

**YOUR
COMMITTEE**

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**NEXT BRANCH MEETING
15th January 2002**

MINUTES OF THE 2001 AGM

Seventeen members attended the Branch AGM, which was held on Monday 26th November at the Brownlow Hall, Warfield. The meeting followed the usual format for such events with reports from the outgoing committee being first on the agenda. Without boring you to death it is sufficient to say that the committee felt that whilst the Track Day had been an outstanding success the rest of the year was a bit of a let down. Bad weather and lack of drive had been the main culprits. At the AGM branch membership stood at 54, an increase of one over this time last year and the highest ever for the Thames Valley.

The Treasurer was able to spread happiness and light by announcing that branch funds had risen to a healthy £985. This cash surplus is the result of the increasingly successful Track Days the Branch has held. Although profit has never been the main intention, the overwhelming demand for entries has meant that a small profit is the inevitable consequence. Our gratitude must go to Barry Stickland, Beryl Skinner, Ken Aylett and their team of helpers - thanks.

The outgoing committee then abdicated. A new committee was duly elected, which looked strangely similar to the old one. A remarkable sight to observe was seventeen grown men all managing to avoid eye contact with each other whilst volunteers for election to the committee were sought! With the old committee elected "en mass" the real business could begin.

The next item on the agenda related to the general progress of the Branch; a sort of health check if you like. Brian Seward, a long-standing member, opened the debate by saying that he did not find the branch as enjoyable as he once did. He felt that club nights were not as good as they once were and that we did not seem to run as many social events as in previous years.

The Secretary then asked the floor for their opinions and a most interesting debate ensued. Many members expressed dissatisfaction with our meeting place - The Plough and Harrow - feeling that it no longer fitted our purpose. The main gripes were the cramped seating area and the fact that it is not possible to make announcements, run quizzes or do other things that we might wish to in fear of offending other pub users. It was the unanimous feeling of the meeting that a change of venue would benefit the branch. A watershed moment in Thames Valley history; our thanks go to Brian for nurturing the discussion.

Although this was the mood of the meeting nobody advocated a headlong rush to the nearest branch of Pickfords. No, the AGM was clear that any change of venue had to be a genuine improvement over the present location; the main criteria for any new venue being as follows:

- ◆ Preferably offering a separate clubroom, or at the very least an area solely for the use of club members.
- ◆ Suitable and safe parking for motorcycles.
- ◆ A licensed bar.
- ◆ Within an approximate five mile radius of the present location (negotiable for the right venue).

Peter Renouf offered to make enquires at the Binfield Club, which may fit the bill. However, any other suggestions would be most welcome, so if you know a suitable venue let one of the committee know. We do not intend to make a hasty decision and any decision to move will only be taken following consultation with the Branch membership.

Finance was next up. Prudent use of funds for the benefit of all branch members seemed to be the general view and a few suggestions were forthcoming. The Track Day will again be held in September, requiring funds to start proceedings, which should then be recouped through the event. The Secretary offered to contact the main club with a view to having their clothing supplier tender for the production of branch shirts. This may require a one off set-up fee but would then allow members to buy shirts with the branch logo on direct from the supplier. A free summer barbecue for branch members was also suggested.

The discussion on finance naturally led into events. There was no shortage of suggestions but as always it was difficult to finalise dates as nobody had a calendar of next year's motorcycling program. This is a problem that has always hampered the AGM. To avoid the problems encountered this year with regard to inadequate planning the AGM decided to convene an events planning meeting for January 2002. This will be open to all members with the purpose of finalising a branch events program for 2002. Please check for an announcement in this newsletter.

The final point of consideration for the meeting was the Branch newsletter. All those present acknowledged the hard work of the editor in single-handedly producing eight issues a year. However, it was clear that this task was made more difficult by the absence of contributions from the members.

As a result of the discussion that ensued the Chairman agreed to supply regular reports on the racing exploits of the members. Barry Stickland said he might be able to contribute some articles based on letters he has received from our club president John Hudson. Both these contributions were welcome, although there is still room for other contributors; if you attend runs, shows or events please consider submitting a report.

The AGM finished at 21.50 and everybody adjourned to the Plough and Harrow. In many ways this was our most contentious AGM; a time to re-appraise our position. It could have been a depressing affair but the debate that followed showed that the members are keen to see the Branch flourish. We can now approach 2002 with renewed vigour and a thirst for world domination through our obsession with an outmoded means of transport!

Ian Verrinder.

EDITORIAL

A successful AGM signals the close of one season with a sense of anticipation for the coming season. The branch has a number of issues to resolve regarding its venue, its communications and its events but I am confident that it will all be democratically addressed.

The committee recognises the different strengths and interests of its members; racers, part time and full time tinkerers, socialisers, ralliers, run outers, drinkers, eaters, off roaders etc. With this diverse group we know that we must be fair to all in the organisation of events and this comes up later – please contribute at the planning meeting and tell us if you think we are not being representative!!

Planning for next year now starts in earnest – see the announcements in this newsletter.

And finally Esther..... (*how old am I?*)



A Merry Christmas to all members and their families of the flourishing Thames Valley Branch of the Norton Owners Club.

EVENTS PLANNING AND QUIZ EVENING

Date: Tuesday 29th January 2002 at 8pm

Venue: The Blue Room, The Brownlow Hall, Warfield.

Format:

1. We will plan the Thames Valley NOC events calendar for 2002. This will include the extra-clubnights held throughout the summer. Please bring along any ideas you have, but remember to be included we need dates. Even if you do not have any suggestions yourself you will still have the opportunity to vote on those proposed.
2. There will also be a team quiz, with the teams being drawn at random on the evening. The questions will obviously include some on Nortons but there will also be some general knowledge.
3. The branch will provide refreshments.

Skittles Evening

The annual skittles challenge between the Thames Valley and Solent branches will take place on Saturday 19th January 2002. The cost, for what is an excellent evening's entertainment, is £8.50 per head. Contact Barry Stickland to book your place.

Events Thoughts

At the AGM the following were tabled and need to be brought to the planning meeting:

- Solent Track Day – 18 May 2002
- TV Track Day – 21 Sep 2002
- Reading Speedway
- BSA OC Lord Derby
- Triumph OC Iver
- Alton Station Café
- Matchless/BSA OC Maidenhead
- Ace Café
- Southern Run
- Milestone Museum Basingstoke
- Southern area branch meet at Avebury
- Ace Café
- Gurston Down (Broad Chalke nr Salisbury, Wilts) hill
- Any local scrambles, trials or enduros
- BSB, Thruxton, Brands
- Branch runs to NOC Events - Norton Day etc



EVENTS/DIARY/ NOTABLE DATES

January 2002

19th

Skittles evening at the Golden Pot near Alton.
Contact Barry Stickland to reserve your place.

29th

Events and Quiz evening!!
(See Article)

The rest will come after the Events event!