FEBRUARY - 2012

BikeBytes

The Monthly Magazine Of The Scottish Motorcycle Club

Welcome

Firstly, a warm welcome to new member **Chris Findlay** who lives in Dunfermline and owns a Suzuki GSX650F and a Suzuki DRZ 400SM. We hope to see you on many of the 2012 club runs, Chris.

Looking at the website calendar, the first run appears in late April but, if we are blessed with a mild spring, I'm sure we won't have to wait that long.

At the other end of the season, in September, there will be a repeat of last year's hugely successful Donegal weekend, with Ken Russell generously throwing open the doors of his historic farmhouse to club members. This was one of the most memorable events of 2011 and comes highly recommended by those of us who participated.

As for February, the club night on the 8th is significant as this is the cut off date for any AGM nominations or motions. Both our Editor and Chairman will not stand for re-election at the AGM so please consider standing for these, or any other, committee posts. If you have any questions regarding the AGM, please contact me on the email address below.

Coming up:
Wednesday 8th February – Club night. Black Bitch Tavern, West Port, Linlithgow. 8pm.

Please keep up to date by checking out the website:
www.scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

Steve MacKinnon
secretary@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

Editorial

Ok, it's difficult to think of warmer weather and, hopefully, dry days….but we can only dream. At least we have no snow (in Edinburgh at the moment anyway!).

However, looking forward to summer time and Kelso Bike Fest, this will be the first Kelso show under the new BMF arrangements.

From this year, the BMF shows (Peterborough, Kelso and Tail-End) will be run completely by The Mulberry Group, with BMF Marshals helping out with staffing. This removes the financial risk from the BMF, but also allows The Mulberry Group much more scope to develop the shows as a viable entity.

The Mulberry Group managing Director, Martin Chick, is a very keen motorcyclist and has been devoted to making the shows a hit. It's a difficult job, in difficult financial times, but they're committed to making them a success. Unfortunately, one of the main traders, George White Motorcycles, recently went bust and that leaves a bit of a hole in the income, but Martin has managed to get sponsorship for all the shows from an insurance company, so they will all go ahead as planned and they'll no-doubt be a huge hit.

One thing that the BMF has always struggled to get from the shows though is good feedback. We get very few comments from the shows, either good or bad, so it would be good to se that change.

The shows are really for the individuals and clubs that attend them and they need to be more than just a good place to get cheap bike kit and have a few beers with friends over a weekend.

So, if you have any ideas about what YOU would like to see at Kelso…or any of the other shows that you attend, please let me know and we'll get Martin fired up to take some of the suggestions on board.

Anyway, let's hope for some good weather for Kelso this year…maybe I'll be able to get my Saturday afternoon run in this year without the hail and lightning…who knows?

Ken Glendinning
bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

S M C CHALLENGE 2012

This year's Challenge will be based on visiting bridges around Scotland. I am finalising the details of which ones to include and setting up the Club website to operate the Challenge, but can give you the following information just now.



The full details of the Bridges Challenge 2012 will be published on the Club website and event co-ordinator John Moss will soon circulate a notice by email to let you know it is ready. I will have details at the Club meeting on February 8th, so come and discuss them there.
Two new features will appear this year.



The first is a graduated award scheme, with Bronze, Silver and Gold standard awards. These will require increasing numbers of bridges to be visited from the list, encouraging more members to take part and gain recognition of their participation. The second feature is a Best Bridge Photograph award for the best picture featuring one of the bridges, not just a visit evidence photograph.



There won't be the opportunity to bring home a sample of the product as in 2011, but you may learn some interesting facts about civil engineering, transport, industrial development and social history (and see the websites of bridge geeks and skilled photographers!)

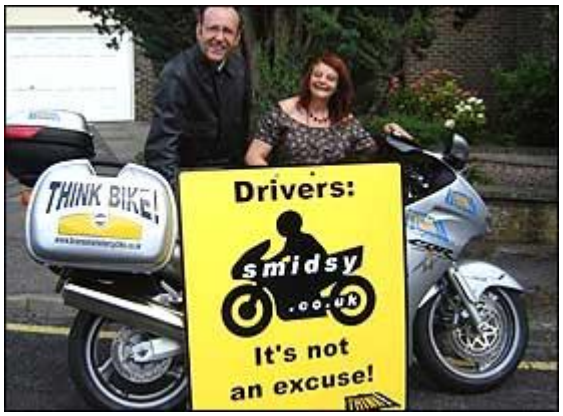
Steve Middleton

'SMIDSY'

Now, all of us will know what the above acronym means, but, just in case any non-motorcyclists are reading this, it means 'Sorry Mate I Didn't See You'.

Statistically, the type of accidents where someone pulls out on you without apparently seeing you, are the most common, especially in urban areas.

Thankfully, most of these aren't generally the most serious type of motorcycle accidents, but there's a lot of injury and expense involved in all these incidents.



There is continuous discussion about how these sort of accidents can be reduced. High-visibility clothing and lighting are amongst the most common solutions suggested for raising the visibility of two-wheeled riders to car drivers. Now, I ride with a white helmet and my riding gear, though it does have light reflecting panels, isn't bright yellow. I tend to keep my reflecting 'Sam Browne' type harness for riding at night or in poor visibility.

This issue edited and published by: Ken Glendinning, 14 Craiglockhart Avenue, Edinburgh, EH14 1HW
email: bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk Tel: 0131 443 2616/07774 135243

Maybe though, I should invest in one of those newer, mainly yellow, jackets that the manufacturers are producing these days.

I have made an effort though to make my lights distinctive. My Tiger, like most modern bikes, has lights that are on all the time. By default, only one of the two lights is active on 'dip', but, by plugging a relay into a socket under the fairing, both lights are active at all times.

I have also fitted a couple of Philips 'Motovision' bulbs. These give better light output and a longer beam than the standard bulbs, but, more important, they give a slightly orange reflection to the light, which, hopefully, makes you stand out from the background clutter and maybe makes a motorist's brain register that there is something approaching. Do they work? I don't really know…I still occasionally get someone pulling out in front of me, but not all that often. The bulbs are slightly more expensive than good, ordinary headlight bulbs, but I think that they're worth the extra investment in visibility.

Anyway, The IAM are trying to gather more data on 'SMIDSY' type incidents and the factors involved, so they have an online poll that you can complete to submit your experiences. Do try to complete it, your information is useful and the IAM are listened to by government transport departments, on both sides of the border! The poll is at:

http://www.iam.org.uk/component/content/article/2-uncategorised/968-smidsy-sorry-mate-i-didnt-see-you

Ken Glendinning

The cost of a fall

I recently replied to an article in the "Ride motorcycle magazine" that praised the benefits of riding an older motorbike. One of the points I edited from my letter before I submitted it was the cost of dropping the bike during last years club treasure hunt.

Some of the club members may remember that while looking for the answer to the clue in Airth I attempted and made a complete mess of a U turn.

Unfortunately the spot I picked to turn was on a slight incline. At the apex of the manoeuvre the bike came to a stop and 236kg of Diversion started to tip over to the right (downhill). My right foot went down to support the bike and probably would have done if hadn't been for the strategically placed 2in deep pothole that my foot happened to find.

It still may have been possible to save face but for the slight sprinkling of loose gravel in the bottom of the pothole that caused my foot to slip that extra inch. (The only time in life that I've not wanted an extra inch) And the fight was lost. I could perhaps have held it given several of the problems listed but all of them at the same time? In much less time than it takes to tell the bike was on its side and I was lying beside it. I had heard the crack of breaking plastic and could smell the petrol leaking from the carbs.

I had often wondered if I would be able to lift the bike in a situation like this and I remember reading a magazine article about the subject. But believe me when a young blonde pulls up in her car and several people are looking from a doorway you find the strength and you can. I got hold of the lower handle bar and heaved. Half way through the lift I remembered that I should have put the side stand out and had to lower the bike kick out the stand and lift again. I had a quick look to assess damage and apart from the indicator everything looked fine. The bike initially refused to start but to remove myself from this embarrassing situation I straddled the bike paddled off and coasted down the hill. A couple of prods on the starter soon filled up the carb's with fuel and the bike burst into life.

Anyway, to get back to the point of this story, on closer inspection as well as the broken indicator lens I had several small scratches on the silencer and the fairing but being an older bike this just adds character to a wonderful bike, part of the patina of life. The indicator lens mounting boss had to have araldite applied to repair it and the total cost of the repair was 90p for a new light bulb.

When I compare that to an article by Simon Toyne, one of the journalists that contributes for ride magazine, about his long term test bike. He ran a Honda CBR 600RR and had the misfortune to park it outside his house and have the tarmac melt under the side stand. The fall on its side resulted in a bill for £1,327.29 to return the bike to its former glory, I think I got off lightly

Gavin Paton

'Steer Clear of Bike Crime'

Arthur recently forwarded a link to a pamphlet that he obtained from his local Community Police Officer's display stand and I thought I'd share a few points with you.

Thankfully, Scotland is a relatively low 'bike-crime' area….at least for the type of motorcycles that we ride.

This issue edited and published by: Ken Glendinning, 14 Craiglockhart Avenue, Edinburgh, EH14 1HW
email: bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk Tel: 0131 443 2616/07774 135243



Most of us will have thought of the security of our treasured motorcycles, but some of the points in the pamphlet, which can be viewed here:

http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/steer_clear_of_bike_crime/steerclearofbikecrime.pdf

might be of some interest.

Electronic Security

> I have and alarm on the Tiger, which immobilises the ignition, so at least no-one can ride my bike away under power. It also will sound when anyone tampers with the bikes…but how many people bother about vehicle alarms going off these days?

Mechanical Security

> I use a good, heavy disk lock most of the time when I park the bike around town for short periods of time, but I also have a heavy chain that I can use to tether the bike to a handy rail or pole. Luckily, in central Edinburgh, the council have provided solo-motorcycle parking spaces, which have rails to attach a chain, and, when I remember, I take the chain with me if the bike is likely to be there all day. I notice that, at a lot of the more frequently used spaces, some people leave their chains attached to the rail, to be used when they park up. At least that avoids having to carry the heavy chain around with you….the one I have does weigh quite a lot and it means that I often don't bother with it!



Marking Systems

> My previous bike was a Honda and it came with Smartwater markings…consequently, I carried on with Smartwater and marked the Tiger accordingly. I suppose the real reason for vehicle marking is so that you can have your bike returned to you in the unfortunate event that it is stolen, but hopefully the fact that it is marked may have some deterrent value.

Buying second-hand

> I've never bought a bike from a private seller, but it would be interesting to hear other club member's experiences about this. The pamphlet though offers the following suggestions:
>
> Have you seen the original registration document?
>
> Have you compared the bike's frame or engine number with those shown on the registration document?
>
> Can the seller provide proof of their identity or address?
>
> Is the seller insisting on meeting you away from the registered address?
>
> Have you checked the vehicle's history?

This isn't from the pamphlet, but, from what I read in the motorcycling press, if the seller asks to use 'Western Union' for the payment, abandon your attraction for the 'new' machine and leave!

Anyway, the pamphlet does provide some useful information and contact details form organisations that can help; Thatcham, Sold Secure, Association of British Insurers etc.

Ken Glendinning

This issue edited and published by: Ken Glendinning, 14 Craiglockhart Avenue, Edinburgh, EH14 1HW
email: bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk Tel: 0131 443 2616/07774 135243

Events

If you check the calendar of events on the website site you will see there are a few free spots in the coming and future weeks. If you fancy organising a run or other type of event, or just suggesting something that we can arrange for you, then please let us know at events@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk and we'll see what we can do.

Run reports

Remember, there are lots of reports online and photos in the gallery!

http://www.scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk/

Articles for BikeBytes

PLEASE! Send any articles, pictures, funny stories or anything vaguely motorcycle related to:

bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

FOR SALE

Please let me know if you've anything, bike related, that you want to advertise for sale.

BikeBytes Crossword

OK, since this year's club challenge will be about Scottish bridges, my last BikeBytes crossword as editor is all about bridges across water in Scotland.

They're not all road crossings!

Answers in next month's edition!

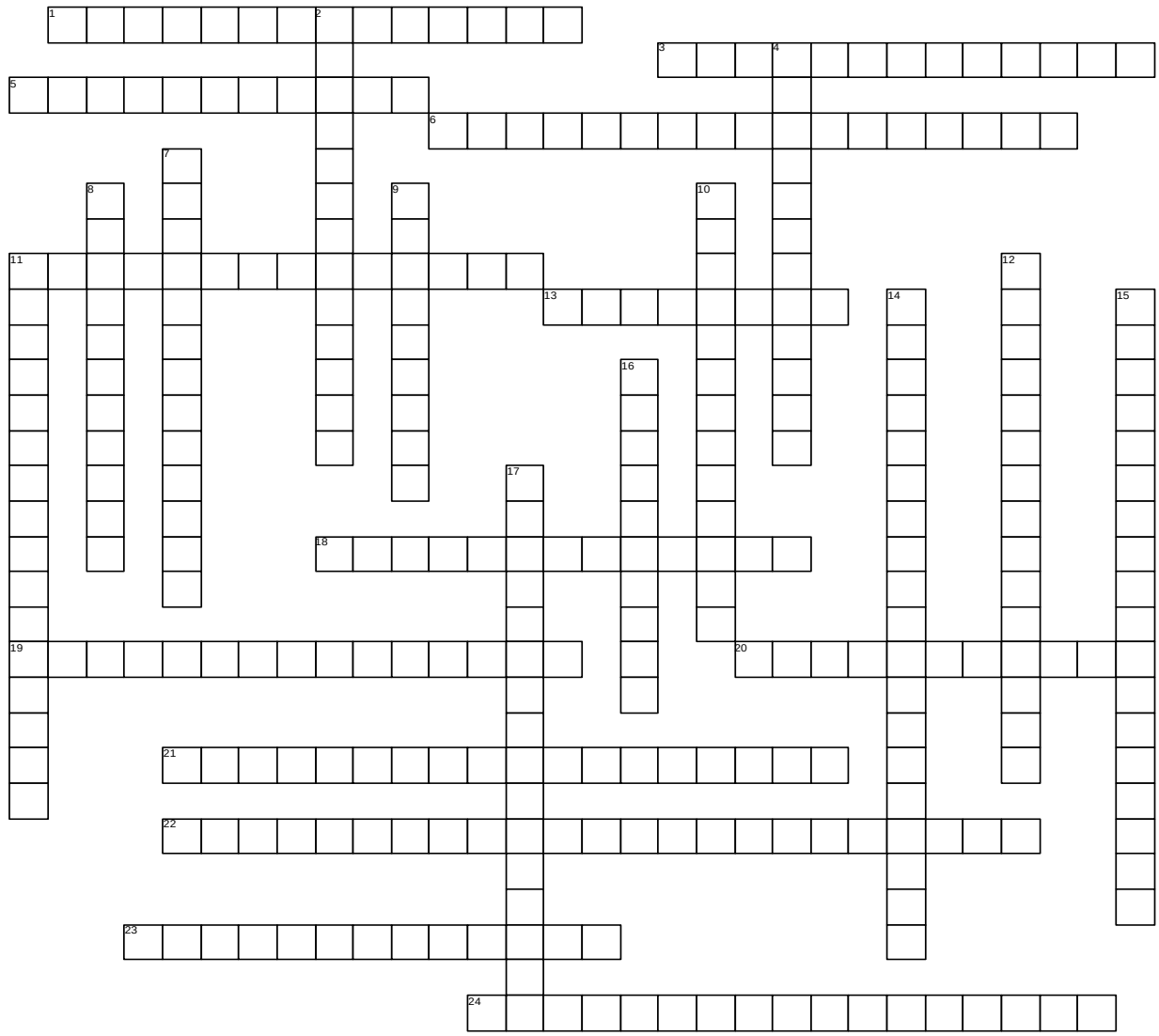


Surely not!



Well, it has three wheels…it must be a trike!

This issue edited and published by: Ken Glendinning, 14 Craiglockhart Avenue, Edinburgh, EH14 1HW
email: bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk Tel: 0131 443 2616/07774 135243



www.CrosswordWeaver.com

ACROSS

1 Spans noisy clotted cream? (8, 6)
3 Telford's bridge over the ocean (7, 6)
5 Near a former US Space Surveillance base (7, 4)
6 Flying Ford Anglia? (10, 7)
11 This gets mentioned a lot on the traffic reports (8, 6)
13 You can usually see it behind Jackie's shoulder (5, 3)
18 Late mediaeval bridge over the Eden (7, 6)
19 Crosses the Teviot with attached Shank's way (8, 7)
20 They're thinking about a viewing platform! (5, 6)
21 Replaced a ferry on the A82 in 1975 (12, 6)
22 Spanning the Tweed near an Abbey (8, 5, 10)
23 'The Golden Bear' was pictured on this short one (7, 6)
24 Old Reston to St. Boswells rail link (10, 7)

DOWN

2 Forms a roundabout over the Clyde (7, 6)
4 One-way traffic on the Forth Bridge's little cousin (6, 6)
7 Near to the Caledonian Stadium (7, 6)
8 Links Sutherland and Ross and Cromarty over the Kyle (5, 6)
9 Nannie steals a tail here (4, 1, 4)
10 At the meeting of Lochs Glencoul and Gleann Dubh (7, 6)
11 The other bridge north to Fife (10, 6)
12 Angular bridge over the Clyde (9, 6)
14 Whisky country, Telford cast-iron bridge (13, 6)
15 Irish military man's bridge of the Tay (7, 5, 6)
16 Lots of summons over this one! (4, 6)
17 One of the world's oldest suspension bridges still carrying traffic (5, 5,6)

This issue edited and published by: Ken Glendinning, 14 Craiglockhart Avenue, Edinburgh, EH14 1HW
email: bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk Tel: 0131 443 2616/07774 135243