

THE PAST IS SO INVITING

Mid-Summer 2023

May 2023 - SUSSEX IN A MORGAN

Until now the Morgan had only ventured out on day trips around Thomas Hardy country and the Jurassic Coast, so it was time for something a little further afield. The vintage leather suitcase, strapped to the back of the car really looked the part as we set off, top down, in the May sunshine. Steering clear of the obvious trunk roads and motorway we sauntered across country and on to the South Downs for two nights in Sussex.

I switched from one hand to another ensuring that both arms were stretched by equal amounts carrying the vintage suitcase across the hotel car park and up a flight of stairs. It weighed 10kgs empty and will only be used for ceremonial purposes in future.

The usual visit to a stately home and gardens was pleasant enough but did I really belong here? The Industrial Museum however was altogether different, a joy to visit. The 1960's machine shop, with an array of hand tools and metalworking machines wistfully transported me back to my days as an engineering apprentice.



June 2023 - A DIFFERENT TYPE OF CANOEING

It was reminiscent of an old green bathtub with a curved prow at each end, capable of being navigated in either direction, which we later discovered would be very helpful. When I started out, all those years ago, a canoe was a sleek vessel, pointed at the front and back and navigated with a paddle with a blade at either end. In modern parlance these are now known as kayaks and the Canadian canoe, navigated with a single bladed paddle, is now simply described as a canoe.

Given my daughter's prowess at water sports I gave her the honour of sitting in the back but it wasn't long however before we were heading straight for a bridge and I was fending off to avoid a collision.

Read more overleaf...



Contact Gordon

Email gordon@linbeck.co.uk for a chat or advice on your next motorcycle adventure.

Further down river the rapids looked fun and easily tackled but somehow we managed a 360° pirouette discovering that the canoe was capable of travelling either way round, although it didn't help having your back to the direction of travel. To complete the trio of mishaps we even managed the indignity of running aground, leaving the bow high out of the water.

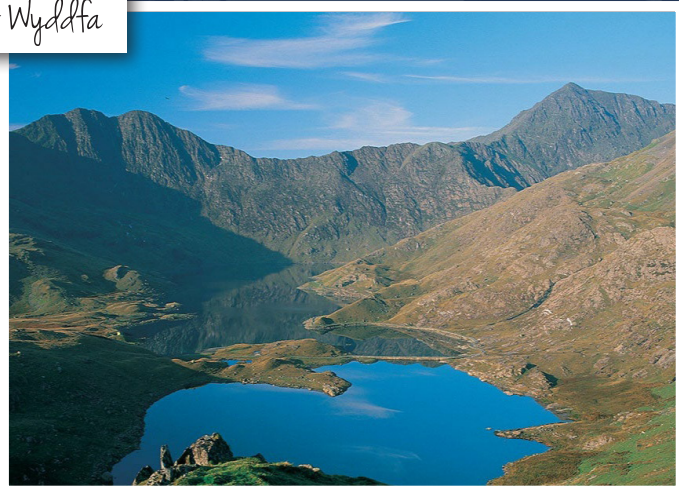
My Gobi Desert Canoe club pennant enjoyed a second outing in less than 12 months, having previously lain dormant for 52 years. The black monster belonging to Severn Valley Railway steamed and puffed into the station ready to convey us back upriver in grand nostalgic style to our launching point and the end of a memorable day.

June 2023 - MOTORCYCLING IN WALES

It was all vents open as I journeyed across the old Severn Bridge into Wales, before heading up the wonderful Wye Valley. Tintern Abbey stood there, on the banks of the river, in all its majesty, just as it has done for centuries and just as it did 53 years ago when I came ashore in my canoe with the founder members of the Gobi Desert Canoe Club.

Leaving the valley, I meandered through the Brecons, the remote Elan valley, Mid Wales and finally North Wales and the Mountains of Snowdonia or as it's known today, Eryri National Park. I rode past Tryfan in the morning sun, reminiscing about the many times I'd climbed it, still fascinated by the image of an Old Man's face depicted by the rocky North Ridge. My favourite mountain of all time.

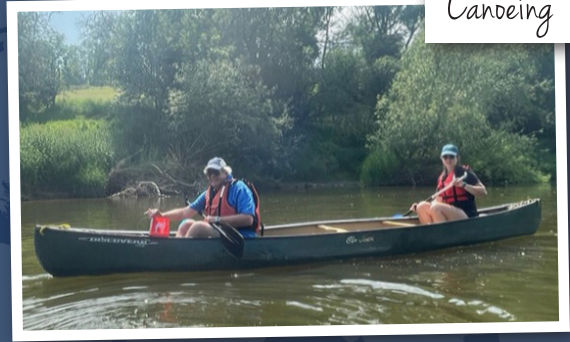
Yr Wyddfa



A superb ride over four days, although the weather played its part, along great sweeping roads and not too much traffic. You'd think that living in Dorset heading to the southwest would be the chosen destination but this route up through Wales beats it by a mile. The counties of Devon and Cornwall have their destinations but not the roads to reach them enjoyably by motorcycle.

My mind continues to travel back in time. The past is so inviting.

Canoeing



Pausing at the roadside, the skyline of Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) and Llewdd, mountains that Dotty my dog and I last summited 5 years ago, were in all their glory. Magnificent. My experiences of climbing mountains will last my lifetime, even if now I can only stand and reminisce.

I wended my way back south through similar landscapes and down the Wye Valley for tea and cake in a second handbook shop. Very civilised.



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adventure.