MARCH - 2012

BikeBytes

The Monthly Magazine Of The Scottish Motorcycle Club

Welcome

Judging by the number of visits already recorded in the Bridge Challenge, lots of people have taken advantage of a mild February to dust off their bikes and start the new biking season.

By the time you read this, Steve Middleton will have led the first club run of the year and the Awards Night will have taken place at the Mercat Bar in Edinburgh.

Please attend the AGM, if you can, details below. I know it's become a cliché to say it, but your opinion is valuable and crucial to how the club is run both now and in the future.

Coming up:

Saturday 10th and 11th March – Scottish Motorcycle Show, Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston. Not a club event but members can arrange to meet there via the website Forum.

Wednesday 14th March – Club night and AGM. Black Bitch Tavern, West Port, Linlithgow. 8pm. Please come along to participate in the discussions and voting.

The calendar for March and early April is looking fairly empty at the moment so if you have an idea for a run please contact John Moss at events@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

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

Steve MacKinnon
secretary@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

Editorial

Well, this is it, my last **BikeBytes** issue as editor…..maybe I'm not the only person with a sense of relief!

I've enjoyed putting together this magazine and I'd like to say thanks to all the members who have submitted great articles over the past three years and made my job easier.

A number of the committee members have been prolific producers of information, but there have been great contributions from 'ordinary' members as well. Thanks to everyone!

It's a fair commitment to get something worthwhile together every month….even more so, if, like me, it's always left to the last minute….despite best intentions!



Good news! – It's that time of year again to get the bikes out and enjoy the mild, dry weather. I managed to get out for a short run yesterday and , even only after an hour on my faithful Tiger, there was a wide grin across my face when I arrived home. Biking should be available on the NHS!

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Steve MacKinnon
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I had great intentions this year of participating in a lot more club runs…it's what we're here for after all….but I've just found my role changed at work and it looks like I'll be spending even more time away from home – Drat! However, maybe I can make some of those meetings on two wheels rather than four.

I wonder how many of you use your bikes for work as well as pleasure? I started taxing my bike for class 1 business use a couple of years ago and I've used it a few times to get to customer meetings. It's raised a few eyebrows, turning up in bike gear, but it's amazing how many other motorcyclists you find that you've been dealing with for some time. The presence of a bike helmet on the table does break down barriers a bit.

Who are motorcyclists anyway?....more later!

Great news! My favourite motorcycling magazine is back, albeit as an online read. Still seems to be the same great standard of writing though, with some fascinating global adventure tales, great photos and no, over-the-top, sport-bike testing.

Give The Riders Digest a look here and I doubt you'll be disappointed……it's free! (www.theridersdigest.co.uk/Home.html)

Remember the Scottish Motorcycle Show at Ingliston this weekend (10th & 11th). I'll probably be there on the Saturday, minus my cheque-book according to SWMBO!

So, I hope you enjoy this issue….there's a couple of great articles from Gavin Paton and George Kay…and I hope to see all of you at the AGM on the 14th

Ken Glendinning
bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

Bridge Challenge

The Challenge is up and running, with four visits recorded up to 27 February, to three different bridges.

Four pictures are entered for the Best Bridge photograph competition already.

I've organised a half day run on 4th March to bridge A – Belhaven in Dunbar. See the website Calendar for details and a Google route. I've included a tea break at East Fortune air museum, and intend to continue the theme of bridge and planes with a visit to the Dumfries aircraft museum tied into a visit to the Devorgilla bridge in the town. It will be after Easter because the museum doesn't open until then.

So, get going and join in.

Steve Middleton

Buying Motorbikes



Ken asked for our motorcycle buying experiences in last months **Bikebytes**, in particularly how to ensure that we stay clear of bike crime.

Perhaps unlike most of our members and with the exception of Hamilton Motorcycle Service where I have went occasionally for spare parts I have never set foot in a motorcycle dealership. All my bikes have been auction purchases

When I first started out on bikes in the early 80s I studied at Jordanhill College which was 10 minutes walk to Strathclyde motorcycle auctions. My first three bikes, a Honda H 100 a Yamaha XS 250 and a Kawasaki GT 380 were all bought at auction on or around February – March, ran for 6 months and either sold privately for a small profit or sold through the auction for an insignificant loss. (The GT 380 was bought for £100 and sold 6 months later for £85 plus fees)

For some people buying at auction may no be for them because of worries about mechanical condition. Each of the bikes I had was bought as seen with no Mechanical warranty. What was guaranteed by the auction company was the validity of ownership.

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Well I think they had signs up to say something to that effect.

Fast forward 20+ years and when I was ready to return to bikes E-bay had arrived. I had spent several months researching various options but, My first bike from the site a KLE 500 was an impulse buy. I had logged on and found the bike 30 minutes before the auction was due to finish. I put in what I thought was a low-ish bid and 26 minutes later had bought a bike. I did spend a few days kicking myself for my impulsiveness and I certainly wouldn't recommend buying unseen. This time I was lucky and had bought a good wee bike, put about 4000 miles on it over the 2 years that I owned it, and sold it for the same price that I had paid for it.

When I came to replace the KLE I had intended to do things differently and at least look over a potential replacement before making an offer. Unfortunately the bike I took a notion for was down in Newcastle which made a viewing a bit difficult. I had a bit more time with this e-bay auction and made contact with the seller and asked for a landline contact number. George responded quite quickly and supplied a phone number. I had drawn up a list of about 20 questions and as well as discussing them over the phone with George I also E-mailed the questions to him through E-bay, in doing that they become part of the conditions of sale. That first phone call lasted more than 30 minutes and as well as finding out a bit more about the bike

I came to a quick conclusion that the bloke I was dealing with was someone you could trust enough to buy a bike from. I made one more call with several more questions and requests regarding possible collection made a low offer to end the auction early and only then submitted a bid. I then went away for the weekend and when I returned home on the Sunday I had bought a 900s diversion.

So, on the 3rd march two years ago I arranged a lift down to Newcastle fully prepared to walk away from the deal if anything was suspect and returned with what has turned out to be a comfortable reliable bike that does what needs to be done.

p.s. - I have now set foot in a motorcycle showroom. I stopped of at Victor Devine's in Glasgow the other day when I happened to be passing and spent a happy half hour pointing at the shiny bikes and saying "want that one" Jim the salesman is going to invite me back to test the new NC700X when they put a demonstrator on.

Gavin Paton



The domino effect

This week I decided to do my callipers.

I got everything ready around 0830 one morning - Tools / rubber grease / copper grease / basin for bits / Dot 4 / a syringe / paper towels / lamp / protective gloves etc.. etc..

Got front calliper off and pads out no bother and then delicately took the calliper off of bracket and removed pads - Did not remove pots as would have to bleed system.

Cleaned calliper and bracket with Muc-Off brake cleaner and then cleaned pots and pads which are OK then it was only a matter of reversing the procedure after greasing boots / pins / back of pads and sliders thread lock onto calliper bolts and voila all done.

After torquing everything up I then went to top up RHS brake reservoir. - It was a bit dirty in there so I syringed out about 3/4 of fluid and put it into a bowl - Quite dirty and cloudy so I filled up reservoir and repeated procedure then topped it up and sealed it off.

Time for the rear calliper which I was not looking fwd to.

Had to loosen off silencer to get to calliper bolts - Still could not get ratchet and socket into bolts and so just had to use open ended spanners to get bolts loose and to loosen slider pin.

Got two exhaust bolts out no problem than the third (Bottom right) - This one seemed very tight and I could hardly get it out which I was suspicious of.

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Anyway I managed to get calliper off no problems and then dismantle it from bracket / sliders and removed pads.

Pads OK but one on inside of disk is well more worn than the other and so I will replace them later in the year.

Same lubrication process as front and once again all back in place and reservoir topped up.

I could not torque calliper bolts as no access to them unless remove complete one piece exhaust system but I estimated torque by feeling spanner on front ones which have same settings.

Then I came to securing silencer back on - The bolts were only loose which had given me a few centimetres extra space to access calliper bolt heads and so I decided to remove all three exhaust bolts and copper grease them.

Two came off easily but the bottom right one was still stiff and then it got stiffer and stiffer as I undid it to remove it.

I suspected it had a crossed thread.

Then it stuck - Would not go in or out so I just had to force it out and strip the threads but which ones not sure at time i.e. the bolt / the swinging arm hole or both !!!!.

Bolt came out and it was a mess and rounded off at end.

I think this happened when whoever repaired puncture as everything has to come off to get rear wheel off and so some one has forced bolt in on a crossed thread and then said nothing.

There is also another semi stripped bolt on the carrier that was probably stripped by whoever last removed rear carrier when rear body work was removed to do the valves.

Any way back to bolt in question.

I just could not get it back in and had visions of finding somewhere that would get a new thread run on the frame.

I was determined to try to fix it and so I hacksaw'd the rounded, smooth end of damaged bolt back to good thread and then filed the newly formed end of bolt down to taper it a little and then clear the start thread end so it would catch - Hoping that the inside of the hole was not too badly damaged.

Then I copper greased the bolt and started to thread it in - not quite catching so I pushed onto bolt when turning it and it caught and as I kept pressure up it wound home and tightened up all the way in - Success and relief.

I torqued off the other two bolts to 49 NM but only did the other one to 40 NM.

I ordered up a new bolt but will not replace old one until absolutely necessary i.e new tyre and the like.

So what started out as an hour or so job turned into a more frustrating and time consuming one which took another couple of hours by the time I had figured out what best to do and then completed the repair.

Once again I found that to ensure something is done right, when possible, do it yourself.

Next job will be to replace brake fluid which I am not looking forward to as I have not done this before so any tips would be appreciated.

George Kay

RST Paragon III Jacket

I've been considering getting a new jacket for a while, wanting a bit more conspicuity than that offered by my black Hein Gericke GoreTex item. It's got some reflectives but not much and no fluorescent stuff.

RiDE magazine did a set of tests at the tail end of 2011 and this in its version II came top in the reasonably priced section, beating many of the top priced ones.

I checked it out before Christmas and got the size right and a good price from David at Phoenix Honda in Grangemouth. The version III had just come in featuring some improvements in design and particularly the venting. David spoke highly of the item, with the head salesman there using the suit.

I'm a pernickety bugger and made sure the jacket fitted me properly on a bike, and my gloves were compatible with the sleeve ends both under and over. David could get me a spare zip piece to make a joint to my HG textile trousers (he of course tried to sell me a matching pair by RST, but I resisted), so I made Arnie's promise: "I'll be back".

Over the holiday I blagged a zip piece to match the trousers from HG in Edinburgh (if you don't know, their branches keep a box of spare zip pieces – ask nicely if you need one to fit a HG garment).

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Clutching my Christmas gift money I went back to David and swapped it for the jacket, raced home and got the sewing machine out. I aligned the two zips and sewed them together, put the jacket and trousers on, linked the zips – Bingo! It worked perfectly.

I checked out the jacket's fit and operation (two front zips, Velcro neck, adjustable belt & sleeves, napoleon pocket etc.) on a couple of dog walks and came back warm and dry.

I've also done two Bridge Challenge runs in damp conditions and can report excellent comfort and warmth, rain- and wind-proof. The zip slider handles are very glove-friendly.

Steve's a happy bunny. Go see the jacket on the RST website. Go see David and mention me and the SMC if you are interested yourself. (http://www.rst-moto.com/index.php/products-details/moto_rst_paragon_iii_textile_jacket_1203/)

Steve Middleton



Motorcyclists or Bikers – Who are we?

I'm sure that I've mentioned before about how broad a church biking seems to be. The most obvious example of this is working on the gate at Kelso over the years. You get all sorts on all sorts of bikes…Cruisers, Choppers, Trailies, Tourers, Sport-Bikes…..you name it! But, we're all the same…aren't we?



What got me thinking about this again was watching the Richard Dimbleby Lecture the other day on BBC1, given by Sir Paul Nurse, the leading geneticist and noble laureate on science and it's place in world culture….well worth a watch and it's here for a couple more days: - (http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01cx7x0)

It was announced in his introduction that he'd bought a motorcycle with part of his Nobel prize winnings….and this was met with some laughter. Now, in any other country, this would have been completely unremarkable, but, in the UK, we still seem to find it peculiar that an eminent scientist would like to ride a motorcycle (It's a 500cc Kawasaki, if you're interested!)

There's a section of public opinion in this country that seems to think that motorcyclists or 'bikers' are apart from society (maybe the guy in the cartoon above quite likes that idea!), which probably dates back to the 60's and the Mods and Rockers battles at English seaside resorts.

I mentioned earlier that I've been amazed how many other motorcyclists I've found when riding my bike to meetings, or even when bringing the subject up in 'polite' company. Do we tend to keep quiet about our motorcycling 'habit' normally and what do we describe ourselves as…..I tend to use motorcyclist or 'I ride a motorcycle'…it's not snobbery, I think that we all shrink from using the word 'biker' deliberately.

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I still often hear of people being turned away from B&Bs and hotels when turning up on a bike….which is something that you'd never encounter on the continent…or in the US I think.

On my German trip a few years ago, I remember turning up as the only motorcyclist at a small Bed and Breakfast in the Black Forest after a VERY wet run down from the Mosel valley. I was absolutely drenched and dripped water all the way up the stairs. The owner didn't bat an eyelid.

I also noticed that car divers in Europe are much more courteous to bikes and always move over to let you pass.

There seems to be a bit of an assumption in this country that if you're a biker, then you're more likely to be living near the edge of the law. Which is strange, considering the real cross-section of the biking/motorcycling community these days.

What do we do to address this, I don't know. We do a lot of charity work as bikers…for hospitals, children or any number of charities. Maybe it'll just take a generation or two for the last vestiges of negativity to die out?

It's good being part of a gang though!

Ken Glendinning

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

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

bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

The next editor will be very grateful!

FOR SALE

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

BikeBytes Crossword

The answers to last month's BikeBytes 'Bridges' crossword are on the final page of this edition….did you manage to get them all?



A Triumph SnowPlough!....Would have been useful last winter

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Motorcycle & Side'car'!



A real HOG!



B&Q Motorcycle?



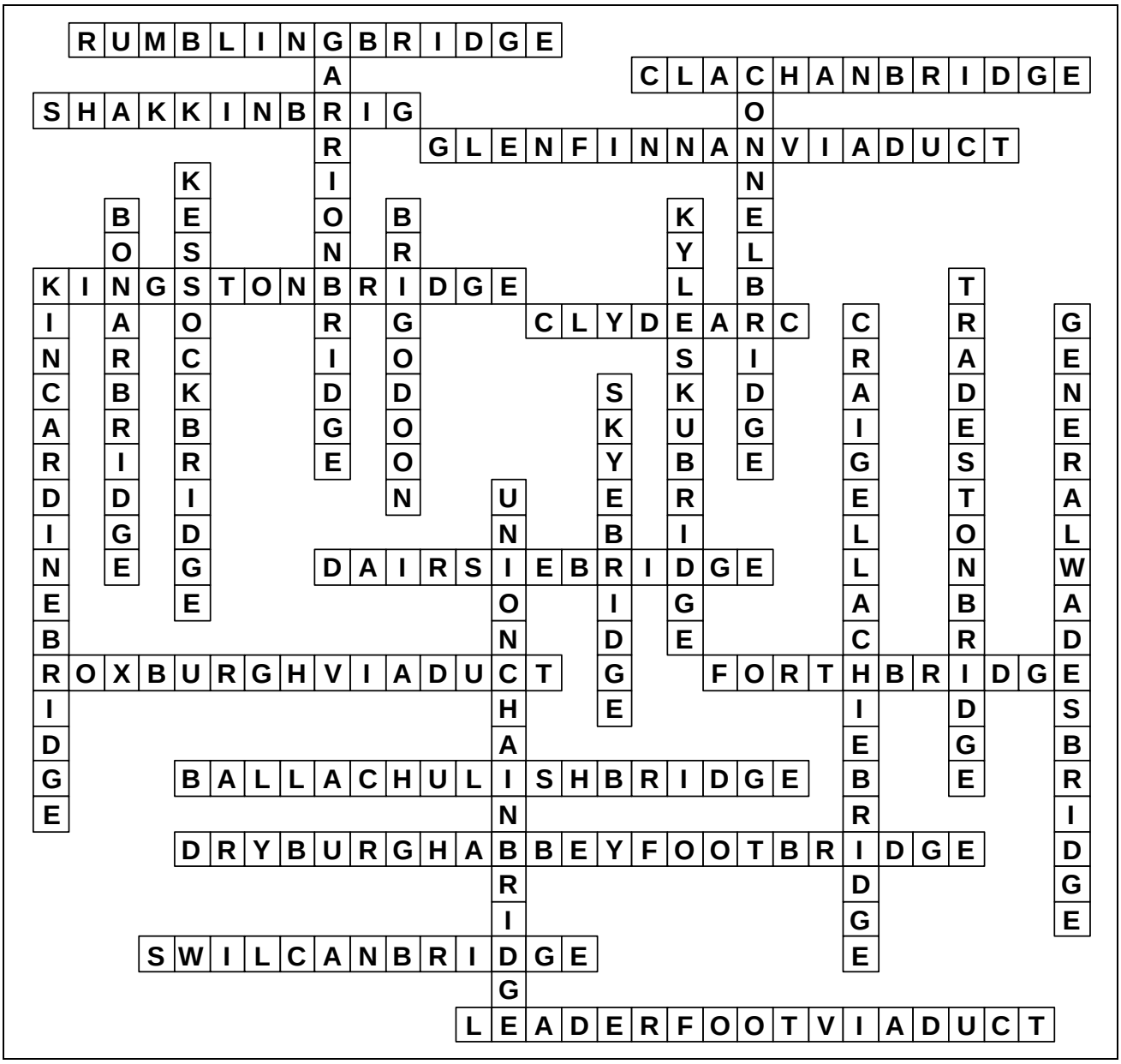
Bet that tyre was expensive!



All American motorcycle!

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Answers to BikeBytes February 'Bridges' Crossword



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