



# BikeBytes

Volume 4 Issue 3

March 2003

## WELCOME

We are very pleased to give a big welcome to another new Member this month. He is **Willie Wills** from **Haddington** who rides a BMW K1100LT. Anyone who knows him (and there many who do!) will tell you that we can expect some pretty impressive riding when Willie takes the scene. Willie, we all hope you enjoy belonging to the Scottish Motorcycle Club and joining in all the fun. Willie's joining takes the total current membership to 125.

We are also delighted to welcome our new Chairperson in the form of our old friend, **Ronnie Howat**. Ronnie joined SMC within two months of our starting and has been a strong organiser and supporter of Club runs and events. He has introduced quite a few new ideas, such as the barbecues, quizzes, etc and it looks as though he is going to continue innovating! Ronnie was elected unopposed at the AGM last month. Previous Chairperson, **Stewart Bowman**, had announced in December that he would not be seeking re-election, his intended two-year stint being complete at the AGM. Many thanks go to Stewart for all his good guidance and skilful chairing of just about 25 meetings! Of course, now he'll be able to organise and lead lots more runs for us all to enjoy! He already has a run and a weekend in the 2003 Calendar of Events. Stewart continues as our MAG Representative.

Two other Members were newly elected to the Committee at the AGM: **Tracy Macmillan** and **David Jerome**. David has also taken over from **Jim Simpson** as our BMF Representative.

**Arthur Shepherd**

## MEMBERSHIP

If you have sent in your renewal form and subscription, thank you. You'll receive your new cards (and Calendar of Events) soon. If you haven't, you won't! A new Contact List will be sent to you later on. If you would like to be included in it, mark the boxes on the renewal form - or just tell me!

**Arthur Shepherd**



New Chairperson **Ronnie Howat** entertains at the Christmas dinner, next to **John Moss** with **Arthur Shepherd** at the extreme right

## NEXT MEETINGS

The next Club Night Meeting is on Wednesday 12 March 2003, upstairs in the Black Bitch Tavern, 14 West Port, Linlithgow, and will start at 8pm. **Bill Smith**, my round-the-world biking friend from Aberdeen, **cannot** now manage the March meeting and, at the time of writing, he hadn't yet received the official video anyway. He hopes to visit us in April to tell us all about his success in riding 32,500 miles in three months in Nick Sanders's Round-the-World Challenge last year. The official video should be available by then and, if it is, Bill will show it and be able to add his own comments and explanations. He plans to bring the actual bike he rode!

**Arthur Shepherd**

## RUNS AND EVENTS

Welcome, too, to a new season of runs! Once it's time for the Scottish Motorcycle Show at Ingliston (8-9 March), the real runs are not long behind. The new current Calendar of Events is being sent out to you with your new 2003 Membership Card and is in the Members Area of our website. Note that there are some changes (including some dates) since the draft went out, so make sure that you have the correct details in your diary, on your wall calendar and up on the notice boards in your kitchen, garage and allotment shed. You wouldn't want to turn up on the wrong day, would you, or

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be gardening when you could be really enjoying yourself on the bike? Updates will appear throughout the year as usual, with details in BikeBytes.

**Jim Simpson** and **Alex Rennie** have produced a great Calendar again this year, with good support from those Members willing to help with runs and ideas. Notice that there are some runs on Saturdays to look forward to, and even a day run on a Thursday has been introduced. If you would like to get involved in helping on one of the runs, or if you can take an additional run, get in touch with Jim or Alex (or through me and I'll pass you on).

**Arthur Shepherd**

**WEBSITE**

The Members Area of the SMC website has had a few minor upgrades, and more are planned. The Links page has been updated and some more photographs of Members have been added to the Picture Gallery. The Newsflashes on the main page are changed quite regularly, and it is the place to find your way to the list of Committee Members and the "very latest, up-to-date, current issue" of the Calendar of Events! The location of the private Members Area will, of course, change soon to its new address for 2003. The new address will appear in a future issue of BikeBytes sent only to current Members who have renewed their subscriptions.

**Arthur Shepherd**

**Here is the solution to February's Crossword Puzzle.**



The January Prize Crossword Puzzle attracted nine entries, five of which were correct. The lucky prize-winner (drawn at random from the correct entries at the Club AGM in February) was once again **Colin Stewart**, last month's winner! Maybe it's your turn to win this month – but you need to send the solution in to Arthur.



John Middleton's arm and associated support work after his incident on the A77 at the end of last year. I count ten screws and a loooong plate. See John's note in the newsletter.

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

Dear Steve

In the February issue of BikeBytes, you printed a fascinating review from Jim McKechnie of his experiences on a MAC training course. I think Jim was being unduly hard on himself! Not only is his bike a good one to have in front of you on a run but he has taken the time and made the effort to improve further his obvious riding skills! Several of us like to enjoy the views and the scenery as we ride along on an SMC run; we are so lucky to live in such a beautiful country.

However, being myself somewhat involved in Edinburgh & District Advanced Motorcyclists (EDAM), and Aberdeen's ADAM before that, I was disappointed by Jim's comments on the IAM, whose training is all based on "Motorcycle Roadcraft - The Police Rider's Handbook", as followed and exemplified by all MAC Motorcycle Instructors. All MAC Motorcycle Instructors are ex-Police Class 1 Motorcycle Instructors and all IAM Examiners are Police Class 1 Motorcycle Instructors! I think Jim must have had some very bad experiences from someone in his local IAM Group! It may be worth trying another Group in another area, or RoSPA, or at least another Observer if you feel you aren't benefiting.

As for Jim's being a "consistent disappointment to Bob", I bet that it was *nothing* compared with when Bob took *me* out on a MAC training run! After that experience, Bob suggested that I should perhaps take an anchor with me for some of the scary passes when we went on his forthcoming Lake District run last year, although he thought everyone else should be OK!

**Arthur Shepherd**

**MESSAGE from JOHN MIDDLETON**

hi steve John Middleton here (membership no 111) - just a wee note to say thanks for putting the bike in BikeBytes, I have decided to keep the old girl (*his CB900 – ed*) as I am getting over my injuries better than was expected, my right leg is now over 1 inch shorter than it was, I have also sent you xray of my left arm and this is now what's inside. My cbr400rrj was totally wrecked and the insurance paid out in full, (thank god). I go to physio weekly - it's murder. My cb900 still runs first turn every time, Hbpe to be back on it in the near future (if my ankle can hold it up) I also will be renewing my membership for this year, thanks again. Tell the others I was asking for them thanks,  
**John**

*- great to hear you are recovering well, John – we wish you a full and speedy recovery – ed*

**HOLLAND TRIP – INFO NEEDED**

For those of you who are going on the Holland trip in May and have still to pay, could you please let me have payments by 16 March to allow me to start paying the bills? Please make cheques payable to Scottish Motorcycle Club. The price, just to confirm, is £325 per person sharing or £310 per person for a couple sharing with just 1 bike. When you send payment could you also let me have the following info which is required by the ferry company;

Date of birth  
 Passport number  
 Bike type and reg number

Please send info and cheques to me at 4 Mearnsroft Gardens, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 5QG. I will not be at the March club night so will put an update in next month's newsletter with joining instructions for the 1st.

Remember, as always, you need to arrange your own breakdown and personal cover and it would be best to take this out, the latter one especially, as soon as you have paid just in case you have to cancel for unforeseen reasons.

The ride-out routes are being recce'd as I write this and are looking good.

More anon.

**Alan Hopper**

PS If there is anyone out there wanting to go but who didn't book, you could let me know and I will see if it's possible to get extra space but note that I will be away until 16 March. You can phone me on 07860 506188 or e-mail me at [hopper@buzzoff.freemove.co.uk](mailto:hopper@buzzoff.freemove.co.uk) but I believe ferry space around that time is at a premium and it may already be too late.

**“THANK YOU” from the new Chairperson**

Ronnie Howat sends his thanks for the support he was given by members when standing for the post of Chairperson at the AGM, and hopes he will be able to show their confidence is merited.

*- and while Thanks are in the air, those who did not attend the AGM should know that a thoroughly deserved vote of thanks was recorded for Stewart Bowman for his leadership over the last two years. – ed.*

**NO HELMET REQUIRED! (from the BMF)**

Last year the BMF carried an item (*in its magazine Street Biker – ed*) on Peter Parker from Bedford, prosecuted for not wearing a helmet while riding on his BMW C1. Well at long last his much-deferred case came up yesterday 3 March at Bedford Magistrates Court and he won!

The court ruled that riders of the BMW C1 were riding IN and not ON a motorcycle and therefore did not need to wear a crash helmet! Riders would not therefore contravene the protective headgear regulations that require a person riding ON a motorcycle to wear a helmet. Simple as that.

What we don't know at this stage is if the powers that be might appeal against this ruling (they have 21 days in which to do so) but if not, the C1 will become the only powered two wheeler that can be ridden without wearing a helmet.

Peter based his case on two main points. 1. That he was riding in and not on a motorcycle so was therefore legally he was not covered by the compulsory helmet law. 2. The purpose of the helmet law was to protect the rider's head, something the C1 was designed to do.

In fact, having passed European crash tests for rider protection the C1 is exempt from compulsory helmet laws in most European countries including France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, Spain, Turkey, Hungary. and even South Africa.

Peter, an experienced motorcyclist and supporter of helmet wearing on ordinary motorcycles and scooters, is obviously pleased with the verdict but points out that this is a unique case and only applies to the C1. Simple weatherproof enclosures such as that on the visually similar Benelli Adiva, do not count!

The BMF welcomes this as a good commonsense decision but one that has no implications for any other form of motorcycle.

**NATIONAL RALLY MATCHES HORSES FOR COURSES**

Uttoxeter Race Course, more famous for horses than it is for bikes, is the final control for this year's extensively revamped National Rally. Jointly organised by the BMF and the ACU, it will now be able to cater for any bike, any rider and any one of a number of routes.

This unique road event, attracting over 1,300 competitors last year, is to be held over the weekend of 5th/6th of July and is open to all riders with a full motorcycle license and costs just £20 to enter.

Riders can chose outes of 200 to 540 miles to complete in 20 hours, but to combat rider fatigue and keep the event fresh, a number of new elements have been introduced. Spread widely throughout England, the one hundred plus controls have now been split into four zones, with the three outer zones (North, South and East) open from 14.00hrs to 24.00hrs on Saturday 5th and the inner zone open from 22.00hrs Saturday to 10.00hrs Sunday 6th. Riders competing for trophies must ride in one of the outer zones, plus the inner zone.

To encourage Classic riders and smaller machines, a new class to be called The National Medal requires riders to only complete in one zone covering 200 official miles. Competitors can therefore start and finish closer to home if they wish as they do not need to visit the final control at the famous Uttoxeter Race Course, Staffordshire.

As well as being invited to support the Mencap charity through personal sponsorship, clubs are also being encouraged to take part with a new trophy to be awarded by Carole Nash Insurance to the club whose members amass the most points - and Castrol, who are sponsoring Mencap's involvement, will also award a trophy to the rider who raises the most money for Mencap.

These new awards join the existing ones for: Overall champion; Best 125cc; Best Scooter; Best Sidecar outfit; Spirit of the Event and Oldest Rider & Machine.

Regulations and Entry Forms are now available from the ACU on 01788 566409 or download from the official website:

<http://www.national-rally.co.uk>

**SPEED LIMITS (25.2.03) From Hansard**

**Mr. Maples:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the proposed new national guidance on speed limits to be published.

**Mr. Jamieson:** Guidance on the setting of speed limits already exists in the form of Circular Roads 1/93. This remains good advice but we recognise the need to update it. Work currently underway which will feed into a review is planned for the latter part of this year.

**DRIVER FATIGUE (27.2.03) From Hansard**

**Bob Russell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures he is taking to raise awareness among drivers of the dangers of fatigue with (a) the general public, (b) operators of motor fleets and (c) companies using commercial vehicles and employing travelling salespersons.

**Mr. Jamieson:** The Department raises awareness of the dangers of falling asleep at the wheel among all drivers by means of national publicity campaigns and advertising. Local authority road safety officers support our campaigns and provide relevant publicity materials to employers within their areas.

We will be running new radio commercials this Easter. Motorway variable message signs will again carry the "Don't Drive Tired" slogan again. We will also be using lorry back advertising for the first time to remind drivers to take a break. A ew public information film will be produced in the spring.

**DRIVING THEORY TEST GETS TOUGHER**

The hazard perception test (HPT) became part of the theory test on 14.11.2002. Candidates are shown 14 video clips, and are required to click a mouse as soon as they see a developing hazard. One clip has two (scorable) developing hazards, the remainder one each, so 15 in total.

Candidates score a maximum of five marks for each (scorable) developing hazard, most marks being given for clicking in the shortest time after the hazard becomes visible. So the maximum possible score is 75.

Different pass marks on the HPT apply depending on whether the candidate is taking it as part of their theory test for car/bike, or for bus/truck, or to become an ADI. When HPT began, the pass mark was set deliberately low to avoid too great an unfairness as between those who took the theory test immediately before or after HPT began. Now all the pass marks are to rise.

Test	Pass mark (from 75)		Date of change
	Old	New	
Car and bike	38	40	1 March
PCV and LGV	44	46	1 April
ADI	51	53	1 April

The multiple choice part of the theory test remains unchanged.

**STEVE'S SCRIBBLINGS**

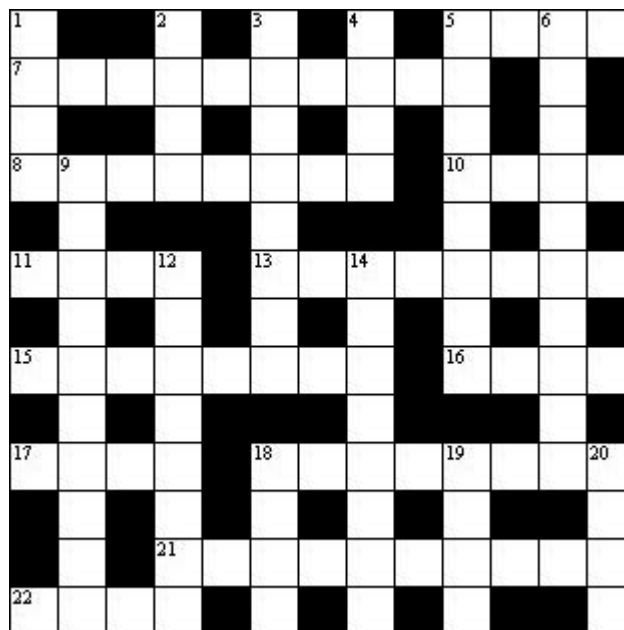
**You Wanna Go Fast ??!-**Then go get one of these, but hold up a bank first:

[http://popularmechanics.com/automotive/sub\\_colleno/2001/8/recycled\\_jet\\_setter/print.phtml](http://popularmechanics.com/automotive/sub_colleno/2001/8/recycled_jet_setter/print.phtml)

it's a turbine-powered motorcycle, an example of American excess, fuel guzzling but it GOES.



# March prize crossword puzzle



Crossword and clues all prepared by Sue Temple

*Look for some Scottish towns, many of which have been visited by the SMC over the years, in the answers to some of this month's clues. Sue Temple*

**Across**

- 5. Roman dress (4)
- 7. Fife fishing town, well known to the Club as a favourite fish and chip stop (10)
- 8. Soft head wear, traditionally associated with the working class (5,3)
- 10. Bone in the forearm (4)
- 11. A person who considers himself superior (4)
- 13. Scottish fishing town of Wester Ross situated on Loch Broom, founded in 1788 (8)
- 15. Floor covering, a traditional product of Kirkcaldy (8)
- 16. A district of Central London, with many clubs (4)
- 17. A native of the country formerly called Siam (4)
- 18. Clapping in approval (8)
- 21. Borders town (10)
- 22. Nocturnal birds of prey (4)

**Down**

- 1. Powder used after bathing (4)
- 2. Term used in proof reading meaning 'let it stand'; or the initials of the South Tayside Educational Trust (if such an organisation existed - you've no idea the problems I have setting some of these clues!) (4)
- 3. Accidental release of air from a tyre - let's hope this never happens to you on your bike, once happened to us in Glencoe - just thought you would like to know! (8)
- 4. Retail outlet (4)
- 5. A group of Bonnevilles, Thunderbirds and Tigers (8)
- 6. Fife town, a few miles north of Kirkcaldy (10)
- 9. West Lothian town, birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots, and home of the 'Black Bitch' (10)
- 12. Reservations (8)
- 14. Columns holding lights in a street (8)
- 18. Spindle on which a wheel revolves (4)
- 19. One of the Continents (4)
- 20. The Orient (4)

Write your name here: .....

Send the completed puzzle before the end of the month for entry into the £10 prize draw to:

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