



Cornwall Freewheelers EVS

Registered Charity: 1140165

Blood Bike Service



December 2014 Newsletter (ramblings from the saddle).

Wow! It's getting chilly and in conjunction with the introduction of my winter riding tights, hello it's my first cold of the winter!!

I think it's worth mentioning that with the arrival of some colder weather we should be looking at ways of keeping warm and dry.

Thinking back to my days as a Clearance Diver in the Navy the way to keep warm is layers. Now I'm sure my instructors knew of this concept so imagine my surprise when we were asked to complete endless skinny dips in December and January. We clearly didn't have to do them if we didn't want to but if we wanted to complete the course it was a question of 'Thank you very much Chief, can I do another just to make sure I'm really cold?' Now I'm not saying the coordinators are anything like my old diving nemesis Len but the last thing on their mind when they send us out on a job is our warmth. It's not that they don't care, it's a simple fact that we should be able to look after ourselves. So here are some tips take them or leave them but any idiot can be uncomfortable and cold...

So here goes layers are brilliant, its better to have thin layers that trap the heat rather than that thick Arran jumper your mum knitted that stops you being able to bend your arms. There are lots of very expensive makes on the market but I prefer the Helly Hansen Lifa range. I have used it extensively throughout my diving career and it does exactly what it says on the tin. Traps the warm air and lets the sweat escape. Obviously there are many other brands that offer the world and the ability to take cash off you quicker than one of those bankers who send you a dodgy email wishing to send a present to his dying mother via your bank account.

Something that people tend to forget is the effect of cold and wet on the body so a good diving suit will do the trick. Totally impractical but would definitely keep you dry, so what else is around?

The ... wait for it, deep breath in, BMW rain suit is brilliant. I've only gone and done it again, mentioned the BMW brand in a newsletter and I'm not on a commission. At £80 it is not cheap but it really does work. Frank Thomas does the job very well but their bright yellow and black one can be a bit fiddly when trying to put it on. So here is a bit of a revelation. I have been doing a bit of wet weather porn around the Internet. No not that porn but it is surprising what turns up when you type in 'wet clothing'. I have been looking for ages for something (wet weather gear) that I can put on quickly and have looked at all sorts of variations.

Eventually I made a purchase and could kick myself because I bought MVP desert camouflage Gortex jacket and trousers. How many sets of this have I given away during my 24 years in the navy! The set cost me £60 including postage and packing and it arrived within two days. I know military stuff is not everyones idea of cool but this stuff really works, I should know. I chose the desert camouflage as it is easily noticed by car drivers who insist on driving with all their windows misted up.

So the exterior is covered but what about the cold blue body under your riding gear. Drinking is vitally important during your shift unfortunately no alcohol but hot drinks are ideal and water is important too keep you hydrated. It is surprising just how much sweat you will generate while riding even though you may feel chilly on the outside. A bit of sugar will also help boost the energy levels if you are riding for a long time. Don't think that you can't take a break. If you are tired, thirsty or cold/hot let the coordinator know and he will either task someone else or delay the next job while you grab a drink. I think that's welfare covered, so what else?

What a brilliant presentation we had at the member meeting held at Kingsley Village by the Paramedic team. I was surprised that there are only three paramedic bikes in Cornwall, which explains why you don't often see them. The information on how they selected their current bike was very informative.

Ian, the Quatermass has been busy trying on various Hi-Viz jackets with a view to supplying our newer members with and to replace any older versions that may wear out.

At the meeting we discussed 'Crowd Funding' which has the potential to reap a large amount of money for the charity.

I had a meeting with Steve Damerrell last week and explained the concept we were looking at. He loved it! We have been given at a hugely reduced price an MT09 Tracer. This bike was only released at the bike show in Birmingham. He has also said we can have a scooter, helmet and as much clothing as we need to provide rewards for the project. With that in mind I contacted Ocean BMW in Plymouth and explained that Damerrells were going to be our first backer and would they like to be our second. They are discussing it over the next few days and will give us a call to let us know what the outcome is. They are very interested though and are happy with the concept. I have asked them if they can help us out with a bike and straight away they asked if we could work with a car. Lets wait and see what happens.

I'm hoping to visit Ocean BMW Penryn this week as they have a donation for us from their golf day. Pete Soby and I hope to collect it on Thursday or Friday of this week.

Now I was promised last month that someone would provide a profile of themselves but was let down at the last minute. Apparently the budgie was flying around the lounge when he was writing it on the computer and something happened to distract him and as he turned away the budgie landed on the delete button on his computer so he lost it all...

I have reliably been informed that the budgie has been restrained with pepper spray and the goldfish has been distracted with two castles to keep it busy so here goes... Paul Thomas' profile; I should point out that no animals were hurt in the writing of this profile.

When Mark the frog Holroyd decided to write a monthly newsletter I suggested that maybe each of us could write a personal profile so we all might learn what company we are keeping. He instantly counter suggested I write the first one! So here we go....

I'm one of six, born into a military family in Hereford. (guess what my dad did?) My mother is Canadian so I enjoy dual nationality. We moved back to Cornwall 3 days into my life where I spent the next 20 odd years, and some of them were odd! At school I was described as outstanding, in so much as I was often found standing outside the headmasters office awaiting due punishment for some indiscretion, the best (or worst) was me and 3 others being caught carrying the deputy heads BMW Bubble car up 2 flights of stairs and delivering said car to his office. School and I gave up on each other rather early and I was dispatched by my father to become an apprentice stone mason with a local builder for 4 long years during which time I managed City & Guilds advanced level, ONC in construction studies and a distinction in Concrete Technology, oh, and National Apprentice of the year 1972! So, I'm 21, I've got my trade, I've got my certificates and I got the sack.

To avoid the wrath of my dad I legged it to Frankfurt, trowel and spirit level in hand in true Auf Weidersein Pet style my intention being maybe stay 6 weeks to pay off a bank loan. Oh no! I discovered beer, fast cash, fast women and all the diseases we giggled about at school. Three years later after having visited almost every European country and parts of the Soviet Union, I was arrested after a fight in a beer kellar in Dortmund. The very nice policeman suggested that for everyone's sake I go home to wherever I came from and don't look back. Now, I don't know about you but I always try and find something of value for me in everything, and this policeman had a nice clean uniform; he was cleanly shaved and looked well fed. On the other hand, I was hungry, scruffy, battered bruised and still bleeding, hung-over and I smelled! My point? I can do that, gissa job? Within 6 months I was outside the gates of the Metropolitan Police Training College at Hendon.

My time with the Met was varied and full of surprises. I was always drawn to guns so most of my career was within a firearms unit of some sort. To cut a long story short my career ended abruptly one August evening after "an accident" resulting in a broken back. The very kind men at New Scotland Yard decided I was of no further value and also suggested I go back to wherever I came from. Heard that one before.

Back to Cornwall briefly before heading out to British Columbia for a few years with Lynda my wife of 28 years and of course my three young children. We had the time of our lives!

Back to Cornwall again, this time setting up an AGA servicing and repair business. My eldest daughter working for RBS in Bristol, youngest daughter learning Performing Arts at Cambridge and my son Archie is working at a ski resort in BC, Canada.

The effervescent Chris Polawski recruited me to Cornwall Freewheelers. I don't own a motorcycle so CFW lent me the Silver Pan for 3 months to complete my IAM. I've been a lifelong blood donor and donated this month for the 90th time.

That's me, who's next?

Cheers Paul, so now you know what's required why haven't I got more profiles?

We have some newbies and prodigal sons to announce.

Martyn Gaffney, Mark Sampson, Richard Taylor, Steve Wells

Also up and running are Sonia Finch (Fundraising collective), Mark Pascoe, Roger Always, Phil Jefferies with Phil Fishwick and Olly Rutter making welcome returns.

The date for the next meeting will be announced soon but will probably not be until the New Year due to this being a busy month for everyone.

Bring along as many people as you like whom you think could be interested in helping out with the charity. They don't have to be able to ride a bike but I can't lie to you **we need coordinators!** Did I say that loudly enough? **We need coordinators!** Please ask around, the only commitment they will have is to be able answer a phone, then phone a rider to take the job. I'm sure there is more to it than that and training will be given to all those who apply.

Chris Polawski is hunting for new people to sign up so please spread the word.

If you have any bits you would like me to include in future ramblings please email me at fundraising@cornwallbloodbikes.org and I will see what I can do.

Hmm that's probably enough for today so I will leave it there. Don't forget to put your availability down on the rota and if you want a marked bike check out the booking form on Dropbox. My last plea concerns Dropbox, remember to take the form you want to read or amend out of the box and put it on to your desktop. That way we don't get duplicates of forms, which leads to confusion. Oh and did I say that **we really need coordinators?**

Ride safe
Mark