of Glasgow in Scotland.

After retiring from a career as a Police motorcyclist, I now work as a driving instructor with Glasgow City Council. Motorcycling has been part of my life for around 16 years, and over that time, I've owned more bikes than I can count — a

wide variety of makes and models have passed through my garage.

My current fleet reflects my eclectic taste. I ride a 2024 Honda 750 Transalp, a solid all-rounder; a 1992 BMW R1100RS for those longer, more comfortable trips; and now, the newest (and possibly quirkiest) addition: a 1990 IZH Jupiter 5 — my first Cossack! I'd been keeping an eye on the Jupiter 5 for weeks. It was listed on Facebook



Marketplace, but perhaps due to its unusual nature and its location all the way down in Stranraer, it hadn't sold. The 200-mile round trip didn't put me off. I've always had a soft spot for the unusual and machines with real character — I'd recently sold a 350 Jawa and was looking for something that filled a similar niche.

Since bringing it home, I've given the Jupiter 5 a good clean and replaced the wheel bearings, tyres, plugs, and oil. It's shaping up nicely, and I hope to have it road-ready soon.

My first big outing on the bike will hopefully be the *Blue Haze Rally*, run by the Clyde Valley Vintage Motorcycle Club, of which I'm also a member. Until





then, I'll be keeping things local while I test its reliability. As much as I appreciate the flawless performance of modern machines, there's something deeply satisfying about riding and maintaining a simpler bike that can be fixed with basic tools and a bit of patience. Reliable, yes — but with character!

Please find attached a few photos of me and the bikes. I'm looking forward to getting involved with the club and meeting other enthusiasts who share a passion for these wonderful machines.

Good to hear from you, Gibby. Looking forward to seeing you at some of the club events. Ed(s)

Hi Andrew and Nick,

I sent out the second COC Members' email recently, encouraged because statistically it was opened more and bounced less than the first one. Thank you very much to all those members who responded with feedback to my email address. The plan is to send out these emails at a frequency of around two weeks.

Even though there camping weekend up, this frequency organised

From Paul Codling – Members Communication

might not be a or other event coming allows any event anywhere in the country by any COC member to be promoted club wide at short notice.

Previously, relying only on the committee to organise events has inevitably left huge swathes of the country left out. Using this club email system, even the most remote members can have a go at organising their own meetings.

Currently, around 40% of the emails sent out have not been opened, pretty good for just two days. I'm well aware that a strange email with a scary sending site is going to frighten the on line safety conscious, and so it should. So I'd like to tell you that the emails are titled Club Events and they're from Cossack Owners' Club. If you click on the sender to find out which email address sent it, or who Cossack Owners' Club is, you should find paulcodling@pb06.wixemails.com, which is me from the COC website, run by Wix. If you see that, it's OK to open.

Stories from our Chair
Update from the DVLA
Peter Ballard

COC has a very helpful designated manager at DVLA who works with/through me to help our members with registration issues.

Here are some examples, briefly:

1. A 1975 Cossack was first registered 'new' in 1989 with a 'Q' registration, not a 1989 registration, we don't know why. We tried to get the 'Q' corrected to a 1975 age related registration but the '7' in 1975 was unclear. Thus DVLA needed proof it was indeed made in 1975. I worked with the owner to provide proof that the Cossack had to be 1975 by its looks and that the little Cyrillic character preceding the serial number was indeed the character for 1975. Success, a 1975 age related registration was approved.

2. An owner bought a KMZ and the seller promised to send on the V5c UK registration document, but it did not arrive. Owner had the serial number so I asked our DVLA contact to search on the DVLA database for that serial number for makes such as KMZ & Dnepr etc. No luck, but it does prove that DVLA can indeed search on a serial number to see if a DVLA record exists.

3. An owner bought/imported a KMZ but the frame stamp had been molested and the frame plate had been replaced. Thus there was no reliable serial number for the motorcycle, this meant that the import agent could not declare to HMRC the motorcycle as imported and thus DVLA would not be able to register. Advice from our DVLA

contact was to mention his details in a request to DVLA for a new DVLA VIN number, which is what was done and a 17 character VIN number was provided. Once stamped on the frame then the essential Import Declaration and NOVA could be completed. Work then started to prepare the KMZ for a MSVA (Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval) test to put the bike on the road with a 'Q' registration.

Info:- DVSA (Drivers and Vehicle Standards Agency) who run the MSVA, state that they will not test a vehicle over 10 years old, but this KMZ was obviously over 10 years old. What the rule actually means in this case is that as the age of the bike was not able to be determined it can not be proved to be over 10 years



Driver & Vehicle
Licensing
Agency

A Warm Welcome to our New Members

Paul Rosser, Western Australia.
Phil Upton, Swadlincote, Derbys.
Mark Callard, Kingsbridge, Devon.
Tony R Jones, Beckermest, Cumbria.
Carl Ebrey, Litchfield, Staffs.
Adrian Mitson, Banbury.
Trevor King, Leicester.
Melanie Taylor, Cockermonth, Cumbria.
Richard Jackson, Congleton, Cheshire.
John Warner, Farnham Royal, Bucks.
James Manley, Swindon.
Melvyn Burden, Heslington, North Yorks.
Jason Laffan, Peaslake, Surrey
David De La Haye, Torquay, Devon.
Stuart Mills, Clipstone, Notts.

First Eastern Meet at Krazy Horse Andrew Mutter

Yesterday, the 28th of May, saw our very first Eastern meet-up at Krazy Horse Customs in Bury St Edmunds. We'd arranged to gather around 11:30 am, and despite it being a weekday—and my unfortunate date mix-up in Horizontal View—we still had five people turn up. A solid turnout!



My 75-mile ride there was anything but dull. After filling up on the A10, I managed to lose my petrol cap just three miles later. A quick roadside fix involved some plastic and tape, then a stop at another garage where I fashioned a sturdier version using a car cap and more tape. Things didn't improve when I



realised I'd left my top box open—several drivers on the A14 were kind



enough to shout warnings at me. A wrong turn led me down some narrow, muddy single-track roads, but I finally rolled into Krazy Horse around 11:20. Jim and Paul were already there, positioning their bikes out front. They were soon joined by Percy Wright and Igor on his outfit. Jim had lost his kickstart lever en route, so it seemed





eventful journeys were the theme of the day. Coincidentally, we overlapped with a ride-out from the VMCC, about 12–15 riders strong. They took a great interest in our Soviet bikes, asking plenty of



I'm not sure which VMCC section they belonged to—the club's large and broken into many local groups, each with its own committee and website.

Lunch was the usual mix: halloumi burgers, large breakfasts, and plenty of coffee. Between bites, Igor kindly offered to fit a rev counter to my grey Ural. That turned into a small engineering project in the car park, involving crimping pliers, multimeters, and small spanners. Igor was a star, finally decoding my chaotic wiring. Thanks to him, I now have a fully functioning rev counter and ammeter.

The ride home was calm - considering though I did have to top up a bit of oil on the M11.

All in all, a great start to what we hope will become a regular meet—maybe once or twice a year. Let's hope more groups pick up the idea and run with it.

questions. We spent time discussing the joys and quirks of our machines apparently, comparing them with their mixed group of Japanese classics and vintage British motorcycles.





Just down the road from me on Wood Street, Walthamstow, there's a striking

mural of Beryl Swain—the first woman to race solo in the Isle of Man TT. Born in 1936 on Marlowe Road, Beryl discovered motorcycling through her husband Eddie,

***Walthamstow's
Trailblazing TT Racer
Beryl Swain***

local garage owner. He gave her her first bike in 1959, and she quickly found success racing 50cc bikes in domestic events.

In 1962, Beryl broke barriers by entering the TT's newly introduced 50cc class. Facing prejudice from the start, she was



forced to wear a lead-lined belt to meet an arbitrarily imposed minimum weight limit—introduced solely for her class. Despite mechanical issues, she finished a respectable 22nd out of 33, making history as the TT's first female solo rider.

Though she planned to return, the FIM banned women from international solo races, fearing backlash if a woman were injured or killed on the perilous course. Beryl fought back publicly but was ultimately sidelined. She continued to race locally for a short time before retiring from the sport, rarely speaking of her achievements again. Beryl passed away in 2007, her legacy largely forgotten—until local historian Kirsten Sibley revived interest with a 2019 exhibition. That same

year, artist Helen Bur painted a mural in her honour, not far from where Beryl's groundbreaking journey began.

Source - MoreBikes monthly newspaper



check out the exhaust pipe - what did this sound like!!



Stafford Classic Bike Show A Great Weekend *Andrew Mutter*

The Stafford Classic Bike Show is always a highlight for me—plenty of great bikes, parts to browse (and buy!), and a chance to catch up with friends. Unfortunately, Karl couldn't make it this year due to an accident at work, so the organising fell to Paul and the rest of the team.

As usual, there was loads of interest in our bikes, and we spent much of the



weekend chatting with visitors. The star of the show had to be Phil—maybe it's the teacher in him, but I don't think I saw him without an audience, sharing his encyclopedic knowledge of Soviet motorcycles!

Many of the usual suspects were in attendance, including Paul Greensmith,



Jason Pollitt, Paul Codling, Tom O'Brien, Tony, Phil, Gina, Matt Woodward, and Greensmith Junior (Harry?). . . Also joining us were Nick and Samuel,



Billy and his ever-patient wife Wendy—and, of course, yours truly. Tony once again manned the barbecue brilliantly, and the talking (and laughing) went long into the evening. Looking forward to the next one already! If you'd like to show your bike at an event, get in touch with Karl—his contact details are listed at the front of the magazine.

Shocking Shocks

Nick Turnham

serviceable shocks—which is very annoying!

If anybody wants to contact me, I'll be happy to help. Here's my email address and phone number.

07837945434 nick.turnham@gmail.com

Shock Absorber Rebuild Step-by-Step

Picture 1

This is the shock absorber after removal from the motorcycle. I noticed an oil leak on all three rear shocks, so this was the first one I took off for inspection. I already had some spare seals and ordered more from Matthew at Windmill Motorcycles (01580 243161), who was very helpful and had them in stock.



Picture 1



Picture 2

Hi Andrew,
You asked me to outline the sequence of events I follow when servicing my shock absorbers, so here it is.

I used this website as a reference, and I highly recommend taking a look:

www.myural.com/

[servicing_shock_absorbers.htm](http://www.myural.com/servicing_shock_absorbers.htm)

It's a great resource, with lots of useful information—not just about shock absorbers, but other maintenance topics too.

I've included photos showing the full process, including how I used a homemade spring compressor to dismantle the shocks. You'll see the internal components, seals, and how everything comes apart. Using the spring compressor made it easy to disassemble, clean thoroughly, replace the seals, and repaint the units.

The shocks on my bike are the 12mm type. I sourced replacement seals from Windmill Motorcycles, who were very helpful. I used 20W/50 engine oil, as recommended, and it seems to work perfectly. To be honest, I don't think these shocks have ever been serviced in 25 years, so they've done well. The tipping point was the rough condition of some of the roads around West Berkshire, which I've been riding on while running in the engine after fitting a new barrel last year. Hope this helps—between my photos and the guidance on the website, you should have everything you need if you decide to service your own set.

It's worth mentioning that some of the later shocks are non-serviceable. I've had leading link forks fitted, and unfortunately, they came with non-

Picture 2

I found this spring compressor design online and followed the instructions to build my own. The website address is www.myural.com

Picture 3

A closer view of the spring compressor I used. I built it from scrap materials, purchasing the metal rod from B&Q's metal section. The design worked well for compressing the spring.



Picture 4

Here, you can see the spring fully compressed, which allowing removal of collets from the shock absorber body.



Picture 5

This shows the shock absorber body held securely in a vice. I used a tool from the Ural toolbox to unscrew the cap holding the internal components in place.



Picture 6

The internals of the shock absorber as they came out of the main body. The oil was very black and clearly well past its best— obviously time for a rebuild!



Picture 7

All the internal parts laid out in order on the bench, ready for cleaning and for replacing worn components where necessary.



Picture 7



Picture 9

Picture 8

This is the inner sleeve of the shock absorber, which was heavily corroded and definitely needed attention.



Picture 8



Picture 10

Picture 11

The shock absorber is almost fully reassembled here. I used a wire brush to clean the sleeve inside and out, removing all traces of rust.



Picture 11

Picture 9

Here's the old seal from the shock absorber. You can see how worn it is around the inner lip—this wear allowed oil to leak out. At 25 years old, it had certainly done its time!

Picture 10

Getting ready to reassemble the shock absorber with new seals. Everything has been thoroughly cleaned and prepared.

Picture 12

This is the main body of the shock absorber waiting to be stripped of all paint and to be cleaned thoroughly, ready for repainting.



Picture 12



Picture 14

Picture 13

Another view of the shock body during the cleaning process, showing the rust being removed before refinishing.



Picture 13

Picture 14

Painting the outer body with black Hammerite paint to give it a fresh and durable finish. All components are now cleaned, rebuilt with new seals, and ready to be inserted back into the main shock body.



Picture 15

Picture 15

Here's the fully reassembled shock absorber filled with 20W/50 engine oil, now back on the bike. I've taken it out for a ride, and I'm happy to report it's working perfectly!

Wow what hat a great job Nick! Ed

A Selection of Camps, Rallies, and Runs for 2025

You are strongly advised to check with the organisers for terms and condition before setting out! If any readers know of a camp or rally or show or run that is not listed here, please do let the editors know. We would also welcome pictures of past events to liven up the list. The list will be revised for every issue with more details as we receive them.

Cossack Owners Club events are in BOLD and italic.

- The Sidecarland Sidecar Soiree, 24th-27th July, 2025 at Petruith Paddocks, Labourham Drove, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3FS w3w: Details from Lesley: 07484 336630 lesleyaves@aol.com or Martyn: 07398 600285 or <https://sidecarland.uk/the-sidecar-soiree>

- Powderham Castle 12th -13th July - The biggest show in the south-west. Held at the castle of the same name, near Exeter, the IFA club will have a stand and weekend of activities, including a road run. Info/ bookings contact alorrieadams@gmail.com

- **COC AGM, 31st July-3rd August at Talybont-on-Usk, Talybont Farm Camping, LD3 7YJ** We're sharing the venue for the weekend with the MZRC, with whom we have a substantial crossover of members. The MZ Club are also holding their AGM

this weekend, which means lots of MZs making the weekend a festival of East European interest.

The village of Talybont is lovely, bordered on one side by The River Caenfanell and on the other by the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, which is higher than the village and reached by steps up the bank. Talybont lifting bridge is fun, watching the poor canal boat tourists cope with the complicated nearby locks. There are two pubs, a little shop and a cafe.

The COC AGM will be on Saturday August 2nd, timed to accommodate day visitors. It's important to point out that the AGM is the year's opportunity to share your points of view with the whole club and make a difference by voting if changes are necessary. Day visiting is not only a good idea at the AGM, but at all camping weekends. We would like to encourage it.



CAMP HERE NR27 9PX

A 149

CROMER



Norfolk 'n' Good COC Weekend

5th -6th -7th September at Woodhill Camping, East Runton, NR27 9PX It's a family campsite with lovely facilities, on the cliff top on the North Norfolk Coastal Path. We have 20 pitches reserved at Woodhill Park campsite for September 5th and 6th and there are a limited number available beyond that at the moment. *COC Membership liaison Paul Codling thinks the campsites are going to hold our 20 pitches until August. Booking early rather than later is good because the campsite will sell our pitches if they're still empty in August, and, if more than 20 of us want to go, we can fill up the pitches we haven't reserved before anyone else does. The pitches are £23.60 for two nights with one tent and one person. You can add up to five more people and some dogs for a more money if you want. Book by ringing the campsite's reception team on 01263 512242 and telling them you are with The Cossack Owners' Club and the group reference is 479610. The campsite's website is <https://www.woodhill-park.com> but you can't use the essential group reference on that, ring them. The ride out this year is a gentle trundle down some quiet country lanes, ending up at North Walsham Motorcycle Museum. As with all camping weekends, if you want to pop in for a few hours with a question to ask or because you're just fascinated, or want to enjoy a drink with us in the evening, please do. Contact Paul if you would like more details Paul's email paulcodling@mail.com*

- Surrey and Cranleigh Classic Car Show
10th August - This massive show on the Sunday will be the bookend to an IFA Club weekend, including a Saturday

Road Run. Info/bookings contact biz@rpjeffers.co.uk

- Annual Rally Federation Of Sidecar Clubs 22nd – 25th August 2025, Southam,

Warks, CV47 2DG <https://www.sidecars.org.uk/>

www.sidecars.org.uk/

- Eleventh European Ural Meeting, 5th-7th September 2025, Burg Piberstein, Helfenberg, near the town of Ahorn in the Mühlviertel in Upper Austria, <https://www.ural.at/eu-ural-treffen>

- Bujaleuf 6e Rencontre Européenne de sidecar Ass. Ural France (Dnepr and Ural) 26th- 29th September 2025 - <https://www.associationuralfrance.fr/>

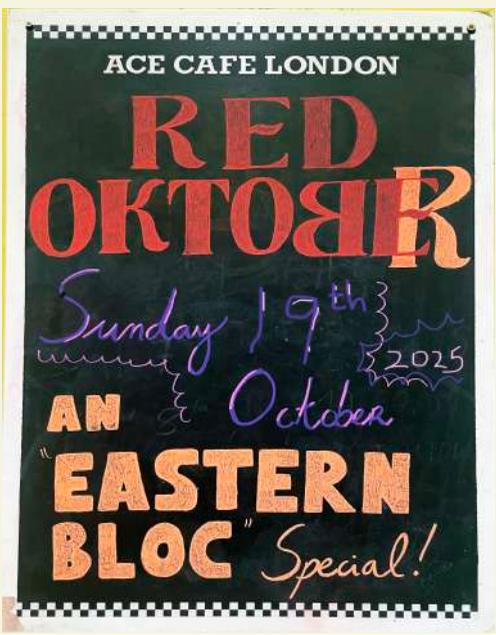
Autumn Dent, 3rd-4th-5th October 2025 at Conder Farm Dent, Cumbria, LA10 5QT a wonderful event, full of Cossack's and friendly company. Close to a small village with good pubs and great company. It's a great Cossack Owners Club tradition to attend these we understand that it's getting bigger. You are very welcome, come if it's only to visit on the Saturday.



The Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show, 11th -12th October 2025, Staffordshire Showground ST18 0BD, <https://www.classicbikeshows.com/staffordo/> please contact Karl if you would like to show your bike.

- MZ riders camp 10th -12th October at the Sloop, West Haddlesey, Selby, East Yorkshire, YO8 8QA Campsite behind a quirky pub on the side of the river Aire. No showers, but thankfully there is a toilet and water. Good pub grub and many more pubs in Selby a short cab ride away. Towton War of the Roses battlefield (greatest loss of life on English soil - apparently the streams ran red with blood for 2 weeks after) a short ride away. **All Cossackers welcome.** Any more info contact Bynnszi 07980837005 or bynnsi@gmail.com

Red Oktober Day Ace Café London Sunday 19th October – last year we managed to get 10 bikes to this annual event at the Ace Café. If you've never been to the Ace, it's on the North Circular and is a transport café dedicated to bikes. An interesting selection of Soviet Block vehicles including cars, army vehicles and bikes. North Circular Road NW19 7UD Contact andrewmutter@yahoo.com





Hassler and Stewart in training

*Michael Wadsworth
Visits the Site of the
Cockleshell Heroes
Raid*

Michael Wadsworth

has been on his travels again—this time visiting the site and memorial commemorating one of the most daring and unconventional operations of the Second World War: the legendary raid by the Cockleshell Heroes. This is their

Courage in Canoes

Site of the Cockleshell Heroes Raid

extraordinary story. In the grim winter of 1942, as Nazi forces tightened their grip on Europe, a small unit

of British Royal Marines launched a bold mission behind enemy lines. Known officially as Operation Frankton, it aimed to damage German shipping in the vital port of Bordeaux—an industrial hub supplying the Axis war effort. Twelve men, handpicked from a new unit called the Royal Marines Boom Patrol Detachment, embarked on the mission in six two-man collapsible canoes, known as “cockleshells.” Transported by submarine HMS Tuna, they were launched under cover of darkness into the choppy Atlantic waters off the French coast.

The plan was as ingenious as it was perilous: paddle 70 miles up the heavily defended Gironde estuary, navigating





resources to defend their ports. Michael's visit to the memorial offers a reminder of the courage and sacrifice shown by these men. The Cockleshell Heroes remain a symbol of ingenuity, endurance, and the power of a small, determined team to make a lasting impact.

Source: National Museum of the Royal Navy.



minefields, patrol boats, and freezing December waters—all in complete silence. After several days of grueling paddling and evasion, the men planted limpet mines on enemy merchant ships.

Only two of the original twelve—Major Herbert “Blondie” Hasler and Marine Bill Sparks—survived. The others were either captured and executed or perished in the attempt. Despite these tragic losses, the mission caused significant damage and forced the Germans to divert considerable





New Member Introduction – Noni Stannard

Hello all! I'd like to introduce myself as a new member of the club. My motorcycling journey began during lockdown in 2021 with what I like to call an *early* midlife crisis—or more accurately, a full-blown “feck-it moment.” That’s when I decided it was finally time to get my motorcycle licence. My first big bike was a CBF500 custom bobber named **Little Bstard*** (yes, asterisk included!). The name came from the original builder’s frustration with the bolts

From Midlife Crisis to Dnepr Devotion

during the build— apparently, they were a right nightmare to remove. The name stuck, and so did the attitude. Soon after, I stumbled across a 1998 **Dnepr**, and despite having zero idea what I was getting into, I bought it purely based on how it looked. A couple of hours’ drive and a handshake later, I was the proud owner of what could only be described as a beautiful bodge job. The previous owner—a woman far more skilled at riding than building—had done her best. The rest was up to me. The bike was



christened **Igor**, and he has lived up to the name with every rattle, clunk, and puff of smoke. I've lost count of the swear words used and cups of tea consumed during the learning curve, but somewhere along the way, I completely fell for the old brute. I've slowly figured out what makes him tick... literally.

Igor now proudly sports a *breather pot noodle* (it genuinely looks brilliant when it steams) and is flanked by my trusty "mechanic"—a weathered **Action Man figure** cable-tied to the bike frame. He doesn't do much, but he's always there and working, which is more than you can say for most electrics!

I'm thrilled to be part of the club and looking forward to many misadventures with fellow enthusiasts.

Four bikes later, I can honestly say this was the best thing I ever did. □

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*The DVLA states that this bike was first registered in 1998 by Neval, which would make Noni's bike a **Dnepr M-11**. As we all know, it's a Soviet-era motorcycle with roots in military design and a reputation for rugged reliability—plus a bit of eccentric charm.*

As Noni puts it: *"The mudguards are Harley, the exhausts are BMW, and the tank is Triumph—so I own a bit of a mutt!"* Like many surviving Dneprs, this one has had a few parts swapped in over the years, giving it a unique, characterful look. But that's part of the fun—these bikes aren't about perfection; they're about personality and practicality.

My Dnepr MT-11 may not be fast or fancy, but it's a workhorse with plenty of old-school charm—perfect for someone like me who loves tinkering, a bit of adventure, and a machine with real history and heart.

The Cossack Club website features a gallery of photographs — sometimes showcasing the inimitable photography of Webmaster Dave Cox — all organised into albums for easy browsing. It's a great way to see **The Past, The Present, and Into The Future** of the club. If you haven't yet been to a COC camping weekend and are wondering just how much fun you've missed, take a look at the *Club Rallies and Event Photographs* section.

For example, if you're based in the South, check out *The Three Magpies* album (from Wiltshire) then make plans to be part of it **next year!**