



Horizontal View

The magazine of the Cossack Owners' Club

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The New Guys edition - number eight



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A Warm Welcome to our New Members

*Samuel Reynard, Bicester
Mark Bentley, Shropshire
David Ward, London
Andrew Curley, Sutton*

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Front page - Peter Ballard's IZH Planeta Sport Mark II, made in 1981 and sold by NEVAL Motorcycles

Gout, Grease Guns and the Great Stafford Show

Andrew Mutter

So I arrived at Stafford full of anticipation after an easy journey up, towing the beast on my trailer. I got there mid afternoon, unloaded the bike at the bottom of the ramp with a bit of help from one of the security guards, fired up my Ural after about six kicks, and rode it up. Already on the stand was Tony Jones's Soviet copy of a DKW RT125. There was a space for me right in the middle of the clutch of bikes, a perfect spot that showed mine off beautifully. I was very pleased, as the whole stand looked absolutely fabulous. Most of the bikes on display were Urals, apart from the Soviet DKW (IZh-49), Peter B's Planeta Sport, and Jason's 1952 IMZ M72, a splendid looking machine. Bill and Wendy had their mafia inspired cruiser gleaming

under the lights, and there were a couple of outfits from Ian and Paul Greensmith, as well as Paul Codling's Ural, Serenity. There was no barbecue this year, but we still managed a well deserved drink and a good natter after setting up the exhibition. Tony had brought along the COC gazebo and fire pit, which quickly became our HQ and social hub, though I suspect the fire pit was really there to toast toes and tall tales in equal measure. A real treat was Jason's newly acquired Buhanka van from Russia. These legendary vans are currently in service in the war in Ukraine. Devoid of creature comforts or shock absorbers, with a sparse interior, rigid seats and not much else, their best feature is their four wheel drive capability. Even with military modifications, the van's 2.7 litre engine produces a modest 112 horsepower, not exactly fast, making it an easy target for



drone swarms. The Buhanka is a rugged go anywhere workhorse, it will climb a tree if you ask nicely maybe it could be hired out as a campervan for eccentric travellers. Jason told me he actually bought one in Ukraine with the idea of driving it back to the UK, but the border post would not let him through without the right paperwork. In the end, he returned it to the dealer and got most of his money back. Luckily, just a week later one turned up on Facebook Marketplace, this one had served as an ambulance in the Czech Republic and somehow found its way back to the UK. It is a brilliant bit of kit, ideal for hauling bikes around and sleeping in at rallies.

Also on show was Peter Ballard's IZH Planeta Sport Mark II, made in 1981 and sold by NEVAL Motorcycles in 1983 as the 340 Intruder. Peter's bike was a proper shed find in 2021, the tank was rotting through, the chrome was flaking, and the engine and gearbox were full of water. Peter rebuilt the engine and gearbox to standard, fitted a trials exhaust, new carburettors, higher handlebars, and a folding gear lever. He reckons it is a bit heavy at 102 kilograms, but it is a splendid example of the model, and most importantly, another fine rescue job. You will see it proudly featured on the front cover of this edition of *Horizontal View*.

The two days seemed to glide by, chatting with punters and enthusiasts alike. The most common

question was, "Aren't they just a copy of the BMW?" Cue our well-rehearsed explanation: *the M-72 was a German-licensed 1939 design based on the BMW R71, produced in the USSR using BMW tooling as part of a pre-war technology exchange between the two countries, and its successors are still being made today.* The next favourite was, "How do you get spares for a Russian motorcycle in England?" *We pointed them toward F2 Motorcycles, Windmill Garage, and of course, our buy and swap Facebook page.* And honestly, who among us hasn't managed to find spares one way or another? Another regular line was, "I used to own one of those. I think I have





still got the toolkit somewhere.” We also made sure to direct people to our website for the full list of suppliers. I had a long, informative and detailed chat with David Angel about the merits of different G424 alternators. I had just had one fail on my bike and replaced it with a Chinese one. I must admit, I am not filled with confidence; the new ones have a reputation for giving up the ghost without warning. I have got a couple of older Russian ones, and David has kindly offered to test them for me at F2 sometime soon. That is what makes events like Stafford so brilliant, the sharing of knowledge, parts, stories, and mild electrical traumas. Paul and Peter were busy throughout, fielding questions from potential new members about makes and models, while Paul also spent a good deal of time talking through the finer details of rebuilds. Peter,

meanwhile, must have explained the registration procedure at least a dozen times, with patience worthy of a saint. Hazel and Peter did a sterling job on the regalia desk too, selling a good number of items. A big thank you to everyone who came and helped on the stand, the club spirit was in full swing all weekend. There were plenty of good-natured conversations with curious visitors, including a couple hoping to fit a Ural sidecar onto a BMW. I was able to put them in touch with David from F2 Motorcycles, who just happened to be manning the Jawa stand next to us. He even gave us a few business cards to hand out to anyone still hunting for Russian parts. Most of the Cossack Owners Club members did the rounds of the outside field a few times. I picked up a grease gun for a fiver, a bargain if ever there was one, some cleaning supplies,



and a couple of screwdrivers I did not need but could not resist. Unfortunately, by Saturday afternoon I had developed gout in my wrist. If you have ever had gout, probably in your big toe, you will know exactly what I mean. Imagine someone jabbing a red hot needle into your wrist every time you touch something. Not ideal for a weekend of pushing and loading motorcycles. By Sunday evening, I had to get the bike down the ramp and across to the exhibitors' car park, load it on the trailer, and then drive four hours back to East London. As I waited my turn at the ramp, I thought, "How on earth am I going to stop this thing at the bottom when I cannot even pull the front brake?" In the end, I managed it by wedging my foot on the rear brake and creeping down at the speed of an arthritic tortoise.

Thankfully, my faithful grey Ural started on the second kick, and I was able to limp it across to the car park by setting the revs on the throttle and feathering the clutch. I was lucky to find a couple of friendly dealers loading some trials bikes into a van, they kindly helped get mine onto the trailer and tied it down. I then set off for home, one handed, utterly shattered, but at least heading in the right direction. By the time I got back, I was too tired to unload the bike, and as I write this, it is still sitting patiently on the trailer, waiting for my wrist, and enthusiasm, to recover. Nevertheless, none of that spoiled my time at Stafford. It was a fantastic weekend, full of good company, great bikes, and plenty of laughter. ***If you would like to exhibit your bike at the Stafford Show, get in touch with Carl, his contact details are at the front of this magazine.***



Puncture number 1

Paul's Puncture Odyssey

Paul Codling

Puncture number 1 happened on the way to Cornwall late 2023 after I'd just bought a new tyre. It was our first puncture for a hundred years, so long in fact that carrying a spare tube had dropped off the radar, especially because the rest of that, tyre levers, foot pump and wheel out spanners, were heavy when we were heavy enough thanks. I remembered Avon SM tyres as hard and durable in 1978 so I chose its modern incarnation, now squishy and soft. We were just past Oxford on the A420 towards Swindon when Serenity slid sideways on the first roundabout. I had to pull her upright, forget the A421 and bounce up the curb at a tangent, where there was a handy lamp post to park against. We'd need AA relay then.

Lovely Hazel phoned ahead to a motorcycle shop in Oakhampton where our B&B that night was booked. They said they'd order a tube in for the morning. It took three AA vans until 2.00am to get us there. How boring was that? Our B&B lady picked us up in driving rain, well beyond the call of duty and dropped us back the next day in the sunshine. The rim was rusty. It looked like a flake of chrome had lifted and its sharp edge had worked its way into the tube. I spent ages polishing all the rust off, and more loose chrome likely to cause trouble, then taped up the rusty spoke nipples because they looked rather wicked too. I borrowed a file from the bike shop bloke. There was nothing else to do because tube arrived lunch time. All was well for the rest of the year, the early part of the next one too and all



Puncture number 2

Poland, we were in woodland on more lovely rural roads twisting and flowing through the trees. Luckily the road happened to be straight when the next tube popped. Mike, our travelling companion, had another one in his sidecar. He's got lots in his sidecar. We run 40psi in Serenity's rear tyre and sidecar springs because of the rearward weight bias, and because there's so much of it. I confess I was worried on the

the way round Finland and back down the Baltic states. For some reason Serenity seemed to love the blistering hot weather. There were times after we'd crossed the Polish border from Lithuania, she powered up the rolling hills with enchanting enthusiasm, the sweetest she'd ever run. North Poland has some lovely swooping roads. I noticed the tyre looked a bit flat on the campsite that night, because there was only 3psi in it. Good job we reached the campsite OK.

Puncture number 2. No one goes on holiday to Finland without a spare tube and tyre tools of course. Our A420 lesson learned, in went the new one. Oddly enough it wasn't a proper, self tapping screw or a nail through the treads puncture, but another chafe on the inside. More Duck tape, wider this time? The rim was quite badly pitted.

Everything looked good in time for dinner in the lakeside restaurant. Puncture number 3 was more of a burst. Still in

way down from 50mph with her tail suddenly flailing. Yet again, the tube had chafed through on the rim and we could see where it hadn't yet chafed through in other places. Was Duck tape a bad idea? We had that off and replaced it with smooth, shiny insulating tape, concluding in our straw clutching that the Avon tyre must be moving, squirming in its stress, and had rucked up the Duck tape into ridges and edges which then wore into the tube. That night we found another lakeside campsite and stayed two nights so Lovely Hazel could go swimming in



Puncture number 3



Puncture number 4

approaching 30°C for days and the Avon was significantly easy to slip on and off with hardly any effort. Was the problem the heat? It wasn't Duck tape.

Enjoying the ride became a challenge. Every bump and hole in the road, every gust of sidewind, every stone we ran over, felt like another puncture. For some reason our luck held and Old Timer's tube lasted for the rest of our rural route

the lake. This site, very much a holiday destination, had parties of Polish families who drank vodka and sang riotous Polish folk songs all night. Mike rode to Old Timer Garage, only a few miles away, to get some bits and pieces and another tube. He returned with a tale of the roads his satnav showed. They were made of deep sand. Apparently they really were roads but the locals had used the cobbles, wooden blocks I think, for building houses. Puncture number 4 struck us in Germany, another sudden burst but this time, I was focused by the previous two. It wasn't a surprise, neither was the chafe through yet another tube. By now, it's taking around 15 minutes to remove all the bags, take the wheel out, pull the tube out, have no idea what's going on, put everything back and be ready to go, expecting to do it again soon. Was 40psi a problem, why now when it hadn't been for years? Was it the hot weather? We'd been

through Germany and the necessity of heading for Rotterdam on a Dutch autoroute. Puncture on a motorway? Oh dear, what a fuff! Lovely Hazel impressed me, courageously climbing onboard once more in spite of the likelihood of catastrophe. She expressed how nervous she felt, "Meditating through the fear".

Back home, back in the shed, I discovered that even the Old Timer tube would have chafed through sooner or later. There were marks all round it where it had obviously been rubbing on



Puncture number 5



Lakeside in Finland

the rim, on the apex where the rim curves into the well. I blamed the rim, wanting to believe it had once been too rusty and no matter how much I polished it, the pits and edges were still a threat. The Avon, doing well and only half worn after almost 10,000 miles couldn't be the culprit, could it? You know how it is. You buy an old Soviet motorcycle and it comes with a van load of bits, but they're all knackered for some reason.

Before we went to Finland, for years in fact, Serenity had been rolling along on the best wheel there was. Yes the rim was rusty but the brake drum was round, sort of, and the drive splines were perfect. I valued that. Building the best ever wheel was always going to be a headache, because the nipples would all be seized on and chewed up, the spokes would break, new ones would all be Chinese and tensioning would pull the drum oval. That's why I hadn't done it. However, unless I faced these monsters, Serenity wasn't going to be as much fun. So I stripped all my wheels, with a hot air gun and Mole Grips where necessary, picked the best hub, the best bearings, the best rim and all the best spokes and

nipples which I polished and greased. Not only that, I ground off all the burrs and smoothed off the edges of the nipple heads before I put them in. I tried really hard to build the most worthy wheel I could and dumped the scrap wondering why we always keep it all.

Puncture number 5 happened back on the A420, on our way to Cornwall again, 2025. This time the tube popped on the run up to a roundabout in

Swindon. "What?" said Lovely Hazel, unaware Serenity had sagged, because we weren't moving when the last air left. As ever the tube, an extra thick, hard as nails motocross tube, had chafed through against the rim. Just like all the others. "It's that Avon." I told Hazel, certain it had to be.

We camped at Trebyla Farm, on the Cornish cliff tops near Boscastle on another near 30c week. I took the tube out to check it, because the following weekend we were going to a MZ camp in Pewsey on the way home, a long way to feel frightened. Of course the tube showed chafe marks. I put a new one in and checked that on the MZ campsite, only 150 miles old. Just to be sure it would last the 250 miles home. That weekend the temperature reached 33c and the Avon felt so flimsy and pliable I found it easy to imagine its tall side walls flexing. I think, as it flexed, it took the tube with it, constantly rubbing it on the rim. Serenity, dressed for camping, might stress her tyres that way.

We have a Heidenau now, hard and stiff, 2,000 miles and so far so good.

Understanding the DfT & DVLA's New Repair and Modification Policy

Peter Ballard

The DfT and its DVLA have issued a new policy statement with regards repairs, restorations and modifications of motor vehicles.

Vehicle registration: Repairs and restorations - GOV.UK

This covers both cars and motorcycles. Previous DVLA advice concerned cars but promised rules for motorcycles coming later so this new statement now includes motorcycles, thus I have extracted the parts that refer to motorcycles.

Owner needs to tell DVLA about some Repairs or Restoration or if you Replace a motorcycle frame or the V5C vehicle information is changed. This frame replacement option is new as previously except under very specific conditions the

frame could not be replaced, but you can now, but see later.

Repairs or restorations of motorcycles can include repairing the frame and replacing steering, suspension, gearbox or forks.

What else may count as a repair or restoration?

assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6899c2cf3080e72710b2e335/INF318_making_changes_to_a_vehicle.pdf is worth a read.

Where a frame for a motorcycle has been replaced like-for-like, (for example, without changing the vehicle's appearance or dimensions from its original manufacturer's specification), this is classed as a repair, but it does need to be notified to DVLA using the form 'Vehicle parts statement' (V627/1). The replacement can be either brand new or second-hand but must be of the same specification as the original. If you're using a second-hand





replacement, evidence of the identity of the donor vehicle must be provided, this includes the V5C registration certificate (log book) for the donor vehicle, or official receipts from identifiable suppliers. Examples of structural modification for motorcycles will include, but is not limited to, any lengthening, shortening, or widening of a vehicle's frame or changing its appearance and must be advised to DVLA. So a frame that has been chopped, hard tailed or raked for instance must be advised to the DVLA this must be done using the form 'Modified vehicle statement' (V627/3) Previously this was unclear but DVLA implied that such frame modifications would need a MSVA, that may still be the case as DVLA can respond by requesting a MSVA.

Vehicles over 40 years old, to submit a modification for such you will need to provide an MOT. This is new and is aimed at those owners who carry out

major changes to a 40+ year old vehicle to increase its performance on a vehicle that previously did not need to be MoT'd or put through MSVA.

Reconstructed Classics, rules do not change. " The reconstructed classic category is intended to support the restoration of unregistered classic vehicles. Reconstructed vehicles must be composed of genuine period components that are over 25 years old and of the same specification." COC is supporting one such currently.

There is no indication that welding on sidecar connections to the left (typically) of the frame to take a left hand sidecar to meet C&U Reg93 would require notification to DVLA.

If in doubt read the DVLA advice or ask. Also remember 'cheating' the system by modifying a motorcycle without the required notification to DVLA can also invalidate your insurance.



Red Oktober Day at the Ace Café!

Andrew Mutter

We rolled in with seven outfits altogether (plus my solo, bravely puffing out its chest and pretending to be as important as the rest). We also had a grand line-up of MZs and CZs, along with a rather gorgeous DKW and a Pannonia that attracted more admiring looks than most of us ever will. There was no shortage of animated chat about how everyone keeps their bikes running or, more accurately, how we *claim* to. As usual, plenty of praise was heaped on David Angel and F2 Motorcycles, without whom half of us would still be stuck at the roadside. We had a fine cast of characters: Andrew and his partner from South Africa, turning up in an outfit called *Tutu*, Tony Fay, Jim on an outfit, and Phil and Dave. I didn't catch everyone's name, if I've missed you, assume it's because you were having too much fun to stand still long enough. Somehow I even managed to persuade a few folks to rejoin the club. Even more mysteriously, I now appear to have agreed to organise a meet-up next year with Andrew from South Africa. I'm still not sure how that happened, but it must have been during

a moment of weakness or caffeine deficiency. The general feeling was that a run to both the Silver Ball and the Magpie Rally (50th birthday!) would go down very nicely — preferably with better weather. It was a lovely dry ride *there*... followed by a glorious, all-soaking, boots-squelching ride *back*. Still, worth every mile and every puddle. A message from Dave Greenwood: he hopes as many of you as possible will come along to his Winter Day Meet at the Silver Ball Café on **Sunday, 18 January 2026**, in Reed on the A10 near Royston (SG8 8BD). I went last year — perfect weather for a Soviet outfit and excellent for keeping the circulation active, whether you like it or not. Let's try to get as many there as showed up at the Ace Café for Red Oktober Day. Best to arrive around 10am. I turned up at 11 last year and the place was already overflowing with outfits.



The Accidental V Twin

Jerry's Story

I was in Finchingfield one day, out on the Grey Ural, my favourite bike, when MZ Jerry approached me and told me this story.....It was one of those bright rally mornings when engines barked, tents flapped, and the smell of fuel and bacon drifted across the field. Riders from all corners were rolling up to the gate of the annual V Twin Rally, Harleys thumping proudly, Moto Guzzis rumbling, and the odd curious machine slipping in among them. *And then came him.* A cheerful rider pattered up to the gate on a well used Ural, its paint sun faded, its engine clattering merrily in that unmistakable "built on a Friday afternoon" Russian fashion. The gate marshal took one look, folded his arms, and shook his head. *"Sorry, mate," he said. "Harleys and Guzzis only. That there isn't a V twin."* The Ural rider grinned. "Course it is!" The marshal raised an eyebrow. "It's a horizontal opposed twin. Your pistons stick out like a pair of stubborn elbows. Nothing V shaped about it." But the Ural rider was ready. "Aah, but you're assuming Russian

engineering is precise," he said with a wink. "I bet if you actually measured it, those pistons aren't quite 180° degrees in line.... No way they got that right at the factory. So if it's not perfectly opposed..." He paused dramatically. "Well then, it must be a V!"

The marshal stared at the bike, scratched his head, and looked again. The Ural rattled obligingly, as if trying to prove the point by sounding just uneven enough. After a moment, the marshal chuckled. *He stepped aside.* "Get in there and tell everyone that story. You've earned your place."

And so the Ural rider rumbled through the gates, possibly the first horizontally opposed maybe V twin ever welcomed to the rally.

Later, as I sat in Winners, the café everyone ends up at in Finchingfield, Jerry continued chatting waxing lyrical about the British Two Stroke Club and the fantastic rallies they put on. I hope Paul and Binzi make it to a few next year, if you see the chap on the bike below, please tell him we published his tale. With any luck I'll catch up with him, once my Jupiter is finally on the road.



From Left to Right: *A Ural's Journey to the UK*

Michael Wadsworth/Andrew Mutter

Recently, Michael wrote to me to share his experience of converting his motorcycle and sidecar from left-hand to right-hand drive. Fifteen years ago, he bought a new Ural sidecar outfit in France, where it remained ever since. Now that he has brought the Ural into the UK, he has had to work through the legal requirements surrounding sidecars.

One of the main reasons for the conversion is a specific rule: *No person shall use, or cause or permit to be used on a road, any two-wheeled motorcycle registered on or after 1st August 1981 — unless it is a motorcycle brought temporarily into Great Britain by a person resident abroad — if there is a sidecar attached to the right (off) side of the motorcycle.* In short, the sidecar must be fitted on the left for UK use, and so the

entire outfit needed flipping. Michael shared some wonderful photographs capturing the process he went through — a mixture of engineering challenge and enjoyable tinkering. Before anything else, he wished to express heartfelt thanks to the ex-pat custodians who cared for the Ural during its fifteen years in France. Frank (Fronck), Dave and Margaret looked after it faithfully, and their help is deeply appreciated. There were many others who played a part in the Ural's return. Michael received excellent guidance from Peter Ballard, President of the Cossack Owners Club, and invaluable technical support from F2 Motorcycles with the sidecar fittings. The final task was the exchange of the French registration plates for UK ones — the last official step in bringing the Ural home. And so, for now, a fond farewell from the proud Ural Sidecar Importer.



Greener Grass? Lessons from Spain and the Perils of a 30-Year Rule

Risks of pushing for a 30-year rule instead of the 40-year rule for UK Historic Vehicle Status

President Peter Ballard recently drew attention to an article by Lindsay Irvine, Legislation Director of the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC), published in Historic, the Federation's journal. As members of the COC, the issues raised are highly relevant to us.

At a recent Federation Board meeting, the Chairman highlighted significant changes to vehicle classification regulations in Spain. These reforms aim to encourage the preservation of historic vehicles (HVs) in a country where, by international standards, numbers have long been considered low. After examining the documents gathered from a conference he attended, Irvine confirmed that Spain has introduced genuinely impressive improvements. Registration costs for HVs will be substantially reduced, road-worthiness testing will be less demanding than that for newer vehicles, and owners will no longer be required to replace the original number plate with a new "historic" one. Such developments will no doubt excite UK enthusiasts who favour redefining historic vehicle status in line with the international standard adopted by FIVA (the International Federation of Historic Vehicles), which sets the threshold at 30+ years. However, regular readers will know the Federation's position: while the FBHVC accepts the international 30-year definition and would welcome its adoption, it recognises that it cannot currently be a priority. Irvine has

discussed this in depth in previous issues of FBHVC News (2023 Issue 2) and Historic (2024 Issue 2).

One major concern for government is the potential impact of dramatically increasing the number of younger vehicles that qualify. The younger the vehicle, the greater the likelihood it will be used for everyday commuting rather than preserved as a historic artefact. A crucial but often overlooked part of the FIVA HV definition is the stipulation that the vehicle "is not used as a means of daily transport." This is the quid pro quo for the lower 30-year threshold. Spain reflects this clearly: in exchange for more generous rules, owners may use their HVs for only 96 days per year, effectively preventing routine business or commuting use. Greece goes even further by limiting HV use strictly to shows and events. By contrast, although the UK retains a 40-year threshold, there are no usage restrictions. Spanish media already acknowledge that enforcing their new limits will be difficult outside CCTV-covered urban areas. In the UK, blanketed with ANPR, a similarly "relaxed" approach seems improbable if restrictions were ever imposed. So while the Spanish model may look attractive at first glance, a closer look suggests it may simply illustrate the old Latin saying: *Fertilior seges est alienis semper in agris* — the grass is always greener on the other side. Peter also notes a parallel in calls to revisit UK legislation on left-hand-drive sidecar outfits to enable legal use of two-wheel-drive machines. Even there, "success" would come with strings attached: sidecars allowed on the right, but with seatbelts, passenger helmets, E-marked headlights, and more.

In short, be careful what you wish for.

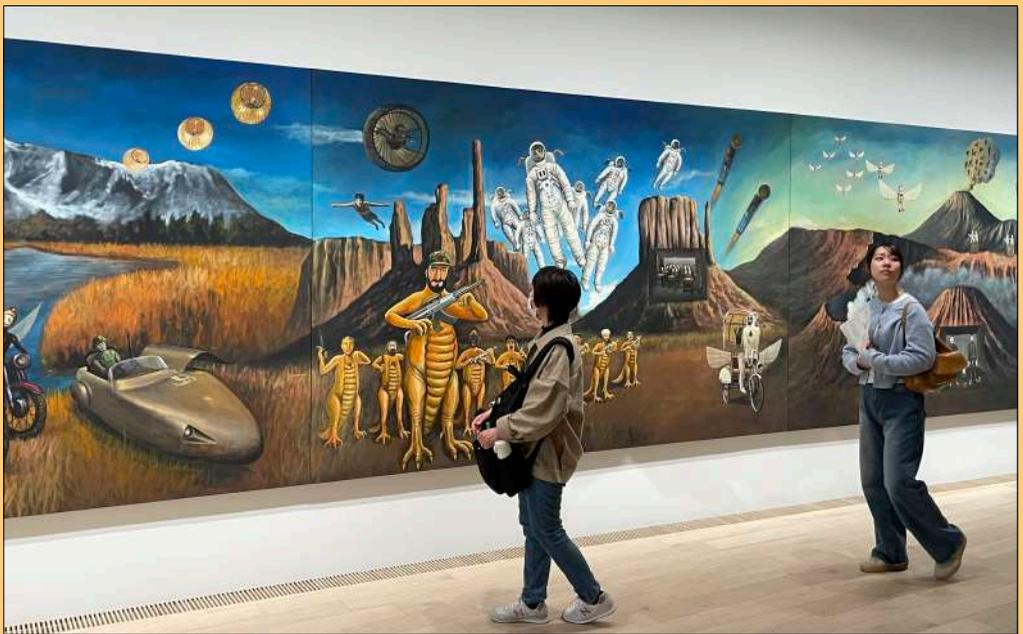


Riding Through Art: Discovering Heri Dono on the Naoshima Art Islands

Andrew Mutter

Just recently, I had an incredible trip to Japan, spending about three weeks exploring the country with my son. A big part of our adventure was discovering art, and one of the highlights was visiting the **Naoshima Art Islands**, home to three international museums and a playground for contemporary art lovers.

was there that I came across a striking painting called **The Odyssey of Heridonology**. As someone who is always fascinated by the connection between art and motorcycling, I was immediately drawn to one part of the painting: the motorcyclists. This is a very large, multi-panel work by **Heri Dono**, one of Indonesia's most celebrated contemporary artists. Dono's work is packed with symbolism, storytelling, and playful imagery, so naturally, I wanted to



dig deeper into what these motorcyclists might mean.

While there is no official explanation for them, according to sources, after some research I think we can understand them through three ideas:

1. **Everyday Life and Movement**

Motorbikes are everywhere in Indonesia. They are part of daily life. In the painting, the motorcyclists can be seen as ordinary people **moving through the world**, full of energy and vitality.

2. **Mixing Old and New**

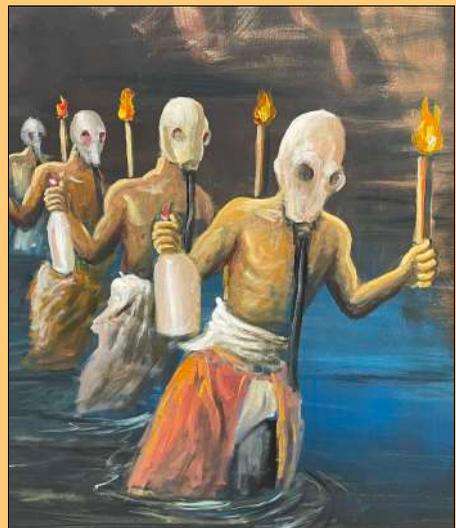
Dono often blends traditional characters with modern objects. Here, motorcyclists share space with puppet-like figures and fantastical creatures, showing how **traditional culture and contemporary life coexist**.

3. **People Going Through Change**

Many of Dono's figures, even the whimsical or strange ones, comment on society. The motorcyclists might represent **people moving forward, navigating change, and being part of**

Indonesia's ongoing story.

Finally, this intriguing painting has a dreamlike quality, filled with fantasy and strange symbolic elements. I loved the motorcycles and their riders, whose eccentric and unconventional presence fascinated me.





The Story of G119 PAG A Dnepr 11 Roadster

Paul Morris

Hello, this is the story of just about the best, most reliable and fun motorcycle I have ever owned, a Dnepr 11 Roadster.

Back in 1990 I was riding a Moto Guzzi 650 Lario, my sole means of transport and the start of my passion for Moto Guzzis. I have always liked quirky motorbikes. At the time the motorcycling press was firmly pro rice burning Japanese sports bikes. Anything else was a slug and dismissed as rubbish, especially eclectic stuff like MZs and Cossacks. Naturally, I was drawn to the underdog. I had read a road test of a Neval Dnepr 11 solo in, I think, Motorcycle International, which unusually was reasonably, if bemusedly, not too

harsh on it. It had a weird red fibreglass fairing on it, but its stability and handling were praised by the tester.

I was in the RAF at the time, stationed in the north of Scotland, and came home on two weeks leave to my parents' house in Grimsby, Lincolnshire. The importer, Neval, was based on a farm just outside Hornsea in East Yorkshire, over the Humber Bridge. As I had some spare time, I rang them up for a test ride, just for the experience. I was not intending to actually buy one. On the day I turned up at the Neval workshop on my Lario and saw the Beast from the East in the metal and fibreglass. In fact, it was their demo bike which had featured in the national magazine article and had been fitted with different gearing for solo use. There were several other bikes in the shed, mostly combinations, being fitted out for

customers. Whilst the outfits were handsome, I had no real interest in them as practical means of transport. The demo bike was truly horrible to look at with that weirdly shaped fairing, almost like a bath tub, but I was there and the proprietor gave me the keys and waved me off. I took it around Hornsea Mere and some back roads for half an hour or so and was deeply impressed by the comfort, handling and smoothness of the machine. That extended to the slick gearbox, which was so much smoother than the Guzzi's. My thirty minutes extended to about an hour. This was a really lovely bike to ride. I almost forgot about the hideous fairing. On returning, the chap asked, "What do you think, then?"

"I love it," I replied, "but it's just that fairing."

"Ah, that was a bit of an experiment," he said.

At that moment I noticed in the corner of the workshop a motorcycle of great beauty. It was a solo Dnepr 11 with a metallic green painted tank, small side panels and a wavy cream stripe down the side, with chrome mudguards.

"What's that?" I asked.

"Oh, that's a Dnepr 11 I've souped up for a mate." *"Well, if you can do one like that for me, I'll buy one," I said.*

Several weeks later the bike was ready and I returned from Peterhead to pick it up. I had a week to run it in before going back up the A1. The Dnepr factory in Kiev was a beneficiary of Gorbachev's perestroika policy to restructure the Soviet economy. The factory had been retooled and quality control was improved in order to produce better machines to help exports and attract foreign currency. But the machine was still old fashioned, and I was determined

to run the bike in properly.

The main feature of this was to limit the revs quite severely for the first five hundred kilometres to the first service, then less restrictively for the next two thousand kilometres or so. I cannot remember the exact revs, but it equated to around thirty miles per hour and forty miles per hour respectively.

In the first week I remember being chased through the town by a gang of young lads on AR50s and the like. I did not want to damage my new pride and joy but at the same time I had to uphold my pride. Try as I might, I could not shake them off and they could not overtake, so I headed out into the East Marsh, closely followed by a buzzing haze of two stroke. One by one they dropped out, lacking the range of the mighty Dnepr. I took pity on the last lad who actually ran out of petrol, so I turned round, picked him up and took him to the nearest fuel station.

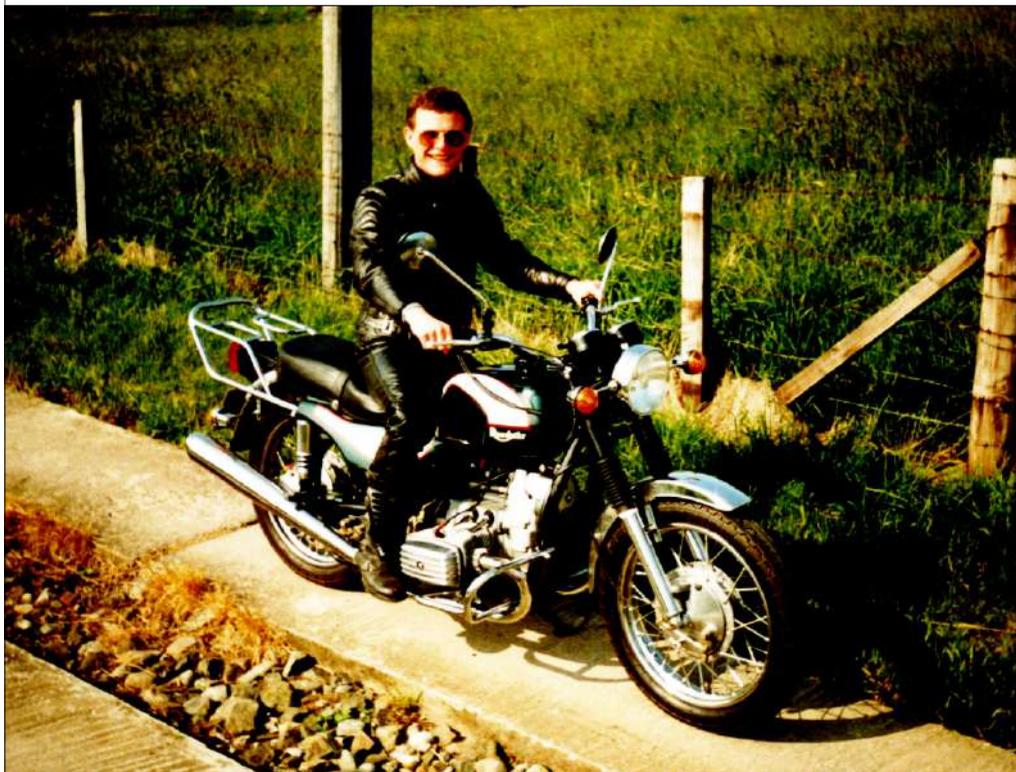
After returning to Hornsea for the first service I made my way four hundred and forty miles north back to Peterhead, stopping overnight in Alnwick. At that time the A1 was single carriageway and, being restricted to forty miles per hour, I cannot have been very popular. I remember I had a cardboard sign on the back saying, "Sorry. Running in." That journey took nineteen hours in all. For the next two years I toured around Scotland and found the bike to be smooth and comfortable, with very stable handling. Pick your line into a bend early and it just cruised round. The Roadster drew admiring looks wherever we went and the reverse gear was a handy way to get out of awkward parking spaces, which took a lot of people by surprise. For local trips some friends and I used to

go down to the pub at Pennan Cove, a very pretty fishing village made famous by the nineteen eighties film Local Hero with Burt Lancaster. The road down was a series of incredibly steep hairpin bends, but the Dnepr's brakes worked very well for a heavy bike. My friend Del had a GPZ550, which I rode a couple of times. It was very smooth and fast but felt like riding a hairdryer with no character.

One trip was to the Outer Hebrides. My friend Jim and I had a few days off and the squadron boss said that the radar at Clettraval on North Uist had broken down for want of a small widget and asked whether we would like to speed over there with a part for the klystron. I am pretty sure she did not realise that speed and Dnepr were mutually exclusive terms.

Off I went, with Jim riding pillion, which

did not dent the cruising speed at all. Then came the rain. Wetties on. Fifteen minutes later the sun came out. Wetties off. Fifteen minutes later the rain squallied in again. Repeat ad nauseam. We just kept the wetties on after that. Such was the urgency that we did not really pay attention to the map. The bridge over to Skye had just been finished, so we breezed onto the isle with plenty of time to meet the last ferry at Uig to take us to Harris, because it only takes half an hour at most to cross a piddly Scottish island. Or so we thought. In reality it was around fifty miles to said ferry, which we missed. Luckily the Ferry Inn had rooms for two young, wet fools for the night. We had a great evening, involving the locals taking us for a tour round the islands. Needless to say, never having drunk much whisky before, the next morning found me in need of a



large cooked breakfast and feeling very ropey, made worse by the vicious sea swell on the crossing over to Harris. How I kept the bike upright I do not know. The things we did for Queen and Country.

I joined the COC and went to the Cossacks in the Trossachs camp in 1990 and won the best bike award. The Roadster really was a handsome machine. I include some photographs from that event. Does anyone remember some of the characters from 1990? I remember George from Glasgow, whose Jawa CZ combination expired just as it got through the camp gate. We could not



fix it, so George rode pillion with me on the first ride out and then back with John in the sidecar of his Ural outfit. John, who I remember also being referred to as the Mad One, was quite a character, with his shock of long red hair in a ponytail to match his outfit. He had a great party trick of riding his outfit backwards in circles in reverse in the car park. The Dnepr was a brilliant bike for a novice mechanic to service, with an excellent toolkit. The design was very ergonomic, with only four sizes of nut and bolt fitting, unlike the Guzzi. I lost count of the number of different types and sizes of

fittings on that bike. Apart from condensers blowing every six months, the bike was very reliable, which I put down to the build quality and my zealous running in. The fastest I ever achieved was an indicated eighty five miles per hour, head down, tail wind, overtaking a Volvo on the Peterhead bypass. It was happiest cruising just below the national limit at fifty five miles per hour. There were some annoying vibrations at sixty miles per hour which disappeared at sixty five miles per hour. This generally improved over the years as the bike ran in, but as the nineteen nineties progressed it became a noticeable issue as cars got much faster and were constantly speeding and trying to overtake me on A roads. I had not had a lot of luck getting girls on the back of my motorbikes, apart from my sister, who did not count. The usual response to my offer of a ride was, "No thanks, it will ruin my hair," or "Ooh, it is dangerous and my dad will kill me, and you, if he finds out." This is something which perplexes me to this day, so I presume I was attempting to consort with the wrong type of girl. The situation was remedied when I met a cracking Northumbrian girl who loved riding on the back of the Dnepr, so I married her straight away. We are still happily married thirty three years later. Marriage brought a motorcar. The Guzzi went in exchange for a three piece suite, horror, and the Dnepr got used less and less. That is life, I suppose. But it followed us around in the RAF. Now here is the killer. When I left the RAF in 2005, the Dnepr was off the road. My last unit was RAF Henlow in Bedfordshire, near Hitchin. Our removal van could not fit everything in, so I had to leave the bike with a friend on the camp to pick up later.

At the time Henlow hosted a large number of smaller lodger units, most of which were deployed around the world at short notice. My friend and I belonged to one of them. After I left, he bought a fishing boat to do up in a garage he was renting from the camp at the back of the officers' mess, and so parked my Dnepr outside while he worked on his boat. Henlow had a new station commander who took it upon himself to tidy up the place and notified in the weekly Station Routine Orders that any vehicle or caravan without an in date camp permit and road tax would be towed away. Of course, this happened when my friend was deployed and, of course, as the bike was off the road and not taxed, it disappeared. Mine was not the only one. Evidently, a local scrap merchant took away dozens of caravans and vehicles



owned by people serving far away who did not know about it, including one young chap who was in Afghanistan and lost a Ford XR3. Outright theft as far as I am concerned, but there was not much I could do about it at the time. I kept the

Dnepr's excellent toolkit, manuals, ignition key and logbook for sentimental reasons. It remained on the DVLA register despite being lost.

Fast forward to 2024 and, for some reason, I made a random check on the DVLA website and, blow me down, there it was with a change of V5C. I wrote to the DVLA explaining the situation and that it was my bike, but they would not help. The local Lincolnshire police would only confirm that yes, it was registered to someone, but they were not interested either. I reported it to Bedfordshire Police, who said that because the incident happened on a military base nearly twenty years earlier they had no jurisdiction. They did, however, helpfully tell me that the bike was registered to a person in Shropshire.

So may I make an appeal to the COC. Does anyone know anything about G119 PAG, or does one of our members even have it in their shed? The most recent information on the DVLA website says that it was last MOT tested on twenty six July 2016 and that it is untaxed. I am sure that whoever has it in their keeping now would not know its dubious history and would have acquired it in good faith. My wife and I loved that bike and we really would like her back. The old girl probably needs restoring and I am willing to buy it back from whoever has it now.

Any help would be gratefully appreciated. Thank you

Paul Morris - paul.winncottage@gmail.com
07939 297774

Update - What a lovely story - Paul has now been reunited with his Roadster - I've seen pictures of it and it looks in good condition, he's going to try and get it back to his original state - more in next edition of HV

COC Club Events 2026

The Silver Ball Cafe is a Winter day meet for mainly sidecars but many solos also attend. The cafe is on the main A10 in the village of **Reed near Royston, Hertfordshire SG8 8D** on the northbound lane. The date is **Sunday 18th of January 2026**. All Cossack owners are welcome solo or sidecars. MZ, Jawa/CZ owners and The Federation of Sidecar Clubs have also been invited. I look forward to seeing you there. Dave Greenwood **07775525591** or davidgreenwood@hotmail.co.uk.

International Classic MotorCycle Show 25–26 April 2026 Staffordshire Showground, ST18 0BD

Contact: **Comrade Carl 01253720327 NB**, Carl lives a peaceful life largely without the internet anxiety the rest of us suffer. He's not contactable by email. Leave a message on his answerphone. This is worth doing because yes, there is a highly polished motorcycle show, auto jumble, exotic auction and trade stands as well, but Stafford is very much a COC social event too.

COC Spring Dent 8–10 May 2026 Conder Farm, Dent, Cumbria, LA10 5QT There is no official organiser for this, the weekend runs on the formula of the weekend after the early May bank holiday, so those who know go then. It's very much a COC institution, begun a hundred years ago by Trevor College, who's long gone now, bless him. Anyone interested in the Dent weekend should ask questions in reply to this email, paulcodling@mail.com

COC Three Magpies 50th Anniversary 29th, 30th and 31st May 2026 Bath Rd, Seend, Melksham SN12 6RN This year

The Three Magpies Rally is a special anniversary weekend, because we've been camping here for 50 years! Provisionally, it might include a run out, a come and fix it workshop, service parts availability, a commemorative badge, and a celebration meal on Saturday evening. For now it's important just to fix the date. There'll be more details later.

Contact: **Peter Ballard**
idandreg.cossackownersclub@gmail.com
01225 891634

Friday 5th _ Sunday 7th June 2026. JAWA-CZ Owners Club National Rally and AGM 2026, Greetham Community Centre, Great Lane, Greetham, Nr. Oakham. LE15 7NG The rally organiser is John Blackburn, chairmanjawaczoc@gmail.com Once again a **free rally**, i.e. free camping (including motorhomes and caravans), free rally badge, free evening meal on Saturday. Bar on site, breakfasts available (not free). Saturday is the main day please make an effort to attend the AGM. More details to follow.

Maybe, we'll have an invitation only camping weekend in June, in South Norfolk focused on **The Locks Inn Geldeston**, accessible by dirt track across the swamp if it hasn't rained much, otherwise it's a ferry trip up the river from Beccles. Geldeston Locks is the extreme Southern limit of The Broads. Keep in touch with paulcodling@mail.com

Red Star Rally, or East European if you like, and **COC AGM, Friday 31st July – Sunday 2nd August 2026, Talybont Farm Campsite, Talybont on Usk, Brecon LD37YJ**. This is a joint rally hosted every two years, now more frequent than the previous every four

years, this year by the MZ Riders Club, with the Jawa/CZ Club and the Cossack Club. It usually has a brilliant turnout and in the past there have been over 200 people attend. The campsite is brilliant with lots of flat grass, excellent toilets and showers and a couple of real ale and food pubs less than 10 minutes walk away. It really is a beautiful part of the country.

Contact **Andy Binns** on 07980 837005 email bynnsi@gmail.com or **Sandy Morgan** 07929 955 221 email sandyjmorganmz@icloud.com or **Peter Ballard** idandreg.cossackownersclub@gmail.com 01225 891634

Norfolk 'n' Good COC Weekend 4th - 6th September. The Venue is to be confirmed but **only provisionally for the moment**, we're returning to the campsite in Loddon, **Loddon Marina Campsite, Bridge Street, Loddon South Norfolk NR14 6EZ.** The site is under new management and has been significantly tidied up. It's quite pleasant now. Loddon is a spectacular location with some equally spectacular Saturday ride out opportunities. With luck, this will be another agricultural show/classic vehicle weekend and punters early enough might get a Friday evening ride out to Geldeston Locks Inn.

Contact: **Paul Codling** paulcodling@mail.com 01508520890

COC Autumn Dent 2-4 October 2026 Conder Farm, Dent, Cumbria, LA10 5QT The contact details are as for the spring Dent weekend,

Red Oktober Day, Ace Cafe, date to be confirmed, likely Sunday 18 October 2026 Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner,

North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London, NW10 7UD Eastern Bloc vehicle meet in collaboration with the IFA Club.

Contact: **Andrew Mutter** andrewmutter@yahoo.com 07775890815

The Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show, 10-11 October 2026, Staffordshire Showground, ST18 0BD Contact: **Comrade Carl**, as for the April Show above.

In addition to the main calendar events, there are likely to be a number of ad hoc day events organised by local groups, such as Red Oktober Day at the Ace Café. Last year, several events were held at Krazy Horse Customs in Bury Saint Edmunds, all of which proved very successful. The club also joined the Federation of Sidecar Clubs and exhibited motorcycles at both the Ace Café and the Silver Ball. Discussions are ongoing within different groups about organising further regional events, which will be advertised in Horizontal View and on the club Facebook page. Members interested in organising an event are encouraged to do so. Please inform the editors of Horizontal View so the event can be publicised. **No prior permission is required.** Events should also be advertised on Facebook. It is particularly encouraging and exciting when these activities develop independently



Tutu's Journey: A Ural Motorcycle's Journey from South Africa to Europe

Recently, at the Ace Café Red October Day, we met Andrew and Stevie. What absolutely fascinated me was that they are Ural enthusiasts who recently moved to the UK from South Africa. Not only did they relocate themselves, but they also brought their motorcycle with them, importing it into the UK. They are serious motorcyclists and have travelled extensively throughout South Africa on their bike. Andrew later sent me the following account:

'Tutu' is a 2010 Ural Gear-Up, named after South African anti-apartheid and human-rights activist Desmond Tutu. We purchased her in 2013 from South African Ural dealer Ryno Greeff and were welcomed into a lively club of Johannesburg-based Ural riders who showed us just how brilliantly these machines handle South Africa's rough, dusty roads. While living in South Africa and settling into married life (we bought Tutu as a pre-wedding gift to ourselves), we rode her across as much of the country as we could. This included

a trip across the border into Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) and a ride across the Karoo Desert for our honeymoon. When we decided to emigrate to the UK in 2016, we knew we couldn't leave Tutu behind. Since moving to Hampshire, UK, Tutu has explored villages and towns across England, including the Isle of Wight, and has spent two summers touring various First and Second World War sites in France, Belgium, and Germany. We have big plans for future trips to the Netherlands and Spain, and Scotland's North Coast 500 route is definitely on our Ural bucket list!



Inside Percy Wright's Shed

I have always found other people's sheds fascinating places. They are full of history, ongoing projects, and those parts and tools that are kept "just in case" they might be useful one day. Recently, I have been in contact with Percy Wright, who is kindly supplying me with a drive



gear for my alternator. Along with this, he sent me several photographs of the projects currently underway in his shed, as well as some interesting images of tools and old stickers.



Percy tells me that one of the motorcycles shown in the photographs originally belonged to Paul Codling around twenty years ago. It is a 1971 M63, which now has its heads fitted and has been lightly chopped, featuring a Sportster fuel tank. Another machine has been in his ownership for more than thirty years. Other projects still awaiting completion include a Citroën 2CV-engined café racer. There are also some particularly interesting stickers dotted around the shed, including various rally stickers and an early pre Cossack Owners Club sticker. One item that really caught my eye, and which I would love to own, is a substantial Soviet vice that Percy bought at a local sale around thirty five years ago.



Send us pictures of your shed - we would love to see it!!

Andrew and Stevie joined us at the Ace Café meet in October, bringing with them a real sense of adventure from South Africa. One image shows Tutu, their beloved Ural, perched on a hill overlooking Johannesburg, another shows a Ural group stop at a SA filling station. Stevie and Andrew, we look forward to seeing you at many of the events this year. We're certain you have plenty more tales to share with us about riding across the Bushveld!



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!**