



## The Magazine of The Scottish Motorcycle Club

### **WELCOME...**

to a new SMC Club year!

Firstly I must make a HUGE apology to Alasdair Wood for missing him off the list of Committee members in the last edition. As you know he does an amazing job with the website and is a great asset to our Club!!

No doubt you've all renewed your memberships, but if you haven't, you only have until the end of the month to get them paid and benefit from the great attributes of your Club:- meeting up and making new friends, riding on the well organised Runs, the brilliant website, chat at the monthly Club night and much more!

Need to get in contact with any of the Committee? Please don't email 'membership', use the Committee alias' listed below:-

John Hill, Chairman – [Chair@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk](mailto:Chair@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk)

Steve MacKinnon, Membership - [Secretary@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk](mailto:Secretary@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk)

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Janet Moss, Editor - [Bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk](mailto:Bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk)

The Minutes from the AGM are now on the website for those of you who were unable to attend the meeting. Go to Club Information on the Home page, click on Club Documents, then Club Documentation and finally AGM Documents.

**Cheers, Janet Moss**

**[Bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk](mailto:Bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk)**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

The membership now stands at 54 paid-up members, but we have 17 members who have not renewed, as yet, so numbers should still go up. We also welcome 6 new members to the Club:-

Jason Davies from Kippen, (BMW R1200RT)

Jim Ritchie from Fallin, (Honda VT750 Shadow, Honda CBF600N),

Robert Easton from Hamilton, who owns a BMW R1200RT and a modern Triumph Bonneville.

Greig Addison from Stirling, who rides a Kawasaki Z1000SX

Peter and Mandy Johnson from Bathgate. Peter has a BMW R1200RT and a Vetrrix, while Mandy rides a Suzuki Gladius 650.

## OUT TO PLAY ON NEW BIKES



Here's a photo of some of us enjoying our new bikes recently outside of the normal club runs. Having enjoyed our recent Club Run to the Borders, Neil Johnson, John Hill and myself took off on a similar route a couple of weeks ago taking in Langholm via the B709, Moffat and St Mary's Loch, out towards Selkirk turning back up the B709 again. No garden centre stops but we started off with a coffee at my place first and then lunch at Pelosi's Cafe in Langholm (great value) and the obligatory stop at the bikers favourite cafe overlooking the loch. Great weather, great biking - even the company wasn't bad. Got John's bike in the photo as well but as he took the photo, he's not in it. Then again he gets in plenty SMC photos on account of his high office. Neil's KTM seemed a bit sluggish (he insists it is a fueling problem and not him that's slowing down), my BMW was brow as was John's Ducati. I think he wants me to tell everyone it's a Multistrada 1200S Touring - guess that has extra street cred points over an ordinary one! It's possibly got a neat espresso making machine on board somewhere.

**Alan Hopper**



After a lunch of rolls, crisps, biscuits, tea or coffee provided by the centre, Clive pulled his spare bike from the garage for Alan and we headed off for a bit of trail riding in the forestry trails just West of the A819 close to Inverary. Here we practiced the slow speed control and braking finesse we had learned in the morning and I used the "bike picking up after a drop skills" on just one occasion. We then went back to the centre for a coffee, de-brief and issuing of certificates.

I believe this introductory course is well worth the cost (around £250), with everything you need being provided by MotoScotland for the day. It's hard work and challenging at times, but good fun and there is a real sense of achievement when you understand how much better a rider you are and how much more control you have over your machine after this experience.



## John Moss

### GOLF COURSE CHALLENGE

The total number of visits recorded so far on 6<sup>th</sup> May is fifty three, with a Bronze Award already earned by Gordon Robertson. He's kept going and is currently on ten visits, well on the way to a Silver Award. David Goodenough has one to go for his Bronze, and the next highest scores are by George Kay and Michael Wight on five. The full scoresheet is on the Club website [here](#). If you have not yet made a start on the Challenge, go see the details [here](#) on the website.

Only two courses remain to be visited at all – as might be expected they are the furthest flung at Machrihanish at the bottom of Kintyre and Durness at the top left of the mainland. Whitekirk in East Lothian and Leadhills in the Lowther Hills of South Lanarkshire are the most popular with seven visits each.

Those who have made visits have added some interesting details to the information for

each course, so when you go make use of that for other things to see in the area and where to get refreshments. Add your own bits in a post to the course's thread in the Forum when you get back from a visit.  
Have fun.

## Steve Middleton

### AWAY TO ELGIN

Early on a gloriously sunny Easter morning John and I headed off for an overnighter to Elgin, primarily to bag our first golf course of this year's Challenge – Duff House Royal. Firstly up to Glenshee via Dunning and Blairgowrie, then on through Braemar and a stop for coffee in Ballater at the Brown Sugar Cafe.



**GLENSHEE**

Huntly was our next stop, for petrol at the big Tesco store and onwards to Banff. After taking the all-important photos at the golf course, we parked up next door at Duff House for a picnic lunch and a look around. Duff House is looked after by Historic Scotland but all the contents come from the National Gallery of Scotland. Well worth a visit!



**DUFF HOUSE**

Back on the bikes we then followed the coast road along through Portsoy, Cullen and onto Elgin. We were booked in for the night at the Laichmoray Hotel (£72 B&B for us both at booking.com) on the edge of the town centre. The hotel was lovely and we had a big, clean room with a great shower in the ensuite. There was a large car park which was facing the road but we were allowed to park our bikes 'round the back', out of sight. We could have eaten in the hotel, but having a wander around the town to stretch our legs, we found a cheap but good Italian (Pizzeria Toscana) so ate there.

Next morning, after a well cooked breakfast we rode to Elgin Cathedral and took a wander around.



**VIEW FROM THE TOP OF THE TOWER AT ELGIN CATHEDRAL**

From Elgin we continued along the coast (A96) to Inverness, through the Great Glen and into Fort William to get petrol and some lunch from Morrisons. Then it was down through Glencoe, looking fantastic in the still-sunny weather, filtering through the nightmare traffic of Callender, Stirling and home. We had a great couple of days, doing about 430miles overall. I'd definitely recommend the trip if you fancy riding some fantastic roads, bit of culture and some good food.

## **Janet Moss**

### **EVENTS**

There have been a few half day runs, the CHAS Easter rideout, the off-road experience and this weekend 7 are heading up to Strathpeffer to gather a couple more golf courses for the Challenge and of course enjoy a wee dram, good food and good chat.

Then 25<sup>th</sup> May is the first full day Run, to Bute, led by John Moss, meeting at 9.00am at Stirling Services. After that it's into June with a Run on the 1<sup>st</sup> to North Berwick and Hawick and then the 8<sup>th</sup> when we take in Glencoe and Glenshee. Check out the Events calendar on the website for more details.

Get in touch with Gavin at [events@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk](mailto:events@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk) if you want to organise a Run or have an idea for one.

## RABBIT IN THE HEADLIGHT

In this edition our headlight is trained on Steve Middleton.



### **How long have you been a member of the SMC?**

Since its founding in 2000. After Arthur Shepherd and Alan Hopper I think I have the lowest member number of current Club members.

### **When did you pass your test and what was your first 'proper' bike?**

1967 if I remember correctly, on a green James with the common 200cc Villiers two-stroke engine. I bought it as a non-runner in my home town in Kent and got it going, squeezed it thru' a perfunctory MOT or two and sold it in Durham after graduating and before going abroad for a year.

### **What would be your dream bike?**

A development of the new Yamaha MT-09 with a half fairing, bigger tank and some luggage. Or a modern Honda VFR800 with about 25Kg less weight. I don't want too much power, but light weight is becoming more important as I age.

### **What is your favourite biking road?**

Short and local: A706 Linlithgow West Port to Torphichen when it's quiet – challenging to ride accurately.

Long and distant: A832 Kinlochewe to Falls of Mesach near Ullapool – bends, good tarmac, sea lochs and mountains. Continue on up the west coast for sensory overload.

**Where were you born and when (optional)?**

Hitchin, Hertfordshire – despite never having lived there or even near. Reason unknown, and now there's no-one to ask for an explanation. I've only ever consciously visited the town in the last year because, strangely, our son Martin now lives about ten miles away.

**What do you do for a living?**

Nowt – I'm retired. After immigrating from 'dahn sarf' to work in Falkirk I've served my time in manufacturing industry, local government and education.

**What's your favourite film?**

I don't have one – cinema has not been a great interest. However I fondly remember a slightly strange double bill pairing of "Butch & Brodie" (Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid plus The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie) as very entertaining – but that may be down to the company I was in as much as the films.

Can I substitute a favourite recording? Meatloaf – Bat out of Hell. A magical one-off that has not been followed up successfully, containing superb lyrics, wonderful sounds and arrangements, and some great backing singing. *Thank you* to the girls in the wages dept @ BlueBell for introducing me to this album.

**What's your favourite food/drink?**

Dinner prepared by Madame in a *Chambre d'Hôtes* – usually delicious, with the associated pleasure of a holiday in France / wine recommended by Monsieur to match the food.

My most memorable meal was that on the final evening of our 2013 New Zealand holiday. The "Eight" in Auckland is so named for the eight cuisines it offers and provided superb quality ingredients beautifully prepared and served on an *eat what you want* basis. I had steaks from five different animals cooked in front of me – as a first visit to the counters. Also, it was my birthday!

**What's your pet hate?**

Generally, inconsiderate people and bullies – often combined in the one body. Specifically on the road, tailgaters (see Generally above) and those who consider signals unnecessary or optional.

**What 3 items (not including your family) would you rescue from your house if it was burning down?**

The filing box with the insurance and investment documentation, all the vehicle keys, our wallets. (OK, there's not much sentimental value there, but I'm a practising pragmatist) I'd expect "family" to include any dog we were fostering at the time.

**Who from history would you like to meet and why?**

Leonardo da Vinci. Artist, scientist, engineer, and general all-round polymath (if that isn't a

tautology) whose skills, entrepreneurship, sense of inquiry and range of ability I admire. I'd want to be able to tell and preferably show him how we have developed and implemented his ideas. I'd also tell him off for not publishing his work and thereby delaying knowledge – particularly medical – by a century or more.

## **BOB'S RUN FOR JUDY**

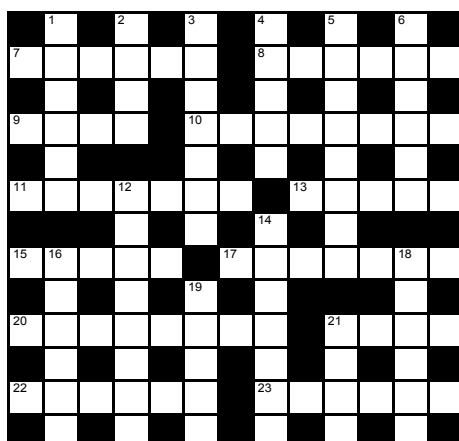
An early start (7.30am) saw John and I heading down to Moffat on a misty, drizzly, cold Sunday (4<sup>th</sup> May) to meet up with Bob Crawley and friends to have a day riding around Dumfries and Galloway in memory of our friend and fellow biker, Judy Broad. About 40 people on 31 bikes met up at the Ram, including 4 SMC members – Jonathan Douglas, Alex Muir, John and I. Leaving Moffat and using the Drop Off System so no one got lost, we headed swiftly back up the B7076 to Elvanfoot and then took the A702 via Moniaive down to New Galloway for coffee, a scone, a warm up and a catch up with 'old' friends. Then we worked our way down to Newton Stuart, Glenluce and along the coast to Isle of Whithorn for lunch in the Steam Packet Hotel. Needless to say Bob had it all well organised and there was plenty of room in their conservatory for lots of bikers and their kit!



### **GATHERING THE GROUP TOGETHER BEFORE LUNCH**

After lunch we went back to Newton Stuart for petrol and then onto Gatehouse of Fleet for the afternoon tea stop in a very posh hotel, The Cally Palace. The Run ended there and everyone went their separate ways. We were home by 6.00pm after a long (330 miles), still damp day, but it was a good way to remember Judy and chat with her other friends outwith the Club about her.

## **Janet Moss**

**Across**

- 7+ 20ac Famous bike manufacturer (6)  
 8 Formation (6)  
 9 One changing the colour of something (4)  
 10 Have a good time (4,2,2)  
 11 Pipe for expelling fumes from engine (7)  
 13 Achievements (5)  
 15 Tic (5)  
 17 Power (7)  
 20 See 7ac (8)  
 21 Large number (4)  
 22 Make of motorcycle (6)  
 23 Speeding competitors (6)

**Down**

- 1 Voice box (6)  
 2 Poor visibility (4)  
 3 One riding a bike (7)  
 4 Protection for the hand (5)  
 5 Event (8)  
 6 Month (6)  
 12 Word describing summer (8)  
 14 Bends (7)  
 16 Squares (6)  
 18 Old-fashioned transport (6)  
 19 Commonplace (5)  
 21 Speed (4)

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