



# NORTHUMBRIA BLOOD BIKES

March  
2015  
Newsletter

## The official handover of the new Vauxhall Mokka 4x4s to Northumbria & Cumbria Blood Bike Groups:



Former motorcycle racer and British champion James Whitham handed over the keys to the driver volunteers, as the northern ambassador for the Henry Surtees Foundation. Motor sport legend John Surtees set up the foundation after his son Henry died aged 18 in 2009.

Mr Whitham said of the blood cars: "It's clearly a good idea whichever way you look at it. I'm happy to be associated with it because I've been a bike racer and I'm also into mountain biking. It's not beyond the realms that one day I might need these guys and certainly I've used air ambulances coming away from circuits when I've hurt myself when I was racing. It resonates with me on quite a personal level." The blood bikes have been in action since January and now the cars will join them on the so-called 'BoB run' - blood on board run. The volunteer drivers take it in turns to transport blood in thermostatically controlled boxes, which the Henry Surtees Foundation has also donated.

The blood is taken by Northumbria Blood Bikes from the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle to a meeting point near Carlisle, where a relay is in place for the blood to continue its journey with Blood Bikes Cumbria. Northumbria then return to the RVI to take a second box to the other air base at Durham Tees Valley, every 24 hours, 365 days a year. If the blood is not used it is returned to the hospital and put back into the system. Laura Attwood, a doctor with the Great North Air Ambulance crew, said: "It's totally life changing for the patients we go and pick up on the roadside."

The keys were handed over to Bill Bertham, Chairman of Blood Bikes Cumbria, and Peter Robertson, Chairman of Northumbria Blood Bikes, at the Great North Air Ambulance airbase at Langwathby, near Penrith.





It was an impressive sight to see... Two liveried 4x4 cars, and four blood bikes, alongside the Great North Air Ambulance helicopter at their Langwathby base.

**Top Right:** Blood Bikes Chairman Bill Bertham gets interviewed by radio station CFM, who later ran a feature on their website.

**Middle Right:** It was a very cold trek across the Alston - Penrith route with a quick stop-off at Hartside Top. The bikes had to go via Carlisle to avoid the snow!

**Bottom Right:** Owain managed, as always, to sniff-out a pressure washer to clear off the dirt before the press arrived!

**Below:** James Whitham hands over the car keys to Bill Bertham (Cumbria) and Peter Robertson (Northumbria).



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## Jankers Generator plaque:

Some time ago we were given a donation in memory of John "Jankers" Doyle from GB Bikers. We decided to purchase a generator for our large events, so that there was something permanent that would benefit the charity rather than just leaflets or keyrings etc.



We also promised to get a plaque on it to show how it had been funded....and Here's Owain & Sue, proudly showing it off...



## Waiting for the Kangoo....

Our publicity man, Owain Harris's car is still getting used for all the event equipment (Gazebos, Mini-Motos, bloodboxes, banners, buckets, leaflets etc) while we await the introduction of the Renault Kangoo van (kindly donated to us) to join our fleet. Hopefully once it is on the road, Owain can give his car a well-earned rest. The plan is to use the Kangoo for events and promotions when available to help to reduce wear & tear on members personal vehicles.

## 12<sup>th</sup> February: A Presentation to Cramlington Mens Group

Just after the last newsletter was sent out, Owain Harris did a presentation in Cramlington for the local mens group, who listened with enthusiasm & also made a donation to the charity. Alan Ross was a duty rider, and popped in with "Octagon", our Honda Pan-European Bike, as there had been none available to book out for the event. Many thanks to all who chipped in to make a donation for us!







&amp;



# Charity Night

Local Heroes Kirsty & Clair pull off an amazing evening at Derwent Manor Hotel:



I don't think many of us anticipated how big a success this event was going to be.... Although we should have guessed when tickets sold out completely, just half way through January! Bloodbikes volunteer Kirsty Lawrence teamed up with her colleague Clair Gray and organized, well, EVERYTHING. From the promotion and advertising of the event, organising the tickets, finding the entertainment, dressing the tables, sorting out raffle prizes, managing the seating arrangements, an unbelievably complex task which they managed to undertake without a single hitch!

Mark Richardson brought Madathlon bike "Bella", and also did a short speech about the work of our charity, and thanked everyone who had attended. The bike stayed inside the function room so that guests could have their photos taken on it. Mark even provided his jacket so that people could look the part for their "selfies", although the lack of bright lighting gave mixed results for some cameras....including mine.

We cannot thank Clair & Kirsty enough for that fantastic work they did to stage this event. There was an update posted to us the following day, which suggests that the two charities will be sharing over £2000.00 of the proceeds from this event, and another one is already being planned for November,.... If they can cope with the stress of organising it all over again!

Thank you so much Clair & Kirsty, you've done us proud. What a fantastic night; hopefully the first of many. And of course, a huge thank you to everyone who attended and supported this event!



*Left to Right: Kirsty Lawrence, Mark Richardson, Clair Gray, and of course "Bella", one of the two Madathlon Blood bikes.*

# Meet the team keeping Northumbria Blood Bikes moving!

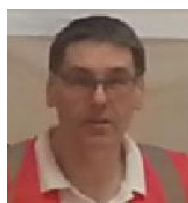
It's been a long time (May 2014 to be exact) since we did one of these "Meet the committee" pages. Quite a few of the faces and names have changed, but more importantly there's also a huge number of new members since the last time we did it, so it's high time we introduced ourselves again!



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**Mike Thompson**

**IT & Website**

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**Geoff Spencer**

**Training / Rider Assessment**

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**Richard Scholfield**

**Treasurer / Bike Manager**

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**Barry Bullas**

**Membership**

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**Vice Chairman**

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**Graham Moor**

**Fundraising**

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**Sean Storey**

**Hospital Liaison**

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These are the people who try to keep the wheels turning.... and we've included the email addresses so that you can contact them if you have any issues, questions or ideas. We don't bite.

As a charity, our (voluntary) positions are open to election each year: Any member wishing to have a greater influence on the progression and direction of the charity can stand for election to any of the posts held, but we're also just as open to suggestions and feedback via the appropriate emails listed above. We each work incredibly hard to keep the group running smoothly. Most would be quite shocked at the amount of legislation, negotiation and administration that goes on behind the scenes! Feel free to contact any of us if you would like more information on how you can help.



## Joseph Swann Academy Talks:

13<sup>th</sup> February was a busy day for Owain Harris, Alan Ross, Nigel Barlow and Tandy Pickering as they did a series of presentations to five classes of school children at the Joseph Swann Academy in Low Fell. Tandy was there representing the Blood Service to educate them about the importance of giving blood, and to explain about platelets, blood groups etc. We also took along a laptop to show a few videos explaining the importance of what we do. There was plenty of interest, some unexpected questions, and the opportunity to take the all-important "selfie" while sat on a bloodbike.

The staff and pupils made us most welcome, and look forward to working with us on similar presentations or events in the future.



## ASDA Ryhope, Sunderland:



Two of Northumbria Blood Bikes members, Alan Johnson and Nigel Barlow, in Asda Ryhope when we attended on Sat/Sun 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> February.

By the time this picture (left) was taken, we had already moved from the draughty foyer to inside the store - such nice people!

The Triumph is one of Madathlon 's - 'BELLA' and as usual was very popular.... Even with the local Police Community Support Officer (Below)....



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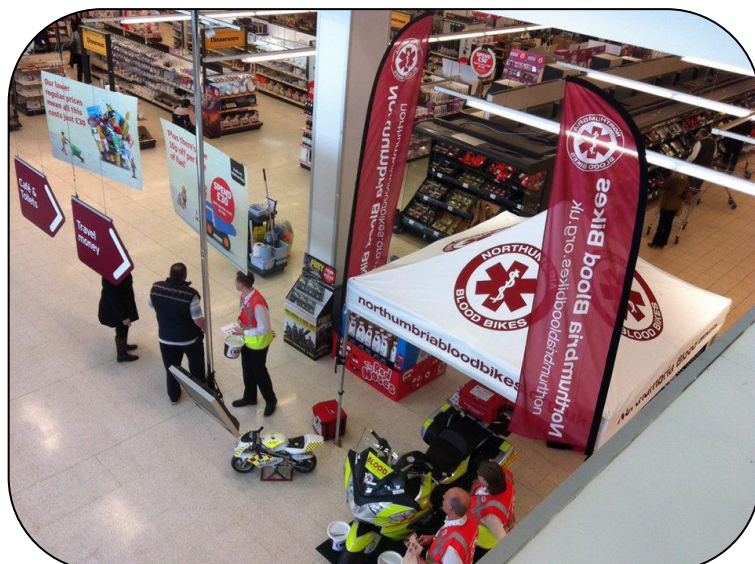
What a brilliant turn-out for Sainsburys at The Galleries, Washington, on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February! Many thanks to their community champion - Gabi Oughton., for making us all so welcome in store.

We took Madathlon's BELLA along.... And even had room to put the gazebo and flags up to attract more attention. New members Wilfred Moralee Kirsty Harris-Parker popped along to lend a hand and see what we do. Sue Harris seemed to meet most of her pupils from school, as this was such a local event.

We have another invitation to the Armed Forces Day as a result of Graham Moor being approached by the organiser.

It was constant from 8.30 to 5.00pm: Thanks to Peter Robertson, Wilf Moralee, Len Potts, Gary Annan, Kirstie Harris-parker, Nigel Barlow, Owain Harris, Susan Harris, Graham Moor, and everyone else who attended and helped.

The team photo above was taken by Alan Ross's wife, Dawn, who was shopping in store. - And check out this "balcony photo"... excellent!!!



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## Owain & sue leave people in tears?

“Owain Harris and Sue Harris represented the Northumbria Blood Bikes on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March by travelling to Delves lane in Consett to present a talk to the wives group at the church there. The connection was made whilst we were fundraising at Kirsty Lawrence's store, and we met Ethel - the organiser. Everyone was very grateful and were putting both coins and paper money into the collection bucket that we take as part of the show.

It was whilst packing up that Ethel dropped the bombshell...she had lost her husband 5 weeks previously, he passed away in the car park at Tesco Consett - we were stunned.

Ethel was full of praise for Tesco, and Kirsty Lawrence and Clair Gray, community champions there - take a bow girls!

Sue was hugging Ethel, people were teary eyed, and it was then that we realised that this is why we go out and do these talks to those that want us to come, despite the distances involved - it doesn't matter if it's Consett or Coquettale, the public want us to tell them about the charity and the work we do. Not every talk is measured in terms of what we gain financially as a result, but what we gain in respect, and admiration for simply doing the job - and that's what matters.

I was proud to be a Blood Biker that night, and left Sue to hold the fort while I went and loaded the car as I had something in my eye.. ”

*Story: Owain and Sue Harris.*

## A nice Easter gift for Villa Real & UHND Childrens' Ward:

Tesco Consett's Community Champions, Kirsty Lawrence and Clair Gray, are organizing an appeal to help to provide enough Easter Eggs for all of the children attending the Villa Real school, which caters for pupils who have severe learning difficulties including Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Cerebral Palsy. The appeal will hopefully provide enough to give every child an egg, but also donate additional eggs to the Children's ward at Durham University Hospital. On Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> March, children from the school will be visiting the store to perform Easter songs between 1:30pm & 2:30pm. After the performance, the eggs collected will be presented to the children, and Northumbria Blood Bikes will be there to assist, along with a Blood bike for the kids to play on. Please come and join us in supporting the appeal... and donate an egg!



Rotary Club of Cramlington have organised a fundraising meal, for 23rd March, at Mandarin Bay, Cramlington. 7pm start. Tickets are £17 for a 3-course meal, with all profits plus raffle to Northumbria Blood Bikes. If you would like tickets, message Stephen Perola. Only 60 available and they should sell fast!

SCA theadvertiser

### Store Easter egg appeal

**SUPERMARKET** shoppers are being asked to donate an Easter egg to local children.

Staff at Tesco in Consett are organising their Easter egg appeal for the second successive year. Last year enough eggs were collected to give one to each of the 83 children at Villa Real School, which caters for children with severe learning difficulties.

This year they also hope to give eggs to youngsters in the children's ward at the University Hospital of North Durham. Children from Villa Real School will visit the store on March 24 to perform a selection of Easter-themed songs for shoppers.



## A new outdoor event for us:

The Sunderland Steam Spectacular will return to Herrington Country Park on Sunday and Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> May, featuring a wealth of vehicle displays including: Steam Traction Engines, Vintage Cars, Classic Motorcycles, Vintage Tractors and, for the first time, an event stand from Northumbria Blood Bikes.

A designated countryside area will also offer visitors a range of attractions such as gundog displays and birds of prey with flying demonstrations in the main arena. There will also be an opportunity for all terrier owners to bring along their dogs and join in the fun with the main arena terrier racing.

This event will also feature a children's corner, trade stands, Falconry displays and much much more.

Tickets are £6 for Adults, under 16s £4, and under 5s go free - Tickets will only be available on the day. Family tickets £15 (2 adults and 3 children).



## SUNDERLAND STEAM SPECTACULAR ~ 2015 ~

**SUNDAY 3rd MAY  
MONDAY 4th MAY**

**HERRINGTON COUNTRY PARK  
A183 PENSHAW MONUMENT**



## Waitrose Hexham token scheme:

Something for shoppers in many of our areas as we return to the shopper tokens. For the month of March, we are featuring on the store's 'Green token scheme' at Waitrose in Hexham, and for the March / April period, we are on the Community 'Chosen By You' board at the Asda stores in Cramlington, Byker & Gosforth (Wansbeck Road,). If you visit these stores, please feel free to drop your tokens on our box, and if you don't shop there, why not visit for a change and vote? Each Asda store has a winner value of £200,

and Waitrose has a total value of £1,000 shared proportionally among the charities taking part. Please, spread the word, share, like, visit, and anything else which helps. These are the events that keep the fuel in our fuel tanks!



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## Return of the “Buddy Rider” system...

In this month's open meetings meeting the committee agreed to reintroduce the "Buddy Rider" system for new members, and Steve Rawlings has kindly accepted responsibility for organising and monitoring the development of it. As yet the details have not been worked out, but he plans to get together with Barry Bullas (membership) in the near future to get it sorted. In the meantime, Steve would like to hear from anyone who might be interested in being a Buddy rider or driver, and of course would be happy to hear your views or ideas that could help to make this work.



The idea is simply that any new rider/driver would be allocated a buddy rider/driver to show them the ropes and to be their first and foremost point of contact until they are up and running. This could include familiarisation rides to the hospitals, completing paperwork, shadowing on a shift, advice of logging jobs and any other area we think would help a new member ease in smoothly to their role. If any of our (fully operational) riders or drivers are interested in becoming a Buddy rider/driver then please add your name to the forum, or contact Steve Rawlings direct. Steve's phone number is available to members via the "Operations Contact List" in the members only section of our website.

- *Many thanks to Steve for taking on this role and helping newcomers to find their feet!*



### Morrisons, Morpeth:

Northumbria Blood Bikes appeared at Morrison's in Morpeth over two days, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Peter, our Chairman, took our "Bright Northumbria" Yamaha FJR (Pictured left & below) on the Monday and it took pride of place along the storefront.

On day two, Steve Rawlings took Madathlon bike "Bella" (one of the two Triumph Trophy bikes donated to us from Madathlon).



Peter used the store as a base from which to do his annual assessment ride with Geoff, who arrived with Chris Mitchell, (also doing his assessment ride). They both went out with Geoff, then stayed around to get on with more fundraising - to pay for the fuel they'd just burned! Well done Alan Johnson, Steve Rawlings, Matt Spencer, Chris Mitchell, Geoff Spencer and Peter Robertson for helping us at the store.



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## Hepscott WI talk...

Our Chairman Peter Robertson did a talk to the Hepscott WI on 17<sup>th</sup> February. "What a nice bunch of ladies, they gave a cheque plus collected over £60 in a whip-round of 30 members!" Peter took "Octagon" the Honda Pan European donated to us by MG owners group. Also attending was a new member, Ben Shelley, on just his fourth day of membership. He came to see what went on, but was persuaded to talk to the group about why he had joined, and how he intended to help. Let's hope the pressure of standing up & presenting hasn't put you off, Ben.

It's worth pointing out that new members (and existing ones, for that matter) are welcome to come along to any of the presentation & talks that we do, space permitting. If you'd like to, have a look at the events calendar on our website, then drop an email to the person organising the event.

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## Biddick Primary School:

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March saw Northumbria doing a presentation in front of the whole school at their morning assembly, followed by a few smaller groups being given an overview of our activities. "Bella" was there for the kids to sit on, but the age group was so young that the two mini motos (below) were probably just as popular. Remember, we're happy to do these talks at any schools in our region, so tell your kids to pester their teachers & we'll arrange a visit!



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# Future events to put in your diary:



## Waitrose, Hexham

We're there with a collection & Awareness stand, 9am-5pm. Hexham is a hard one to cover, and it's our first time there, so we need to make a good impression! Please come if you can.

Waitrose



## ASDA, Wansbeck Road, Gosforth:

We will be at ASDA for the EXTENDED times of 9:00-17:00. (Awareness stand/Bike) Long hours on busy weekend days...can you help?

ASDA



## Tesco, Consett:

We will be at Tesco 10:00-16:00 with our colleague Kirsty Lawrence, Community Champion, to help her to raise funds for the Group.

TESCO



## Fundraising dinner: Mandarin Bay, Cramlington

Organised by the Rotary Club of Cramlington. Tickets are £17 for a 3-course meal, with all profits to Northumbria Blood Bikes. See the article on page 8.



## Tesco, Consett:

1.30-2.30pm students from Villa Real special needs school will be in store performing. We'll be there with a bike as a treat for them, and will be helping to present the Easter eggs in-store after their performance.

TESCO



## North East Motorcycle Racing Club, Croft Circuit:

More details to follow on our website, but we'll be there! All day, both days. Adults £10, Children 15 and under go free.



## Cockfield Family Fun Day and Bike Show

From 12:00 onwards: This event is to raise funds specifically for our group! Go with the kids for some fun! We will have a bike there to climb over and add to the occasion. Cockfield WMC, Front St. Cockfield DL13 5ER.



## Prescott Bike Festival

Yes, it's a long way to go, but worth it! Lots and lots of Blood Bike groups and plenty of opportunity to meet other groups and compare bikes! Details at [www.prescottbikefestival.co.uk](http://www.prescottbikefestival.co.uk) or on our events calendar.



## Sunderland Steam Spectacular: Herrington Country Park

More details to follow on our website, but we'll be there! All day, both days. Adults £10, Children 15 and under go free.



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

[facebook.com/northumbriabloodbikes](https://facebook.com/northumbriabloodbikes)

[twitter.com/northumbriabb](https://twitter.com/northumbriabb)

[linkedin.com/company/2866951](https://linkedin.com/company/2866951)

## FUNDRAISING HOTLINE:

**07766 479 770**

- for any opportunities to increase our funding through sponsorship, locations for collecting tins, supermarket events etc...