

NORTHUMBRIA BLOOD BIKES

Newsletter: May 2014

Cover Photo: All three of our blood bikes side by side at the Triumph “Demo Day” on Saturday 12th April.
Left to right: Graeme Mitchell, Ian Hunter, Richard Scholfield



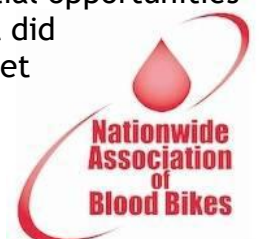
Triumph Demo Day

A very rare sight indeed... all three of our fully liveried bikes attended the demonstration day at Triumph North East: This was only possible thanks to the two duty riders for the dayshift agreeing to attend, despite being on standby for any calls coming in from hospitals.



The event gave us the opportunity to show North East bikers our full fleet, discuss our operation to potential members and, of course, show Triumph how far we've progressed since we last dealt with them in the summer of 2013.... We only had one bike then, and now we're looking a little stronger, especially as bike number four is on its way.

Last month's visit to Prescott opened our eyes to new potential opportunities with Triumph, so it did no harm for our fleet to be seen at their North-East Event!



Say "Cheese!"



While our fleet was attending the demo day at Triumph, Barry Bullas was busy taking photos of the various uniforms we have, including fundraising vests, polo shirts, formal shirts and rider jackets, to use for training documents and guidance to new members.

Barry hired the Banana Studio, Whickham Bank, for a couple of hours to do the photo shoot, as the studio is perfectly equipped with all the lighting and backdrops he needed. Pictured right is Barry with Phillipa Bromley, modelling our URBAN GLOW riders jacket (below).



Since we're on the subject of rider jackets, it's worth letting you know that Barry has ordered another 26 of them (the first 30 are all gone!), which should be delivered by the end of May. Thirteen of the jackets ordered have already been set aside for the members who have requested them, leaving a further thirteen of various sizes as stock items, in the hope that new riders will not have to wait so long to get a jacket. If you are passed your assessments & advanced training (i.e. you are "ready to ride") and have not yet ordered a jacket, please email Barry (membership@northumbriabloodbikes.org) to add your name to the list. We ask for a £20.00 deposit against the substantial cost of the jacket, which is refundable if/when it is returned to us. (or you could be a sport & 'donate' the £20.00.....)

Introducing bike number four:



This is our fourth bike on 19th April, "the day it was collected from a dealership in Leeds by Bike Manager Richard. We already have the livery for it so we should see it dressed and ready for duty a lot quicker than previous models. The purchase was made possible thanks to a substantial donation from the Charitable Funds Committee at the Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, so we have asked them if they would like to choose a name for the bike, as we do with any group offering to fund a vehicle for us. They have chosen "Bright Northumbria", and have a logo which will be displayed on the bike. Thanks also to Rota Guru Gary, who drove Richard all the way down to Leeds to collect it!

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An expensive month for bike maintenance:



Following a big chunk of time freeing off seized brake callipers and with fresh pads and new tyres installed, the RT passed its MOT on 12th April with flying colours. It went straight back in to service (contrary to plan) as our Pan also needed new tyres, so it went up on the lift next morning. No sooner had Richard got the wheels off it, he got a call to say the RT had broken down; it had a sidestand switch failure, which normally prevents the engine from running when the stand is down, but decided to stop the engine from running completely. So Richard spent the next evening taking all the plastic off the RT to get to the sidestand switch, putting the new one in and testing - all good.... Or so he thought: No sooner than the RT was back together, he got a call saying the Pan won't start, and it was at South Tyneside Hospital mid-job!

Richard jumped on the RT, scooted over to STDGH, beating the taxi that the hospital had called in place of us. Our duty rider Malcolm Cramman was able to take the package after all. The Pan bump started, so Richard brought it home.

We had a very visible issue at a hospital, but we were able to step up and still deliver, before their "plan B" taxi arrived. While we were lucky that the RT had just been repaired, the visible aspect to the Trust is that we dealt with it, and were still able to get their package delivered. Well done Richard, and thanks to everyone involved in the various movements of bikes and parts that were needed to gain a successful outcome...

John Parish gains a few pounds again..... for us!



On 16th April, member John Parish attended his weekly Albany and Concord Slimming World Group where he was handed £160 cash donation for NBB from Catherine Archer. She, like Margaret in last months' newsletter, has been getting sponsors for her weight loss. Thank you very much, Catherine, and to you too John, for promoting our group. I'm sure John won't mind me announcing that despite attending Prescott he still lost another 3½ lbs this month and received a "Club 10" award!!

While on the subject of the unstoppable Mr.Parish, he has, for three years, been teaching one of Gentoo's managers, Mr.John Ford, how to play guitar.



Mr.Ford now has his own band consisting of other Gentoo staff, and our Mr Parish helps out the band occasionally 'entertaining' elderly people in the Gentoo community. Anyway, John Ford knows about our Blood Bike charity and nominated us for a dress down day which they do occasionally to raise money for local charities. This raised £45.90 for our charity...Thank you Mr.Ford and all of your staff! We have also been nominated for inclusion in another Gentoo charity collection but we will have to wait and see if we are chosen as successful. I will keep you informed if we are.

Supporting the NHS in more ways than one.....

Members will know that Paul Strachan suggested at our meeting in March that we invite staff from the Newcastle Donor Centre to come and talk to our next meeting on the 12th of June about the work of the centre and to encourage as many members and supporters as possible to volunteer as donors. That's now confirmed. Tandy Pickering, one of the senior nurses at the centre, has sent us this article explaining what it's all about. Have a read, pass it to friends and family and do volunteer if you can.

Platelet Donation: 'A method for prolonging life'.

(Johanne Colle: University of Padua: 1628).

Platelet donation would have been beyond Colle's imagination when he mused upon the potential benefits of transfusing blood in the 17th Century and even our own Sir Christopher Wren, accredited with the first intravenous administration of medicine in 1666, would have been astonished by how far his aspirations have progressed: It took two World Wars to fully realise the potential of blood donation and component donation.

Platelets are a component of blood, they are most commonly known to be part of the clotting process, during which they create a mesh plug to stop or prevent bleeding.

Blood is made in the bone marrow and most platelet donations are given to patients who are unable to make enough for themselves; these would include premature babies and adults or children with leukaemia. Chemotherapy can leave cancer patients needing platelets during their treatment phases and sometimes patients need platelet transfusions after major surgery or extensive injury.

Platelet donations are taken via a cell separator machine. During the procedure blood is withdrawn, mixed with anticoagulant to prevent clotting and processed by spinning to separate the platelets. The rest of the blood is returned to the donor, which is why it is safe to donate platelets with a much higher frequency than whole blood. Only one arm is used!

Platelets are kept at room temperature and must be used within 7 days; as a consequence, your local Donor Centre is continuously providing platelets for hospitals in 'real time'... and like yourselves, hospitals are thrifty consumers who always want the freshest produce! The 6 platelet donation machines in Newcastle upon Tyne, for example, are expected to supply all platelets for the North East of England.....to the north; the Scottish Blood Services take over and to the west; Lancaster. South is taken over by Leeds. If you have a loved one who has needed platelets, the likelihood is that they came from your closest Donor Centre.

Our donors can come very regularly.....some manage 2 weekly, 3 weekly and 4 weekly..... committing up to 90 minutes of their time to help save or prolong lives: They are looked after by qualified staff supervised by nurses. Donors chat to staff, relax, watch television or read whilst being offered refreshments throughout their donation.

If you are already a whole blood donor, you can find out if you would be suitable for platelet donation by giving an extra blood sample when you next donate. You will be asked your height and weight and staff will advise you whether your veins would be suitable for the cell separator machine. Only about 1 in 10 of the samples we take will prove suitable for platelet donation.....so if that is you, we would ask that you give platelets instead of whole blood.

If you have never donated blood before, why not contact 0300 123 23 23 or www.blood.co.uk to register and make an appointment to give blood or to give a sample?

Tandy Pickering. Nurse: Newcastle Donor Centre.



Paul Strachan and Peter Robertson are possibly just two members who already donate platelets – by the smiles on their faces it can't be difficult!



Thanks to Tandy for this, we'll see her on 12th June - thanks also to the Donor Centre for the supply of publicity materials that we're now able to pass on to interested members of the public at our events.

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Sainsburys - Arnison Centre, Durham on 5th May:

A big THANK YOU to all the volunteers who helped us to raise funds on Bank Holiday Monday at Sainsburys. We had no display in the store, but offered bag-packing between 10am and 4pm. As the day progressed we dwindled in numbers, (finishing with just three people on the tills), but a bank holiday is always a tough one to find willing volunteers and we're really appreciative of those who were able to attend. Our next event is Saturday 24th May at ASDA in Blyth..... and we'd love to see you helping there!



Morpeth Lions roar for us!

Morpeth Lions kindly invited us to attend one of their meetings and give them a talk, which we did on possibly the foggiest night of the year so far! Owain Harris, our tireless publicity officer, crawled up the A1 at a snails pace and met our Chairman Peter Robertson at his house before following him into the town to the club.

This was slightly different to a normal meeting in that the head of all the clubs in the North of England was present - perhaps checking us out before we do a presentation for him at their regional meeting? Peter and Owain managed to entertain them, followed by some 'rigorous' questions at the end, but we remained calm (outwardly) and this was followed by a cheque presentation for which we are extremely appreciative. Then, on 8th May, the event was featured in a very comprehensive editorial in the Morpeth Herald (Below)!

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

Send your club reports by email to: morpeth.herald@jpress.co.uk or by post to: Morpeth Herald, 17 Newgate Street, Morpeth NE61 1AW

Backing for bike delivery service

MORPETH LIONS CLUB

Members enjoyed an evening with a difference when two members of the Northumbria Blood Bikes (NBB) charity came along to give a talk.

The added attraction was to see one of the motorcycles used to transport blood, blood products, samples and test results to North East hospitals. After viewing and sitting on the bike, the Lions adjourned indoors for an extremely interesting presentation on the work of NBB.

Peter Robertson and Owain Harris explained how the charity came to be formed, its work and its plans for the future.

The concept of blood bikes started in the south of England some 40 years ago. They are staffed entirely by volunteers and deliver urgent medical supplies between hospitals and healthcare sites in the evenings and at night.

An average hospital would have spent around £25,000 on out of hours transport, though



this is higher in the case of the RVI or Freeman Hospitals.

Funding of Blood Bikes is entirely by donations and sponsorship and the volunteers all work for free, with no expenses taken.

In 2011, a Nationwide Association of Blood Bikes (NABB) was formed. By 2012, member groups carried out 25,000

runs for the NHS and in 2013 there were 22 blood bike groups across the country.

The decision to form a Northumbria group was taken in 2012. This was a quite complicated task as it involved setting up a bank account and HMRC and Charity Commissioners registration.

In addition, extensive liaison was needed with the NHS, as well as training and qualifications, insurance, operational procedures, fund-raising and publicity to establish.

In just over a year, the group raised £25,000 and started to buy its bikes.

NBB will shortly have service level agreements with the

six NHS Trusts in Durham, Tyne and Wear and Northumberland. The controllers and riders work to an operational handbook. The aim is to respond to calls within 30 minutes.

NBB now has four bikes and more than 100 members, with 60 having undertaken assessments and riding qual-

ifications. The overall need is for eight bikes and between 60 and 70 riders.

The motorbikes are big sport tourers chosen for comfort and weight. They have blue lights for emergencies, but these are rarely used.

They are dedicated for NBB and not owned by individuals. Bikes are passed on to the next rider at the end of a shift.

Unsurprisingly, several volunteers are involved in fund-raising activities.

These include supermarket bag packing, attending publicity events and fairs, talks, workplace visits, sponsorship and taking part in major events such as the Great North Run.

After a lively discussion, Morpeth Lions Club President Geoff Bushell thanked Mr Robinson and Mr Harris for their presentation and handed them a cheque for £150 for the charity.

For more information about NBB, visit www.northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk



Above, Morpeth Lions President Geoff Bushell presents a cheque for £150 to Peter Robertson, left, and Owain Harris of Northumbria Blood Bikes. Left, Geoff tries a bloodbike for size, with members of Morpeth Lions Club.

Meeting the Madathletes.....



Just a few days before this newsletter was released, Graham Moor, Alan Ross, and duty rider Ian Hunter took a blood bike down to meet the Madathlon team at their monthly gathering in Newton Aycliffe. For those of you who don't know, they are a charity who have already provided lifesaving medical equipment for a local hospital, and are hoping this year to provide a bike for us to continue our service in their region. They're insane, mountain-climbing, bike-riding, swimming, multi-talented fitness fanatics who put themselves through great physical challenges to raise money, and it's all organised by Edd Gardiner (above, bottom right) and Rob Shields (hiding at the back!). Edd sadly lost his sister Claire in December 2012, and in her memory they are committed to helping to progress causes which help to save lives and preserve life. Claire, pictured below, had a reputation for her charitable nature and would always think of others first "She wouldn't pass anyone in need if she could help and she would always give money to all of the Big Issue sellers she passed while out shopping. At Christmas time she would send Christmas cards to Salvation Army to give out to people who wouldn't have received anything, and tried to spread some cheer to those in need." Claire was also an organ donor, and three people in their 20s and a man in his 60s received transplants following Claire's death. You can follow in her footsteps by joining the UK organ donor register by visiting the website www.organdonation.nhs.uk or calling 0300 123 123.



**Life's amazing.
Pass it on.**

 Register to become an organ donor.
0300 123 23 23 or visit organdonation.nhs.uk

You will see more in our future newsletters about the events that Madathlon have planned for 2014, as we intend to support them as much as we can. They're on Twitter and Facebook, or you can contact Graham, our fundraiser, for more information about the events they are planning, and how we aim to support them!

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Want to talk to a committee member.... But who are they?

We thought it was high time we put some photos into the newsletter so that you can identify us at open meetings and events.... So, any issues, ideas, questions, you'll hopefully know who to approach!



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Graham Moor

Fundraising

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Sunday 25th May....a chance for our riders to test drive our newest bike!



Our fourth bike, pictured left, named "Bright Northumbria" by the NHS foundation whose donation enabled us to purchase it, is a bit of an unusual one. With a semi-automatic box, it has no clutch lever: The clutch is automatic and comes in as you raise the rpm above 1500, and you have a choice of a normal foot lever for changing gear or a finger trigger & thumb button (think "mountain bike"!).

I would imagine that many of our riders may feel a little daunted about this, so we've arranged an opportunity to come along, try out the bike and get a feel for the clutch system.

We have a "slow riding skills" training session already arranged on Sunday 25th May 16:30 at the Heighley Gate Garden Centre, Morpeth, so we're going to bring along the new FJR. Members who currently ride for us will have the opportunity take the bike for a brief circuit to try out the unusual controls and handling properties.

The public are welcome to pop along, see the bike, have a chat with us and watch our training session taking place. However, for insurance purposes, only our members who have completed advanced certification and a riding assessment will be able to participate.

Future events to put in your diary:



ASDA Blyth: Bag packing & publicity: Sunday 24th May.

Sign up for this if you can spare a couple of hours, the diary is open already on our events calendar (members), or for those without access, pop an email to fundraising@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk



Rider Training: Slow Riding skills &  TEST DRIVE our new automatic FJR

Practical tips to improve slow riding technique with our Training Officer, Geoff Spencer. No need to book, simply turn up on the day. Members only for tuition, and for insurance reasons, assessed & advanced members only for riding the FJR, but everyone is welcome to observe & have a chat. Starts @ 16:30 Heighley Gate Garden Centre, Morpeth.



Northumberland County Show:

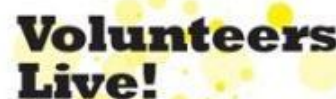
We've have a stand at this show and we're fully staffed for this, but we'd still love to see you drop by!



Volunteers LIVE! Event:

Trinity Square, Gateshead 11am-3pm.

Emphasis on recruitment & awareness instead of fundraising....



"V-Day" Volunteers day event:

St Marys Heritage Centre, Gateshead 10:30am-3:30pm. Special focus on new and small groups....



The Hoppings: Newcastle Town Moor

The return of the largest travelling fairground in Europe.

We're provisionally booked for the full nine days

so will need plenty of volunteers to help us...



Bikewise 2014:

A dream event for bike fanatics, and we have a stand booked....

Drop us an email if you would like to help out on the day



ASDA Gosforth: Bag packing & publicity:

Sign up for this if you can spare a couple of hours:

WE HAVE TEN TILLS to staff! Drop us an email to fundraising@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk if you can help us....



The Crawcrook Fair:

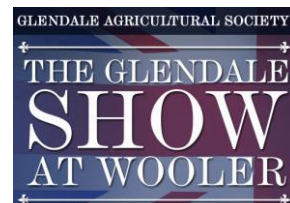
Saturday August 2nd from 11am- 4pm.

Would you be able to support the stand for an hour or two while the rest of your family look around the show?



The Glendale Show (Wooler):

August (Bank Holiday Monday) between 9am & 5pm.



Eldon Square Shopping Centre, Newcastle:

Confirmed as Saturday and Sunday 6th & 7th September.

Drop the kids off in town with the other half & give us a hand! (Possibly holding two events at both entrances to the centre)



Great North Run 2014:

Brilliant publicity last time, so we're trying for it again!

We also have several people taking part in the run itself.

Rather them than me....



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Can you help us to stay operational?

All events are on our fundraising calendar (for members, as a login is required) at www.northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk/fundraisingcalendar.

Alternatively we would ask that non-members wishing to volunteer could drop us an email to fundraising@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk.

So please add your name to any events you can attend. No fundraising=no fuel=no Blood Bikes!
We also want to hear if you know of ANY potential fundraising opportunities: phone numbers below.

You may think we tend to go on & on about the importance of fundraising, and deservedly so...we do!! However, we also fully understand that everyone has lives and commitments of their own to cope with. Please don't feel that you will be looked upon in a negative light if you are unable to fundraise..... we won't think badly of you if you are unable to attend. We do still need to promote fundraising and encourage attendance as much as possible in order to survive as a viable organisation, and will always be asking for volunteers to help. But if circumstances dictate that you are unable to attend, we won't think any less of you, so please don't feel pressured!

Perhaps if you feel this describes YOU, you might be interested in easy fundraising below.....which costs nothing, and benefits us each time you shop online.

We're already seeing good results from this, so spread the word!



You can contribute by signing up with easyfundraising.org.uk, a free way to raise money for our cause when shopping online. Our charity is already on there, just search for Northumbria Blood Bikes when you sign up. A full explanation of how it works is on the site.

That's it for this month....Ride safe ☺☺☺

FUNDRAISING HOTLINE: 07766 479 770 - for any opportunities to increase our funding through sponsorship, locations for collecting tins, supermarket events etc...



www.northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk



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