

Fossil Riders at Rothley - January 2013

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Hi Folks. This is a blast from the past and may not be of interest to many current club members, but it may give heart to riders who are beginning to think that maybe their riding days are coming to an end.

Fossil Riders 1st gathering of the year (by the way 'Fossil Riders' is a name given to the group by Fred Wakefield) was on Friday 4th January and it happened to be the Ellis Cafe at Rothley railway station. You may well ask Who are the Fossil Riders? Well for a start you have to be over 65 and secondly it helps to know Fred Wakefield. Every now and then Fred will send out an invite via e-mail to a load of old boys saying where the gathering will be and it's up to individuals to turn up if they are able, or if the weather permits. On Friday 4th January it was a record turn out on a lovely day with 12 bikes & a Morgan 3 Wheeler. Riders came from Nottinghamshire in the North, Towcester in the south and all points inbetween. The smallest bike was 1000cc but not sure who the eldest rider was as most were in their 70's. From a personal point of view, it gives me a lift when I see bikers older than myself not only still riding their bikes, but also planning their 2013 trips to Austria, Italy, and Spain etc. The photo is of 3 original Fosse Riders members, who helped form the club back in October 1959, and me (from the left they are Mike Fairhead, Fred Wakefield, Pete O'Brien and his brother Mick). I still get my leg pulled because I came along almost a year later and turned up on a 500cc Norton "Inter" with L plates!

For those of you who are too young to remember these bikes, it's worth noting that most bikes were 650cc and the Norton International was the long stroke version of the famous Manx Norton. The Inter had a close ratio gearbox and would do 86 in second!! Admittedly it only did 96 in top, but that was fast in those days and not an ideal learner bike. Image a 16-year-old turning up

today at Shires on a Hyabusa with L-plates and you get the picture! As a footnote I traded in my Norton Inter for a 650cc BSA A10 Gold Flash and re-fitted my L-plates before passing my test. How times have changed. I sold my Norton Inter for £45, they now fetch anything up to £25,000! No doubt many other bikers have similar tales to tell.