



the Beemer Reader

Newsletter of the BMW Riders of Vancouver Island

Volume 6, Number 11

MOR #237

NOVEMBER, 1996

FROM THE EDITORS

Heaven continues! Three more articles from members! Geoff Stevenson writes of his recent travels in his native New Zealand, and compares the experience, and the bikes, to what it was like some 35 years ago. Richard Doucet gives us a detailed and amusing (even to a non-teckie like me!) account of The Big Fix of his trashed tranny, referred to in Kristin Ackerson's article last month. And finally, Kristin gives us more of her witty musings on, well, hmm . . . I think I'll let you decide.

Aside from making my life much easier, this influx of articles from a variety of people is, to me, indicative of a very healthy club. We don't always have the time to chat at length with each other at the meetings, which in any case are not very frequent, so the newsletter offers an excellent opportunity to share experiences and information. I realize that not everyone has the time (or inclination) to write a whole article either, so what about writing letters to the editor (me! - I like letters!). Comments on articles, comments on comments on articles, ideas for new directions for the club, etc. Doesn't have to be long, or particularly erudite or brilliantly written. But the more people participate, the more interesting it becomes. Besides, it's fun being "published"!

Brian Davies tells me he has club clothing left for sale, which he'll bring to the next meeting. A list of what's available is on the last page.

Enjoy the last vestiges of fall, but start dreaming of spring!

Love, Sally

PRINCESS MARY RESTAURANT ⊕ 9:30 AM ⊕

January 6	Saturday
February 4	Sunday
March 2	Saturday
April 14	Sunday
May 4	Saturday
June 2	Sunday
July 6	Saturday
August 11	Sunday
September 7	Saturday
October 6	Sunday
▶ November 2	Saturday ◀
December 1	Sunday

● IN THIS ISSUE ●

Tranny Trouble in Paradise by Richard Doucet	2
Riding, Then and Now by Geoff Stevenson	4
Pumpkins, Karma and Urban Myths by Kristin Ackerson	6
Motorcycle Taxis Anyone?	7
Clothing Update by Brian Davies	8
Buy and Sell	8

TRANNY TROUBLE IN PARADISE

by Richard Doucet

It was turning out to be a great end to a great summer. Derek and Kristen had invited me along on a ride to Long Beach for a couple days of riding and camping. After thinking it over for about 2 seconds, I said an emphatic yes. We spent the first night enjoying the company of Derek's sister and hubby on the water at Cowichan Lake. After being wined and dined, we left Sunday morning for Long Beach via logging roads and Port Alberni. The weather was great, and we pulled into the Greenpoint camp ground in the park at about 1pm. We managed to get a walk-in camp site without any problem. After setting up our humble abodes and getting out of our riding gear, we wandered down to the beach for a nice stroll and to take in the sun and surf. We decided to rise early Monday morning to enjoy the twists and turns of the road back to Port Alberni without having to worry about dodging Winnebagos and Westphalias. It was a wonderful ride back. About 5 miles out of Port Alberni the tranny gremlins reared their ugly heads and said enough of this! My bike made a funny screeching noise, then a grinding noise. I slowed, down-shifted to fourth and nursed it the remaining miles to Port Alberni. As soon as I was stopped, the aroma of burnt gear oil and metal could be smelled, and the tranny case was hot enough to burn. Yes, I was dumb enough to touch it! Derek and Kristen went beyond the call of duty. They rode back to Victoria, hopped into their newly acquired pick-me-up truck, and drive back to Port Alberni to rescue me and my smoking Beemer. The next day I commenced the task of pulling out the tranny. A word of warning here. This is just a general description of how to do this. Rule no. 1, read the manual! If you don't have one, beg, borrow or buy one. There are two ways to pull the tranny. The hard way is to undo the motor mounts and shift the engine and tranny forward, which then

gives you enough room to slide the tranny back and out of the frame. I tried another way, which was to remove the back wheel and swingarm. Just remember to measure the clearance between the swingarm pivots and the frame. (I didn't.) That way when it goes back in you can have the thing all lined up the way it was before.

Once I had the transmission sitting on the basement floor, I grabbed a beer and read the shop manual again. It says to heat the tranny housing to approximately 100C before pulling off the back cover. I cheated and was lucky. It took about 20 minutes of careful coaxing to pull the cover off. I am sure a quick trip to the oven would have helped in this endeavour. If you have access to torches, even better. I have roommates to contend with, so the smell of gear oil wafting through the house wouldn't have endeared me too well with them.

It was not a pretty picture inside the gearbox. There was all kinds of ground up metal sitting on the bottom. Like when you go to Barkerville and pan for gold. Only this was steel and aluminium! The output shaft (the one going out of the tranny to the driveshaft) was sort of flopping around doing its own thing. Luckily the layshaft and input shaft were OK. The inboard bearing supporting the output shaft was totally destroyed. The cage for the bearings was in four pieces and there were ball bearings in various shapes (except round!) which fell out the second I pulled the output shaft. I could see the dollar signs as I pulled the other shafts and shifter assembly. The output shaft and 5th gear were toast. Burned black from rubbing against the bearing race and making a nice machined groove in the gearbox housing. That explains where all the aluminium came from. The rest of the gears on the shaft were discoloured from the heat and lack of oil. The other bearings were in various states of impending failure, with the

only salvageable one being the input shaft bearing. I spent the next day asking various people for advice (and sympathy!). I received lots of both.

Parts needed were:

- 6 bearing, \$140 - Andersons in Victoria
- 1 5th gear, \$160 - BMW
- 1 used output shaft, \$100US - Eurosport in California
- 3 seals, 1 gasket, 4 shaftdrive coupling bolts, 21 protector plate, \$70 BMW

The 5th gear took about 7 days to get here from T.O. and the shaft about 5 days from the US. When getting stuff from the US make sure to tell the guys to label it as Used Classic Parts. They way you only pay GST and handling charges to our buddies at Customs.

Once I had all the parts, I read the shop manual again and started installing the new bearings on their respective shafts. I had a puller on hand to remove the old ones. They came off fairly easily without any grief. I then put the shafts in the freezer to shrink them and the bearings in the toaster oven to expand them. It was at this moment that my roommate came home for lunch. Her idea of having a toasted ham sandwich was put on hold for about 20 minutes while I performed my mechanical surgery. The hot bearings slipped onto the cold shafts with ease. One thing to remember is to remove the small seal covering the cages of the bearings. This will allow the gear oil to lubricate and cool the bearings properly. The next task was to install the shaft and gear assemblies into the tranny housing. I popped the housing into the oven (after supper of course!), and the gear assemblies into the freezer again. Once again everything slipped back into place with a nice clunk. It is important that the shafts and gear assemblies are seated solidly into their respective pockets in the hous-

ing, so that later when the cover goes on, it will be easier to shim. I had the cover installed and shimmed by Kelly at S&M Cycle in Colwood. This is an important and tricky operation to get right and I didn't want to pull the tranny again for the sake of saving a few dollars. The new seals and shaft flange were also installed at the same time.

I then started the task of putting it all back together. This entailed putting parts on and off several times because you have to do one before you can do the other. Such as installing the clutch pushrod in the transmission *before* it is put back in the frame. Or you can do what I did and have to remove the swingarm *again* to do it. Putting the airbox back on the tranny housing, and then discovering that the fuel crossover line goes beneath the airbox. All the little tricks of the trade that make a job go slow and easy as opposed to *really slow* and easy. All in all it was a very educational exercise in the art of patience and reading the manual every time you have the least bit of doubt about what you are about to do. I am now back in the saddle again as Wilf Carter would say. It was a nice sunny afternoon when I hit the starter button and clicked it into first gear to try my and several other peoples' handwork. The gears were where they were supposed to be, and I only had one neutral in the right spot. The transmission shifts much smoother and the telltale vibration of wonky bearings is no longer present at highway speed. My face now has a much bigger smile on it and I am looking forward to more rides with everyone. Thanks to Derek and Kristen for the rescue and to Al Malone for the offer of using his garage and knowledge.

RIDING, THEN AND NOW

by Geoff Stevenson

It was a gentle bend and we took it at about 125 km/h. There was no traffic in either direction, we hadn't seen a cop or photo radar trap all day, the pavement was perfectly smooth and on the horizon were 7,000-foot snowcapped peaks. Of course, the sun was shining brilliantly, although because it was midwinter, the air temperature was only 6 or 7 degrees. Sounds like B.C. in November, you might think. The riding WAS similar, but there was much less traffic and we were on the left-hand side of the road. Since midwinter was last August, you might guess (correctly) that we were in New Zealand.

For me, the riding brought back wonderful, 35-year-old memories. I was born and brought up in New Zealand and learned to ride on a 1954 Ariel 350 single there in 1961. (Mind you, you didn't lean into many corners at 125 kmh on the Ariel! This time I was riding a brother's K100RT.) It was a great old bike. It cost me \$270, which was a fortune 35 years ago when I was a young newspaper reporter making about \$20 a week (yes, a week, not an hour!) Of course, money is relative: in those days in New Zealand, room and board (all meals included) was \$9 a week, a movie was 40 cents and so was a haircut. Ah, how inflation has devalued the currency!

The Ariel's long-stroke single cylinder mill wasn't much more than a big (albeit overhead valve) lawnmower engine. It probably made 15 bph, and, wide open, could reach an indicated 70 mph on the jerky Smith's speedo. But it was reliable - with just one exception. The gear driving the magneto would slip now and then on its tapered shaft. Of course, this would destroy the ignition timing and the engine would quit. So you parked safely away from the traffic, pulled the spark plug and got out a pencil. Fitting a

cigarette paper between the points until you knew they were just about to close, you rotated the engine until your pencil felt the piston coming up the cylinder on the compression stroke. I forget the setting before top dead centre now, but it was simple enough. When you had the piston at the appropriate height, you pushed the gear back on its shaft, and tightened the lock nut. Then it was a simple matter of replacing the cover plate, screwing the spark plug home and reconnecting the high tension lead, kicking her over and riding off. I don't recall how I figured out this was the problem the first time it occurred, but it was an easy problem to remedy thereafter. You ALWAYS carried a pencil!

Of course, K100RTs have no such quirks, and my brother Alistair and I rode about a thousand incident-free kilometres on three days in August. Generous soul that he is, he lent me the Beemer with its magnificent fairing, while he rode either a three-cylinder, blood-red 1000cc Laverda or his trusty 1971 850 Norton with a handlebar fairing. He has an interesting stable of bikes, including a lovely old 1954 500 single Matchless and two Triumphs, a 500 twin and 750 triple. (He also has seven Jaguars, but that's another story - especially the E-type on which he's just finishing a complete restoration from bare metal).

We were lucky with our weather this time. When we left each morning temperatures were just above freezing, but we enjoyed 8 or 10 degrees Celsius in the afternoon. It was dark by 5 pm, so we were home by then each evening.

But oh, those magnificent roads, the snow on the mountains, the blue of the water in the lakes - and the lack of traffic. On one stretch (this was all in the south of the South Island, the larger of New Zealand's main islands, which is about five times the size of Vancouver Island), we could have run wide open for perhaps 50 kilometres, slowing briefly for just a couple of

corners in that distance. Of course, being responsible near-senior citizens, we mostly proceeded at modest speeds - which might have had something to do with the fact that the licence plate on one of the bikes involved, shall we say, a slight irregularity.

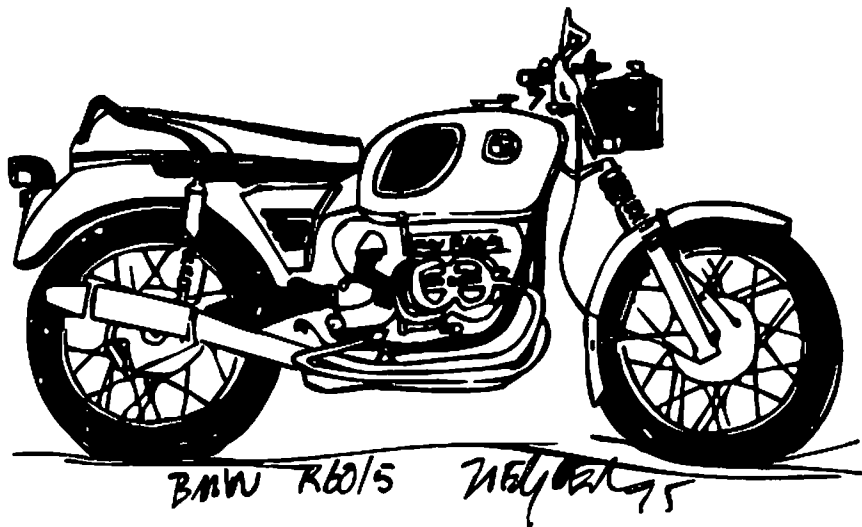
Comparisons with riding in B.C. were easy to make. The roads were as good but no better (we were on two lanes all the time), we did see one cop in the three days (we were never in a town of more than 12,000 people), but there was just no traffic, compared to British Columbia, with the possible exception of, say, the road from Pemberton to Lilloet.

When I rode my old Ariel (and the 650 BSA and the R60/2 Beemer that followed) on these roads in New Zealand, there were tight corners everywhere, it seemed, especially through the narrow rover gorges that abound in this part of the world. Some remain (for which we motorcyclists give thanks), but many have gone the way of New Zealand's extinct Maa, to be replaced by long sweepers that even the local farmers in their pick-ups can take at more than a hundred clicks.

I don't suppose the roads were any more fun than the Hope-Princeton. But with the two-lane limit set at 100 km/h (and most traffic running at 10 clicks faster), you could open the throttle from time to time without being too conspicuous. And because we frequently went 10 or 15 kilometres without seeing another vehicle, the threat of a ticket seemed pretty remote. New Zealand has had photo radar much longer than B.C., but there are (blessedly) no vans parked in the boonies where we were riding.

As many of you will know, it's quite easy to rent a bike in New Zealand if you're there. It's a hell of a long way to go, of course, and not cheap, either flying there or living day to day once you arrive. But the riding will be as good as, or better than anything you've tried before. If you don't believe me, ask Al Malone!

If anybody is planning a trip, do give me a call and I'll happily suggest itineraries - and give you brother Alistair's phone number.



PUMPKINS, KARMA AND URBAN MYTHS by Kristin Ackerson

Since returning to school, I tend to stretch reality into different shapes. Apparently unrelated subjects take on new connections to each other, sometimes ending up in a mixed bag that inevitably has a motorcycle at the bottom of it. So what do pumpkins, karma and urban myths have to do with BMW's? I don't know the punch line, but last week they all intersected. It began with a tall tale I heard shortly after I received a \$165 (U.S.) speeding ticket and ended with a conversation with Derek about what kind of karma one would need to come back as a motor scooter. Last week Sally and I wandered out to the Saanich vegetable stands, where the gourds, squash and pumpkins are piled high, and I began to put it all together. I suppose the only real connection is that these occasions left me with a surreal feeling, like riding with the sun on my face every weekend in September.

Before I begin to tell you about this first occasion of serendipitous connection, does everybody know what an urban myth is? It is a story that tends to illustrate some broader concept of urban living. To demonstrate, I have included a myth that my stepdaughter Nikki (GS Hopeful) sent to me while she was studying hard at Dalhousie. I won't bore you with the whole thing, but the following gives the salient points. **WARNING: THIS IS NOT POLITICALLY CORRECT IN ANY WAY!**

At a hushed press conference, a hospital spokesman described what happened next. "The match ignited a pocket of intestinal gas and a flame shot out the tube, igniting Mr. Tomaszewski's hair and severely burning his face. It also set fire to the gerbil's fur and whiskers which in turn ignited a larger pocket of gas further up the intestine, propelling the rodent out like a cannonball."

"kristin - i know it's gross, but i couldn't stop laughing (sic)" writes Nikki at the end of her disgusting tribute to incredulity and assault on family values. I bet many of you have heard it before. This is a most worthy urban myth because it tends to perpetuate the real or imagined fears of The Majority. In contrast, The Photoradar Myth is a much cleaner tale of a modern David and Goliath.

The story is that somebody came off of the Vancouver ferry and passed one of the new saviours of our society, the photoradar van. Not content to let this invasion of his privacy go unchallenged, the mystery rider turned around for another go at the technocop. This passage, however, he went by at speed *doing a wheelie the whole way!!* Because of the angle, the camera never got a shot of the plate. To continue, the police have supposedly been going around to all of the motorcycle shops trying to identify our hero. Forgive me if you agree with the concept of photoradar, but I think that motorcyclists are out there to enjoy the roads and to go fast if they choose. If that means speeding and passing, so be it. In short, we are the doers, not the done unto. So who gets to be Goliath? I have also heard that motorcycle plates are too small to catch Medusa's gaze, so they can't get us anyway. (*Unfortunately not true, as we found out later - ed*) Just in case this information is one of those unfounded myths perpetuated only by the retelling, Derek has been getting plans off of the Net for strobe lights, neon surrounds, and springs that make your plate wobble ever so slightly, like eyeballs attached to glasses on the ends of slinky stalks. I imagine our belief in an afterlife influences just how far we are willing to go in this life. That brings us to the second part of this discussion: karma. I don't remember what horrible thing I had done, but I'm sure I was deserving of some punishment. My saintly mate remarked on the odd fact that I don't believe in reincarnation. We then began to "what if".

What if I came back as a bug that was about to be wiped out with some new technology? Wouldn't being a bug be bad enough? After that things got much worse. What if I came back as one of Richard Doucet's transmissions bearings? OH MY GOD, what if I had to come back as a motor scooter. We all know motor scooters, right? They're the guys even Honda Goldwing riders won't wave to, not to mention they take up motorcycle parking at UVic. Derek then added the coup de gras: "you will come back as a motor scooter and a dog will pee on your tires". It doesn't get much worse than that.

Somewhere, out in Saanich, all of this made perfect sense. I had a huge grin on my face as I tried to follow Sally's beautiful angles and lines. The big red pumpkins, motor scooters, and wheelies all attained a measure of unity. Now all I'm sure of is that I will languish in some purgatory for promoting these stereotypes and myths. But at least I won't come back as a motor scooter.

Remember that Great Britain, like other European countries, permits lanes splitting so motorcyclists do not have to cue up for red lights or bridges etc. Motorcyclists thus can travel faster and more efficiently than four-wheeled vehicles, save both fuel, pollution and of course time.

These motorcycle or "taxijets" as they are being nicknamed, are fitted with heated seats and a portable cell phone, and weatherproof clothing is also provided. With Vancouver's traffic congestion increasing, is it only a matter of time before a similar service is offered?

Author unknown.

MOTORCYCLE TAXIS, ANYONE?

Reprinted from Das Rundschreiben,
 Newsletter of the Bee Cee Beemers

An interesting concept offered by Virgin Atlantic Airlines of Great Britain, the country with the most crowded roadways in the world! Aimed primarily at business travellers who need to reach Heathrow in a hurry, people now have the option of travelling from the centre of London to the airport by motorcycle. Virgin assures this service can have the client at the airport in approximately 30 minutes, which is two to three times more efficient than automobiles travel



CLOTHING AVAILABLE


Clothing sales have been slow in the past month, mainly due to my not taking the samples to the last breakfast. I assure you this will not happen in November!! To date we have 9 green sweatshirts with large logos: 1 medium, 4 large, 3 X large, and 1 XX large; 10 short-sleeved ash T shirts with small logos (for that winter trip to the dessert): 1 medium, 3 large, 5 Xlarge, and 1 XXlarge; and 9 ash mock T shirts with small logos over the heart: 5 large, 3 Xlarge, and 1 XXlarge. To those members I missed at the last breakfast, my apologies and I hope to be able to help you at the next one. See you there . . . Brian

Editors:**Sally Harvey - submissions**

#301 - 940 Inverness Ave.

Victoria, B.C. V8X 2R9

383-1810 we546@freenet.victoria.bc.ca

Nigel Beattie - mailing

2430 Mowat St.

Victoria, B.C. V8R 5S9

595-6369

BUY AND SELL
FOR SALE:

1972 BMW R75/5 (toaster). Restored, with hard bags, windshield, spare parts. Candy apple red. Collector plates. \$5900. John Bardsley 656-9660.

1972 Triumph Trophy T100C (high piper). Restored, collector plates. \$5900. John Bardsley 656-9660.

1977 R100/7, \$4200. Hermann Schaefer, 642-5006.

Parts For Sale:

Set brake pads to fit recent R bike, EBC #861 bought at Shail's, \$40;

Oil filter socket for K bike, Hazet 2169, \$10;
2 into 1 exhaust for R bike, \$50;

Oil filter, long hinge type, 11-42-1-337-575 \$2 each or trade for short ones.

Dave Linkletter, 1-604-743-1633

Parts/Consultation

Looking for parts for 1970's machines? Unable to get parts in Canada and loathe to pay the exchange in the States? Or just need some general consultation? Roger Godlonton has found a resource person in Calgary who has 20 years experience working on pre-80's BMWs. His name is **Brock Downey**, and he is willing to address the above questions. He has contacts in Germany, so he can help get those hard to find parts. Give him a call at 403-278-2892.