



Scottish Motorcycle Club

Bike Bytes

Volume 2 Issue 8

August 2001

WELCOME

This month, we extend a warm welcome to **Gordon Mackinnon** of Edinburgh, who rides a Pan European and came on our run to Berwick-upon-Tweed on 22 July, and to **Ursula Rouse** of Dundee, who rides a BMW K1. We hope you all, old Members and new, enjoy belonging to the Scottish Motorcycle Club, joining in the various activities, and sharing your skills and experience with other Members by helping when you can.

Arthur Shepherd

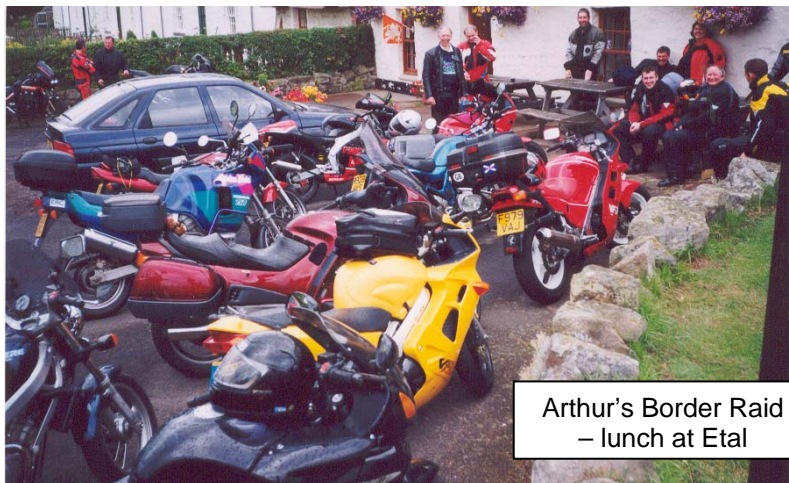
NEXT RUNS AND MEETING

The next **Club Night** Meeting is on 8 August at the usual time and place: 8pm at the Black Bitch Tavern, West Port, Linlithgow.

The next runs are Alan Graham's to **Donnottar** on 5 August, and one to the **North West** on 19 August. And to whet your appetite for September, **Honda MAC** Instructor Neil Stewart is going to organise and lead the run on 16 September. More news of that in next month's BikeBytes (and on our web-site).



Ronnie Howat –
BBQ meister



Arthur's Border Raid
– lunch at Etal



TheFifthColumn

Well, so far the summer's been a bit of a damp squib, weather-wise. I'd thought of getting out on the bike this morning, but the rain won, so I've spent the day catching up on my ironing and paperwork. Flippin' desperate, really. (No, I'm not usually a fair-weather biker, but I've got wet enough going to and from work this week to last me several monsoon seasons!)

Bikes In Bus Lanes The good burghers of Glasgow have decided that they're not going to run the government-sponsored trial of motorcycles in bus lanes after all. Don't know why, though there has been comment that the trial would upset the haulage industry (sounds as lame as a one-legged duck to me). So, all the councils who opted to wait and see the results of the Glasgow trial now have a great excuse not to allow bikes into bus lanes ever. This trial was backed by both Westminster and Edinburgh parliaments, who will no doubt now sit on their hands and mutter about "local democracy". Neither august institution will want to make a fuss, because Glasgow produces and supports so many Labour MPs and MSPs. Enough to make you spit, isn't it?

MEP Ride-Out. This took place on the 4th of July in Strasbourg, when 15 MEPs (including 2 from the UK) were pillioned around the city along with 200 other riders. Nice.

More Bikes In a desperate effort to fill more space in Bikebytes, I have had yet more test rides. This time it was the turn of perfectly innocent second-hand 600cc commuter candidates - since I really was looking for one to buy, no subterfuge was required - this time!

Suzuki GSXF600. A P-reg bike showing about 6,000 miles, in shiny condition. This has the same basic engine as the Bandit - the oil-cooled inline 4 dating from 1985 or so - but has more sporty pretensions. Having said that, the riding position's more VFR750 than GSXR600 - fairly upright, but with a very cramped (for me) leg / footpeg geometry; I just could not get comfy on this bike. Handling was a disappointment too. It was a struggle to stop it dropping into slow-speed corners (serious amounts of handlebar force required), but didn't want to corner at all when going over 50 or so. I thought it had a flat tyre, and stopped to have a good check over it, but all seemed OK. Something not right there - even at a relatively cheap £2500. Honda NTV650. This bike was on a P plate with around 9,000 miles up and a large aftermarket fairing. The wee V-twin engine was much as I remembered from the Transalp I used to have - felt quite lazy, but fairly shifted the bike along. I really didn't like anything else about the bike, though, which is a shame because I wanted to like it (it was cheap - only £2295!). May have been (partly at least) the fairing, but it started a mild weave at 80ish. The handling was OK up to a point, but a bit vague - it didn't want me to know what the tyres were doing when cornering at anything over 20 or 30. Comfy enough, though, and no doubt reliable, but not for me.

Yamaha Fazer 600 An S-reg bike with 10,000 miles on the clock, in good condition. The engine's based on the Thundercat's (same as the older FZR motor), and has a decent amount of power. The riding position was just fine for me, and it's got enough of a fairing to keep the wind off up to decent speeds. Handling was a treat, too - the wide bars help - and the ride was soft enough for potholey roads without being too vague when pressing on a bit. A lovely wee bike which I would have bought but thought it a bit pricey at £3795.

Suzuki Bandit 600 Just 3,500 miles and 3 years old (how do folk manage to do so few miles?) and in almost-new nick. Very similar to the Fazer as far as riding position, handling and general performance go - the Fazer's probably a wee bit faster, but there'd be nothing much in it on most roads. The Bandit's a bit heavier and taller - has a bit of "presence" I suppose, but was just as easy to trickle through what passes for a traffic jam in sleepy Perth. The only thing I found strange was how much it needed / liked to be revved - it's geared to about 11.5mph per 1,000 revs in 6th, compared to the Blade's 16.5mph (or a Pan's 40 or so!).

Conclusion. I bought the Bandit. It's lovely. Thanks to Dicksons and Motorcycle King for the test rides. I will be back (especially for that promised Daytona blast)! **Events.** Strangely, August is a quiet month for biking events. Apart from our own runs, the only thing worth noting is:

Saturday 11th to Sunday 12th - British Superbikes at Knockhill. If you've never been trackside at a big bike race, this is where you should be - you get really close to the action and can wander up to lots of famous(ish) folk in the lorry / caravan park. Standing about 10 yards away as a racing 750 zips round Duffus or lifts the back end braking into the hairpin is, er, "educational"! Fingers crossed that this'll be on Knockhill's one good sunny Sunday of the year.

And Finally. Easy to tell the tourist season is under way again - only about 1 in 10 bikers returns a cheery wave. Blank stares from the Germans - you'd think they'd have a notice in all the guidebooks by now "Scottish bikers like to wave to other bikers - return the compliment or die a horrible death!" Right - back to the ironing. Stewart

Hope i am in time to include in August Bike Bytes it is a taster of my run on 5th August. Please also include that the club can now receive 10 per cent discount (except tyres) at Cupar Motorcycles if they show their card. Alan.G.

Steve,

There are a few wee bits we need to get into the newsletter if you can find (fairly prominent) space for them, please. One of these days I'll get organised and produce this stuff in proper HTML.
Oh - and could you please ensure that the diary of events is up to date too? Ta.
Oh - and again - sorry, the 2nd item under "Run Organisers Needed" below will itself need a voting slip (on a separate page) along the lines shown.

Run Organisers Needed. 2 of the 3 orphan runs noted in July's BikeBytes have found foster parents, but we're still looking for someone to organise a run from Stirling on Sunday 19th August. An ideal opportunity for a first-time run leader to have a go (it's not difficult - heck, even I manage to do the odd run!) - help and advice is always available from Jim McKechnie or anybody else, really. So if you haven't led a run yet this year, stick yer hand up! We're also thinking about a 1-night run to the north-west of Scotland in August / September time. Applecross was mentioned, but somewhere around there anyway. Could you please fill in the form at the back if you're interested so we can decide if it's worthwhile. Stewart

Steve,

With regard to the run, Arthur phoned me the other night to say that Neil Stewart wanted to organise a run and having cleared it with his boss the only day he could was the one I had offered to do. Needless to say I was going to fight for the run!!!! Anyhow I've offered to do the NEC run instead if there's enough interest. I've been in touch with Duke to see if I can get a discount but haven't heard anything back yet so I'll probably pop down to Two Wheels and pick up some videos. Once I've got everything organised I'll do **something for the newsletter**. However in the meantime if anyone has any **particular choices** I can be e-mailed using katharine@kdallman.fsnet.co.uk Cheers. Katharine

Steve and Jim

As recently mentioned to Jim and Stewart, I am in contact with **Neil Stewart**, our SMC Member and Honda MAC Instructor, who has volunteered to organise the **September run** for us. I am expecting the details soon and will let you know straight away. Katharine, who had offered at the last meeting to arrange but not lead a run that day, is perfectly happy about it.

I can quickly make the changes to the master Calendar of Events and get copies to you, and put it in the Members Area of the website with a Newsflash, too!

Best regards

Arthur

Voting slip for north-west 1-nighter:

Name: Number of bikes: Number of people: Preferred weekends: 25/26 August () 1/2 September () 8/9 September () 22/23 September () 29/30 September () Would you like to organise this run? (Y/N)

Guest Speakers. Guest speaker nights seem to be very popular with members, so we'll need to start organising for winter months pretty soon. If there's any particular person or type of person you'd like to see, or if you know anyone who'd give an interesting talk, please have a word with any of the committee. A bike-related theme seems most popular, but don't let that limit your imagination! For instance, would you like a serving traffic cop, an IAM examiner, a bike racer, a mechanic, a manufacturer's representative (bikes, tyres, etc.), a foreign bike tour organiser.... Whatever, do let us know! Stewart Thanks, Stewart

Stewart Bowman

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(Mobile) 07778 485553

----- Original Message ----- From: Gordon Mackinnon To: members@smc2000.fsnet.co.uk Sent: 23 July 2001 20:03

Subject: comment on 22 July run by newcomer gordon mackinnon

To the editor SMC newsletter (sorry too many names in one day!). here is my bit on the 22July Berwick-upon-Tweed run... file attached.

Gordon Mackinnon. gogs@gmackinnon.fsnet.co.uk

Hi Stephen

If possible could you put in the bike bytes that I have a **Haynes manual for a Suzuki Bandit 600-1200** from 1995 to 97? If any one is interested to get in touch.

Would also like to add to the mag That

The Berwick-upon-Tweed has been my second outing since joining the club and it was another great day out. I have only been riding for 3 years after doing my direct access. Most of my riding has been on my own and not in a group and it is not because I have no mates.

But it has been educational to sit behind other riders and to watch what line they take etc. I will be looking forward to the next run because I will be breaking in my new bike which is a ZX6R ninja.

P.S. the back road you took I use to travel 5 days a week for 10 months anyway because I used to work at the Dalmahoy hotel. It was not until you turned towards Ratho that I knew where I was. But you were right it was better than the motorway.

Regards Peter Cook

Please find attached updated **minutes** from July. Thanks to Arthur and Stewart for your feedback

Steve I realise it's probably too late for inclusion (I have been so busy lately) but I am preparing a **couple of short pieces** right now. I tried phoning you earlier to tell you, without any reply. Katharine tells me you already have the Crossword Clues and the Minutes. And you have the Contact List for copying. Am I to do a full postal mailing this month? Regards Arthur

Steve

Here, both in the body of this message and as a WordPad attachment, is the piece referred to in the previous e-mail. I hope it is of some use to you. Many apologies for its being so late. Regards Arthur

BMF Bikefest, Kelso 15 July

The BMF's fourth annual Scottish event took place once again at the Springwood Park in Kelso beside the River Tweed. The main event was, as usual, on the Sunday, which saw the best of the weekend weather - some sun and some showers. The BMF counted 7500 visitors to the Show which, as in previous years, is timed to coincide with Kelso's Civic Week so as to attract not only more income from ticket sales but more traders and attractions than might otherwise come, such as helicopter rides and a simulator.

Jumping Jake Semtex gave an impressive performance. Not only did he wheelie, stoppie and fly through the air over people, Volvos and other obstacles(!), each trick was accompanied by various bangs and thuds from thunderflashes, etc. A ride over the roof of the Volvo resulted in an impressive and the biggest explosion as the Volvo shook and filled with smoke. It also resulted in the biggest cheer. There were lots of other attractions on and off the arena. There were amazing bargains to be had - hundreds of gloves at £5 a pair, for example.

Camping was available on Friday and Saturday nights (discount for Members, free for Marshals like me) and there were more than 600 campers. There was a bar on-site, and two bands and a disco on Saturday night. Our two SMC Members, Neil Stewart and Bob Crawley, were the Honda Mac Instructors who led a rideout on Saturday. The weather had been wet since Friday evening (I travelled there in the wet, pitched my tent in the wet, it rained during the night and it was still raining in the morning) and this must have put people off going. Whereas last year there were two groups of 20-25, this year there were only four people on three bikes: a couple from down south, Mike Little and me (having juggled my marshalling duties around). So, of the five bikes, four were ridden by SMC Members! It's a shame that more people didn't come because, even though it rained very heavily all the way round the 100-mile route, we had a really good time. During the two stops, Bob and Neil treated us to some very, very funny stories that I was going to tell you here but the Editor says not!

I took a note of Bob's route because I'd like to repeat it when I can see further than we could that day. Bob left Kelso by the A68 and then via Boujedward, Jedburgh, Carter Bar, Bellingham, Kielder Water, Kielder Village, Saughtree, Newcastleton, Bonchester Bridge, Denholm and then via the A698 back to Kelso. I was soaked through but even the very expensive, high-tech Honda MAC kit let in water for the first time ever! But, amazing though it sounds, the last mile or so to Kelso was on dry roads!

Thanks, Bob and Neil for a great outing. Neil said we should regard it as a character-building exercise! Having an ex-Police Class One Motorcycle Instructor right behind you for 100 miles, as I did, is scary (ie character-building) but I'm so glad I went, we all had a really good time, and I can't wait for another chance to go out with the Honda MAC Instructors.

Arthur Shepherd

Hi, All (electronic) Members

Here is some news from Alistair Robertson of Alvins about new Harleys and a rally in Aviemore. I'm afraid I won't be at the rally myself because I have a wedding to attend! Otherwise I might have seen you there.

Ride well, ride safe.

Arthur

----- Original Message ----- From: "Alistair Robertson" <ali_alvins@hotmail.com> To: <members@smc2000.fsnet.co.uk>
Sent: 29 July 2001 12:09
Subject: Re: Motorcycle Hire
Arthur

Good to hear all is going well.

I was not at Bikefest, as I have not long returned from a short holiday followed by Harley's major conference for 2002 models, which was in the States and lasted almost a week. HD have launched a stunning new bike called the V Rod, and a sports Buell called the Firebolt; you can see these at www.harley-davidson.com and www.buell.com, let me know what you think.

Our Harley rally at Aviemore is looming, August 24-27, a fantastic weekend where we will get 900 in attendance, although 90% Harleys all makes are welcome and if any of your members could attend I am sure they will have a great time. Details and booking can be found at www.dunedinhog.com or simply contact me.

See you soon.

Alistair Robertson

The Run to Berwick Sunday 22nd July

Arthur's run to Berwick was our first excursion with the Club for some considerable time, so it was pleasing to find out that the leathers hadn't shrunk since the last time they were used.

Not such good news about the Autocom however – dead as the proverbial – hey ho! We'll just have to rely on semaphore and gesticulations as in the good old days.

The weather was a bit iffy as we set off from home at 8 o'clock (yes, 8 o'clock on a Sunday morning, see what we will do for you, Arthur), but it seemed to be inclining more towards 'fair' than 'wet'.

We made Dreghorn in good time, but still Arthur and Alan G were there before us, and soon there was a good crowd gathered together for the off. Steve Middleton's timing being perfect, just coming off the slip road from the city by-pass in time to slot in with the convoy going down the opposite slip road onto the by-pass without missing a beat! (*My refurbished exhaust had developed a leak at the header – luckily being an old Scout I was prepared with a suitable tool!*)

I did try to count how many had turned out that morning, but managed to get a different number every time. I estimate about 15 bikes, mostly solo, but a couple with pillions.

After Edinburgh we headed through Dalkeith and Gifford, then out into the wilds of the Lammermuirs.

The last time I was out this way was actually travelling in the opposite direction on our way back from Lindisfarne with a big group including Maureen Mulkearns from London (anyone remember Maureen, what a character!). Maureen had been fascinated by all the sheep just wandering about wherever the fancy took them – not many of those in London. Now it was a novelty for us to see sheep – not many left now here in Cumberland!

The sun was just starting to peep through, the larks were singing (well, they would have been if we could have heard them) and the hills were covered with bonny purple heather. Oh! I feel a song coming on ... altogether now...

On through the quaintly named Longformacus (I just love that name) and to the coffee stop at the White Swan in Duns.

After Duns we headed straight for Berwick-on-Tweed, crossing the border on the way, the second time for Dennis and I that day.

It was obvious that we had come to Berwick in the middle of some sort of civic celebration. I don't think the flags, bunting and crowds lining the street were just for our benefit.

Arthur has a deep affection for Berwick, harking back to his days with the KOSB at the barracks there. So we had a short stop down by the river to look over the ancient walls, muse on how it should really belong to Scotland, then set off again over the Tweed via the old bridge to our lunch at the Black Bull in the lovely north Northumberland village of Etal. A good old-fashioned country pub with good old-fashioned country grub.

Those of us who finished our meal quickly to outside for some fresh air got caught in a downpour, others of us who took our time over lunch escaped the drenching, but took the warning and donned waterproofs to be on the safe side.

Off on the road again we made our way to Wooler, then west to Yetholm, and another border crossing – our passports were getting good use today. Plenty of twists and turns along this road before arriving at Kelso, then to Selkirk via St Boswells.

Dennis and I decided that we would head south on the A7 when we got to Selkirk, so while the rest turned right we turned left for the south and yet another border crossing.

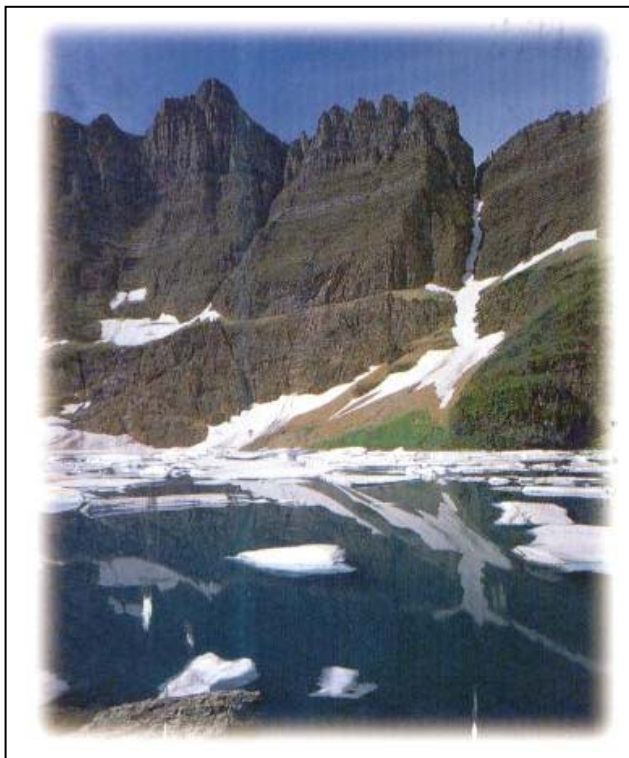
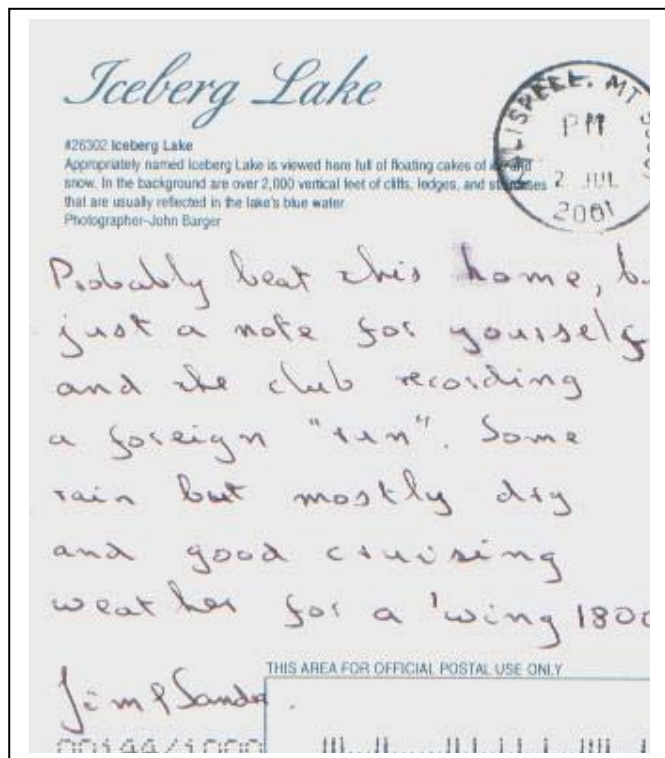
Perhaps someone will finish the story of the rest of the journey. Did Arthur find yet another pub with a colour in its name, the Red Lion perhaps?

Thank you Arthur for a lovely day out, not too far and with a reasonable pace, just suits us old 'uns. Thanks also to Hamish doing a great job as Tail-End-Charlie, and to everyone for their company. Let's hope it is not too long before we all meet again.

Sue Temple

Steve

You may like to use the attached postcard from Jim & Sandra. Regards Arthur



Steve

Attached are Grid0108 and Solution0107.

I managed at last to speak to Katharine this evening (I'd been trying for 10 days) and she hopes to complete the clues on Wednesday. I am afraid I was very late in getting the Solution0108 to her (I thought I had done it ages ago) but this time I had also prepared the blank clues text file with the clue numbers and word lengths already in, something I usually add after I receive her words. So this should speed things up after she has filled in the clever bits.

Things have been very hectic lately at work, BMF Kelso camping and marshalling, organising my run, and at EDAM, etc. It's been non-stop - but you know about that, don't you? Regards Arthur

Steve,

Arthur was a little late in delivering this months Xword to me, however I have promised him that I will have it done by Wednesday evening (25th). I'm not sure how close you are to sending out the bikebytes but I think it would be Arthur's preference to delay it slightly if at all possible.

Cheers!

Katharine Dallman IS Testing Services Tel: 0131-456-6355 [Mailto:kdallman@scottishlife.co.uk](mailto:kdallman@scottishlife.co.uk)

Hi, All (Electronic) Members!

Here is an amazing opportunity for some publicity for the SMC and for any of you "big biker blokes" available on Wednesday, 1 August. Unfortunately, I haven't yet been able to find out what time of day Alex has in mind but I'll e-mail you immediately she tells me. In the meantime, you can be thinking about it. Please contact me as soon as possible if you think you, or another Member not on e-mail, can make it. Thanks.

It sounds like an interesting show, by the way!

Regards Arthur

Tel: Home: 0131 441 3548 Work: 0131 242 8131 Mobile: 0773 00 66 99 6

----- Original Message ----- From: Alexandra Gammie To: members@smc2000.fsnet.co.uk

Sent: 27 July 2001 16:52 Subject: Edinburgh Festival Help!

Dear Scottish Motorcycle Club

I am working for a wonderful actress/comedian appearing at this year's Edinburgh Festival called Suki Webster. Her show is called BEST MAN and tells the story of when she was asked to be best man at a biker wedding about 10 years ago. It is a touching and funny story of love and relationships seen through this particular story and is sure to be a big hit at the Pleasance. I am attaching the press release for your information.

The reason I am writing to you is to ask if you might be able to help with a publicity photo shoot for the show, in return for lots of beers and tickets to the show! We basically need a group of at least four big biker blokes and their lovely machines to form a backdrop for the very pretty Suki, and ask the local press to send along a photographer! I think we stand a good chance of getting some exceptional photos out of it, and it should have the added benefit of publicising your club.

Do let me know if you think you might be able to help. I shall be in Edinburgh from next Monday and we'd like to do the picture on about Wednesday next week.

Yours

Alex Gammie

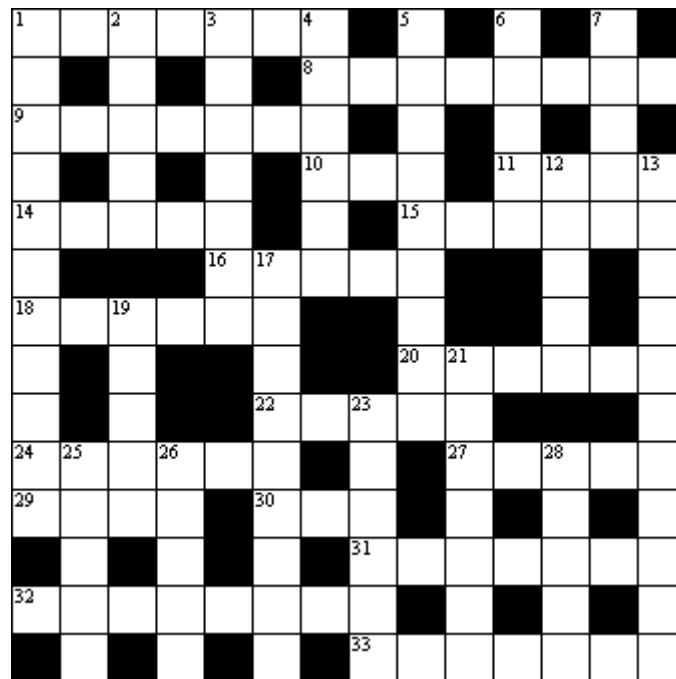
Hi, All (Electronic) Members!

I have just heard from Alexandra and she says the photo-shoot on Wednesday with Suki Webster for Best Man could be early evening, ie after work. It could really be any time except 3-4pm, which is when Suki is on stage. Alex reminds us that this is a play about a biker wedding. I think she means that you have to look eligible even if you're not!

If you are interested, please contact me urgently.

Regards

Arthur



Across

- 1 Operator of the National Lottery (7)
- 8 A necessity for night time driving (8)
- 9 The D in MOD (7)
- 10 Lubricate (3)
- 11 Item needed for 8 across to function (4)
- 14 In Greek mythology, The Muse of lyric poetry and mime (5)
- 15 The player who starts the betting in cards (6)
- 16 We tend to wear clothes in several of these to keep ourselves warm (5)
- 18 The Scottish Open was held here between 12th and 15th July 2001 (6)
- 20 A Xmas drink made from egg, sugar, cream, whisky and cinnamon (3-3)
- 22 Something, such as an accessory on a motor vehicle, for which an additional charge is made (5)
- 24 Reverse or change direction (6)
- 27 Open, generally public, ways for the passage of vehicles, people, and animals (5)
- 29 Notched and grooved, usually metal, implements that are turned to open or close a lock (4)
- 30 Mr. Jones, singer from Pontypridd (3)
- 31 A device that produces alternating current for distribution to the spark plugs, used in the ignition systems of some internal-combustion engines (7)
- 32 Dispute (8)
- 33 Popular pasta dish (7)

Down

- 1 Racing Circuit in Lincolnshire (7,4)
- 2 Italian criminal organisation (5)
- 3 American President who died on 15th April 1865 (7)
- 4 An assumption based on limited information or knowledge (6)
- 5 Goods purchase by post (4-5)
- 6 The soil (5)
- 7 An expression of happiness (5)
- 12 A coupling device for connecting parts, such as pipes or rods (5)
- 13 Shojiro Ishibashi founded of this tyre company (11)
- 17 An undertaking or enterprise of a hazardous nature (9)
- 19 Hazy (5)
- 21 Commercial establishments where cars are repaired, serviced, or parked (7)
- 23 Forest near Pitlochry (6)
- 25 Frightening or intimidating by superstition (5)
- 26 Regularly or customarily used (5)
- 28 A simple cell, from the development of which the young of animals are formed (2,3)

Steve.

It was a good issue but what happened to the numbers of the clues? Compare the attached file with the printed version! I suggest you include the closing date (last day of the month of the issue). The Contact List I gave you was an update intended for mailing with BikeBytes. I'm afraid I'm running late again this month with loads to do both for work and away from work. Speak to you soon. Regards. Arthur