

# Members' Enclosure

## The newsletter for RealClassic subscribers only

What do you make of electric-powered motorcycles, then? I must confess that the concept of 150Nm of torque, delivered at the merest whiff of twisting the grip, does sound strangely attractive. I'm less enamoured of a hundred mile maximum range; an eight-hour recharge period, or the sadly familiar phenomenon of decaying battery performance.

I may be slightly biased here because my Kindle nearly burned the house down last night, after only five years of being charged three times a week. It's no big deal when a thirty quid ereader fails. It would've been a bigger deal had I not noticed how hot it was getting, of course. And I'd be distinctly dischuffed if I paid £20k for a motorcycle and, 800 recharges later, I had to shell out for a replacement battery pack.

Before long-standing RC member EV Guru (hello Paul) mails to berate me for an unfair comparison, I'll admit that perhaps a motorcycle manufacturer would use better quality components than those you find in the average smartphone. Perhaps...

Even if that is the case, I suspect you still need to possess a more than a modicum of the pioneer spirit to take the plunge with one of the first generation, commercially manufactured, electric motorcycles. So I tip my hat in absolute respect to Carla McKenzie who has done just this thing and bought a Californian-built, high-tech, cutting-edge Zero DSR all-electric motorcycle. She really is a motorcycling pioneer, in the true sense of the term.

As if that weren't enough, Carla has teamed up with another long-standing RC member, Julie Diplock (aka Mrs Elk) to push that pioneering spirit to what

might be its absolute limit. They're undertaking an epic adventure, aptly entitled **VINTAGE TO VOLTAGE**: a trial on trails between two cities. This September they aim to ride between London and Paris, avoiding tarmac roads as much as possible so sticking to green lanes and old carriageways, with Carla riding her electric Zero – and Julie on her 92-year-old trusty Triumph Model Q. Wow!

The contrast between the two machines couldn't be greater. While Julie will be wrestling with rudimentary suspension, basic brakes, a hand-change gearbox and a lever throttle, Carla will need to find charging points for her machine along the remote roads they'll be travelling. This will definitely be a serious shake-down for the Zero with all of its tricky technology. Would you care to place a bet on which bike will be the first to require mechanical (or electrical...) attention?

Julie and Carla will set off from Westminster in Tuesday 18th September, and plan to arrive in Paris on the 21st. We'll have more details about when and where nearer the time, so people can give them a rousing send-off as they start this epic trek. You're also invited to support their efforts raising funds for charity, and here's where you'll find all the info:

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/CarlaMcKenzie1>

So would you be tempted to try an electric motorcycle? No gears; seamless acceleration; no nasty drive chain; no oil changes; 90mph top speed; 300lb kerb weight and relatively low running costs. It sounds almost too good to be true, doesn't it?

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## MARTIN GELDER

We don't usually run obituaries in RC, preferring to concentrate on the more cheerful side of life. But Martin was a part of RealClassic before it even existed as a magazine, so we have the unhappy duty of passing on the sad news of his death on Monday 2 July, after a short illness.

Au revoir,  
old friend.