

# SEAX

The newsletter of the Essex Crusaders, Centre 19, Virago Star Owners Club.

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Attachment. Essex Crusaders Christmas Dinner.

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[http :/www.vsoc.org.uk](http://www.vsoc.org.uk)

## Rep's Rambling:

Who would believe it as we approach November I am still riding around in my summer riding gear, may it continue. What a difference a year makes, this time last year it was snowing . I am not sure which one is caused by global warming.

The Essex Crusaders Christmas dinner is on the 19<sup>th</sup> December (see flyer) as everybody enjoyed last years , we will follow a similar format. To reserve your place send your cheques or money to Carol by the 5<sup>th</sup> December with your choice of menu, should be an other great night.

The Centre 19's AGM is on Monday 18<sup>th</sup>, January 2010 at The Bell, Woodham Ferrers. More information in Decembers SEAX

Motor bike show, NEC Birmingham, 27<sup>th</sup> November to 6<sup>th</sup> December.  
Pre-booked tickets tel 08445812345 £15-00, concessions 60+ £5-00  
On the door £17-00, concessions £5-00. Bike parking free, car parking £8-00

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## Editor's Note:

**COPY DATE FOR DECEMBER SEAX is MONDAY 30<sup>th</sup> Nov.**

**ANY SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE WILL BE KEPT FOR  
INCLUSION IN THE FOLLOWING EDITION (IF STILL RELEVANT).**

**THIS ENSURES RECEIPT OF SEAX (BY e-mail) PRIOR TO THE FIRST  
MEETING OF THE MONTH**

Thank You

## A TALE OF SUNSHINE AND FINANCIAL IMPAIRMENT, AUGUST 23<sup>RD</sup>

A long distance rideout to Southwold on the Suffolk coast. Met up with others at Boreham BP Services at 9:30 and set off up the A12. Another glorious day, a bit windy but bright sunshine, and no chance of rain. Parked on a bit of green surrounded by footpaths with little “no motor vehicles” notices dotted about, We managed to get in a neat row all facing the same way.



A local comedian then added two little pedal cycles to the end of the line which finished it off nicely and made passers by smile. Being a hot sunny day and being used to the good weather that goes with costal rideouts I had taken shorts and sandals – so much better to wear than armoured leathers and boots for a seaside stroll. Following my impromptu strip and re-dressing we all wandered off along the sea front to find toilets and cups of tea. The beach was packed; possibly because the tide was in and there wasn't much beach left, or possibly an effect of the current recession and all those people who used to go to Spain for a fortnight now going to Southwold for an afternoon. Managed to walk the length of the pier (a bit shorter than the one at Southend-on-Sea, more than a mile shorter).

Strange view looking back at the town, a lighthouse sticking up out of the houses, not on the front but a couple of streets inland. The town's website explains that it was on the costal edge of the buildings originally, in the grounds of the existing Customs House, but that some of the land was later sold off for housing leaving the lighthouse “stranded”.



Wandered back to the bikes and found a few people had gone already and that others were about to go. By the time I had changed back into riding gear I was last to leave. Pressed on a bit to see if I would catch up, as usual on the bike or in the car, fairly careful about 30 and 40 mph limits but take little notice of the 60 mph national limit on single carriageways. On the bike I am also a bit careless about 50 limits, assuming that modern cameras are front number plate and that I can press on.

August 27 got a letter from Suffolk Constabulary asking me who was the driver of motor vehicle EJ05UDZ which had been recorded travelling at 14:31 on 23/08/2009 at 66 mph on the A12 at Benhall where the road is subject to a 50 mph limit. Bigger - it was me pressing on past a rear number plate camera. Told them it was me and got another letter on September 5 offering a fixed £60 penalty and



three points. The Suffolk Safety Camera web site has some lovely photos of me and the warning sign that I rode past. Now I have to tell the insurance companies – motorcycle, my car, and my wife’s car. Suspect that the speeding fine will end up being the cheap bit of the experience.

**Bob Owen**

### CLASSIC BIKE SHOW, ANCHOR PUB, STRATFORD St. MARY, SEPTEMBER 20

I arrived at Boreham BP Services at around 9:50 to find a small group of Crusaders assembling for the rideout. Went round the back of the toilet block to survey the damage caused on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> when a 40 tonne articulated truck ran down the car park slope and hit the building. Bit of a shame that the truck driver was between the wall and the truck at the time of impact, he is in hospital recovering from multiple injuries.

10:05 and Bruce announced that he knew where The Anchor was, and that he would lead. Off we went, just 5 bikes, but a glorious sunny morning for a quick whiz up the A12 to the show organised by the Colchester Classic Motor Cycle Club. Several other members of C19 already there including Mr K who was getting ready for his long trip to Spain on the coming Monday. Standard rough grass field and a collection of bikes of all ages and types. Ours were at the shiny and new end of the range, there were a few modern sports bikes and trikes, but as always at “classic bike” shows there were the usual strange collection of elderly bikes from British makers who disappeared when the Japanese imports first arrived, plus some examples of those first Jap bikes.



A trike with all-in-one bodywork based on a Suzuki 1250 Bandit



A very shiny old Triton  
(Triumph featherbed frame with a Norton engine)

The Anchor excelled in the food and drink department. No paper cups for tea and coffee so they used disposable pint beer glasses – only £1 a pint. The staff we are used to seeing indoors were out in the garden, a young man in chef's whites tending to the cooking and two of the young ladies serving! Good BBQ with slightly suspect burgers and sausages (caution may contain unidentified parts of meat based life forms) but large helpings, fresh cooked, and plenty of ketchup.

No organised ride back to Chelmsford – we made our individual ways at separate times once the BBQ was being digested and the boredom threshold for parked bikes had been reached. In my case I left with two others but turned off the A12 at Witham to enjoy the country lanes via Maldon to home.

**Bob Owen**

## Royal Enfield – To India and Back



Through necessity, and in common with most other engineering companies of the day, Enfield didn't restrict themselves to one line. They also made lawnmowers, bicycles and rifle parts for a Small Arms factory in Enfield. A clue lies in their logo which depicts a cannon, which I have to say, is infinitely better than a lawn mower. Their motto of 'Made like a gun, Goes like a bullet' is also evidence of their military involvement. In 1907, the company joined forces with a business with the unlikely name of 'Alldays & Onions', to produce the Enfield-Allday automobile. Fortunately, the onion was dropped. These cars remained in production until 1925.

Royal Enfield produced their first motorised vehicle in 1898, a vehicle that would today be described as a 'Quad'. This early effort had a De Dion-Bouton 2.75 hp engine. As the 20<sup>th</sup> century dawned, a bicycle with a 150cc engine mounted above the front wheel was introduced. The year after in 1902, a similar machine was fitted with a 239cc Enfield engine. The famous V-Twins appeared in 1910, primarily fitted with a Motosacoche 344cc engine, but later superseded by Enfield's own power unit. The first small, two stroke engines saw the light of day in 1915 with the 200 model.

With the outbreak of World War 1 in 1914, Royal Enfield was requested to furnish the British armed forces with machine gun-carrying combinations and stretcher-bearing motorcycles. The company also won a contract to supply machines to the Russians. In 1917, when most able bodied men were at war in Europe, a police force made up of women was issued with 600cc Royal Enfield motorcycles.

The time between the wars saw a boom in the popularity of sidecars, and in 1924 a combination using a 350cc single was launched. In 1928, saddle tanks and centre-spring, girder front forks were used. Royal Enfield bikes now took on a more contemporary appearance, and despite the economic gloom of the depression years, sales kept steady. A 488cc machine with a four speed gearbox was offered in 1927 and a side-valve 225cc in 1928. It seemed that the company could do no wrong, and during the thirties, Royal Enfield's catalogue featured thirteen models. This is the time that the famous single cylinder 'Bullet' was born.

As the world once again fell into war, Royal Enfield rose to the occasion to produce a series of motorcycles for military use, the most famous of these being a 125cc bike called the 'Flying Flea'. It was also known as the 'Airborne' because of its capability of being dropped by parachute. Special instruments for war use were also manufactured at this time.

In the fifties, Enfield of India began building machines with parts shipped from Britain, but in 1962 were producing complete motorcycles. Unfortunately, the factory in Redditch, England ceased production in 1970, with the Chennai plant in India still operating. Denomination rights were purchased by the Indians and the name lived on, which today enables Royal Enfield to claim the title of 'The world's oldest motorcycle model'. The bullet is in fact the model with the longest production run.

Between 1955 and 1960, Royal Enfield's were sold in the USA as 'Indian Motorcycles'. This of course had nothing to do with India in the Asian context. The famous Indian motorcycle company had experienced troubles of its own, and this was just another chapter in their particular history. The Americans weren't too keen on badged motorcycles, and when the business agreement expired, Floyd Clymer, who had controversially claimed the 'Indian rights', sought other sources for his venture.

It appears that the 'Enfield' name has plenty of life in it yet. Enfield India continues making motorcycles and is indeed flourishing. In 1986, a civil servant from Britain named Raja Narayan went back to India to create an export arm for Royal Enfield, so in the same way the Raja had returned to his roots, so had the Bullet, which is now marketed in Britain.

Despite production moving from Redditch to India, the marquee can claim to be the only one to span three centuries, and who knows, it may even reach a fourth. Whilst the Indian plant goes from strength to strength, the few buildings that remain from the Redditch glory days have been swallowed up by the Enfield Industrial Estate.

## Centre 19 meeting's dates:

### November

#### North meeting.

8 pm Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2009.

The Anchor, Upper Street, Stratford St. Mary, CO7 6LW.  
West of A12, North of Colchester

#### South meeting.

8pm Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2009

The Bell Inn, Main Road, Woodham Ferrers, CM3 8RF.

On the B1418 between Bicknacre and South Woodham.

### December

#### North meeting.

8 pm Monday 7th December 2009.

The Anchor, Upper Street, Stratford St. Mary, CO7 6LW.  
West of A12, North of Colchester

#### South meeting.

8pm Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2009.

The Bell Inn, Main Road, Woodham Ferrers, CM3 8RF.

On the B1418 between Bicknacre and South Woodham.