

Mike Hailwood Memorial Run

Pete Coombes

Sunday 21st March was the annual Mike Hailwood memorial ride. This year the run was actually on the same date as his tragic accident, which was 29 years ago. I'm sure none of the older members need to be told who Mike Hailwood was but for the benefit of anyone who doesn't know, he was without any doubt the greatest motorcycle racer ever. Unlike the modern riders he would often compete in three different grand prix classes on three different bikes and invariably win on all of them. After eleven years out of the sport he came back to ride an underrated Ducati to victory in the TT. Anyone who saw him ride couldn't fail to be impressed. So tragic that such a great rider was killed in a car accident while buying fish and chips. The organisers of this run are committed to keeping his memory alive and the memory of the once great British motorcycle industry.

Four of us met at a foggy Fosse park, Sharon, Rod, Derek and myself for the ride to the old Norton factory at Bracebridge Street, Birmingham. There we joined two or three hundred others for the short ride to Tanworth in Arden, where Mike is buried alongside his Daughter who was also killed in the accident.

Unlike most rideouts these days there really was a mixture of old and new bikes. Most of the old British makes were there and most looked as if they had just left the factory. On the way home we stopped at a pub for drinks but judging by the prices I think we bought shares. A good day out in good company. A special mention to the West Midlands police who did a superb job of traffic control enroute. Next year is the 30th anniversary of Mikes death. The organiser asked us to tell our friends so that the run can be even bigger, well now you've been told!

Pete