

NW Fred Hill Run – 8th February 2015

Once again a massive thanks to all of you who braved the freezing fog and made this year's Fred Hill Run such a success – you certainly showed the "Fred Hill Spirit". It's now 31 years since Fred Hill died in Pentonville jail. At the time of his death he could be described as a political prisoner or at the very least a prisoner of conscience. He believed that in matters of personal safety the choice of the individual should be paramount. He was one of those rare people who refuse to compromise on their most dearly held beliefs. The state locked him up but they never beat him. He died without giving in.

So, how much has changed in the last 31 years? MAG is still here, still battling for riders' rights. Many of the young men and women from 1984 are still active in the organisation, a lot older now if not any wiser. You sometimes hear, or more often read, that MAG is now an anachronism, fighting the battles of yesteryear that no-one today cares about. I've been a MAG member



for about 20 years, been an activist for about 10 and in that time I've seen several threats to biking rear their ugly heads, most of which have thankfully been beaten off thanks in no small part to the efforts of MAG. However, it seems that once we've seen off threats they often refuse to die, coming back again in another guise, almost like a game of legislative whack-a-mole. Most of us can name MAG's victories: leg protectors, the 100bhp limit but we've also had our share of defeats. The changes to driving tests, which MAG opposed, have resulted in a decline in the number of 18 year olds coming into biking from roughly 3300 in 2013 to just over 200 last year. Motorcycling like any sport needs young blood but at this level of new entrants biking, and all the infrastructure that supports it, is simply not sustainable. Perhaps this is the greatest threat we face.

MAG is needed now as much, if not more than it has ever been. We may not be fighting exactly the same battles, in exactly the same way as Fred Hill did all those years ago but we still cling to the same beliefs and hopefully show the same spirit. I for one am proud to be a member of an organisation that Fred Hill belonged to and proud to remember his life every February.



Arriving back for a butty and a warm



The official bit



At the BMF the butties are this big!

Looking ahead to this month - NW Region AGM Sunday 22nd February



This year's North West Region AGM will be held at the **Duke of York pub, 89 Church Street, Eccles, Manchester, M30 0EJ** starting at **1pm**.

MAG is, and always has been, a grass-roots democratic organisation. The vast majority of MAG activists are unpaid volunteers and those who hold positions of responsibility only do so because they've been voted in by members like you. As well as electing regional officers for the next year, members concerns and ideas are invited, which can be taken to the national AGC in April. It's always good to see a few faces which you haven't seen for a while and meet some new ones. Salford MAG are running the show so you're guaranteed a warm welcome and some old-fashioned Manc hospitality. This is your chance to influence the future of MAG. And I believe it's a decent pint there as well.

Looking ahead to next month – Salford MAG Rock Night Friday 6th March

MAG needs money (when doesn't it?) so Salford MAG are doing their bit by having a party. There'll be all the usual rock night shenanigans - a great live band (Deathwish), a rock DJ, food and a raffle – but this time all profits will be going straight to the MAG fighting fund. What's not to like? It all kicks off about 7pm at the Duke of York, Eccles (see above for address) so get along and have a great time for a good cause!

e-petition - Scrap double taxation in new Vehicle Excise Duty Rules

This is an issue that has been highlighted before in the newsletter and now an e-petition has been started to try to change the rules:

“Under the new VED rules introduced in October 2014, a person buying a car cannot use the unused road tax on the vehicle (as they could previously). They must tax it in their own name from the time of purchase (back-dated to the start of the month) and the seller will receive a refund for any complete unused months of tax. In practice, that means that the car will have had VED paid twice for the month during which the sale takes place. That is clearly an attempt to raise additional revenue by stealth.

Such 'double taxation' should not be permitted. It is not only unfair but will make the private sale of cars harder because the buyer must tax the vehicle in their name before it can be legally driven away or they face the prospect of being prosecuted for driving an untaxed vehicle.

The government should revise the legislation to drop this new rule and reinstate the existing rule which allows the VED on a sold vehicle to run until its expiry date.”

For “cars”, of course, read any road vehicle. Thanks to Rob Wilcock for letting me know about the petition – I've already signed! The petition needs to raise 100 000 signatures in order for the matter to reach the House of Commons. I reckon that, given the sheer injustice of the new rules, it might just do that. If you would like to add your name please go to: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/69173>

North West Motorcycle Alliance

This is not a MAG organisation but a monthly meet for all bike clubs, organisations and interested bikers anywhere from Cheshire up to Lancaster. The next meeting is at **Last Bastion Brotherhood** at the **Clubhouse, Liverpool** on **Wednesday 25th February** at **8pm**. Please contact "*Doc Bastion*" on Facebook or drop me a line for the exact address. Here is the latest, up to date list of biker events this autumn which the Alliance has put together, which includes a few changes from last month.

Regular monthly events

HAMC Open night last Saturday of month, open 7.30 'til late

Sutton Rockers Band Night, 1st Saturday of each month.

Black Diamonds open night every Friday at the clubhouse in Hindley

Last Friday of each Month - Open Night, Ribble Valley Chop Club

1st and 3rd Friday every month – Born of Chaos MCC meeting everyone welcome - Warrington WA4 6RS

1st and 3rd Tuesday every month – Brickies Bike Club meeting everyone welcome - Atherton, M46 0QA

Salford MAG meeting 8pm Last Thursday every month, Duke of York, Church St, Eccles

Rogue Riders meeting every Thursday – The clubhouse Statham WA13 9BT

Mid-Life Crisis Meet'n'greet, BBQ - last Wednesday of each month, Ship Inn Irlam M44 6AJ – restarting in the spring.

1st Wednesday April → Sept – Rising Moon MCC Ride In, Hyde – restarting in the spring.

Known upcoming events –

21st Feb – British Bulldogs Rock Night, Castle on th'Hill, Hindley

21st Feb – MT Heads Rock Night, Ukrainian Club, Rochdale

22nd Feb 2015 -NW MAG AGM, Duke of York, Eccles. Starts at 1pm.

28th Feb – Millennium Rocknight, Canberra Club.

Feb 2015 - Leyland Eagles Rock Night, Farrington Social Club – date TBA?

6th March – Avernus MCC Underground Rock Night RBL Club Spennmore Lane Coppull PR7 5BY

14th March Last Bastion Birthday party, Clubhouse Liverpool

28-29th March Event City Bike Show Manchester

29th March Two Wheels in Unison Charity Ride for Derian House, starting from Avernus clubhouse Coppull

March 2015 - But Why AVVA Laugh Rock night and Bike show

22nd May 2015 - Warrington Wheels Youth-bike - Grappenhall School, Warrington, entry forms available from Bob Towler 01925 263895 or E-mail bobtowler57@hotmail.co.uk

26-28th June 2015 - Blackpool Area MAG 18th Rally, Fleetwood RUFC

4-5th July 2015 MLC MCC Bike show Ship Irlam

5th July Blackpool Bike Show Stanley Park

10-12th July 2015 Millennium Caveman Bash Rally

14-16th August Jesters Rally, Whittingham & Goosenargh Social Club

15th August Millennium Bike Show Bay Horse Adlington

28=31st August Avernus MCC Underworld rally Hamilton House Farm Tarnacre Lane StMichaels PR3 OTB

10th Oct 2015 – MidLife Crisis MCC Birthday Bash

Apologies

Last month I referred to Manchester MP *John* Leech as *James* Leech. Sorry John! I also listed the Jesters MCC Rally as happening on 14th-16th *July* when it should be 14th-16th *August*. Sorry Tony! I can only assume that these lapses were down to either early onset dementia, a very bad cold or the fact that I typed it up after getting home from the pub. I suspect a combination of all three. As ever, if you would like to have your say on anything vaguely MAG-related, or sell something bike related, just drop me a line at billgreen@masafish.com and I'll put it into the newsletter next month.

Bill

NW Political Rep



An open invitation to our
MAG

FUNDRAISER

March 6th at 19:00 p.m.
Duke of York ,Church Street, Eccles M30

Rock Night in Aid of the Motorcycle Action Group fighting Fund, featuring Live music from Deathwish, Rock DJ, Raffle & Food. If you love your 2 wheeled lifestyle & you want to keep it come along & support us, you might even want to join us.

SPONSORED BY SALFORD MOTORCYCLE ACTION GROUP

