

## Central North Island Newsletter – October 2016 (Issue 3)

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Welcome to the third issue of the IAM CNI newsletter. In it, we cover on-going developments and priorities within the region and continue to introduce more active IAM motorcycle members from the CNI. They are Mark Revill-Johnson and Tony Knight.

### **Mentoring Priorities**

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, I'm currently the only qualified Observer in the Waikato region. My location in Coromandel Town means that it is nigh-on impossible to adequately support all the existing Associates from the region. The priority is therefore to mentor Trainee Observers Lloyd Hollis (Hamilton) and Rob Van Proemeran (Pokeno) to Observer test level as soon as practicable. Wherever possible, this is being done by rotating existing Associates from the region on observed rides with either Lloyd or Rob as part of their Observer training. Many of you will have already enjoyed their company.

I'm pleased to say that great progress has been made and without pre-judging the future, it's highly likely that both of them will be ready to sit the Observer Test in early 2017. At the same time, several Associates are progressing well towards the Advanced Test so it's a double win. I'm also hopeful that practical Observer training will commence for Cambridge-based Mark Revill-Johnson this year. The region will really start to fly when some of our existing regional Associates enter Observer training!

In the meantime, any CNI Associates are always warmly welcomed to join the end of month mentored rides in Auckland. I know it's a bit of a haul but it makes for a great full day of riding. Joining in the mid-month social rides is also welcomed. Also, discussions are underway to provide some temporary supplementary mentoring assistance from Auckland Observers. More on this in due course.

For the Bay of Plenty members, you're not forgotten! One Associate from Rotorua recently had a mentored ride in the Hamilton area and once we have Observers established further south in the Waikato, we hope to provide some assistance to the perennially busy Glenn Berridge!

### **Non-active members**

There are a number of financial members within the region who are not currently active and the reasons for this are varied. One Associate has recently signalled a desire to return to active riding with IAM and we are working out the best way of

making this happen within our currently limited resource base.

For other non-active financial members, we will be in touch in the coming weeks to find out what your intentions are and how we might be able to help.

### **Other items of note**

The Auckland region Observers and Trainee Observers meet monthly to share information and discuss matters of mutual benefit to IAM members. These are attended when possible by CNI reps as they are great value and also serve to standardise various initiatives between regions.

Don't forget that there's a Facebook IAM NZ sub-page for the Central North Island for members to use for regional news or other related material.

### **Meet the Team**

In this issue, we continue the profiling of active motorcycle members within the Central North Island, especially as it's such a geographically large area. This time, it's the turn of Mark Revill-Johnson (Cambridge) and Tony Knight (Netherton).

#### **Mark Revill-Johnson, Trainee Observer**



I was born in Southport, UK which is a small seaside town that sits on the northwest coast between the City of Liverpool and the more popular seaside resort of Blackpool.

I served with the Merseyside Police Force in various locations and departments for a total of 18

years, achieving the Class One Advanced Car qualification in 1989.

In 2003, along with 80 other experienced police officers from across the UK, I made the move to New Zealand, and served a further nine years here working in Auckland City, Waiheke Island, Manurewa, Dannevirke and Masterton.

In 2012, after deciding that 27 years of policing was enough, I went into business as a driving instructor. I initially qualified as an instructor in the UK, working mainly in fleet training, passing on the benefits of using the System to sales reps, who were massively over-represented in serious and fatal crash statistics in the UK.

I passed the Institute's car test in 1987 and became an active Observer with them from that date. I later became a member of the Sefton IAM Group Training Committee, and eventually became the group's Chief Observer, a post I held at the time when observer qualification was first introduced in the UK and guided the group through the Observer Qualification process when it was introduced. I also trained all of the first batch of Senior Observers, and tested all of the group Qualified Observers.

In the UK I acted as an examiner for the other advanced driving organisation RoADA in order to allow me to continue as an active Chief Observer for the Sefton Group.

In NZ, I am an IAM examiner for cars and I am a motorcycle member – just starting out on the process towards becoming a Motorcycle Observer.



**Mark on the Observer training course with John Heebink**

I now work full time as car and motorcycle instructor. I provide car lessons in Cambridge and training for fleets and businesses across the country (to meet their obligations under Health

and Safety legislation). I also deliver motorcycle training, Basic Handling Skills Testing, and Competency Based Training and Assessment in Rotorua, Tauranga and Cambridge.

I am an approved trainer for the AA Skills Control (Crash Avoidance Techniques) Programme, Defensive Driving, Defensive Driving for Experienced Drivers, Defensive Driving for Fleets and Businesses, Defensive Driving for Senior Drivers and the Driver Awareness Programme. I also deliver fleet training and assessments for the AA Driver Training Corporate division as and when needed.

On the car front I have owned all manner of different vehicles from my first purchase, a 1973 Mark One Ford Escort, through a collection of standard sedans and station wagons including a 1978 Mini, Honda Legend, a couple of Vauxhall Cavaliers (Holden Vectra) and BMWs, an MG Midget and my first NZ vehicle, a "14 seater" Isuzu Bighorn (that should bring a smile to face of one of our former chairmen), to my last privately owned car which was a Subaru Legacy Lancaster. Now of course I have a sensible driving school car in the shape of a Suzuki Swift and a Nissan Navara for carting the bikes around.

As for bikes I started on a 1977 Honda CB250T (Dream) on to a Honda 750 Sabre, BMW R80RT, which saw some serious service throughout Europe, and a Suzuki 600 Bandit in the UK. In NZ I started on a GS500 and graduated to a Suzuki VZ800 Marauder, a GSF1250FA Bandit and currently my main bike is a GSX1250 which spends a lot of its time following learner motorcyclists around. I also have a Honda 650 Deauville (bought more for nostalgic reasons than anything else) and a small fleet of GN125's and GW250's as training bikes.



More information on the businesses can be found at:  
[www.rvcdriiving.com](http://www.rvcdriiving.com), [www.revs.co.nz](http://www.revs.co.nz)

## Tony Knight - Associate



Hi everyone, my name is Tony and I am a bikeoholic!

My first brush with motorcycling came at a very young age when my Dad donated his old "piss pot" helmet for me to wear whilst burning up the back yard on my trike and pedal car. (Please excuse my French, but that's how we roll in the Waikato). It was made from painted hardboard – gloss paint, no skimping – and lined with canvas straps held together with string. Leather ear flaps and chin strap completed the look. I'm not sure it would pass any testing regime but would be a "must have" accessory for any new café racer types. The helmet, the stories from dad and the complaints from mum about the "offs" ignited a small fire that still burns bright today.

I first threw my leg over a proper bike about age 8. A friend's dad seemed to have an almost inexhaustible supply of BSA Bantams and Villiers 125's and if we were really lucky we got a C50. I remember that they seemed to break down less and tended to start more. We would ride in our local woods, just across the road from our housing estate. When we were between motorbikes we made do with push bikes.

Unfortunately school got in the way of a highly successful international racing career. That and the friend with the enabler father moving away. Fast forward to age 19, fresh out of college I was engaged in gainful employment with a commute of about 9 miles or 14kms in new money. This was achieved on a Yamaha YB100, come rain or shine and even in snow. Not the fastest bike on earth but always reliable(ish). One piece of routine

maintenance that is not so common now was the regular decoking of the exhaust system. This was signalled by a noticeable drop off in the already limited power and necessitated blocking the inlet end of the exhaust up with something, generally a potato, cheap and a good seal, and pouring boiling water and bicarbonate of soda down the other end. Wait until the fizzing stops and pull out the spud. Hey presto, full power has been restored.

Fast forward a couple of years and I had upgraded to a Kawasaki KE125 and I was working with a small team of lads, 80% of which rode bikes. By this time in the UK the two part test had been introduced and I was still riding on L plates. With the aid of a guy who was a work mate and had been a friend from our school days and happily for me spent his Sunday mornings teaching bike courses for our local council (Derbyshire for the curious) I undertook a rigorous but informal (free) training program. The part one test was duly passed as was the part two. The part one was similar to the part one tests taken today, basic handling and riding round a course set out in cones. This was, however, in the days before riders being tested were followed by the examiner. The examiner would send you round a set course of corners and junctions in close proximity to the test centre and do his best to try and look inconspicuous by hiding behind bus stops and bushes whilst observing you. Thanks to the rigorous training and lack of opportunity to observe any mistakes I may or may not have made, the test was passed first time.

Within weeks of passing my test I'd upgraded to a Honda 400/4 and been roped in to becoming a trainer working for my mate. He was the chief instructor at the Matlock training centre. Any Poms reading this may know that Matlock Bath is an inland tourist attraction and has been a mecca (i.e. a place of worship, not a bingo hall) for bikers to gather at for a long time. Sunday mornings were wonderful, ride out to Matlock, do some training, get paid to do it, ride to Matlock Bath, ogle some bikes and then go home the long way.

After a couple of years a change in career direction, back to college and working away from home during the summer months meant that the 400/4 wasn't quite the right bike. Needing to go further afield it was upgrade time again. The choice was between Suzuki GS650 Katana and a Honda CX500. I can hear everybody shouting "*NO, don't do it Tony!*" Unfortunately I did and the CX came home with me. The CX was used for many years as my primary transport travelling between Kent and Derbyshire without issue.



**CX 500, aka "Plastic Maggot"**

My racing career was revived briefly with a couple of seasons completed racing in the Moped Mayhem series. This series comprised of practice, class scratch races and the main event was a six hour race as a finale. The emphasis was definitely biased towards having a good time for minimum effort. We once VERY NEARLY failed Saturday scrutineering for having tyres that were considered to be too good! Apparently we were taking it too seriously. Luckily we managed to convince them we were not. The Honda SS50 ran on 4 star and we ran on Guinness.



**The redoubtable SS50**

After the moped racing finished I went back to training becoming a Star Rider trainer, gaining the qualifications to test and issue CBT certificates (compulsory basic training) and take students up to test standard.

The CX was supplemented for a short period by a BMW R100RT but the CX remained in the garage. Eventually the CX went to another owner and I upgraded to a Honda 250N Superdream, though upgrade is probably not the term everyone would use. The Dream was the only bike I've ever had stolen. It was found quickly only a short distance from where it had been taken. Fortunately the thieves didn't have the wit to figure out that the fuel tap was turned off and flung the thing under a hedge at the bottom of the road when the fuel in the carbs ran out.

Fast forward to New Zealand and the first part of my stay here was covered by a Honda CRM 250, a grey import 2 stroke enduro bike acquired from a friend and eventually sold when working overseas.

Recently my first Suzuki, a SV650S, has sat in the garage and over the past 3 years, it's taken me the length and breadth of New Zealand. Highlights would be a run down to the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary Burt Munro Challenge last year and a 4 day run round East Cape and up through the central north island the year before. In all I've clocked up about 70,000kms on the bike and this year will see the odometer click over 100,000. It's a good job I like the bike as once that happens it'll be virtually worthless as a trade in.



**SV650 S – off to the Burt Munro Challenge**

I guess that brings me to the reason why I'm now getting involved with the IAM. When I bought the SV I thought a Ride Forever Bronze course would be just the ticket. This I enjoyed and in the following couple of years knocked off the Silver and Gold courses as well. When I'd completed the Gold course, I felt a little underwhelmed and wanted to pursue more training and the IAM seemed the logical option as the standard of riding is high; the training is at an excellent standard and on-going, not to mention the first class people I've met.

Ride safe and I hope to see you on a ride soon.

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The success of the CNI group heavily depends on everyone contributing so if you have any suggestions, questions, or contributions, we'd love to hear from you!

Best regards,

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