



# Suffolk Riders



## In this issue

Chairman's update	p1
April Events	p2
Round Suffolk Ride	p2
Carter Tours	p3
Zoom Group Night	p4
May Events	p5
Member's Forum	p6
Heaven & Hell - 2019	p6
Charity ride	p12
Last Word	p13



### Chairman's Update

As I sat down to write this column I reflected on my hope last month that Suffolk Riders would settle down to what we exist for, namely training riders and putting on a programme of social activities. How wrong I was. At times I wondered just what was going to happen next! It started with Tony Butler phoning me to say that owing to pressure of work, he had decided to step down as our Training Officer. Then some other Senior Tutors and Tutors also stood down. I would like to thank them all for their support in the past and hope they will feel able to come back and rejoin the Tutor team soon.

From that low point, however, the news has all been positive. The role of Training Officer is a very demanding one, so I am very grateful to Keith Gilbert for agreeing to take it on. Four experienced Tutors have agreed to train to become Senior Tutors. Keith has put out an appeal for members to consider training as Tutors, and at last count

six of you had volunteered. So the Tutor team is going to be stretched for a while, but at least we can see the way forward.

On the social side, the first rides under the new 'rule of six' took place on the 18<sup>th</sup> April, and were well supported. By popular demand we held a group night by Zoom on the 26<sup>th</sup>, where several Committee members gave an update on their plans, followed by a Q and A session. Over 30 members joined in and all told us they found it worthwhile. On the Covid front, it looks very likely that we will be able to eat inside again in groups of 6 after the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, and in larger numbers after June 21<sup>st</sup>. The group of us going to Yorkshire for a few days at the end of May are keeping our fingers crossed, and we have booked the Needham Market Community Centre for our first real group night on 28<sup>th</sup> June – put it in your diary now! We will have a Club stand at the Stonham Barns Motorcycle Show on 9<sup>th</sup> May – thank you to all of you who have volunteered to help.

In spite of Covid restrictions, six new members have joined recently. One found us using Google – confirmation, if any was needed, that our social media profile is going to be increasingly important in the future. Martin Gooda is on the case full of enthusiasm, thanks Martin!

Safe riding everybody. I hope it warms up soon. I'm keeping the lining in my trousers for another month...  
*Phil*

# April Events

## *Round Suffolk ride 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021 – Dave Hardwicke*

Organized by Vini Evans, the idea was to get a decent ride out while staying in our local county, but effectively riding round the outer edges of Suffolk.

The plan was to meet at Martlesham Tesco at 9am, I didn't make it (problems with the clasp on his lid), I was late (flat battery on my 1190 adventure bought 14 months ago and hardly ridden since) but we had a group of 5, Vini, Steve, Mr and Mrs Valentine and myself.

We headed off towards the coast and up through Rendlesham and Tunstall forests in pursuit of the Norfolk border, like the other rides this day we were treated to dry roads but a chilly start, it seemed ages until the temp was above 10 deg C

Blythborough, Southwold, the edge of Beccles and Bungay passed by, then came the clever bit imho, the A1066 is the obvious route east to west towards Brandon, but Vini had found a route south of that on country lane the rest of us admitted at Brandon were mostly new to us!

Refreshments at Brandon Country Park – not as routine as you might expect, it was closed due to a murder investigation earlier in the week, and then country roads down to Long Melford Garden Centre for cake.

The route from then on ran along the Stour Valley back to Ipswich.

A big thank you to Vini for sorting out such an interesting route with fuel and food stops built in during semi lockdown.

*NB if you are a 'friend' of the club on MyRouteApp, you can access the GPX file on the club's database in a folder named 'A long way to stay local.' Ed.*



### *Carter Tours - Bedford - 18/4/21 - James Myers*

With Boris' blessing we have once again been released into the wild, and with that, the much anticipated return of Carter Tours.

A full roster of riders were present; comprising Brian, Neville, James, Lee, Ray and a very welcome newcomer, Andy. Andy has only recently joined the club, and is yet to embark on any formal training. But we were all very encouraged to see that he was clearly an experienced rider and we were all surprised to learn that he had not undertaken any training to date either past or present. Notwithstanding, clad in Rukka and mounted upon a GS, Andy looked every inch the advanced riding group member. Either that or just a man after my own heart, as I also enjoy the gore tex offerings from the Finnish based manufacturer.

The route commenced from Tesco, Bury St Edmunds and headed out towards Haverhill, turning off at Thurlow towards Dullingham and looping around the Northern outskirts of Cambridge, before swinging down through Biggleswade.

The lunch stop took place at the Blossom Cafe just outside Bedford, where a varying complement of eggs benedict & full english breakfasts were greatly received and swiftly consumed. By this point Ray had taken Andy under his wing, and was offering some friendly riding tips with what to expect from training and further involvement with group activities. Whilst a less formal setting than the Group Training Rides, the Breakfast Runs are certainly a good opportunity to ride with other members and discuss riding skills.

Conversation soon turned to Andy's other riding experiences, and, for the initiated reader, you will know that Brian is a man who has ridden from good ol' Blighty all the way to Xi Jingping's backyard in the People's Republic of China. But for Andy, this was a new revelation! Andy's excursions have led him to the depths of Eastern Europe, and since having retired he is now keen to get out more on his bike, both home and abroad. We all agreed and hoped 2021 would see a return to a greater semblance of normality, and that some of the European trips planned for later on in the year could take place.

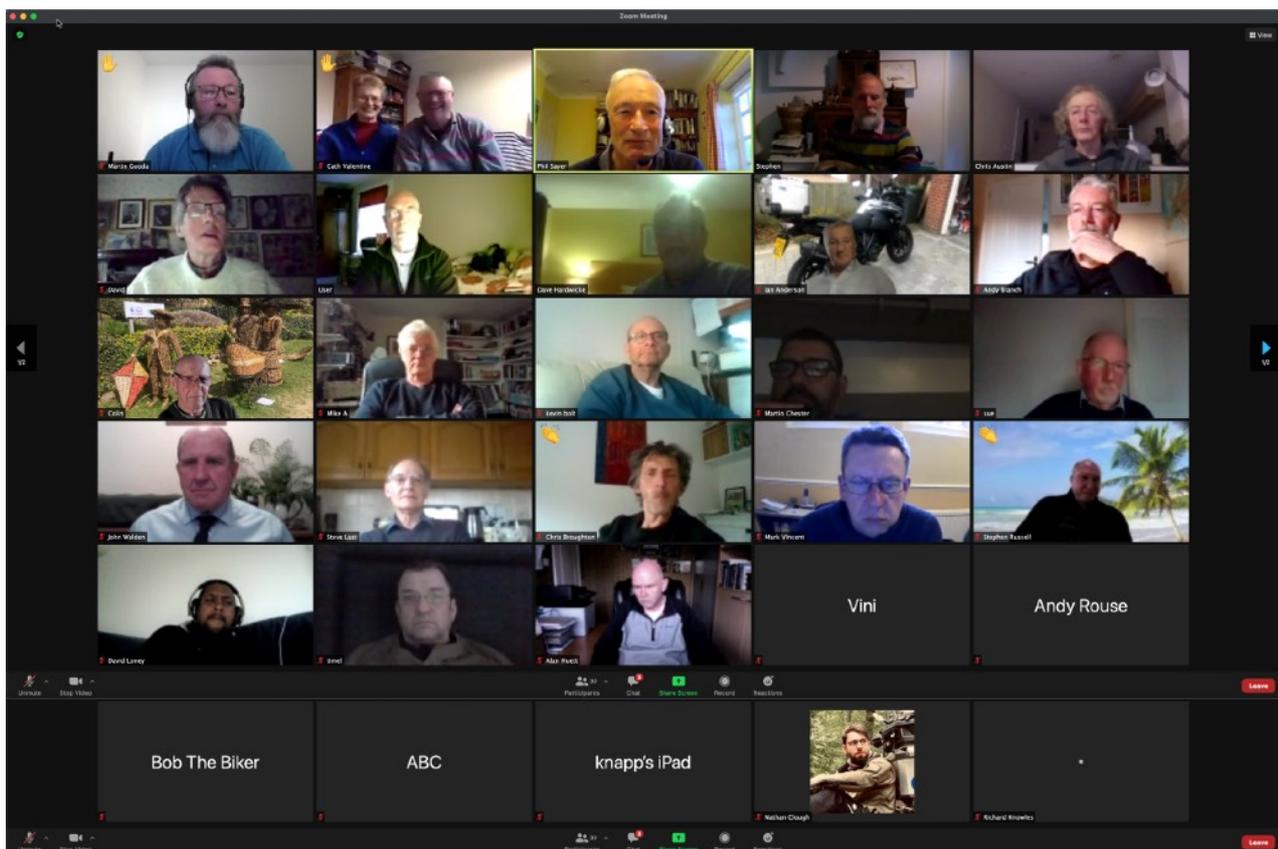
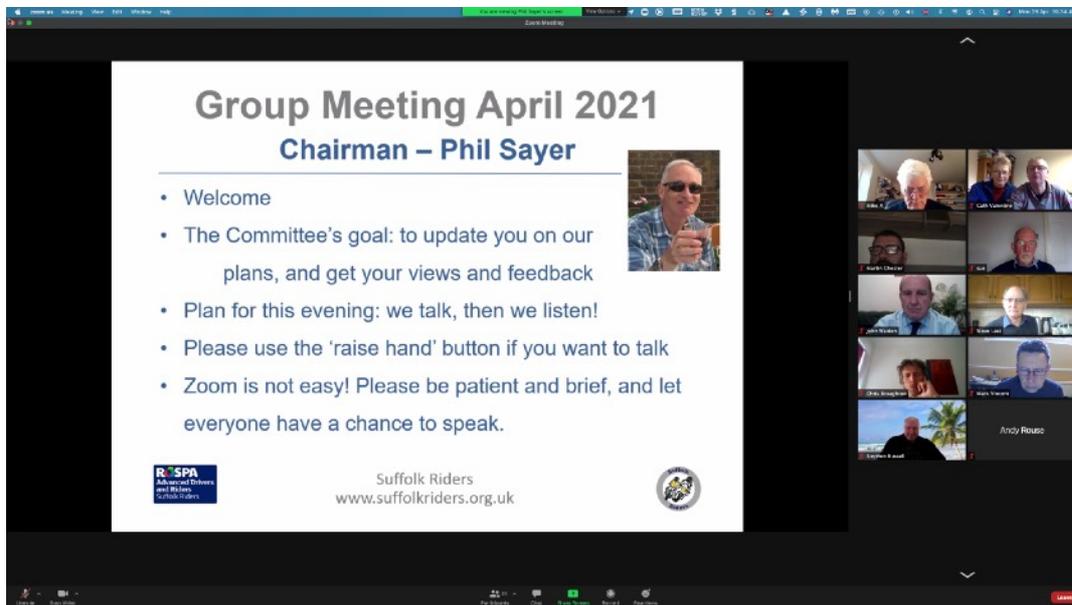
After lunch, the route headed across country toward Wellingborough, and onward around the top of Huntingdon. The rest point on the return leg was at Bluntinsham services. A quick group stop for coffees ensued, and the remainder of the journey was completed through Wicken and onto Bury.

A good day was had by all, and we look forward to the next edition of Carter Tours. A big thanks as always to Brian & his secretary, Mr Goodchild, for planning and circulating routes.



### Zoom Group Night - 26th April.

Phil S. hosted our first full Group Night this year via Zoom. Considering we are something of novices at large meetings, the technology went well. The content was restricted to outlining plans for the remainder of the year which you can see below, followed by a Q&A.



If you would like to see the slides produced for the meeting, the file can be accessed for the next month [here](#). You will need a suitable application to open the file, e.g. PowerPoint, Keynote, etc.

# May Events

The events sub-group have been in discussion about ride-outs for May. Your editor gets to see their on-line deliberations so can give you a 'heads up' on those that are definite. Invitations will also go out as usual via email when all are confirmed and, in the meantime, you can always check the club's calendar.

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> meet at Bury Tesco in good time for a 9 o'clock departure.

The good news, Horncastle Garden Centre do not want a card deposit. Not so good news – they are not taking reservations. Outside tables are on a 'first come first served' basis. We should arrive somewhere between 11:45 and 12:15. Early enough to hopefully walk straight in to a table – but..... If we get Colin to advertise the run as to the Horncastle area then, as the names come in, I can get a majority view as to whether we are all willing to queue for a table or would rather picnic close by. *Vini*.

CONFIRMED!

Fish and chips – Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May.

Departing Stowmarket Tesco 6 o'clock sharp. To Deep Blue, Newmarket (restaurant on premises that *could* be open if weather inclement). FREE parking behind B&M. Bench seats on High Street. *Vini*.

# Member's Forum

## [HEAVEN & HELL 2019 - Trevor Fisk](#)

The best of my motorcycling year started on 1st June 2019 at Folkestone heading south to Dubrovnik through the Alps on an 18 day tour with the Magellan tour company.

Sadly by 11th August 2019 I was sitting in a wet grassy verge with a suspected broken neck and injuries all down the righthand side of my body, beside my beloved bike, which was now just a crumpled heap of junk, trying to stop myself crying and wondering how could this have happened. It finally was settled at Court on 26th February 2021.

So lets start with the best bit first the tour to Dubrovnik.

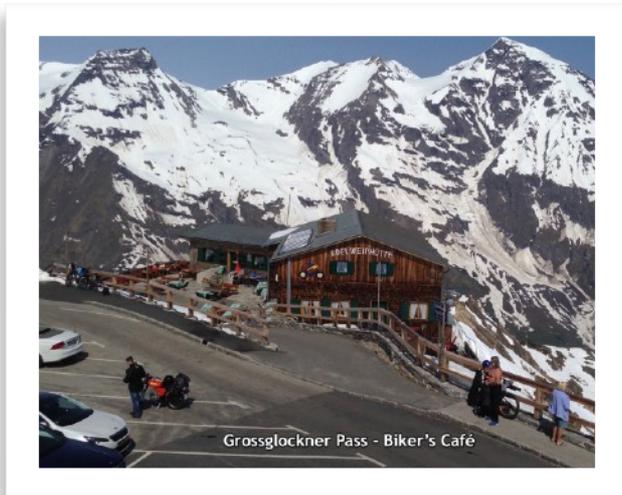
Day 1 328 Miles. We meet near the tunnel having just a short time to meet our guide and the rest of the group then straight through the tunnel, where we all get to know each other and check out all the bikes, as you do on the short train journey. It turns out we are a small group of six riders, one lady pillion and two guides. David Tiger 1200, Dave and Sheena Honda VFR 1200, Jim BMW 1200 GS, Rich BMW S1000XR, Paul KTM 1290 Duke GT, myself Aprilia Caponord 1200, Mark and Andre the guides both on BMW 1200 GS's.

We start with a day of cross country riding under clear blue sky's across northern France along the [Route d'Epinal](#), to our hotel at the edge of the [Lorraine National Park](#). I like the [Magellan](#) way of organising their tours, it's not a case of following the guide like ducklings, or using the drop off system: you are supplied with all the necessary GPS routes and set free to ride with whoever you prefer within the group. The guides follow behind along the same route, so, in the unfortunate event of a breakdown, or puncture, they are able to help. Our hotel for the night is very nice and more than adequate, as are all the hotels for the duration of the trip.

Day 2 232 Miles. Starts with us back tracking west for a while through the Lorraine National Park under a clear blue sky to visit the [WWI Memorial at Verdun](#). What a humbling experience, we are very lucky to have been born into this generation. We then head off on our ride to the next hotel near [Baden Baden](#) through the sweeping curves of the Vosges Mountains and some of the Black Forest in Germany.

Day 3 331 Miles. Mark, the guide, goes through a daily briefing after breakfast to highlight any points of interest we may like to see on route, and the recommended coffee and lunch stops. This morning he informs us that the [Grossglockner Pass](#) that we are due to go through on day 5 is still closed due to the extraordinary snow fall earlier in the season, so we may have to make a detour, not good news. The ride today is good, we are heading down the infamous [B500](#) on its fast and flowing curves then on through Bavaria, still wall to wall sunshine – and it's getting warmer. Onto the picturesque town of [Zell am See](#), a well known Ski area in Austria. We stay here for two nights. Everyone else makes for the bar on arrival, but I'm heading to the pool, which wouldn't be out of place in any Bond movie.

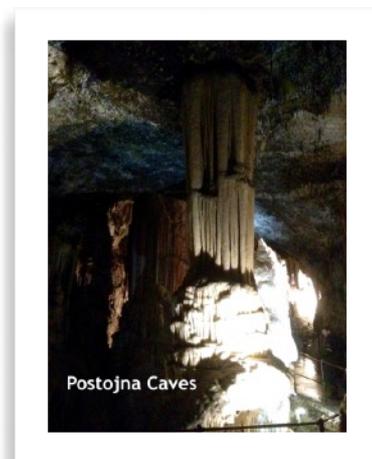
Day 4 224 miles. Today we can chose a rest day or a ride out, most of us visit [Eagles Nest](#), Hitler's WWII retreat with its amazing views and museum. The route we are given is to return via the same road, but I planned a different route back via the giant [Eisriesenwelt Ice Caves](#) inside a Glacier, just in case there was time to visit both. No time to visit, but everyone followed me back on my route. The weather is getting even warmer, so this evening I had more company in the pool.



Day 5 225 miles. Great news at the briefing the Grossglockner opened yesterday, this public road was designed to be used for racing, the road was closed to allow racing in the early years. This is the highest surfaced mountain pass in Austria heading down the other side into Slovenia. The road surface was excellent and the snow was amazing, in lots of places we were riding along passageways with vertical snow 7 to 8 metres high both sides of the road. At the highest point 2,504 metres there's a great biker cafe up a scary steep, 1st gear, single track, cobbled road, with tight hairpin bends revealing amazing panoramic views. It's cooler up here but under clear blue sky's it's very warm at lower elevations. Down into Slovenia we call in to

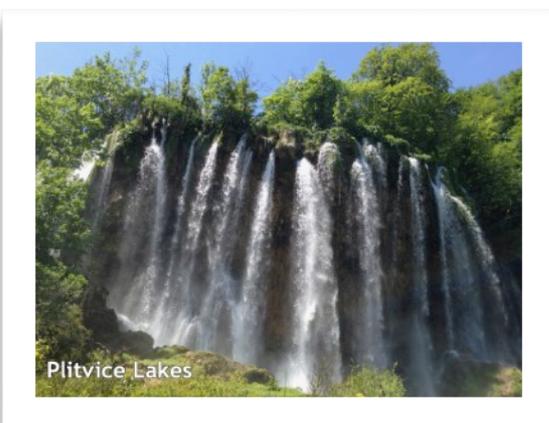
visit the [Predjama Castle](#) that is built into an opening in the side of a mountain, then on to the evening hotel in Postojna.

Day 6 175 miles. This morning we visit the dramatic [Postojna Cave](#) system, everyone agreed it was an amazing experience travelling deep underground by train then a walk through huge caves some bigger than St Pauls Cathedral with stalactites and stalagmites to match, all made more dramatic by subtle coloured lighting. We then set off on our short afternoon ride to the next hotel near the [Plitvice Lakes](#) National Park World Heritage Site. We still hadn't seen a cloud in the sky since Folkestone and the temperature is now in the high 30's °C.



Day 7. We all took the day off the bikes today to visit the national park.

The briefing is dominated by the weather, its expected to reach 38/40 °C for the next few days, so its lots of sun lotion and shady hats for the walk round the Plitvice Lakes. After a short bus ride into the National Park we walked around the most amazing lakes and waterfall system, the water gin clear with lots of fish and green vegetation. We take a boat ride back to the visitor centre for lunch in the shade and back to the hotel early enough for a bit of bike maintenance. I had noticed the bike was using more oil than normal but thought it was caused by the heat but on closer

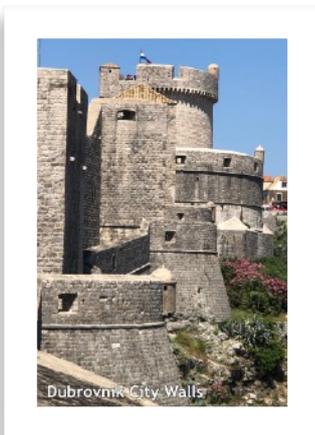


inspection I had oil dripping off the sump plug, so it's tools out to check everything is tight, after a clean up it seems to be coming from the pipes that feed the oil radiator. I do carry a small amount of oil on tour so I now check the oil level every day. Then off to the pool for a swim.

Day 8 213 miles. Our destination today is the Bosnian City of [Sarajevo](#) for a two night stay. As we prepare to leave, all the riders with their heavy duty textiles and full length winter boots are already soaked with perspiration, and looking very enviously at my fully vented outfit, open face helmet and summer ankle boots. I'm amazed even the tour guides are not prepared for the hot summer conditions. So it's a sticky ride for most, especially as we negotiate the city centre traffic to the hotel.

Day 9. Today, Magellan arranged for a local tour guide to show us around the city, which still shows all the scars of the recent conflicts. Our guide was a young man who was only 7 when the war started, he suffered first hand all the hardships of the city siege for the duration of the war. No time here to explain but quite harrowing listening. He finds us an air conditioned café for lunch and recommends a war museum to visit but I had heard enough, so I headed up the lift to the ski centre built for the 1984 winter Olympics. As normal, I catch up with the rest of the group later in the bar.

Day 10 181 miles. Today we head to [Dubrovnik](#) for another two night stay, via the world famous town of [Mostar](#) with its world famous bridge built in 1566, any of you old enough must remember the TV war coverage of the bridge being bombed during the war. They finished the reconstruction of the bridge in 2015 using mostly the old stone work dredged back out of the river. On arrival at our beach side hotel with it's seaside bar it's cold beers and a swim in the sea to cool down after another scorching day.



Day 11. Another day off the bikes to explore the very picturesque walled city of Dubrovnik, we all set off for a walk around the top of the city walls with it's beautiful views over the turquoise waters of the Adriatic sea, stopping for lots of photos and cooling drinks. We split up at lunch time with some heading for the bars or more sight seeing but we all regroup round the bar for a swim in the sea back at the hotel.

Day 12 250 miles. Today we head homewards, north up the Dalmatian coast road via [Split](#), calling into quaint little fishing towns for coffee and lunch breaks, again under the relentless heat from the beautiful sunshine and clear blue skies. Paul has invested in a ball of string so he could tie his jacket to his pillion seat because he is suffering so much from the heat, in his own admission it's crazy riding in a polo shirt but his best option. Our hotel destination for tonight is the small town of [Zadar](#), luckily furnished with another refreshing pool.

Day 13 280 miles. We continue up the Dalmatian coast today with more impressive views heading back through Slovenia – great lunch today, spit roasted lamb. I'm feeling sorry for the guys now as the heat builds as we head inland away from the coast. Coming from a farming background I'm surprised to see farmers with their wives and children turning hay in huge meadows by hand: as we get back into Austria everything gets more mechanised. Our destination for tonight is over the [Julian Alps](#), just into Austria in a small village with beautiful mountain views.



Day 14 285 miles. Today we have the choice of two great passes the [Timmelsjoch](#) or the [Brenna](#) pass the later being 40 miles shorter. Most of us opt for the Timmelsjoch we head out through Austria, cross into Italy to head up the pass, the roads here are more the normal kind of alpine road we expect as opposed to the race track quality we enjoyed on the Grossglockner, the forest we are climbing through is a pleasant relief from the relentless sun. Climbing higher through never ending hairpins we break out of the forest into the snow line, this pass reaches 2,474 metres, the snow and the views are amazing and no extra layers of clothing are necessary. Our destination this evening is the pretty town of [Oberammergau](#) just into Germany.

Day 15 256 miles. Today we head out across southern Germany on very quiet A class roads, made for motorcycles, still under that endless blue sky at a refreshing 29 deg C. For lunch we stop at [Lake Titisee](#) it's a great place like an inland seaside resort with lots of apple strudel and ice cream, then heading off for the evening to the Vosges mountains in France along the [Route des Cretes](#) to Munster. This is to be the last night of the Magellan tour, but this is the third time I have left this area for the last day dash to the tunnel, so I had booked an extra night here to explore the Vosges region and enjoy a more relaxed trip home.

Day 16 81 miles. I have a lie in this morning as there is no urgency to get off with the group, there are clouds in the sky, the first since we left Folkestone, I see them all off from the hotel, it's drizzling with rain. My first job is on Google to find a garage or bike shop were I can buy a reasonable size bottle of oil as my supply is all used. I find what I need at the third garage and top up with oil. The rain has stopped. I have planned a circular route around the Vosges to include a visit to the [WWI memorial at Hartmannswillerkopt](#). At



956 metres it's an important look out over the Rhine Valley. In 1915 a fiercely fought battle that lasted 11 months, resulted in stalemate, 30,000 French troops lost their lives. After the war only the bodies and artillery hardware was removed. I was able to walk round well worn paths in the woods and see all the trenches, rusty barbed wire and defences left in place as a memorial to the fallen. There is also a well stocked cafe for lunch and the clear blue skies have returned.

Day 17 242 miles. Today I'm heading to the beautiful [Cathedral square in Reims](#). I planned a route avoiding motorways via lakes and wooded areas and was pleasantly surprised by the diversity of the countryside that we miss when we all rush down the motorways to get to the mountains. It was easy to find coffee and lunch stops, I arrive in time to have a wander around the Cathedral and my evening meal outside on the cobbled square was still in gorgeous sunshine. Then onto my hotel in a very small village just south of Reims in the middle of miles of vineyards.

Day 18 366 miles. My destination today is home to Melton, Suffolk amazingly it's wall to wall sunshine again, I head north on the motorway to Saint Quentin turning west to follow the River Somme all the way to Amiens where I stop for lunch at a riverside cafe. Then north up the coast road to Calais straight through the tunnel with no queues. As I come out of the tunnel the clouds don't seem to have moved since I left 18 days ago. I avoid the M20 heading north to the M2 and, sure enough, before I make the dual carriageway I have to stop to put on all my wet gear, welcome home Trev, after 18 days brilliant sunshine I'm not complaining.

I'm very satisfied with Magellan, they are at the more expensive end of the market but their attention to detail is superb, you receive GPS routes well before you travel and backup, if required, loading these on to your device. Also, a full daily itinerary in a glossy booklet including maps, hotels, points of interest at each port of call, loads of advice on touring and loads of phone numbers in the event of any emergency. Also, the guides are great, we had two because Andre was leaving the ropes as a new guide, he was due to take another group on the same tour later in September. You also buy into a social media group, being able to arrange or join local days out on the bike with other Magellan customers. They also arrange reunion days, or evenings, like the one I attended at the 2019 NEC Bike Show. They booked the National Bike Museum for the evening for a posh three course meal and a wander round the old bikes at your leisure, attended by well over 100 people.

On arrival home the bike is booked in for a service at my favourite bike dealer [Mototechniks](#), I explain about the oil leak but receive blank looks, because after the rain on the way home and a good clean there's no sign of any leaking oil. When Luke arrives back from the normal test run after the service in now a hot summer's day, we have oil dripping on his pristine workshop floor. On close inspection he finds the oil pipes that feed the radiator have vibrated together and worn through the outer stainless steel shield, damaging the inner rubber pipe work which is made worse by the high temperatures. When I tell him I found the leak on day 7, he is stunned and explained how lucky I was, if the pipes had failed I would have had an empty sump and a leg bathed in very hot oil in seconds.



He's straight on his computer and finds there are no replacements in the UK so it's home on the train and off to Tesco's on my bicycle.

My plan for the next few weeks of the summer was to return to my partner's house in the midlands then on to her holiday home in Wales. We had planned to do a few short trips together on the bike if the weather was suitable. Waiting for the pipes put all those plans on hold.

11th August 2019. I set off on another hot summer's day loaded up in readiness for my trip to Wales. I have a well tested route to the West Midlands to avoid the A14 and M6. I had encountered some very light showers so I put on my hi-vis waterproof over my vented jacket. On the A513 near Litchfield I was caught in a torrential rain storm so I decide to pull into a large gravel entrance to a field on the left of the carriageway to put on my waterproof boots and trousers, I check mirrors indicate left and as I am about to pull in..... BANG I'm hit from behind with an impact that launched the bike and me into the air, coming down to earth about 8 metres away in the long wet grass of the verge past the entrance. I'm very dazed and confused, then someone is asking, "Are you OK, can you move?" This turned out to be a witness who was travelling in the opposite direction, he stopped because he saw my hi-vis jacket flying through the air.

Please read next month's issue for the Hellish part of my 2019. *Trevor Fisk*



### *Support Frank Barrett's charity ride.*

On the 4th September, our colleague, Frank Barrett will begin cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats on behalf of the [East Anglian Air Ambulance](#) and [SERV Suffolk and Cambridgeshire](#). If you would like to help these fantastic charities, click [here](#), donate (every little helps) and enable Frank to raise funds for two very good causes.



# The Last Laugh Word

My thanks to two new contributors, as well as an old stalwart, very good writers to boot. Having read both parts of Trevor's article – 'Heaven& Hell 2019', the words that popped into my ancient head were 'annus mirabilis' and 'annus horribilis'. The latter brought to life by the Queen in 1992. While Trevor's experience may not be on a par with HRM, one can only empathise with what he went through follow such a perfect holiday. So well worth a read next month. I'm hoping to squeeze a piece out of James Myers, who for some time during his training to be a solicitor was on the other side of the fence, acting on behalf of insurance companies. In a conversation on one of the Carter Tours, James suggested that only a video of an incident will help expedite a claim against a third party; but let's wait to see if James will help us understand the view from the insurer. NB both Trevor and I now have cameras fore and aft, that are recording for the whole time the bike is powered on, and a few minutes after switching off: a cheap insurance policy.

Admiration was another word I heard in my head when I learned that so many club members had offered to be considered for the roles of senior tutor and tutor. Apart from being very experienced riders they are selfless in wishing to help others just for the pleasure of knowing that they have helped a fellow rider, quite amazing.

Enough of my musings, it's quite lonely sitting here, so if you have a question or the seeds of a contribution, call or send me an email. *Ed.*

