



# CHAINLINK



AUTUMN 2020

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# CHAINLINK

The Magazine of the Christian Motorcyclists' Association UK

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## Autumn 2020

**A big 'Thank You' to all who have taken the time to send articles and photos for this issue.**

**If yours does not appear in this one then it will be kept over for possible inclusion in the Winter issue.**

The views expressed in *Chainlink* cannot be taken as official CMA policy on any subject. The magazine is published up to four times a year, to provide information for CMA members and to encourage them in their personal walk with God. We pray that this magazine will also stimulate non-Christian readers into thinking more about Jesus Christ, and also seeking Him for themselves.

**The Bible says: 'Seek and you will find' • St Matthew chapter 7, verse 7**

## From the Editor's Garage

### 'Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.' Hebrews 12:2

Our lives are like a book—full of chapters that the Author has already planned. With some novels the reader is allowed to choose which direction he takes and so influence the final outcome. In our life-story there may be many unusual twists and turns, sometimes of our own choosing, but the end is to 'finish the course' that our Father has set for us. 'He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.' (Philippians 1:6 NIV)

Unlike the preparation of this and many other publications, there will be absolutely no requirement for our life-book to be proof-read on God's behalf—He doesn't make mistakes so needs no-one to check His work. Fantastic!

Ride safe, be blessed, be a blessing.

John

Articles for Chainlink are most welcome, and should preferably be submitted by e-mail to [chainlink@bike.org.uk](mailto:chainlink@bike.org.uk)

All images should be high resolution (originals from your camera/smartphone) and NOT embedded in a text document. Vector graphics are also welcome. Text documents should be unformatted text or rich text format (RTF) files. MS Word, OpenOffice and WordPerfect documents are acceptable, PDFs are not.

The sender must have permission for the inclusion of ALL names, addresses and pictures, especially of children, prior to submission and be able to provide accreditation for all material that is not original. The sender takes all responsibility for all content and rights relating to all items that are submitted. If in doubt, please obtain verification from the National Chairman or the Executive committee. The editor retains the right to correct spelling and grammar as appropriate.



### Thinking back to the call of God to CMA . . .

Let me ask you a question:

**“How did God call you to be part of the ministry in CMA?”**

When I think back to the first contact I ever had with CMA, it was in the mid to late ‘90s at a Baptist Church in Stockton on Tees; Howard and Denise Robinson came to visit and set up a table-top display. As we talked, I realised it was a ministry that combined motorcycles and sharing the Gospel with bikers rather than just a ride group. I felt something connect in my soul and that God was saying,

**‘Remember this moment—it’s significant.’**

It wasn’t a coincidence that Howard and Denise ‘happened to be there that day’—God’s purpose and plan was being established for His Kingdom purpose. Maybe they were there just to meet me? That’s what grace will do—God knew what was happening and three or four years later He opened the door for me to join CMA. I had no idea what lay ahead and looking back I still can’t get over the privilege of serving as a member of this incredible mission to *‘Reach the world one heart at a time’*.

When I attended my first branch meeting, I was made to feel very welcome and sensed the passion and



Mike & Sandy – early days!

excitement I had been hoping to find. Andy Hogan made me laugh—he still does (at that time I needed all the laughs I could get). In the months ahead these new friends became family and taught me so much.

I’ve never forgotten the day I introduced Sandy to Howard, he said, “Does she like motorbikes?” When I said “Yes”, Howard said, “That’s alright then!” All these aspects of my introduction to CMA were essential and I thank God for them.

We have so much to be grateful to God for and so much to share with those who don’t know His love—especially those who don’t believe He exists.

At a recent CMA Zoom prayer meeting I shared Psalm 103:8-11 (The Message Bible). I am so encouraged by the hope I find in these verses; this is the *Good News* that changes a life of drudgery and hopelessness into a life of peace with God.

God is sheer mercy and grace;  
not easily angered, he’s rich in love.  
He doesn’t endlessly nag and scold,  
nor hold grudges forever.  
He doesn’t treat us as our sins deserve,  
nor pay us back in full for our wrongs.  
As high as heaven is over the earth,  
so strong is his love to those who fear him.  
And as far as sunrise is from sunset,  
he has separated us from our sins.

Paul Hodge prayed, ‘Thank you Lord that you don’t love us for what we do but because of who You are!’

The Prophet Isaiah responded to God’s call when he heard the cry, “Who will go for us?” Isaiah’s heart replied from a position of humility, “Here am I, send me.” In other words, like me he said, “Lord if you can use me, I’m willing to go.”

Brother Andrew, who started *‘Open Doors’* once said, “God does not choose people because of their ability but because of their availability.”

Isaiah made himself available to the service of God but his reliance was in God not himself. I’ve been reminded of this time and again throughout the past twenty years.

As we move forward this year the world may be facing uncertain times but God’s Kingdom purpose will not be deterred. Let’s pray that God will put us in contact with those he is calling to serve in this vital ministry so that those who live in darkness may see the light of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

<sup>3</sup>If the Good News we preach is hidden behind a veil, it is hidden only from people who are perishing.

<sup>4</sup>Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don’t understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.

<sup>5</sup>You see, we don’t go around preaching about ourselves. We preach that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we ourselves are your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, “Let there be light in the darkness,” has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

I have never forgotten that moment when I felt something connect in my soul and sensed that God was saying, “Remember this moment – it’s significant.”

I have never forgotten the welcome I received, the sense of belonging to the CMA family and the advice that was available to help me grow in God’s service.

It is a privilege to serve alongside you. God Bless you,

Mike

National Chairman CMA UK, a Follower of Jesus



Mike’s new pulpit!



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'Thank You' to Roger Faulkner, Open Doors UK

Mike Fitton, National Chairman



Many of you will know Roger Faulkner who has now retired having served the Lord for many years in the ministry of our mission partners Open Doors. Since 2009 Roger regularly attended our National Rallies / EMC Rallies to share heart-breaking accounts of our brothers and sisters in the 'Persecuted Church'.

Throughout the eleven years I have known Roger, I knew he was a man dedicated to God's calling on his life and

eager to speak out for the persecuted. On numerous occasions I would send him a text or email and rarely found him in the UK. He might be falling off a camel in Egypt, dodging a scary moment in places that can't be mentioned or praising God having met another hero of the faith, that Hebrews would describe as 'the world was not worthy of'.

On behalf of CMA UK I want to thank Roger for sharing his passion with us and challenging our response to those who suffer in ways we cannot imagine. I would also like to pass on our thanks to Roger's wife, Janet, who faithfully supported him, her commitment did not go unnoticed.

Roger said, "I have been extremely privileged to serve the Lord through Open Doors and during my 14 years with them have seen, heard and done many

amazing things. My contact with CMA has been particularly valued".

We welcome Dan Gower as our new Open Doors contact and look forward to working closely with him.

God bless you,

With love from us all at CMA UK

Mike and Sandy



### “What’s persecution got to do with me?”

Many years ago, I remember thinking just that, “What’s persecution got to do with me?”

I went to a seminar at a Christian conference about the persecuted church and it felt so disconnected from my reality. My church experience was comfortable. Turn up once a week, say ‘Hello’ to a few people and see them again next week. Being persecuted for wanting to follow Jesus was simply not on my radar. I had never been treated differently for following Christ, at least not in ways that threatened my livelihood, freedoms or even my life!

As time moved on, I started to be involved in church leadership and eventually in planting a church. When doing this I had to think about questions like, “What does church look like? What are our values? What do we believe?” The question of “What has persecution got to do with me?” was like a nag that would not go away. I couldn’t shake off the thought that this was something I should not just know about but should actively be doing something to stand with those on the receiving end of persecution.

There was one passage in scripture that I found particularly

challenging. We all know as Christians that we are to love God and love our neighbour. In the book of Hebrews the author expands on what loving one another looks like.

*“Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.”*  
Hebrews 13:1-3

The line ‘remember those in prison as if you were together with them’ hit home. This has everything to do with me. This is my family. I want to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep; to have that under-used gift of encouragement to my brothers and sisters who I may never know personally but are known to our Father in heaven.

Earlier this year I met Mojtaba, an Iranian church leader who spent time in prison for his faith in Jesus, he told me, “I never prayed for God to release me from prison, I can serve God anywhere, inside or outside of prison. It doesn’t matter what situation I am in. I can work in God’s Kingdom wherever He places me.”

It really challenged me in thinking

about how we relate to God, how we can serve God wherever He places us and how we can stand with our church family through the challenges that they face. I am so inspired by the millions of persecuted men, women and children who, despite the dangers, despite the cost, live for Jesus in the hardest places to follow Him!

In January of this year I began to work for Open Doors, who support and strengthen the persecuted church around the world. Roger—who you know and love—has retired. I will do my best to follow Roger in representing Open Doors and the stories of our brothers and sisters around the world as best I can.

I was really looking forward to

being with you at your national rally. A couple of years ago I passed my Mod 2 but for various reasons I have not got round to buying my first bike yet. I was going to enjoy checking out all the different bikes. I will have to defer it to 2021!

So like me, if you have ever asked the question, “What has it got to do with me?” I’d encourage you to

check out our website – [www.opendoorsuk.org](http://www.opendoorsuk.org). On there you will find articles, stories, resources, and ways to pray and support our persecuted family. If I can serve you, CMA and your church families then please get in touch.

Yours in Christ,  
Dan  
[Dan.g@opendoorsuk.org](mailto:Dan.g@opendoorsuk.org)





## Albert Schanzl - A Tribute

Andy Harrison, South Lancs

**On Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020, a not unexpected message was posted on the Bikers Church Facebook site that Albert had gone home to be with the Lord.**

Not unexpected because only a few days earlier, along with friends from South Lancs branch, I had visited him at home and spent time with my friend who was clearly at the end of his battle with cancer. It was a battle that he rarely discussed with his friends and always fought bravely, with a smile on his face. In fact, as I write this thinking about our time together, I can't remember an occasion when Albert did not have a smile on his face.

Albert will be known to many of you reading this, his distinct hairstyle (if you can call it that) made him recognisable on the rally site. After a poor attempt by Kevin Cummings to mimic Albert's distinct Austrian accent (Kev sounding more like a man from Glasgow than Graz), Albert earned the unfortunate nickname of 'Scotch'. Playing along, he purchased a square metre of Celtic land and acquired the formal title of Lord and Lady for himself and his wife Diane.

Albert was born in Austria in 1958 and has two children, Mark and Lisa from his first marriage. He met Diane in 1981 and together with their son Alex, moved to the UK in 1987. Whilst in the UK, Albert got himself a motorbike, a KMZ 125 on which he had a road traffic accident that would leave him walking with a limp, which later would require a stick for support. Albert then progressed to the Honda Goldwing 1800 that he and Diane rode for almost two decades. The bike

served him well, although it had experienced a few dramas over the years, including the odd scrape, breakdown and once set ablaze during a ride out in the North Lakes.

Its custom paint job was a source of conversation at regular Lancashire biker meetings in Rivington, Knott End, Kirby Lonsdale and Lytham St Annes.

Albert and Diane were founder members of the local club Owls, before moving on to the Chorley Wildhearts and then founding the rally club Saddle Bashers. However, following his commitment to our Lord in 2000 Albert would later feel a calling to CMA and his dedication to serving through our ministry was there right to the very end. He volunteered to be Treasurer at South Lancs Branch and he and Diane would support the ministry at every opportunity, meeting in Bolton at the Mercury Hotel (when owned by CMA members Glyn and Kwez) and more recently at the Salvation Army. Albert also shared fellowship with Lakes and Lancs, North Cheshire, the Cheshire Twig and CMA friends across the country.

Albert and Diane were massive supporters of CMA's mission including Bikers Church and once we are out of our restrictions and allowed to meet again,



Albert's presence will be remembered fondly. Never known to decline a breakfast opportunity, he and Di met on Saturday mornings with friends at the Brocket in Wigan, Aspull Methodist Church, Knowle Green Congregational and various carveries across the region.

Albert was well known to secular motorcycle clubs and he and Diane were ever-present on the rally scene—in several countries. Their trusty campervan was their choice of overnight stay (rather than nights under canvas) but the bike often followed on its trailer, socially distanced before it became fashionable. Being blessed with a kettle, they were generous with cups of tea on cold mornings.

Albert's warmth was felt as he served fellow

bikers at the Leyland Eagles, NABD and countless other smaller rallies. His loud, strangely Germanic laugh could be heard from outside the marquee tent of Holy Joe's where he could often be found sat at a table holding court, sharing memories and his faith with anyone who was prepared to listen.

Albert had a heart for the daily problems his friends faced in their lives and never complaining himself, always remembered to ask how we were fairing. He would readily share a time of prayer with us and in the last few weeks of his life, received the gift of speaking in tongues.

Albert was a local legend. Diane received over 230 cards and many more heartfelt messages of condolence via text and social media. We were fortunate to know him, ride with him, laugh with him and serve with him. His warmth and his smile will be an inspiration that stays with us all. ✠





## CMA SA Freedom Road M/C Rally

Derek Scott-Kelly (Scotty), Bristol

### A visit to the CMA Freedom Road Motorcycle Rally in South Africa



(L-R) Eddie Roos, Scotty, George Lehman, Reg Jansen, Tim Crawford

#### The Trip to South Africa

On the 9<sup>th</sup> February my wife Agnes and I flew to Cape Town for a long-awaited three-week holiday. We planned to catch up with family whom we had not seen in over thirty years and for my part, meet family I had never met before. We based ourselves in Cape Town as our plans revolved around the city and neighbouring towns.

Agnes had been in communication with her cousin Reg Jansen who just so happened to be a member of CMA Amanzimtoti branch, the very town where we used to live. He told us about the Freedom Road Rally that CMA Western Cape Region were hosting on the 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> February and that he and the Amanzimtoti Branch President Tim Crawford would be travelling down to the Cape to attend. Plans were immediately put in place to spend a day with these guys and do some catching up.

I got in touch with Eddie Roos, the Western Cape Region President, just to make sure it would be OK and he was very happy for us to join them and to wear UK colours.

#### The Freedom Road Motorcycle Rally

The morning of the 15<sup>th</sup> we set off for Franschhoek, a beautiful area set in the mountains between the Haweqwa and Threewaters Nature Reserves. The trip was amazing as the scenery unfolded and I was so disappointed to be in a hire car and not on my bike.

After a short struggle we eventually found the site in the mountains hidden in a forest. I did notice the car's outside temperature gauge was reading 38°C.

On arrival we were blown away by the welcome and incredible friendship shown to us. It was great to see Reg again and meet people from all over SA. Some were doing round trips of more than 1400km just for the weekend—crazy! The camp site consisted of a few buildings that contained a hall, ablution block, large BBQ (braai) area and a large undercover area for people to gather in the shade. The sun was seriously hot. There were a few chalets but most people camped amongst the trees and refreshments were supplied by outside caterers.



Camping in the coolness of the trees

#### The People

Reg and Tim took us around and introduced us to so many people we can't remember all the names, but all were very welcoming. On meeting Eddie Roos, we immediately got into an in-depth conversation about the different ways CMA organisations operated around the world. I will explain some of the things we discussed later. I then met George Lehman, the SA President, and it worked out we had worked in the same department on the Railways at the same time but in different areas—small world. We exchanged Biker Bibles, theirs is called 'Hope For The



Highway' and I was given a Freedom Road Rally badge. Both Eddie and George knew Mike Fitton as I passed on his greetings and were hoping to meet up with him sometime soon.

Another thing of great interest was the cross I had on my back. Most of the locals had not seen the cross before and really liked it. I must also add that when CMA SA have a rally they invite other motorcycle clubs to attend—by other I mean non-Christian organisations.



The Cross stands out

#### CMA SA

We then walked around the campsite and, seeing different clubs there, the guys explained that for most of the rallies they organise the door is open to all bike clubs. They have been doing this for a while now and found that the trust and respect had grown over the years to a point where although a lot of the visitors were not Christian, they did not act in any way that would have been offensive. In fact, Eddie was saying that they would often come to CMA with their problems and were not shy to express their feelings. This did however take a few years of hard

work, patience and sharing the love of the Lord.

They also explained that they will as a branch do church together. Some branches have made a particular local church their own, but the bigger groups actually had their own services and organised their own venues.

I got a very strong sense of community amongst the CMA SA members.

Bearing in mind the very stormy past that SA has had and that there are still tensions in some areas, I was amazed and thankful to the Lord for the way the different ethnic groups mixed so well.

Another one of the issues they have is travel, the vast distances between the cities ensures that national rallies have to be well organised. Don't forget that in some of the areas these guys travel you won't see a house or services for hours on the road. There were a few places we went where there was no mobile phone signal either. Unfortunately, crime levels are still very high and also has to be taken into account.

Sadly, we could only spend a day at the rally and weren't able to stay for the evening service but we were both very touched by the openness and hospitality of the biking community. The CMA guys exuded a quiet confidence of the presence of the Lord (1 John 4:4) and it was a privilege and joy to spend time with them.

Thanks to Reg Jansen, Tim Crawford, Eddie Roos and George Lehman, God Bless. ✝





## Provision via Raven's Wings

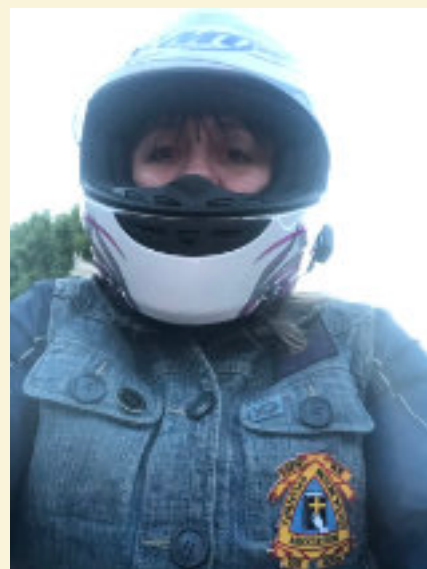
Beccy Pemberton, Devon & Cornwall

I've always loved the happenings in 1 Kings 17. God guides Elijah through some pretty tough times and each time the sequence is the same: God speaks. Elijah obeys. Things look bleak. God provides miraculously. Elijah is vulnerable to the drought and famine but he trusts in God and God provides. I'm in awe of the way God provides and shows His love to those who trust in Him.

When my husband suggested we call the bike 'Raven' I immediately agreed—I mean, what bike doesn't need a name! The garage became known as Raven's Rest (at least to me) and the name suits—she's black and beautiful, and was provided for out of our means (bank of mum and dad with a lifetime loan!) just as God provided food to Elijah by the hands of a widow and the wings of a raven. As I have learned about the ministry of the CMA I became really keen for God to use this provision to bless others and for His glory. I pray that each time I get on I will be riding for His glory.

During the Covid lockdown I was asked to make a money

transfer on behalf of my mum and dad to a Ugandan brother who was struggling – unable to work in lockdown in Uganda and therefore unable to feed his family. I giggled to myself on the way to the Post Office as I looked down at my tank – whilst unable to go out I had created a strap with the image of a raven and the scriptures: 1 Kings 17, Eph 3:20, Phil 4:19—all about God's provision. It is always humbling to realise that God indeed has good works planned for us to do in advance (Eph 2:10) and has planned things down to the most minute detail, down to the name of my bike in order to remind me of that fact! ✝



Check out Beccy's personal website for other stories and songs:

<http://www.beccyp.co.uk>

## Always Got Your Back

Bob Hughes-Burton, North Wales

**Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August, Bank Holiday Monday – what an adventurous day it was going to be. We, the North Wales Branch, and North Cheshire branch were meeting up in North Wales—not all of us but enough for a time of ministry and fellowship.**

We all met up at the Ponderosa Café near Llangollen where we had a time of fellowship over breakfast baps and a cup of tea or coffee. Later we rode to Bala where we intended to have a time of ministry. I left home and headed off for the Pondy closely followed by Dawn and Stephen in the car. Everything was going great and the ride was enjoyable with not much traffic around this time of day, 09.30-ish.

I was headed up the Horseshoe Pass, not far from my first destination. I came to a point where I had to change gear and when I pulled the clutch lever there was very little resistance, uuuummm, ??? So, what was happening here? I arrive in the car park, stopped and parked up, checked over the clutch lever and all seemed OK. I went and and got my breakfast bap and forgot about it.

At the time to set off for Bala, I started the bike up and there was still less resistance on the clutch lever. I should have stopped then but, no, carried on. Everything was going great, 10 miles left to go before arriving at Bala – junction ahead where there are traffic lights – getting ready to change down and CLUNK – CRUNCH as I changed gears. I just thought it was me being a little zealous with trying too quick changes – nope.

We arrived in Bala and, with less than half a mile to go and the dreaded car pulling up in front, on with the brakes and in with the clutch lever—aaaarrrrggghhhh, where the clutch left it somewhere along the way as the bike came to a grinding stall. 'Oh no, I can't push this up that short hill—Lord help me get it to the car park so I can take a look at it', I thought. She started but that clutch did not want to disengage the drive and it was dragging quite badly. But got going and arrived at the car park, found a spot to stall and did so impressively.



I then announced to all the group I had no clutch, everyone gathered round, and the echo of 'no clutch' can still be heard in my head now a few weeks later. OK, so now time to investigate. After some time of taking panels off the bike we eventually found where to bleed the clutch fluid – if indeed we had some – John (Top Box) to the rescue. Off he rode into the beautiful sunshine saying, 'I will return with some dot4 Bob'. So I didn't worry since he's got my back.

Just a few seconds later I saw a guy walking close by who was wearing *God's Squad* patches albeit a prospect. We caught each other's gaze and he came over to me and exchanged greetings. Ten minutes later John (Top Box) arrived back with the dot4 and Stephen my son and Paul Hodge set about bleeding the clutch. The old fluid was as black as the tarmac so we changed as much as possible until we could feel a clutch again. The bike was put back together and so there was time for some ministry.

Mine came in the form of the *God's Squad* prospect. He came over to me and requested prayer for a fallen biker from their group (none *Squad member*). He was out with some friends from the Midlands and one had parted company with his bike earlier in the day. He was taken to hospital in Stoke but no one knew exactly what was wrong with him. We prayed for the fallen biker and I was then asked what the problem with the bike was. After I had explained in painful detail the events of the day the guy from *God's Squad* said, 'He's always got your back'. ✝



# Locked Down in India

David Thornton, Bedford

**For the past ten years now, I have been going to Goa in India to work with the street children's charity 'El-Shaddai' and this year was no exception. I flew out with Air India on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February arriving on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>.**

For those not familiar with this charity, they have been helping to rescue children—mostly orphaned, living on the streets, surviving by begging and raiding refuse bins for food. The charity accepts responsibility for all of their needs—a home, clothing, food, health care and education.

In order to promote *El-Shaddai* and raise funds to run it, one of the things we do is take some of the children, usually forty to fifty, to the beach. There they can enjoy games and play in the sea while we set up an information spot and leaflet the tourists, many of whom are Brits who stay for extended periods avoiding our much colder winters. This happens on Saturday and Sunday (after church) and we alternate venues between Baga, Sequerim and Candolim beaches for the boys and girls. We also have a large stand at the weekly flea market in Anjuna.



This year would become rather different! All started well, but in the background the Covid-19 virus was spreading fast.

14<sup>th</sup> March – all flights into India cancelled.

18<sup>th</sup> March – my return flight to UK cancelled by Air India.

19<sup>th</sup> March – travelled to Panjim (capitol of Goa) to try and organise an early flight back home but no flights available.

From this moment all of our beach programmes had to be cancelled.

22<sup>nd</sup> March (Sunday) India went into LOCKDOWN. Nobody allowed out between 7am and 9pm.

23<sup>rd</sup> March – all shops and restaurants closed. There should have been food shops, pharmacies and fuel stations remaining open but only a few pharmacies opened and only briefly.

24<sup>th</sup> March – one local food market open from 6am to 11am with food severely rationed and even basics like bread unavailable. Most prices had been doubled.

25<sup>th</sup> March – all food stores shut in North Goa and wouldn't open for 21 days! My apartment 'hosts' found me some basic cooking equipment for when I could obtain food—I normally eat out—but the restaurants all had to close. On venturing out to get a feel for the situation and food if available, there was now a strong Police presence everywhere with roads blocked and I witnessed a number of altercations.

At this stage we were having to fend for ourselves food-wise and we came to know each other a lot better around the many apartments, sharing what we had.

26<sup>th</sup> March – an enterprising restaurant owner was now doing cooked meals to order, whilst avoiding the police when delivering.

27<sup>th</sup> March – a benevolent Indian turned up on his scooter loaded down with bread rolls and pouches of fresh milk which he freely handed out.

This became the norm—we were now sharing information on where to obtain food but at a price! Also, the Police were becoming more violent and less sympathetic towards anybody out on the streets. They had a habit of using the long sticks they all carry too.

30<sup>th</sup> March – should have been on my way home tonight!

5<sup>th</sup> April – light a candle for the NHS at 9pm for 9mins.

6<sup>th</sup> April – panic!!! The airtime on my India phone ran out, so a real chase-round to find someone who could 'recharge' this for me as the banks and ATMs were all closed.



For the last two weeks now, the UK Government had been trying to organise repatriation flights for thousands of tourists stranded around the world. There was a lot of misinformation on the various social media sites we were obliged to use—Twitter and Facebook mainly—links didn't work, incorrect phone numbers, all very challenging and stressful. As there were quite a few of us from El-Shaddai, we were able to compare notes and encourage one another. At last some genuine information started filtering through and we registered through a UK Government agency for a flight home. Again, not without its worries as the cost of £681.00 paid to an agency we knew nothing about (there had been rumours circulating the internet of scams) using a bank card and a lot of personal details. This was the third time I had given this information, with two previous attempts to different links not working! So was this a scam or genuine? It turned out to be genuine.

An e-mail arrived, initially with details to be packed ready for a 7am collection at a rendezvous to be advised in due course. That was changed for a different date! Finally, details of where and when including driver's name and mobile phone number, rep's name and number (incorrect) time and place. The e-mail arrived at 9pm. I had no idea where the rendezvous hotel was—the information was incorrect anyway. It was dark by 7pm and there were no street lights so trying to find a hotel that nobody had heard of was a big worry. By 'chance' I asked a young lad who thought it must be only ten minutes walk away. The security guard didn't even know the name of the hotel he was securing! However, the cleaner said a large gathering of people with suitcases had assembled about 6am for the last two mornings. So this must be it?

Back to my apartment and last minute packing and weight check—limited baggage allowance! Made sandwiches for trip as advised no food or water would be provided.

10<sup>th</sup> April—Good Friday—how appropriate. Up at 5am, arrived at RV before 6am, bus turned up bang on 7am which is amazing punctuality for India. Eventually departed after 8am having waited for passengers who hadn't turned up. Airport by 10am after a circuitous route to collect the strays!

We were on the only flight out that day but not allowed into the airport concourse until we had gone through a health check including temperature check and declarations that we showed no symptoms of the virus. After checking in the baggage (weight OK), passport and visa stamped, security and into

departure lounge—plenty of seating for a change—we were issued with a goody bag, not expected but very welcome.

Finally, we were allowed on board and pleased to see we all had bags with enough food to last the ten-hour flight direct to Stansted rather than via Bombay (Mumbai).

The aircraft was being run by *Titan Airways*, an airtanker more used to flying to the Falkland Islands with fuel, so the seating which had been installed was rather basic, i.e., hard! No IFE or galley facilities, but the cabin crew were brilliant.

Face masks – compulsory from pick up in Goa to departure from Stansted.

Self Isolation for fourteen days when home – not compulsory, but I did anyway.

## Postscript

On departure from Goa, there were no reported incidents of the virus there and many ex-pats were staying on—a lot of Brits go for six months, October through to the end of March.



The children at the El-Shaddai homes have all been well looked after and those with any family at all were returned to their 'homes' in the slums, as long as they could be properly cared for. Also, the charity has been feeding many thousands of stranded migrant workers who now have no work, hence no money coming

in and therefore no food or accommodation. You may well have seen footage in the media of tens of thousands having to walk home to Kashmir as all transport banned. Very many died on the way back. I consider myself very fortunate to get home so easily, although it wasn't a pleasant experience at the time. Strangely, on the way to the airport, it was a great relief to be on my way home but I was already looking forward to returning to be with the children and play my small part in their story. However, my wife is not so keen for me to go, it was very stressful for her too. Hmm. I wonder what lies ahead? 🙏



## Back at Oliver's Mount at Last

George Laws,

**OLIVER'S MOUNT** was a revelation; a light at the end of the Covid-19 tunnel. After so much time in lockdown we were able to finally see live motorcycle racing. Over the last few months I had bought every DVD race meeting for BSB and World Super Bikes from 2000 up to 2010. I was nearly at the end so I immediately applied to be a track photographer for both the Barry Sheene and Gold Cup meetings.

With my photographer's pass and a ticket for my wife we headed off to Scarborough in a camper van borrowed from Lee and Catherine, fellow CMA members from Tyne and Wear. On arrival we parked up and I got talking to a man erecting a tent next to us after offering him a much-needed cup of coffee. His name was Tony Elsey and he was a photographer from Darley Moor, Ashbourne. I began talking about photography and motorbikes then to my surprise gave him a CMA card and a Biker Bible. Why surprise? Well for those that know me talking to people isn't what I am good at but apparently, as my wife pointed out, anything is possible in God's strength.

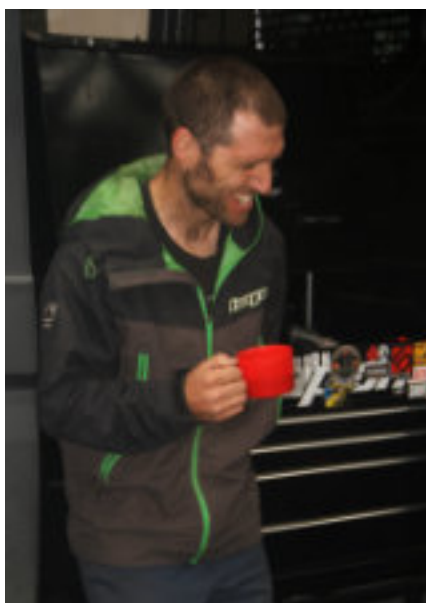
Caz, my wife must have felt a little left out so got talking to Cathy and Dave who were marshals and in a camper van next to us. She gave them cups of tea after a long, freezing day marshalling.

Saturday morning at about 9am Cathy and Dave were awake. Caz gave Cathy a woven bookmark she'd embroidered for her the previous night with Oliver's Mount on it. She also gave her a pink 'Jesus loves you' bracelet, 2 CMA cards

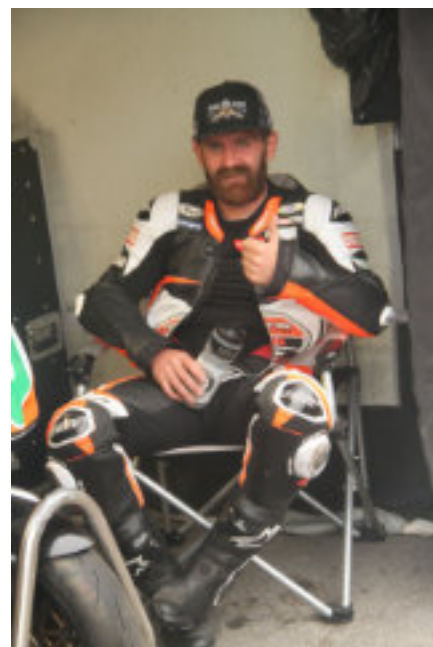
and a Biker Bible.

Later, as I went off taking photographs she got chatting with a woman called Sharon about her lovely motor home. Unfortunately, she didn't get time to witness to her but had ten minutes conversation. The lady did notice that Caz had her CMA waistcoat on.

Heading down to the Paddock, which was closed to the public I registered and managed to just miss being knocked over by Guy Martin arriving late in a van. He'd brought two bikes with him, so I stopped a while and photographed him unloading and drinking tea. Lee



Johnson's smile told me he enjoyed racing and just being out in the fresh air. I managed to talk to Dean Harrison who spoke through mouthfuls of a much needed bacon sandwich as he talked. He too looked pleased to be there. I was going to photograph Jamie Coward who sat on a chair looking miserable but decided not to. As a photographer it's sometimes best not to interrupt people's train of thought. Looking up he noticed me



and gave me the thumbs up, so I took an image. Hopefully I cheered him up.

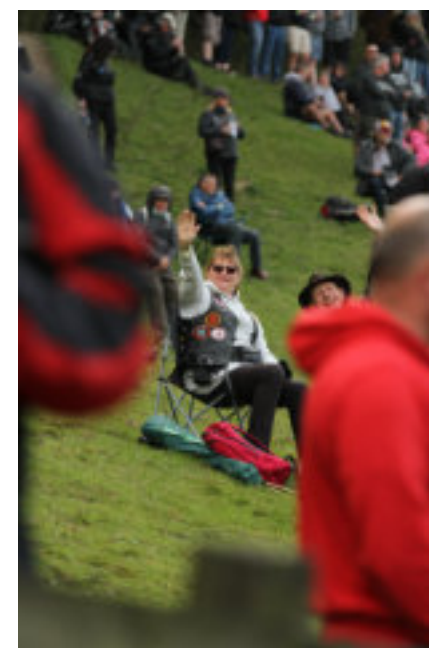
Heading off up the stairs back to Quarry Bends I managed to photograph a number of races while taking much needed rests before making the top. After another session of picture taking, I headed off in search of Caz to see how she was getting on.

Sometimes you feel alone when you are out witnessing. 3000 spectators and just you with a white cross on your back, and other times Paul Wedgwood, from North East Branch of CMA walks out of the crowd to help, support and offer fellowship. We stood watching some racing for over an hour with him commenting on how Dean Harrison finished miles ahead of the competition and how Guy Martin was probably only there for the love of racing and had no intention of winning. Caz was more interested in the 631 bike which was ridden by a woman, Angela Cragg. We prayed that God would give us opportunities over



the weekend.

Then came Ruki and Dave from Glasgow. David had been working in Saudi Arabia and had been stuck there for 4 months because of Covid-19 restrictions. As a biker he couldn't wait to get out and see some racing. Ruki, who was a Christian had other thoughts in mind but came along with him anyway. Realising that Oliver's



Mount had nothing for Ruki, eagle-eyed David noticed Caz's white cross from afar and made a beeline for her, Ruki in tow. Ruki was over the moon and asked Caz if she was a Christian biker. Caz said 'yes' and asked them to join them at the fence.

Caz didn't have her mask on as she'd been distracted by Paul but gave them a CMA card each and a handmade black and pink 'Jesus loves you' bracelet and they each put each other's on. Ruki kept thanking Caz, who asked her how she had been. Ruki said she'd been a bit stressed through the pandemic. Realising she didn't have a Biker Bible left Caz offered her one of her homemade stress pouches and she chose a pink one which smelled of lavender. Paul, seeing Caz search her waist coat in vain passed a Biker Bible over to her, which she gave to Ruki. Opening it up Caz explained the layout, testimonies at the front and back and a New Testament in the middle. Ruki asked David to take a photograph of her and Caz and took one with Caz's camera as well. Caz said she wouldn't keep them any longer from the racing. They said their goodbyes and left.

While in the Paddock a woman approached me and asked if I could take a photograph of her nephew as it was his first race. Normally, as a photographer, this is where I would give them a sales pitch and explain the cost but God had sent me there so I felt I couldn't charge the woman. After taking a few images of him racing I emailed them back to her and was surprised at her

gratitude. Perhaps this may lead to me witnessing to her at another race meeting. God moves in mysterious ways.

I always find it strange the opportunities God gives Caz by laying things on her heart. Sitting in a traffic jam outside a Welcome Break on the motorway we were delighted when a car flashed us and let us into a line of traffic we had been trying to get into. In response Caz jumped out while the traffic was stationary and approached the woman driver. Caz thanked her for letting us in and gave her a pink 'Jesus Loves you' bracelet and a CMA card. Her reply was, 'Aww, thank you for that.' Jumping back into the car she smiled and said, 'Sorry, God led me to do that to say thank you.'



Sometimes it's not just spreading the word of God but witnessing by your actions. As my daily notes showed me,

God, my Father, I want to be, today, for You, the sweet aroma of Your Son, to bring Your love, Your mercy, Your acceptance and Your healing to those around me. I want to bring Your joy, Your delight, Your affirmation and Your life to the atmosphere of wherever I am.

**For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.**

2 Corinthians 2:15, NIV ✠



## Protect Yourself with Good Equipment

Steve Wilds, West Yorkshire

**I love simple straight forward messages – things that are easy to understand and follow. Some of the messages and requirements we have in this modern day are often complex and we have to find our way through a maze of instruction. Remember the maxim: KISS – keep it simple stupid; well in my case I can say, ‘keep it simple Steve’, and cut out the stupidity. Some folk I know say I should leave the saying as it was. Thanks!!!**



On our bikes it's great to have and to use good equipment—gear that will protect you should you have an accident. Bikes are regarded as one of the most vulnerable means of transport on the road and I guess there are numerous reasons for this – ‘didn't see you mate’, hit the corner too fast, bad overtake and so on—probably hundreds of reasons why bikes and bikers can be vulnerable. When and if there comes a time that you fall off or are knocked off your bike it's great to be reassured that your clothing and your equipment are up to the mark and give you the best possible protection.

A good quality helmet, proper biking gloves that stay warm and dry, quality boots to protect your feet and ankles—all these are basic common sense. I have spent many years abroad in Spain and have lost count of the number of times I have seen bikers and their pillions out on the bike in shorts, tee shirt and even flip-flops. They of course support the obligatory helmet but often little else in terms of protection. Now I know the climate can be very hot and it's hard wearing heavy protective gear, but skin and tarmac don't mix and the tarmac without exception comes off best when the two meet. Modern technology has brought the invention of air-vests, you know the ones that inflate if you fall off. I have friends who have proven their worth. As for me I am also keen on high-viz wear. Some say this is not cool but it must contribute to being seen, so high-viz for me! So with my visible vest, a clean white helmet and good road position I hope to be readily visible and avoid that potential crunching crash!

Don't ignore those safety issues, good

preparation for a ride and good equipment is the order of the day and could help save your life if you have a tumble. I don't think there are many of us that would ignore the use of good safety equipment—it's simple. It's a clear message and we need to stick to it!!!

Ephesians 6 says, ‘Put on the whole armour of God so you can stand against the attacks of the devil’. Yep, I bet many of you reading the first half of these few thoughts knew where it was going—put on the whole armour of God. Accept that we as Christians, as children of God will face many enemies, many foes who would want to put us down. We fight against principalities and powers, against the rulers of darkness and spiritual wickedness. This is no fable, this is no old fashioned tale—it is as true today as ever, it's serious stuff.

Spiritually we can be under attack and we need the full protection of God, His armour that will both defend us and fight off our enemies. Get yourself surrounded with the truth, wear the breastplate of God's righteousness, put the boots of peace on your feet and the shield of faith for your protection. Wear the helmet of salvation and take and use the sword of the Spirit—all these will keep you from falling. Once prepared we can go out into the world prayerfully and boldly knowing we have the full protection of God around us.

So, no short cuts, don't expose yourself to danger, put on that protective clothing both on your bike and in your spiritual life. It's simple advice from the word of God, don't ignore it, and in the fullness of time we will arrive safely at our destination.

[stevewilds@icloud.com](mailto:stevewilds@icloud.com) 📧

## The Best Trainer

Paul Rainer, Liverpool

This is a post that Paul put on the North Cheshire branch WhatsApp group at the beginning of September. Well received by members of the group, it was suggested that it should be re-printed in Chainlink as an encouragement and challenge to all – Ed.

Hi all, I know I rarely comment on here but I just felt it on my heart to share something. I hope that is OK.

When I first started learning to ride a motorbike I bought myself a small, cheap second hand Lexmoto 125cc bike to commute to work on. I remember my inexperience of riding a bike was highlighted when riding home from work one day I could see an obstacle on the road a few hundred yards away. As I approached it, I could see it was a rolled up Argos catalogue. I wish I could say it was a giant, flaming boulder rolling towards me, but no, sadly just a magazine. My first mistake was made right then, target fixation – something that years later I learned about in more detail on my ROSPA course. Determined to not crash at the hands of an Argos catalogue, I grasped the handlebars, held my breathe and rode straight over it. The little wheels wobbled but I managed to regain my balance and direction and I carried on like nothing had happened, apart from my slightly damaged ego.

I was reading an article online the other day from a trainer who summed up motorcycling with the following phrase:

‘You start out with a full bag of luck, and an empty bag of experience. The trick is to fill your bag with experience before your luck runs out.’ As a believer in Jesus I don't believe in luck. My father-in-law (who many of you may know – John Hodge), once spoke on how using the word ‘luck’ is putting our trust in something other than God.

So let's re-word this statement slightly and say: ‘you start out with a bag full of inexperience. The trick is to fill your empty bag with experience before your inexperience runs out’.

As I read this, I felt the Lord say, I've/we've been ‘spiritually novice’ riders for too long.

It's time to spend time with our Father, to read His word and grow, so that I/we become experienced riders. We need to become riders who are in tune with our Father's voice and can be guided by the Holy Spirit. He wants us to become riders that are alert and aware of our surroundings, riders that have filled our ‘experienced bag’ through training, prayer, study, so



that when one of many of life's hazards approaches us, no matter how big or small, instead of getting target fixation—staring contently at the problem—resulting in a wobble, we instead are able to turn our attention to our Father.

One final thought. The trainer continued his article to describe his awareness as being like a bubble that extends around him, constantly scanning for information about what's going to happen. Will that car pull out? What's that slight movement reflected in a shop window? How likely is it that there'll be mud on this country lane?

There's also an internal bubble of awareness. What am I capable of? Do I really know my limits? How in control am I feeling right now?

For a beginner rider that's a real challenge – predominantly due to a large empty bag of experience. Which is why the writer then goes on to say “the safest thing you can do is to choose a good trainer”. Isn't it amazing that we have the best

‘Trainer’ available whenever we want. Ready to guide us and encourage us every step of the way on our journey.

I really felt the Lord press me to share this. I believe he wants us all to not lose focus of our Trainer, to not stay comfortable carrying a full ‘inexperienced bag’. As life's hazards continue to come our way, it's only through having a firm foundation with our God, our Dad, that we will be correctly equipped.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says,

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.*

I hope you don't mind me sharing. Thanks all. 🙏



## Ian Mutch, Motorcycle Action Group

Interview by Patricia Levinson-Plumtree

I was greeted at the front door by a small but satanically motivated dog in the window displaying his dentures to theatrical advantage. The window shuttered with his maniacal barking as a bolt slid shut on his holding pen.

I thought of leaving at once.

The front door opened and a short but ruggedly good-looking figure smiled at me with reassuring calm.

**Fear not the hound, he said.**

Inside the 1930s semi just off Glastonbury High St I was ushered through an elegant hallway distinguished by parquet floor and victorian palms to a garden featuring a wisteria-dripping pergola complemented by paintings on slates inspired by Alice in Wonderland. The white Rabbit, The caterpillar, Alice. Surprised? Yes.

I had come to interview the leading figure in UK motorcycle politics, the father of the two wheeled resistance, the indomitable biker of bikers and here I was in his beautiful garden of fairytale imagery where a fountain cascaded into a fish pond bordered by railway sleepers in the midst of hippie town UK. It was far from the gritty imagery conjured by 1970s MAG demo pictures I'd spotted in my research. Even the fearsome hound had turned into a docile companion trotting beside us.

Ian briefly showed me around after putting the kettle on. Beyond the pond a garage where the Harley Davidson slumbered; veteran of trips around Europe and New Zealand and the Sahara crossing to Mali recorded in his book 'Harley to Mali.'

I'm in a shrine, I thought. That is the bike that made those trips.

Tea in hand we climbed two flights of stairs past framed covers of Ian's books. Looking for America, Motorcycles Forever, Harley to Mali, Low Rider and Riding With the Beast.

**I don't print books any more, said my host. Kindle is the future.**

I like a real book in my hand, I told him.

**Everyone does, he tells me, so why don't they buy them?**

I let the subject drop. Time for the interview. We settled ourselves in the loft where a VELUX window afforded a view of Glastonbury Tor.

**It's why I bought the house, he told me.**

TP It is now almost half a century since you formed MAG, does that make you proud?

**IM It should do but I'm a hopeless failure.**

I wasn't prepared for such a self deprecating opener.

TP Why so?

**IM I thought in the early days that MAG would just continue to grow until all motorcyclists became members. The notion that we would have to struggle ceaselessly to get numbers into the five figure bracket scarcely occurred to my youthful naive mind.**

TP Are you bitter?

**IM Yes, but on the other hand I've turned an obsession into a career that replaced my seafaring career (he used to be a ship's officer in the merchant navy) after a few years of London despatch riding in-between.**

TP What was the despatching like?

**IM Fun in the summer, hell in the winter. I lived in a prefab in Bethnal Green for four years pretending to be the previous legal tenant. I paid the rent, I tidied the garden and I grew vegetables and flowers. My neighbours loved me but I was a squatter and got sussed eventually and evicted.**

TP When did you start full time with MAG?

**IM November 1995. I'd failed as a commercial publisher with a Harley-Davidson title called Heavy Duty that I worked on for three years. I'd worked intermittently on a voluntary basis for MAG since our formation in 1973 but now I was engaged full time to deliver a credible publication to be MAG's mouthpiece to the world. I turned it into a tabloid newspaper at first and later a full colour magazine, The ROAD.**

TP Did you not get enough publicity through the commercial titles?

**IM No. Most of them were sport or performance orientated and their editors viewed MAG as a kind of**



Trish Levinson-Plumtree

**nerdy group of angry militants who should stop bitching. I developed a jaundiced view of the media in those days. It became clear to me that if you want to succeed in life materially you must concentrate on the unimportant. Ask the average Englishman what concerns him most, the fate of the blue whale, the destiny of mankind or the fortunes of his football team and it will be the team. It's the same in the motorcycle world. Most riders are more impressed by a racer knocking a second off a TT lap than MAG defeating the BHP limit.**

TP Which MAG did I presume?

**IM Yes, that was one of our most tangible successes. MAG's success may be measured more by what doesn't happen than by what does. Our work is largely to stop bad ideas turning into bad law. The power limit proposal came from a German Commissioner who took the view that motorcycle power had to translate into higher accident rates. MAG often considers the counter intuitive argument and we challenged the myth that power and accidents were related. MAG got UK MEP, Roger Barton on board and he got his mate John Prescott involved. Since John was deputy PM at the time it gave us a high profile photo opportunity with him on the back of Roger's Triumph riding around Parliament Square, while MAG held a conference inside the Palace of Westminster. We turned the UK Government around on the issue and we got the whole plan shelved. We thought thousands of sports bike riders would join out of gratitude.**

TP Did they?

**IM Well we took a stand at two GP races to recruit. Both had attendances of around 40K. We had smart sporty people on the stands and we bought advertising time on an electronic billboard at the tracks to plug our success on the 100bhp limit. How many members did we sign?**

TP You're going to tell me.

**IM Zilch, nadir, not one.**

TP That must be depressing.

**IM It's soul destroying. It made me want a 20BHP limit that applied to everyone who was not a MAG member. We beat the power limit and we beat the leg protector threat at the end of the 80s, we helped stop continuous road tax that would have seen every box of bits in a shed having to be taxed if it included a frame. We've beaten onerous controls on outdoor events, customisation controls that would have severely restricted all modification, we've won exemption from urban congestion charges, mandatory clothing requirements, not counting helmets, the list goes on. We've assisted sensible pro-safety programmes like Bike Safe also and anti-motorcycle theft initiatives, we even offer our own reward scheme for information leading to convictions. MAG has always been pro safety we just don't like bullshit phony knee jerk restrictions that inhibit our enjoyment of motorcycles for no good reason. The bottom line is that riding a motorcycle exposes you to greater risks than driving a car but we love it.**





TP Do you still oppose the helmet law?

**IM Of course, it's wrong in principle.**

TP Even though it's saved so many lives?

**IM Total fallacy; the fatality rate didn't drop at all when they bought the law in.**

TP Why do you suppose that was?

TP He looks at me as if it's obvious, which it kind of is.

**IM We were already wearing helmets, the law was a red herring.**

TP Then why does it matter?

He looks at me with theatrical astonishment.

**IM I don't like being criminalised for exercising my choice. I have a multi gym in my garage but if I get fined for failing to use it every day I am going to be very angry. I guess I'd have to form GAG then.**

TP Gym Action Group?

**IM You got it.**

TP Do you think cyclists should be made to wear helmets?

**IM No, leave them alone! I like cycling. I used to cycle up to the city and West End when I lived in London, no special kit, no problem. The Dutch think British cyclists are mad, dressing like they're in the Tour de France. Slow down, take it easy, make allowances for the errors of others, that's the way to go. Same with motorcycles. I was sitting at the lights on the Kings Rd on my Harley once, next to a guy on a beautiful Ducati all dressed for the racetrack. He looked me up and down in my trainers, shirtsleeves and minimal helmet and shook his head. Then he took off into a tight bend like a ground to air missile. I heard the crash within seconds and soon saw him walking back from his damaged bike, pointing at the driver of a Range Rover who had backed out of a cul de sac. It was the Kings Rd FFS! What did he expect? I so wanted him to look at me so I could wag my head – self righteous wanker!**

TP Were you involved in forming FEMA?

**IM I was at the inaugural meeting of FEMA in 1988 and in later years our then Chairman Nil Liversidge helped form the expanded group FEMA that now has a Brussels office and a couple of staff. One Euro of every MAG membership goes to fund that and we'll keep that up post Brexit because the UK will still be subject to all the criteria that relate to motorcycle construction and standards. No manufacturer is going to build UK-specific models.**

TP Have you ever thought of giving up and doing something else?

**IM Not seriously. I care about whales and gorillas and the environment; you'd need to be brain dead to not care about such things but those causes have plenty of good people working for them so I just pay my subs to them and sign petitions online. I'm a member of over 20 lobbying groups, mostly eco animal rights groups. Battery farming of animals should be outlawed now and as for bull fighters I'd jail them for life along with motorcycle thieves, they could stick spears in each other, bloody vermin. The motorcycle world has MAG and as a founder member I guess I've found my niche in life.**

TP Is the environmental lobby a problem for motorcycling?

**IM Of course, some of the green extremists hate the internal combustion with a vengeance and don't buy the idea that we should be cut any slack on account of our smaller eco footprint. I see the environmental issue as an opportunity for MAG however. We should never be in conflict with the green movement; I've been a member of Greenpeace from whenever it was founded. They phoned me up recently to thank me for my long-standing support and I asked them how long I'd been a member. They said they didn't know as their records only go back to the late 70s and I was a member then. They wanted me to leave them money in my will. I told them to call back in 30 years.**

**I don't buy this idea that batteries are the answer. The eco impact of mining and manufacture of batteries is terrible; I much prefer the idea of synthesised petrol that we can run our engines on, Bosch are spending millions to find a solution. I just can't get excited about battery bikes. I love Jules Verne style bikes that grunt and snort; I love the look of conventional engines, especially V twins, it's why I like Harleys; they're so steam punk.**

TP I hear you rode your Dyna Glide through a minefield in Africa.

**IM I did, there's not much choice if you want to cross the Sahara on the road that runs near the Atlantic coast. There are a few km of minefield separating Morocco from Mauritania because neither side has ever signed a truce over the war for the Western Sahara. It's really not that obvious which path to take as the road ends at the border - the trick is to stay away from the burned out cars whose drivers took the wrong route.**

TP Didn't you ride a rigid chop across the Negev desert in Israel?

**IM I did, way back in 1980. A Meriden Triumph Bonneville hard tail chop with rabbit ear pull back handlebars.**

TP That was a strange choice of machine for an overland trip.

**IM It was an insane choice. The bike was a piece of shit. I**

**had to work on it every day and used every spare part I took with me, including a spare battery and two pushrods. It cured me of the romantic idea that hard tail chops are cool. I wrote the book, Lowrider about that trip.**

TP What is your worst motorcycling experience?

**IM Breaking down in the Yugoslav mountains in November on the way to Israel and having to fit those pushrods at the side of the road. The wind was howling and it began to sleet. I had to become a courier to get anywhere near that level of suffering again.**

TP What's the fascination with Israel?

**IM It's the terrestrial fulcrum about which the fate of humanity turns. I don't claim to be a good Christian but I believe and I love being in the land that Jesus walked on. I can't imagine how atheists get through life; it must be so depressing thinking every effort you make is ultimately pointless. I've always had a soft spot for the Jews because they've had so much grief. I just wish Israel would be kinder to the Palestinians. There are no bad nations or races in the world, just people in grim situations. I love girls in military uniform.**

He stops talking and looks a bit dreamy. I decide to switch tack.

TP What bike did you use as a courier?

**IM A 250cc MZ mostly, best pound for pound motorcycle on earth. You don't need any more power in London. It was smooth, reliable and cheap as chips. I managed close on 90mpg out of mine.**

TP Going back to MAG, how would you say the organisation has evolved over the last 47 years?

**IM We've learned how the system works and we've learned what doesn't work.**

TP Do demos work?

**IM Demos are good for raising the profile of an issue if you get the media coverage and they are good for raising morale but the serious work is done on the inside. When we started we thought that if only you could get enough riders out on the street the politicians would have to take notice. It was a comforting idea but it's hopeless without the sophisticated inside work. For that you need full time professionals who understand which buttons to press and who to speak to. We took on an ex MP, Lembit Opik a few years ago and he has been able to open many doors for us. The old adage, it's who you know . . . is so true. I've walked around the Palace of Westminster with Lembit and you can't go 20 yards without someone stops to say "Hello". That kind of insider profile and savvy is invaluable. He's a churchgoer too, surprising eh? Lembit is ably assisted by**

**Colin Brown who is a highly competent operator. They make a good team.**

TP What is MAG's biggest problem now?

**IM Politically it's the unsympathetic attitude to anything with an engine but the most immediate challenge is the economic fallout from losing our events to the virus. Half our funding comes from the big rallies and so we have a headache there. The simple solution is that riders finally wake up and decide to support us by joining.**

TP Do you see any signs of that?

**IM Membership has been creeping up slowly but we need to treble it this year to insulate ourselves from the fallout of having events cancelled. I think 30K members is a reasonable expectation and that would give us financial stability independent of our social programme. We have about 50K affiliate members via clubs so we are having a big push to turn them into proper individual members paying £27 a year. Actually if they are in an affiliated club they get a fiver off the full fee. The motorcycle community has to wake up and decide if it wants a voice in the political sphere. I'm heartened by the new wave custom bike hipster phenomenon. I like it's positivity and it's cultured media savvy confidence. I never identified with the loser mentality. When I go in the Bike Shed in Shoreditch I feel like I belong and it feels like bikers rule, I mean it is almost in the square mile, that is so elite, it's unbelievable! I love the restaurant and the lounge area with the Chesterfield sofas and the smiling service. It's very inclusive. My first meal in there was a snack of crushed unpeeled new potatoes rolled in rosemary and drizzled with olive oil. Imagine that in the rocker days.**

TP You were privately educated weren't you?

**IM Only for two years then I went to a state school in Dagenham; don't you forget to include that.**

TP I'll keep that in and the living in a prefab in Bethnal Green; you didn't know the Krays did you?

**IM No I didn't, just before my time. I did have a great uncle who was the British Lightweight boxing champion though; Ernie Stanton, nicknamed the 'pocket Hercules'.**

TP How many press-ups can you do?

**IM Fifty, why do you ask?**

TP You asked me to ask you.

**IM Oh yeah.**

Join MAG on line [www.mag-uk.org](http://www.mag-uk.org)

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**Mixed motivations plagued me during this pandemic. It was sad that the two massive biker events in Brighton were cancelled (our main Sussex branch annual outreaches). However, there was slight relief that I could keep my old Ford Galaxy on SORN longer (used to haul the marquees and other display items). Our branch chairman and secretary were not physically able to do any ride-outs, so that left those for me to organise.**

I am aware of a few pros and cons of group rides. Some say they are too slow and restrictive as we try to stay together, limit overtaking of slower vehicles, adjust to the less experienced, etc. Regardless, many enjoy the comradery of the time together. When I plan a ride, I include a good bit of faster low-traffic country roads but also routes through villages where people are out and about and might see our white crosses as we putter through. I feel that one big purpose of a branch ride-out is the image and identity we reflect on the road. Another important part of a branch ride-out can be the stopping point(s). Places where other bikers pause offer opportunities to chat and give out Biker Bibles.

We had two Saturday Sussex outings this summer. I was feeling doubtful that we'd get much participation as I didn't plan very far ahead (wanting to see weather reports first). However, I was pleasantly surprised that we had five on each ride.

The first ride took us from Worthing over the Downs to Steyning, then north through Partridge Green, west to Billingshurst, then southwest to Bury Hill, where we stopped at the Whiteways Café. Initially, we had catch-up fellowship amongst ourselves (enjoying ice cream cones), as it had been a while since we'd seen each other. As we were getting ready to head home, my little lady struck up a conversation with some L-Platers\* in the parking lot. Despite being a grandmother of six, her youthful energy and outgoing personality make her a natural at meeting strangers. And some people are especially curious when they hear her Californian accent. I am thankful that as a



couple, we can reflect the image of God better together than we could individually.

The second Saturday ride started with a quick run to Burgess Hill, in case any East Sussex folk would meet us there. In the absence of added riders, we

*\* It seems the pandemic has motivated increased numbers to get into the biking scene, perhaps to avoid public transportation. As it's a new world to these L-platers, their enthusiasm can make them more open to talking with other bikers. Let's make more effort to respond to these opportunities to encourage the next generation to seek Christ.*

made a group decision to stay more in the west, as some of us wanted or needed to be closer to home for various reasons. Heading north to Ansty, we then took the A272 west to Cowfold, then went south through Henfield to a scenic Devils Dyke stop. After a treat from a Mr Whippy van, the little lady again struck up a conversation with some young bikers. Others joined in and we gave out a few Biker Bibles.

Originally, we planned to disperse our separate ways from Devils Dyke. However, one of us was so low on petrol that most of us decided to go with him to a station near Brighton. We had a surprise 'divine appointment' there. A visiting missionary from Korea asked us about our crosses and we got into a conversation. He was so thankful for

the missionary work my parents did to encourage church growth in the four decades after the Korean conflict. He and his wife took lots of photos of us and we gave out Biker Bibles and some other CMA tracts to the missionary and his son (who lives in England). Then, a fast A27 ride together back to Worthing.

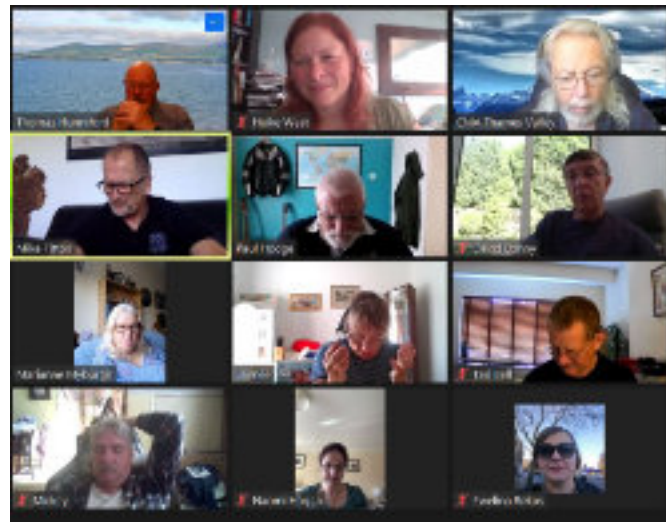
I chided myself internally for being a bit pessimistic when planning these rides. Even though the little lady was less motivated than me to come, these outings affirmed that we are better together as a team. When you are with other believers at events or on rides, may you also experience that sense of reflecting a fuller image of our Lord. 🙏



## A Zoom Prayer Meeting Journey

Heike West, Thames Valley

Lockdown came a week early for me – I was 32 weeks pregnant with our third child and suddenly thrown into the high risk category. It really pulled the rug from under my feet! By the time national lockdown came a week later I was ahead of people because I had a week to get my head round it. At that point we had started a Zoom prayer meeting for our Thames Valley branch. And it was soooo good to see the guys, even if it was just on a screen. It brought us closer together as we prayed with each other every day. We didn't get to see



that much of each other normally! We varied the times but eventually settled on a morning slot. By then we also had invited anyone from CMA to join us. I got to meet and know people I wouldn't have normally met as they joined us every morning to faithfully pray for our CMA family, our nation, and situations that are brought to us. And these guys are amazing. They prayed (and pray) for me so much!

I had glucose tests because baby was so big. There was so much uncertainty over maternity services – could my husband be with me for the birth, what would we do about childcare, shopping and so on. I felt peace, because I had God with me and was covered in prayer.

When at my 37 week scan I was told baby was already weighing in at 8 pounds, the consultant decided that inducing 4 days later was the best thing to do. Nothing like a short notice birth. Again, I was covered in prayer. The whole thing took a lot longer than we wished. I went in on Saturday but didn't get a bed on labour



ward until Monday evening – a whole 48 hours later. In the meantime, I was twiddling my thumbs, listening to my children crying on the phone because mummy wasn't coming home and walking in the hospital car park for hours and hours to get the baby going. But God was in it all. I even got to see a kingfisher in the hospital car park(!) and glimpses of God's amazing creation in all of this. I even managed to attend the Monday morning prayer meeting from my hospital bed.

When we finally got to labour ward on Monday evening and they broke my waters, things didn't progress as quickly as we would have liked. I ended up on a hormone drip at 10pm and still things progressed very slowly. Eventually we made it to 6cm dilated at 6am in the morning. For those not in the know - normal progress is about 1cm per hour and we were going a lot slower than that. They weren't going to check again until 10am. By 7.30am I was so exhausted and tired. I remember talking to my hubby about sending a prayer request but had no idea about timings. Later he pointed out that we sent a prayer request to our home group and our CMA prayer group at 7.30am. Minutes after that I went into stage two labour and our son was born at 7.50am. I still get goosebumps thinking about that. We have an awesome God!

The birth wasn't what I had hoped for. I definitely wanted to avoid the hormone drip, and oh it took sooo much longer than my other two. We don't always understand what God is doing but I can already see some of it. I now understand the induction process and can help other women with my experience and that amazing testimony of Adam being born within minutes of us sending a prayer request! I shared it with a friend just a couple of days ago and she got goosebumps too. The prayer journey doesn't end there. The morning Zoom prayer meeting warriors prayed for me when I

got really ill with mastitis a few days after birth and then there was the passport saga. I am German and we were desperate for my family to get to meet Adam. With Covid they couldn't come to see us when they would usually come in the first few weeks after birth—and birth registrations were suspended for the foreseeable future. Fortunately our booked flights were cancelled by the airline anyway. So, the prayer warriors prayed for a birth certificate and when they finally opened we got an appointment within 2 days (they had a backlog of over 1000 births by then)! Then they prayed for Adam's passport. The application went off the same day we got the birth certificate and within 4 weeks to the day the passport arrived. The ferry tickets were booked that day and we went 4 days later, just in time for an important family gathering we had in the diary.

Then there was the air-con saga with our car. The forecast for Germany was way over 30 degrees for our return journey and the air-con in our car was broken. We had a 500 mile journey ahead of us with three children and no air-con. Through the prayers we managed to find a part for the car which then mysteriously didn't arrive in time to be fitted. Oh the ways of the Lord! Just so we could then be blessed by my dad who got it fixed for us while we were out there in Germany. The Zoom prayer warriors were in it with us all. Praying for a safe journey – we were certainly covered in prayer when a shoe (!) hit the car on the autobahn and all the damage it did was a massive dent in the bonnet rather than shattering the windscreen, for example. My dad fixed that too by the way! They also prayed for a safe journey back. We made the journey with about an hour to spare before the quarantine for the Netherlands came into force because our captain put his foot down



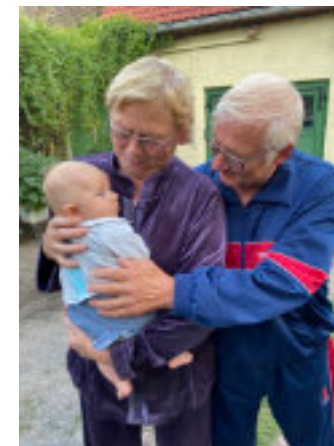
on the ferry and steamed across. As you can see we certainly needed covering in prayer!

I am so grateful for these meetings! And I am massively grateful to Kobus for listening to God and setting them up in the first place. Not only have they covered us in prayer through the whole bump to 22 week old baby journey (as I type this) but my prayer life, my closeness to God in the whole of lockdown has increased so much. I feel connected because I have that time in the morning with God. No matter how busy my day gets. I feel so blessed by spending 45 mins with my brothers



and sisters each and every day. Adam gets to be with me on the prayer meetings most mornings – and as Mike Fitton prayed over my children, as we pray each morning may the Holy Spirit speak to their little minds and hearts. As we get immersed in His presence, may His presence also touch them. Now the kids are back at school I can't make every meeting as I need to drop them to school when my husband is working but I still pray over the notes we get after the meeting. For me the prayer meetings are THE best thing to come out of all of this. And long may they continue!

Everyone is welcome, so if you'd like to join us—even if it is just once—please do! Come and be blessed. We meet at 8.15am during the week and at 9am on Saturday mornings. Please email me and I can send you the link to join ([heikes@live.co.uk](mailto:heikes@live.co.uk)). Did you know that we have a CMA prayer WhatsApp group? So even if you can't make the meetings but want to join us in daily prayer – I can put you on that group too. Drop me a line with your number. We have seen so many answers to prayer in our meetings. Come and be blessed by the power of prayer and be a blessing to others. 🙏





I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. [Psalm 121:1,2]

It is noticeable (to me, anyway) in many secular films—even some Christian films—that when an individual is making a way towards God he or she is usually seen entering a large church building, walking to the front and looking upwards to a large stained glass window above an altar—you get the picture? Well, I was pondering on this scenario and, following several early-morning walks back in the Summer when I was able to pray and worship the Lord surrounded by His magnificent handiwork, realised that the film producers were, in effect, pointing the character towards something that was entirely man-made. Would it not be more fitting, I thought, if they were to set the character outdoors and direct their attention towards what is God-made instead?

Accompanying the character's gaze towards a stained-glass window would be some appropriate ethereal orchestral music, giving that fuzzy, warm feeling—you know what I mean—again, man-made. So, following this through, wouldn't it be more appropriate, I thought, to let the God-seeking character listen to the true sounds of God's handiwork, e.g., the birds singing?

So is this yet another attempt by film-makers to exclude God from our lives? Or is it to go along with what is normally portrayed by the 'Christian church'? Is this where we find Him? In a stained-glass window? In a magnificent edifice built to 'house' our un-houseable God? Read 1 Kings 8:27 and you'll see what I mean.

Also, reading Matthew 24:1 & 2 we see that Jesus' own appreciation for what was man-made was perhaps a little lower than the disciples'.

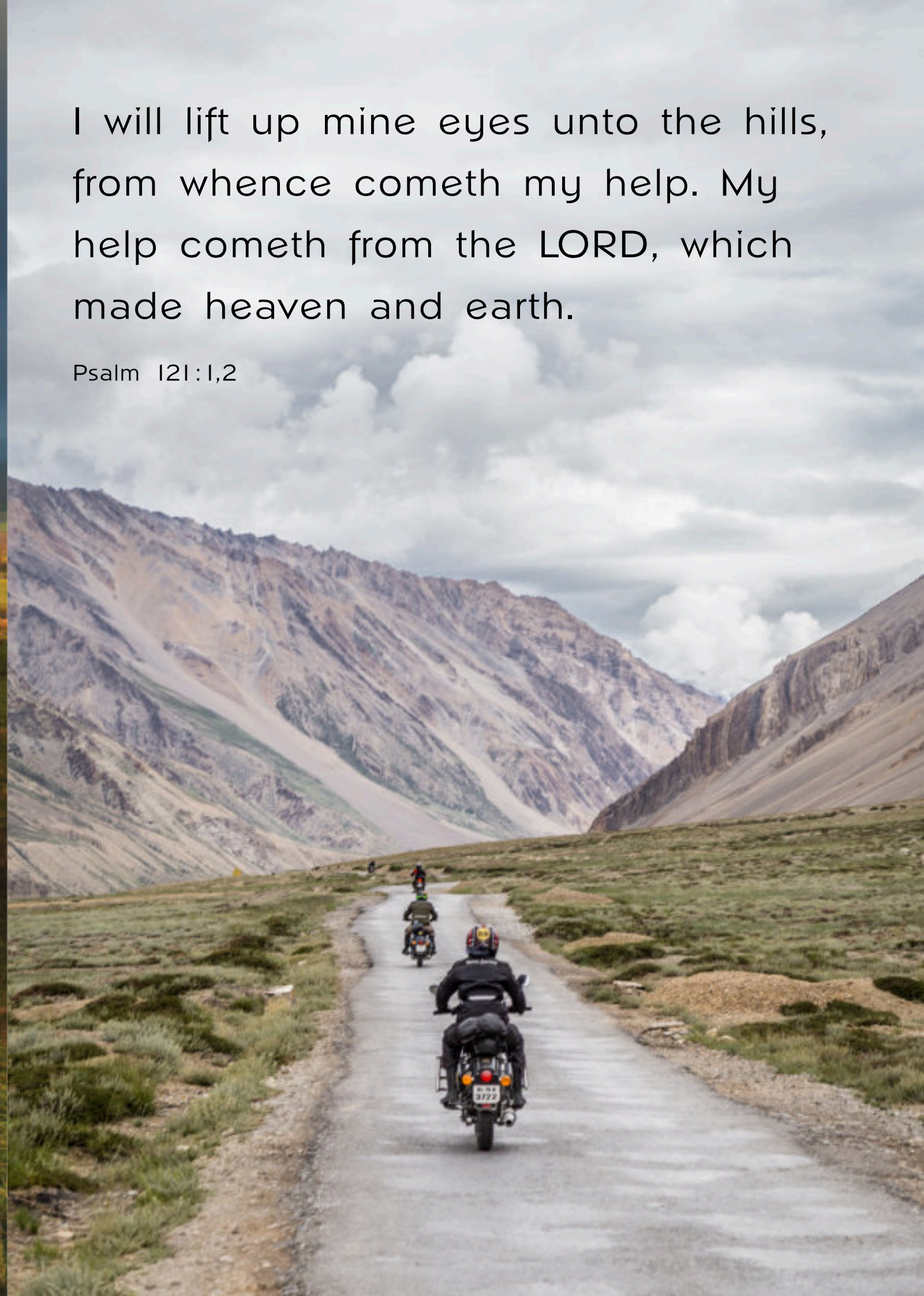
So, next time you are riding through the glorious North Wales countryside, the Yorkshire or Derbyshire Dales, the Scottish highlands and lowlands, the many great coastal roads around the UK or any other spectacular rides that I have yet to discover, then slow down, take in the wonder of God's creation—appreciate it and worship Him. Remember, what we see now is the glory of His creation damaged by man's fall. What must God's original handiwork have been like before the Flood? The mind boggles! The prophet Isaiah, apostles Peter and John all make reference to new heavens and a new earth<sup>1</sup>, when the old passes away, uncontaminated by sinful man.

What a wonderful hope we have, as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, of glorious things to come! I wonder if the new earth will support 2-wheel riding?

1. Isaiah 65:17, 66:22, 2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21:1

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Psalm 121:1,2





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