

which I have been able to recall as I had kept a record of my exploits in a diary. I may have been the second lady of drag racing in this country, but I am the first to publish my story.

My book: 'Drag Racing - Through the eyes of a woman' was published in February 2010, and I am pleased to say that it has been very well received in the drag racing world, with some excellent reviews. This has been another big achievement for me, as I am not a writer. I decided to 'self-publish' so the book is all my own work. It contains many a humorous tale as I reminisce on how it used to be back then, the camaraderie between teams, racing on a shoe-string; sleeping under canvas in the snow, juggling between being a racing driver, raising two small boys and helping to run the chicken farm. There are also fifty images, including some of the finest machines, which I competed against back then.

The book has put me back in the limelight again, which is great as it has given me the opportunity to catch up with old friends I knew back then and also to make new friends with today's racers.

Liz Burn
Photos Courtesy of Liz Burn

Liz's book is available on Amazon, but she has a limited supply of personally signed copies at the special price of £17.95 (incl. P&P). To order a copy, email: lizburndragracing@virginmedia.com

RACING

the eyes of a woman



THUNDERBIRD ANNIVERSARY

LAST YEAR, Ace Cafe Club member and Triumph fan Erum Waheed suggested that we had a ride-out to the London Motorcycle Museum's 4th July "Thunderbird Day" to join in with their celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the Triumph Thunderbird. This caused a flurry of activity in our house, in order to get our TR65 in shape for the ride.

Earlier club members may recall that this bike was badly damaged as a consequence of the mother of all water bursts that took place in the Ace car park in March 1999. Although it was put back together, as good as new, it had stood idle for many years, and this occasion was the first opportunity I'd had to ride pillion on it since that time!

Memories came flooding back, as it was on this bike, a long time ago, that we rode to Cornwall, my first really long trip on the back of a bike, and we were unfortunate enough to find the only nail on the motorway before getting very far. This was further compounded by the garage that towed us in for repair, putting what we later found out to be a folded tractor inner tube in the tyre! They had also been asked not to hammer the swinging arm bolt, but when we returned to the garage after hunting down a welcome cup of tea, we saw them using a hammer! We set off again, but soon noticed that the rear drum brake was so hot that it was glowing red!

This demanded another stop. Having let the brake drum cool down, the dismantling of it revealed that where the swinging arm bolt had been hammered in place, the brake shoe retaining springs had been dislodged causing one of them to entirely wear away against the drum. With benefit of hindsight the word "foolhardy" comes to mind, as having put the rear wheel back together we then pressed on with what can only be described as half a back brake! The whole episode wasted so much time that we could only get as far as Exeter, where we had to spend the night in an expensive hotel. We continued our journey to Cornwall the next day, arriving there rather by luck than judgement!

Little did we know what the homeward bound journey had in store. We crossed the Tamar Bridge, with its spectacular views, when the engine seized! We pulled into a small garage to ask if they had any tools. They didn't, but the young lad work-

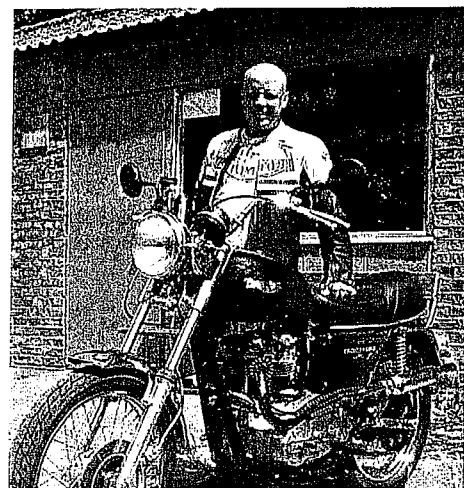
ing there told us that his boss was into motorcycles. He called his boss, who he said that we were welcome to take the bike to his house, which turned out to be up an incredibly steep gradient. Sweating in all our gear, we pushed the bike up the hill!

Remarkably, his back garden was like a cottage industry with every conceivable tool you could think of. We were made to feel at home, while he started to work on the bike, which soon revealed our immediate fate. We were definitely not going home on it, the alternator had entirely broken up, locking the motor solid! However, his kindness continued. He suggested that we should go home by train and that he would get a new alternator and fix the bike up, then give us a call, and Mark could go back down to Newton Abbot to collect it, and that is what transpired.

However, Mark's long journey back was not a good one either, incessant torrential rain and "white-out" spray all the way, but they both got home in one piece, very soggy and dirty. After an introduction like that, it is a wonder that I ever wanted to get back on this bike again, but it's funny how some catastrophes often turn into fond memories a couple of decades later, but I digress...

The weather was glorious and it was a chance to blow the cobwebs away and head off with like-minded riders to the museum, which houses a unique collection of British motorcycles & memorabilia from yesteryear. Throughout the year, they organise special events, which often include a BBQ and music. It's well worth checking out and you never know who you might bump into! On this occasion John Rosamond, former Chairman of

the Meriden workers co-op was in attendance as well as Mopsa & Richard English with the Thunderbird outfit that they set off on a 4 year round the world trip in 1982 when two-wheeled world travel was still a novelty, later describing their experiences in a book called "Full Circle". Undaunted, Mopsa said she would do it all again tomorrow!



Regrettably, prior to the run, Erum's TR65, that he has owned since 1992 and which has been featured in a previous Newsletter article, had a major and terminal setback involving the "big ends" on the M25 motorway on the way back to London from a day out in Brighton, the subsequent diagnosis being a full engine rebuild, but determined to attend, he did so on his Tiger Trail...

www.london-motorcycle-museum.org

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