



1983 BMW R65, 650cc flat twin. My first BMW experience. Amazing condition considering its age. Sold it to help fund the R50. Now have a hankering for an R75/5.

1997 Yamaha Diversion 600S. Bought new and only 1027 miles on the clock after 3 years. Lovely bike, just don't like getting it wet. Finally sold it in 2006 with still only 1095 miles on the clock. Nothing wrong with it as a bike, just all my riding was with the VMCC where the older bikes were more appropriate. Vowed never to buy a new bike again, the depreciation is just too high.



My next BMW was this very nice 1964 R50/2 purchased about 1999, not sure of exact date. It was bought from a local garage where the owners brother was importing cars and bikes from South Africa. At the time it was cost effective thing to do but the value of the £ dropped so much that eventually there was no profit in the trade. Cosmetically it was A1 having been restored for a museum and the engine really sounded like a sewing machine. There were a few issues like square steering head bearings and slack spokes but it did not really take a lot to get it on the road. The really sad part is that having spent what to me was fortune on the bike, I hardly ever rode it



because I was afraid of damaging it in some way. After 4 years it had done under 300 miles so it was sold to partly fund a hip operation my wife needed. Strangely enough I have never regretted this action. The bike was bought by a friend in the Cotswold section of the VMCC and I still see it on runs from time to time but have no desperate desire to own it again.

1981 Kawasaki GPZ550. Bought from a friend who needed the money. Sold to another friend who wanted to recapture his youth; (After I had fixed the holed piston and one or two other horrors). Went well but



not really my cup of tea.



Well my search for an R75/5 has resulted in not one but two R75/6's. This first rather sad beastie was found locally and in desperate need of a good home. I doubt it has ever been cleaned in its life and few bikes would have survived such treatment for so long. Believe it or not it is still taxed and MoT'd when I bought it in June '01.

This is the sad beastie after an intensive weekend of cleaning and tidying up. As always, the picture make it look better than reality; but its is still a

handsome bike. Subsequently, it had some more serious attention to fix oil leaks from the cylinder bases, during which I found that it had unleaded heads and an 800cc conversion. Sold it at a small profit as two R75s seemed a touch OTT but I do fancy another as a project. With hindsight as I learned more about BMWs, I realise that I should have kept this bike as it had many features (like the unleaded heads) which would have proved useful. Ah well some of us never learn.



This is the second R75/6 also a 1976 model but which has enjoyed rather more tlc. Bought in a moment of madness the same weekend as the sad beastie. It is an ex police bike and is very original apart from the



dual seat and removal of some of the police gizmos (blue lights, radio etc). Despite the fairing, I find it lighter than the Revere and a riding position which takes the weight of my dodgy wrist. Seems to be basically a sound bike and has been very reliable over the first 9 months of ownership during which it has acquired new s/s exhaust pipes, rebuilt wheels with s/s spokes and a twin disk braking system. For several years it was my favourite bike but in 2007 it went to provide funds to but the 1970 R75/5 shown below. However, what goes round comes round and I bought it back again in 2008.

The R75 got me to thinking about the later K series BMWs and I decided I just had to have one. From various articles, I concluded that the K75 version would suit me best and the Red K75s shown above joined the stable in October 2001. Very fast and smooth compared to the other bikes and it has ABS, though I lack the courage to prove whether it works or not. Still not sure if I like it better than the R75. I think with hindsight, that the standard K75 or K75C might have been better for me as the K75s does give a semi sporting riding position and puts a lot of weight on my wrist. Eventually I



sold the 75s as I could not come to terms with the high up weight and lean forward riding position. I still have a yen to try either the K100 or K75C with more upright riding positions.



Another long time ambition was to have a sidecar outfit. I was extremely nervous about this as you hear so many horror stories about the difficulties. Initially I tried to build an outfit attached to one of my MZs but quickly concluded (after a few scary trips around the orchard) that it would be better to buy a properly set up and proven outfit. The right ones do not come onto the market very often and I was lucky to come across this BMW/Squire outfit only a few miles from home. The motor has been swapped for an R60/5 unit and the forks are pre 1969 BMW leading link. I As always, the photographs

flatter and it does need a bit of tidying up and a new timing chain but overall, I am very happy with my new toy. And of course, being over 25 years old, its eligible for VMCC events. I thoroughly enjoyed riding the outfit and was genuinely sad to sell it when I finally got my MZ based outfit running - see the MZ section. One of the only down sides to outfit ownership is the amount of space they take up in the garage. With 2 of them I could not move. Every time I see this picture, I regret selling the bike. In fact it's only about 10 miles away and now has a Difazio hub steering front end fitted. As many of my bikes seem to come round for a second time, perhaps this one will as well.

One of the projects I set out to achieve was fitting a larger motor to the R45 outfit, though in practise it went very well with just the 600 motor. In my normal fashion I set out to buy a bigger motor and finished up with 2 complete bikes and about 80% of another. Word spreads in our classic circle and one of the bikes was snapped up by a friend of a friend within a couple of days. The blue R80RT seen opposite was a nonrunner bought sight unseen. But when I got it home I realised it was too good to break for its motor so



I sorted out its various problems and put it on the road. Very nice too, better in some ways than the R75, lighter clutch and better gearbox. However, I could not afford to keep 2 BMWs lying around the place so one had to go. After much agonising the axe fell on the R80 but it was a close decision. Still have the other 80% of a BMW. Now that the outfit has gone I am agonising over what to do with it. One option is to stick the motor, which sounds ok, in the R75 but it will probably get sold like all my other toys. Fickle bunch motorcyclists.

For some time I have wanted an earlier version of the R75, the 4 speed model made from 1970-73 designated 75/5. One finally came up on Ebay in Bath (just down the road). I successfully bid for the machine but had to sell the BMW outfit, the white 75/6 and the R80RT to pay for it. Pre 73 BMWs fetch serious money - by MZ standards anyway. Very pretty to look at and sounds very nice



mechanically. The TLS drum brake gives them a much more classic feel than the disk braked /6 series; even though in many ways they are not so good as the later bikes. However, the wiring leaves much to be desired and the jury is still out on whether I can salvage the battery, Used a couple of times for VMCC events and despite the suspect electrics, has behaved perfectly. Still a lot of fettling before I am totally happy and confident with this bike but I am sure its going to stay. As at January 2010 this is still true, the R75 has stayed with me and no intention so far of moving it on. (In January 2012 it finally moved on to a friend of mine to be replaced by the R80 shown below.)



In a strange piece of wheeler dealing involving the Ariel VB600 and a very nice mid 80s low mileage R80RT, I re-acquired the 1976 ex police R75/6. From a previous project I still had some bits from a late 70s R100 so I decided to make an R90s look-alike. First step was to remove the Avon fairing

and experiment with the various combinations of seat and tank. In the end the bike looked like the picture left. I thought it was pretty cool and was all set to finish the job properly with a suitable paint job when I made the mistake of looking on ebay and saw a low mileage K75c not far away going at a reasonable price. So for the second time PUF916R was sold, this time to a neighbour.

The K75c is shown right and was everything I hoped it would be after my disappointment with the K75S. The more upright riding position suits me much better and I may even modify it further with RT bars. It had come to the UK via Japan but was showing under 40000 kilometres (25k miles) and though a bit sad, cleaned up very well. It even came with the original toolkit, puncture outfit and a full set of genuine BMW luggage including the strap-on tank bag. It is getting used regularly and has even been treated to a full major service as I plan to keep this one for a while. In another year it will be VMCC eligible so is a contender for an end-end trip we are planning. Sadly as you will see below, none of this happened.



Well easy come easy go. Only a few months after I bought the K75, a friend offered me his R80ST. I had first seen his bike about 3 years previously and was very impressed. At the time I asked him to give me 1st



refusal should he ever decide to sell it. Good as his word, the offer was made and immediately accepted sight unseen. There remained 2 problems, space in the garage and money to pay for the bike. The solution was sad but really a no-brainer, off went the K75 to its new owner and off I went to Witney to pick up the ST. It has proved to be everything I expected and I have done as many miles on this bike in 2009 as most of the others put together. The picture shows the bike well laden with a group of friends at

the Lizard in Cornwall in October 2009. Since then I have fitted a GS style tank (actually from an R100R) partly because I like the looks but mainly because it has a much bigger capacity than the standard rather small tank fitted to R80ST. Its not perfect, it really needs either a twin disk setup or the later twin pot caliper and the gearing is quite low making it less than ideal for long motorway journeys but perfect for VMCC events. Overall it's such a nice bike that these do not seem major issues. I like it so much, that I took it off the road in November so it would not get trashed by winter salt. It is already entered for a number of events in 2010.

During 2009 I rebuilt a number of bikes for a friend, including a BSA Road Rocket, an Ariel Huntmaster (for the second time), An Ariel VH500 and a BSA B40. All had been badly damaged in a garage fire in November 2008 and the last one was completed in October 2009.

As a thank you for the work, I was given the sad remains of a 1980 R45 BMW which I spent some time tidying up. Some of the bike had survived very well after a good clean, but a lot of the plastic bits and things like the wiring loom and instruments were totally trashed. I did have a few suitable BMW spares like rear light units



and indicators but as s/h BMW bits were somewhat expensive, I decided to make bits or use MZ parts where possible. I thought the final result was quite good and I used BMW caplyso red as I needed this for the R80st as well. The only insurmountable problem was the seat. I did graft on an ETZ seat unit but it never looked quite right and s/h early R45 seats were like hens teeth. I finally concluded that even if I spent the money to finish it off, I was never really going to use it, not when there was an R75, an R80 and an A65 in my garage all waiting to be ridden. So, reluctantly it was put on ebay and now resides in West Wales where its new owner is slowly putting it back to standard, even he admits its more a labour of love than an economic proposition. Bit sad in some ways that it never got completed in the MZ style as I think it would have looked pretty good. Still there is always the next project to look forward to.



This is the R80ST with the R100R tank as it emerged from winter hibernation in February 2010. Must have been one of the only sunny days so far this winter. Sadly, the offer of an MZ ISDT replica meant the R80ST had to be sold in February 2010 to provide the cash. I suspect it will be a decision I will regret.

This is basically a 1981 BMW R80 but has been heavily modified by its previous owner partly due to taste and partly I suspect from expediency. The overall effect caught my eye on the dreaded eBay mainly because it was only 10 miles away in Devizes so a quick bus trip and I could ride it home. I was really impressed with the way it went, must be the smoothest boxer I have ever ridden. The picture was taken after a full day cleaning the bike and touching up a few parts. The heads have been fitted with hardened ex valve seats and twin plugs with Boyer electronic ignition. The seat is an after market item more like those fitted to /5 and /6 models. Both wheels have been changed to the spoked type (it would originally have been fitted with cast alloy wheels). The disks are cast iron with Brembo callipers. It has the 32/11 rear axle and a kinetic gear change plus the exhaust is fully stainless. Overall a very non-standard but very desirable combination of parts. It also came with a load of useful spares (inc cables filters, wheel bearings) plus the BMW combined pannier frames with integral rack and a full set of luggage. These have been taken off to make cleaning easier. As I use soft luggage, I may not bother to re-fit, though the top box would be useful no doubt. The overall effect was to combine the best of boxer bits in something that looks much more period than its age would suggest. Its still a bit scruffy but tidy enough for general use and of course its VMCC eligible. Just waiting until 1st June to put some tax on it and start riding it in earnest.



My next BMW venture was this 1970 R75/5. Not wholly original and somewhat sad when first acquired but initially it proved reliable enough and was used extensively in 2012. Then it let me down big time on the Cornish weekend with an electrical fault which was never conclusively identified. First time I have ever needed to be recovered thank goodness its a standard part of classic bike policies these days. Over the winter of 2012-13 it was stripped, powder coated and generally tidied up. The keen eyed may notice the MZ instruments and

headlamp in the makeover picture shown left. I decided to modify it to LWB form at the same time. As of Spring 2013 its is still being re-commissioned and has yet to be fully trusted as the cause of the electrical gremlins is still uncertain.

This is deja-vu. A 1997 Yamaha Diversion bought from a guy down the road in Trowbridge in October 2012. Low mileage (under 13k) and very clean - identical to the one shown above which i bought new in '97. I just fancied something more modern that would just start and run without some of the hassle that goes with the classic bikes. Easy to ride though the 4 cylinder engine makes it seem very revvy to me and far more economical than the BMWs. I used it over the winter and it seems to have stood up to the road salt quite well. It may not stay much longer however as a friend's son is very keen to have the bike. I have agreed to the deal, provided he can sell his current bike.



To replace the Diversion I bought yet another bike of a type which I had previously owned a 600c Honda



Revere. It came from Tamworth and was in excellent condition with only 26k miles to its name. It also has a half fairing which I the previous owner never got round to fitting and indeed it is still in my loft. A great bike, very reliable and economical. Over 70mpg during a 1000 miles summer holiday. Still in the garage but to keep it nice I have not used it since the autumn.