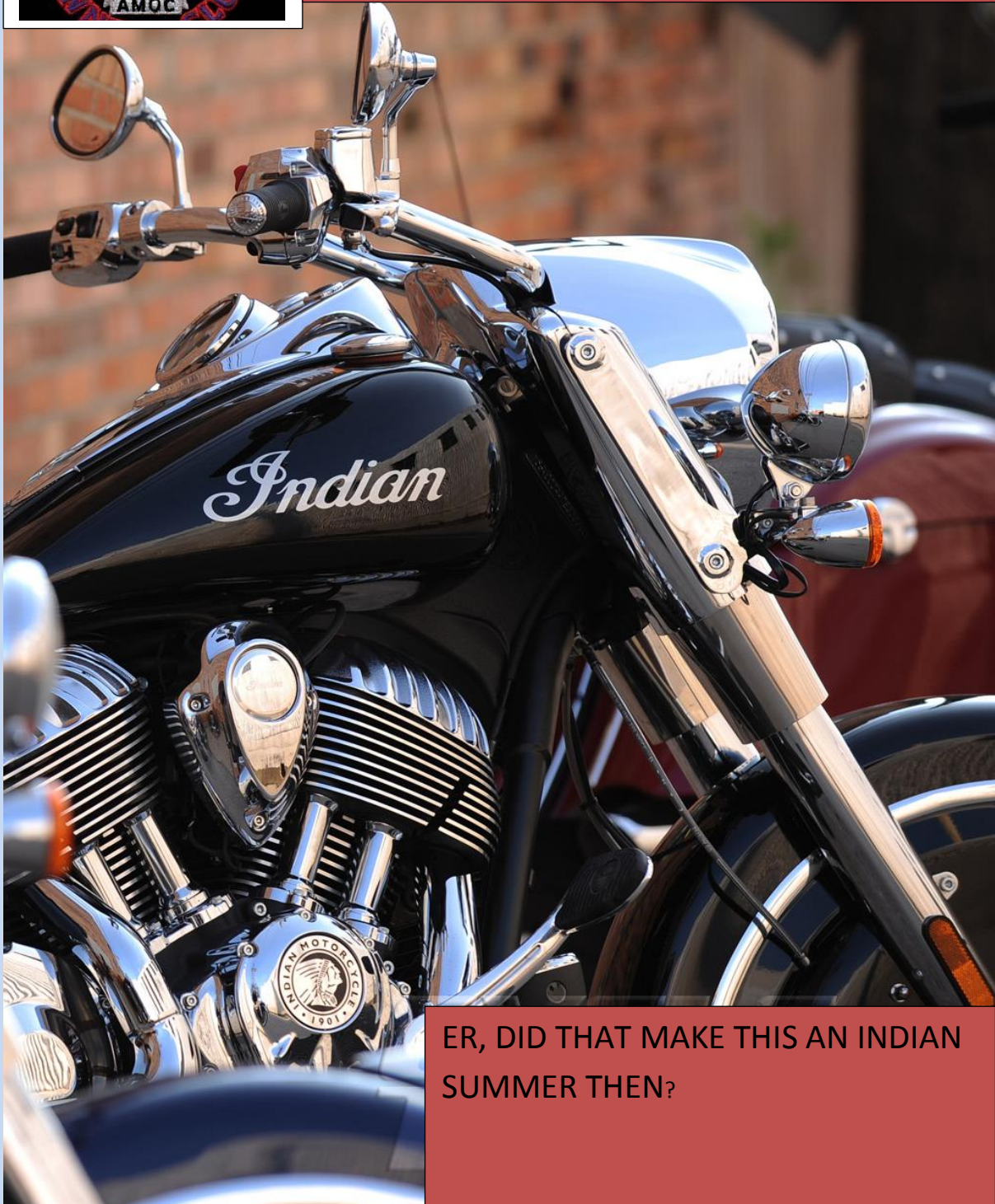


AMOCTIMES—THE VOICE OF REASON?

CERTAINLY NOT, OLD BEAN.

AUTUMN 2013



ER, DID THAT MAKE THIS AN INDIAN
SUMMER THEN?

Consonants

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Editors reasoned ramble

Nothing beats a good old Evo, eh?

At least that's what you might expect your bigoted old fart of an editor to say innit?

I mean its not that long since I roundly lambasted, slagged off and generally bad mouthed all twin cams-especially anything with that skinny front wheel and those forks like pipe cleaners. Remember?

Well, hopefully you don't, in which case who am I to draw attention to my inconsistency....'cos I just bought another one didn't I?

Honest, I only went into the shop to buy a filter for the Evo -and instead came out with a new bike-of which more anon.

Truth to tell I'd been falling out of love with the old thing since the oil pump packed up on me some months before. I guess I was lucky that I got away with just a new pump-others have written off the whole plot when that little red light comes on.

After that happened though I never really trusted it again and that's about the sum of it. I persevered mightily though-even

took it for a trouble free trip to Gower just to prove to myself that all was well, but the damage to the relationship was done by then and I couldn't live with it in peace.

So when I stood at the parts counter in Maidstone Hd , there it was looking at me knowingly....a lovely '08 Softail custom with 500 (yes, 500) miles on it .

I tried walking away but my friends told me to be a numpty.

Even my Beloved added her voice to the deafening chorus of 'buy the damn thing'.

So I did.

Just had to shift the Evo and the Triumph to pay for it....hmmm....if you've recently sold a bike via Ebay you'll even now be reaching for the Valium....gawd what a load of Cretins you end up dealing with.

But in the end they went – and at least the Evo went to someone who knew what he was getting and will probably give it the retirement home it really deserves.

Happy ending then?

Not a bit of it

Peace of mind buying from a main dealer?

Tell me another one.

When I asked to hear it run the battery wouldn't turn it over-fair enough, it's not exactly had a lot of use in the last few years and the nice sales man assured me it'd get a new one+ the change of oil and filters I insisted on too.

So comes the great day and I start it up....and it fires with a resounding clonk from the starter train...ok maybe just a fluke...but its done the same ever since whilst my attempts to get the shop to sort it have been met with blank stares and evasion to date.....its in again tomorrow for a set of pipes and its running in service+ allegedly, they will 'look at the starting'

Lets wait and see on this one-see , chaps I don't actually want you to 'look at it' I want to hear you tell me you'll sort it out before we reach Court over it or I end up doing a stretch for what I can only describe as 'Mindful Violence'

Al

Gravedigger and Pat's wedding







**The new Indian range- a test ride....article
shamelessly filched from cycle world**

Indians- Cycle World gets to ride

August 15, 2013 By [Jamie Elvidge](#)



Much of what one sees at Sturgis Bike Week falls in the “OMG, I wish I hadn’t seen that!” category. But it’s not just swinging boobs, lumpy bums and sunburned beer bellies that hog up the scene in South Dakota. The show-off bikes rolling around the High Plains can also be unsightly. Thirty-inch front wheels, anyone? But this year, thank God and America, there was one double take well worth the head turn: the unveiling of the long-awaited Chiefs from **Indian** Motorcycles.

One Little, Two Little, Three Little Indians...

Everyone knew the Indian Chief was on its way, but the world seemed equal parts shocked and stoked to find there would be three Polaris-borne Indians available straight out of the gate. A truly remarkable accomplishment when you remember how all this came about.

The iconic brand, which became America’s first motorcycle company in 1901 and enjoyed a storied 40 years, has seen a bumpy road since it was first sold in 1945. Decades of slumber were followed by misalignments of would-be profiteers, a sad false start in 1999 and, finally, a heartfelt resurrection by Stellican, the folks responsible for breathing some life back into the iconic Chris Craft line of boats. Only trouble was, the Indian redo didn’t float.

Known as the Kings Mountain Indians, the iffy builds of this era were overpriced and enthusiasm eventually fizzled. In 2011, nearly 60 years after the last authentic Indian rolled off the line in Springfield, Massachusetts, Polaris Industries was able to rescue the beloved brand. The manufacturing giant, well known for its engineering prowess, heartland values and enthusiast workforce, gently laid to rest the Kings Mountain platform after reinventing one of America’s most romanticized marques.

That it took the Indian design and engineering team at Polaris a mere 27 months to create from the ground up these all-new Chiefs—three distinctly different motorcycles—is a mind-blower. And after riding them, it feels like a miracle.



Bob Almond of Rapid City, South Dakota, likes his '09 Kings Mountain Spirit, but was very impressed by the new models. He says he could almost buy two new Indians for the price he paid for his one bike.

“But It’s Just A Victory With Different Bodywork”

Hardly. Somehow, no matter how good something is, how perfectly executed and well intended, there will be haters. For the informed, the **Victory** comparison is tiresome. In fact, after 25 years of testing motorcycles professionally, many of those spent as the editor-in-chief of a cruiser-specific magazine, I can say with authority that these new Indians don’t resemble anything else available. But you don’t need to be an expert to know that; you just need to take a ride on one. If I had a dime for every time I heard someone say, “Sold!” as they stepped off a Chief at the demo circuit I’d have treated myself to a nice buffalo steak.

One guy who grew up in Springfield, Massachusetts, had tears in his eyes when

he got off a Chieftain. Another said he needed another demo ride to make sure his first ride wasn’t a dream. Two dudes with Harley tattoos wouldn’t comment at all. They said they were late for a beer. If you can’t find anything bad to say ... One thing you didn’t hear from Indian demo riders, or the crowds that gathered at every stop to touch, tap and talk about the Chiefs and Chieftain in person, was that they in any way looked like, sounded like or rode like Victory motorcycles. That doesn’t mean to say the two brands don’t share critical things, they do. Specifically, quality and intelligent design.

The Chieftain in red was a showstopper.

The only thing we missed were the Dunlop American Elite whitewalls found on the Classic and Vintage. Indian says the Chieftain’s higher GVWR precluded use of the whitewalls.

World’s Most Functional Indians

The favorite Indian among demo riders and looky-loos alike was the Chieftain with its beautifully-styled hard bags and 1950’s-flavor fairing, modeled after the streamliner trains from the era. As its name implies, it is the leader of the tribe, not just for its bold presence as the first faired hard bagger ever to wear the Indian badge, but also for its top-of-the-line positioning and price. Performance-wise, what separates the Chieftain from the Chiefs is its steering geometry and air-adjustable monoshock, which completely change the ride feel. All of the new Indians are a snap to ride, but the Chieftain is the model that riders report feels most “effortless” and “light,” even though it’s slightly heavier than the others.

And it’s true. The Chieftain’s steeper rake (25 degrees), shorter wheelbase (65.7 in.) and lower bar height make it the most nimble-feeling of the bunch at low speeds and also during aggressive cornering,

where it requires extremely low effort. Not surprisingly, you can feel the weight of the amenity-laden fairing on the fork in the form of a slight wallow in fast sweepers, and major corrections that involve braking during cornering—say, when some a-hole rider coming the other way cuts into your lane—can cause a hinging effect high on the pucker-factor scale. Fortunately, the Chieftain's cornering clearance is excellent, allowing you to dive even deeper instead of slowing down.

The Classic and Vintage use a more traditional rake (29 degrees), which along with positive-offset triple-clamps (the Chieftains are negative offset), results in a 68.1-inch wheelbase. The single shock features mechanical preload adjustment. Both of these Indians feel more like cruisers; steering is a little heavier but very predictable, with rock-solid tracking no matter your speed. The only difference between the two Chiefs is the addition of fringed leather saddlebags and a windshield for the Vintage, which does appeal to the nostalgic set. Hard bags, for the record, are not intended to go on the Classic or Vintage, says Indian, because of chassis geometry concerns, load ratings and potential stability issues.

Again, the cornering clearance on all of the new Indians is stellar and the cast aluminum frame and modern suspension eat up every type of road surface. The gear-primary and six-speed transmission uses an oversize clutch and is thunky but faultless, while the brakes, with standard ABS, are more than adequate.



Despite all of the lavish chrome, supple leather and creamy paint, the Thunder Stroke 111 remains the new Indians' most beautiful element.

PowWOWer

One demo rider from Nebraska couldn't quite keep quiet after he pulled in following a ride on a Classic. "Oh, wow. The engine ... you really have to hold on to this thing!" And how. The **Thunder Stroke 111**, the first new Indian powerplant in seven decades, is the best thing to happen to the cruiser world in a long, long time. "We knew we had to start with the engine," said Eric Fox, Senior Engineer for the Thunder Stroke powertrain. "Typically, when you're designing a clean-sheet engine, you start from the inside out. This was a little different, because this engine also needed to be designed from the outside in, so that when you look at it, it's uniquely Indian."

Folks are impressed when they learn the Thunder Stroke doesn't share a single proprietary part with any Polaris engine, or any engine ever built. And not only is

this a beautiful, modern interpretation of a classic Indian powerplant, with a claimed peak torque of 119.2 foot-pounds at 3000 rpm, it's also wonderfully managed by the closed-loop, throttle-by-wire EFI system. Except for the occasional off-idle hiccup on abrupt departures, response is seamless and smooth.

And the sound. "I tried to record it with my phone, but it doesn't do it justice," said Red, from Spokane, Washington, who was trying to decide between the Vintage Chief and Chieftain. "My wife has all these meditation tapes she listens to to relax: chimes and crickets and stuff. I just want to listen to this bike." Much effort went into creating the universally praised exhaust note of the Chiefs, as well as the bikes' mechanical interaction with the rider. "We wanted to make any unpleasant mechanical noise as quiet as possible so we could bring out a pure exhaust note to the customer," said Fox. "The transmission and all of the gear pairs were designed from the get-go to give off very low mechanical noise."

"We also wanted to keep the engine vibrations low," Fox added, "but not eliminate them. You still want to know that you're on a motorcycle—you just don't want it to be numb fingers that remind you!" The result is a motorcycle that doesn't vibrate at *all* through the handlebar, though at idle, you can feel a pleasant engine pulse rise up into your hands and seat. At 2600 rpm (70 mph in sixth gear), there is a less-pleasant surge of high-frequency vibration felt through the floorboards and seat, but it's specific, and easily avoided with a slight change of throttle.

Lastly, there is, of course, the matter of heat flooding off such a huge mill, and Indian engineers worked hard to manage it. "Power is heat," explained Product Director Gary Gray. "Liquid cooling helps a little bit, but by no means is it the answer

to everything." Ceramic-coated headers, heat shields and the engine's massive fin area work together to direct heat from the rider's legs, but there's no way to forget your knees are hugging a 905cc can of fire, at least not during a South Dakota summer.



Everybody admired the styling of the new Indians, especially the deeply valanced fenders.

Hail To The Chiefs

"As we started on these bikes we had one goal in mind: to build *the* premium American motorcycle. No questions. We want to put Indian back on top," said Gray at the initial press conference. "Polaris is a \$3.5 billion powersports company," he continued. "We go up against giants every day. And win."

Polaris Vice President of Motorcycles, Steve Menneto, is a little more practical when describing Indian's charge. "To take an axe to a Giant Sequoia might seem insurmountable, even impossible," he told us later over cocktails. "It could take five

years. It may take 20 years. Or 50. But as long as you keep swinging, you've got a chance."

What's more, the new V-Twin-powered Chiefs and Chieftain are just the beginning of this brand's revival. "It's the Golden Age of Indian for all of us working on the brand at Polaris," said Greg Brew, Director of Industrial Design. "It's amazing what's going on right now in my department, and what's being invested by Polaris. You see some of the fruits right now, but we're going to blow your minds even more in the future."

The broad design history of the Indian brand gives the team at Polaris huge latitude. The possibilities are copious. Will we see a renaissance of the Four? A Scout? An Ace? Racing bikes? Probably. "I can't say exactly what we're doing going forward," said Brew. "I think it's safe to say you'll see us make bikes that will appeal to many different types of customers in the future."

America's other premium, iconic motorcycle manufacturer might want to circle the wagons. Not only are these new Indians right on target, Harley's core crowd is certain to accept this likewise legendary brand into its fold. "I was always wanting a Victory," one Street Glide owner told us, "I like the lines." He also said his club mates wouldn't have him if he did. "But this is different. This is an Indian."

Bob Almond, a Rapid City local, longtime biker and owner of a 2009 Kings Mountain Spirit, agreed. He says his Indian has not only been accepted by the Harley crowd, it's revered. "I want to own one of the new ones, though. I'm only upset that I could have two for what I paid for this one."



This 1949 Chief is at home on the road with its 2014 namesake. Owners of original Indians we interviewed unanimously applauded the design and engineering team at Polaris.

The Price Is Right

And to that end, there's nothing to keep the Indian brand from success. Someone looking at a Heritage Softail—the same buyer the Chief Vintage is vying for—might see a price tag swinging from the H-D that's \$3500 less, but to make the bikes comparable, he'd have to pony up for the Twin Cam 110 (\$5000), ABS (\$1200) and chrome for the fork, hand and footcontrols (\$1259). Plus, the Harley's seat will be vinyl instead of leather, and internal handlebar wiring, cruise control and keyless ignition aren't even optional. The Indian team is also quick to compare the Chieftain to Harley's Street Glide, the fared, hard-bagger that is The Motor Company's number one seller. Again, the internal wiring, the tire-pressure monitoring system and cool power windshield that come standard on the

Chieftain aren't even available options on the Harley. To make the bikes as similar as possible, you'd need to upgrade from the Twin Cam 103 to the 110, add ABS, cruise control and a splash of chrome. In the end, Indian marketers say, you'll spend almost \$5000 more for the Harley.

"Show Us Your New Models"

Aside from the requisite boob shows and beer-fueled burnouts, Sturgis felt different this year. Everyone was talking about the Indians. Staring, pointing, speculating. Heads would swivel as you

rode by. Mouths turned to O's. It was the beginning of something good.

Indian's marketing team calls it "Choice."

The rest of us will enjoy it as competition.

There's certainly room on this stage for

another iconic American motorcycle

brand, especially for one that gets it right.

Next week, **Harley-Davidson** will release

its own 2014 lineup, and rumor has it

Milwaukee is bringing big news.

Since when is too much of good thing

bad? Thank you, America.

IT's Bleedin Gorn !

**OK, SO WE LOST THE SURREY CLUBHOUSE THEN.....CANT UNDERSTAND
IT....WE LOOKED EVERYWHERE FOR IT BUT WE JUST CANT REMEMBER WHEN
WE LAST SAW IT, OR EVEN WHERE WE PUT IT DOWN.....**

MAYBE YOU'VE SEEN IT ABOUT SOMEWHERE?

**IF SO PLEASE LET US KNOW-WE'RE WORRIED ABOUT IT BEING OUT ALL
NIGHT ON ITS OWN.**

**TILL WE FIND IT AGAIN, SURREY CHAPTER WILL BE MEETING AT THE MORFAX
ON TUESDAY NIGHTS.**

**TILL THEN HERES A COUPLE OF SHOTS OF OUR LAST CUSTOM SHOW AT THE
PILGRIM.....**













ICONIC, WEREN'T IT?

I MEAN THE VENUE 'N ALL THAT
STUFF-WARM SUMMER DAY,
OH, WTF...IT'S GONE NOW





HERES SOME MORE PICS OF IT BEING ALL ICONIC
...AND THEN SOME ONES OF US EQUALLY INCONICALLY EMPTYING OUT THE CLUBHOUSE



OH, AN D LETS N OT FORGET THAT PAIR OF
KANAGROO GELDERS...NEVER KNOW WHEN WE MIGHT NEED THEM.....

Other American Motorcycles.....

The Reading Standard





The 1913 Reading Standard had a good 990-cc V-twin from a company that was but one among scores of motorcycle builders that wouldn't survive the 1920s.

By the time the 1913 Reading Standard [motorcycle](#) appeared, the Reading Standard company had spent a decade attempting to make its bikes stand out in the congested motorcycle-manufacturing industry of the early 20th Century.

Motorcycle Image Gallery

Though Reading Standards first appeared in 1903 as little more than Indian knock-offs with a Thor motor, the company began building its own single-cylinder bikes three years later.

These were the first flathead [motorcycle engines](#) offered by an American manufacturer.

V-twins arrived in 1908. Early examples sported a more conventional F-head

(overhead intake, side exhaust) configuration, but the arrangement was unusual: The valves were on the left side of the front cylinder, but on the right side of the rear cylinder.

These first V-twins displaced 722 cc, but had grown to 990 cc when our featured 1913 Reading Standard motorcycle was built. By now, the company had converted its twins to a flathead design. Later versions displaced as much as 1180 cc.

Advertised as "R-S" motorcycles, Reading Standards were sold across the country. The company began entering competitive events in 1907, winning its first 1000-mile endurance race the same year.

By 1910, however, Reading Standard had tired of racing, and decided to focus its attention on selling more motorcycles at the retail level. Its decision was perhaps a bit late; by 1914, business had already begun to look grim.

In 1922, Reading Standard sold out to the Cleveland Motorcycle Company, which offered a Reading Standard model in 1923 as a low-dollar alternative to its existing line.

The following year, Cleveland itself went up for sale, and the Reading Standard name slipped into oblivion.

CORRESPONDENCE

Our man Des has been busy.....

**Ms Paula Vennells CEO The Post Office®
Customer Care, FREEPOST, PO Box 740,
Barnsley, S73 0ZJ.**

Dear Ms Vennells

This morning I purchased a Manila envelope from your Tonbridge emporium. On my arriving home I chanced to examine my receipt for same. On the back, in large letters it bore the phrase

“HOW DID WE DO TODAY?”

“How did you do?” Well, for a start, the correct grammatical expression is in fact “HOW DO YOU DO?” Actually, for your query to make sense it would mean that you were asking yourselves, tomorrow, how you were today.

As I don’t intend to call at a post office tomorrow I will be hard placed to answer your question.

And another thing, why ever would you need to ask *me* how *you* are? it’s none of your business how I am doing-and if you meant to enquire after my wellbeing, frankly you’re not the sort I’d give that information to in any case.

On the other hand, your query may amount to a puerile attempt to obtain customer feedback on my transaction.in which case.....

“How did we do?” Come off it chaps, you sold me an envelope. It’s not exactly rocket science is it? I mean it’s not as if

you’d just dropped the bomb on Hiroshima and then popped your head out the cockpit window to see if you’d got ‘em all, is it?

No, you just sold me an envelope. I walked up to the till and asked for one and the lady on the other side of the counter told me how much and I paid her.

If you really want to be nit picking about this, I wondered in fact if she wasn’t a little bored and frankly disinterested in my purchase. Is this the sort of information you’d like?

If so I can tell you that, had she shown sufficient gumption, I might have pushed the boat out and bought a stamp too-but no, I stuck with my original intention to buy an envelope.

Come to think of it, aren’t you at all interested in my experience of the actual envelope itself? It is, after all what you sell, so why didn’t your receipt ask me “How is your envelope?” Of course you’d need to modify that a bit as it’s hard to accurately assess the health and wellbeing of a paper folder, but you get the idea, don’t you?

On the other hand it might all be cunning ploy to boost your sales.

After all once I pop this letter in the post box, I’ll need to go out and buy another envelope wont I? Not to mention a stamp too.

I call that sharp business practice and I shall be raising the whole matter with my MP.

Yours sincerely

Des Gussett

The Product Manager

Customer Services

Nestles Foods

(Purina)

1 City Place

Gatwick

RH6 0PA

Dear Sir

I write in some considerable disgust to complain about one of your company's products.

For some time now my garden has been plagued by cats. They seem to gather in ones or two's a apparently with the express intention of excreting on my lawn. In this they have been singularly successful and my wife Doris and I have tried innumerable remedies and expedients in an attempt to disused them from their festival of furry filth.

You can therefore imagine how my hopes rose when I saw your product on sale at my local Tesco's.

I immediately purchased fourteen packets and distributed the contents around my back garden taking care not to stint- I used them

generously-In short, I covered the lawn with them.

Can you therefore also image the dismay I felt when this morning I drew the curtains to find a veritable cacophony of mewling monsters – not one or two but literally dozens of the beasts.

I think you should at once refund your purchasers money and issue a full apology

The product I refer to is sold under the trade name of "Go Cat"

Never was a product so mis-named .

Yours sincerely

Des Gusset

Now this worries me....Got it via John from the Victory Club and though I don't share some of the sentiments below, I do worry about where it might all lead- Editor

ONE PERCENTERS IN QUEENSLAND

1%er Motorcycle Clubs have been getting outta hand for the last few years. They have aired their dirty laundry in public.... things like shooting a rival at an airport reception area, usual shoot em ups on rival clubhouses, punch ups in public areas et cetera.

The the Government is finally fed up with the criminality of certain members or clubs.

A few weeks ago it came to head when 60 Bandidos walked into a restaurant to smash a guy that stole a girlfriend. Unbeknown to them a member of parliament was dining in the restaurant. Once again the public were put in danger so the Gov took action.

The resultant new bikie laws...

It is now illegal to wear colours to most public places, restaurants et cetera.

If you are a member or associate of a 1%er club you receive an extra 15 yrs jail for a criminal offence.

No bail for 1%ers.

26 1%er clubs declared criminal organisations.

If you are a member of a 1%er club minimum jail sentence is 15 yrs for serious crime plus an extra 10 for office bearers. Some mandatory jail terms can amount to an extra 25 yrs on top of the offence that

brings you there in the first place.

Their clubhouses are declared off-limits... stepping foot in a clubhouse, owning or working in a tattoo parlour or riding with fellow 1%ers will get you a six months jail sentence mandatory, three months licence suspension and the motorcycle is crushed.

It is now mandatory for any police officer to pull over and search or check any motorcyclist travelling in groups of 3 or more. The gov has said " if you are not a criminal and just a normal motorcyclist you have nothing to fear. We ask normal motorcyclists to bear with us while we sort out these criminal gangs".

Our state gov and the Attorney General have got this legislation through its now law... they have said...

We are determined to shut these gangs down! We are determined to take away their motorbikes, their clubhouses, their ill-gotten gains, their drugs and guns and make Queensland safe... This is just the beginning!!!

How does this affect me?

I have been riding my bike every day before the new laws and after and am yet to be pulled up! My Victory is actually saving me in a way... its not a Harley!!!

I am getting a heap of extra attention from the cops as in... just yesterday my wife and I were out for a coffee on the Jackpot and a cop car goes past in opposite direction... he hits flashing lights to do illegal turn at traffic lights... switches off flashing lights and zooms up behind me.

He hangs for about a mile, obviously doing a computer check of my plate... he then just turns off not to be seen again.

Every where I go in the last few weeks people are saying " have the cops pulled ya over yet?" "Have the cops got ya?" My standard reply is now "Victorys are too cool to be pulled over by cops!"

I am getting a bit more #\$\$%@ from joe public when riding around... more tailgating, more stares but I'm ok with that as Joe Public can't discern between a Harley and Vic or a Biker and Bikie...

Interesting times! We don't have a Bill of Rights and guns are banned from plain ownership here... these laws went through easily. Passed by both sides of politics by a landslide and not even challenged.

Gangs declared criminal organisations:

• Bandidos • Black Uhlans • Coffin Cheaters • Comancheros • Finks • Fourth Reich • Gladiators • Gypsy Jokers

• Hells Angels • Highway 61 • Iron Horsemen Life and Death • Lone Wolf • Mob#\$\$@ters • Mongols

• Muslim Brotherhood Movement • Nomads • Notorious • Odins Warriors • Outcasts • Outlaw • Phoenix

• Rebels • Red Devils • Renegades • Scorpions

Fortunes of War



It was the early seventies I'm pretty surethose were odd times, looking back on them. Maybe the biggest difference to now being that there were actually jobs available- if you didn't like yours, you just walked out and into another one.

So how come then I'd got stuck in a dead end rut in, of all things, the Civil Service?

I blame my dad. (That's always a good one, isn't it?). With hindsight, he'd come up the hard way....from the Gorbals in Glasgow during the great depression of the 1920's to be precise. The Gorbals was the most notorious slum district in Europe in those days and I can now see why. I spent time there too as a lad in the late 1950's and though it presumably wasn't a patch on its 'heyday' it was still a dump with street gangs and, just for good measure, Catholic/Protestant violence – I guess it must have helped pass the time, or something.

Give all that its not perhaps surprising that my old man decided that a 'career' in

some safe and pensionable occupation was a passport to prosperity.

So, when I was ready for the Big World Of Work he pointed me at the Ministry of Agriculture and lit the blue touch paper.

Gawd, though it was dull. Dull Dull Dull....

I mean we did our best to liven things up.....after a hard morning of tea and biscuits the whole of my section would decamp to the local pub, having all incoming calls diverted to the saloon bar for the 3 hours or so between morning and afternoon tea breaks.

Should anyone have the audacity to call the section, the phone would ring and the entire pub fall silent whilst one of us fielded the insufferable interruption to routine.

But I'm not here to tell you about my Hell in Food Standards Division, am I?

No it's about the bikes, eh?

Sort of. And yes, it's all connected ...just be patient.

Once in a while my folks would descend to visit from their (now much bigger and posher) home on the Scottish coast. Being mindful of just how poorly I must be eating, mum in particular would be sure to bring a sackful of "Scottish Delicacies" with her.

Frankly "Scottish Delicacies" sounds like a contradiction in terms...I mean how many people do you know who visit Scotland for the cuisine? Jeez, we're the people who brought you the Battered Mars Bar and Deep Fried Pizza.....we know a thing or

two about cooking with Cholesterol, don't we?

But I digress.

On this occasion the old girl proudly presented me with the fruits of her labours....more specifically, half a dozen mutton pies, ditto Potato Scones(don't ask) and a 4lb Black pudding. The black pudding in particular was a gem.....a tube of dried pigs blood and fat about 6inches in diameter and almost a foot long, tastefully wrapped of course in the traditional pig's intestine. I hoped the pig wasn't missing it too much.

For some reason the folks had decided to stay in Maidstone when they visited. Seeing as I lived in South Kensington this was a bit difficult to fathom, but WTF, when you come from a country where you need a helicopter and week or so to fetch the shopping, I guess you tend to think differently about 40 miles or so as being a long way away.

So off I went on the bike (See, you knew if you waited long enough there'd be a bike involved) through Sarf Lundun and down the A 20.

Family duty done, I tried to escape without the food but the old girl was having none of it and reluctantly I bungeed the lot on the back of the bike and off I went back to The Smoke.

Now, just in case I've given you the impression of the seventies as a time of peace and plenty, you might need to know that it was also a time of radical politics....in Germany we had the Badder

Meinhoff Gang, in Italy the Red Brigade whilst even dear old Blighty had its fair share of folks happy to wish you 'Peace, Man' and blow your head off –we had the Angry Brigade for example (though I'd always been shy of radical violence myself and wondered if there wasn't scope for a milder form of anarchic radicalism....maybe a sort of Slightly Miffed Brigade?)

And we had The Troubles, too. Especially a campaign of IRA bombings –including various London ministries-nothing too drastic naturally but even my colleague Ken Caruthers (honest- 'Caruthers of the Ministry' You couldn't make this stuff up) managed to lose a couple of fingers to a letter bomb.

So I parked the bike up in the basement of the Dept. of Environment and headed to the pub for an arduous lunchtime back at the Min. Of Ag'n fish.

It did cross my mind though that somewhere along the route I'd lost the black pudding- no matter, if anything this had to count as a bonus really.

Anyhow, come 3 pm we headed back to work, anxious that the wheels of capitalism were probably getting a little creaky without us by now.

Only we couldn't. Outside was a cordon of coppers, 2 dozen assorted squad cars and a veritable forest of traffic cones

"Keep back everyone and clear the area!" quoth a man with a megaphone" we have a terrorist situation. Do Not attempt to return to your offices!"

Fair enough- I mean we'd tried hadn't we?
Crestfallen and bitterly disappointed at
our bad luck, we returned to the pub.

As I reached the door I took a backward
glance down Horseferry Rd.

In the middle of the street a man looking
like he modelled for Michelin tyres in his
spare time, was, with great caution and
solemnity approaching a large black
pudding.

War is Hell

Al



Rockers reunion-pretty crowded, eh?









These guys came from Germany

Why? And strangely enough my brother Paul had spotted the same bikes in Edinburgh a couple of days before I took this shot

Brightona, where it peed down all day





It's an Enfield 'Arry, but not as we know it.....



Odds 'n ends just cause I liked them











Suppose if you must run a trike, you could do worse than this.....tee hee....

