September 2008

BikeBytes

The Monthly Magazine Of The Scottish Motorcycle Club

WELCOME

As I write this a couple of weeks in advance of the **BikeBytes** submissions deadline, we have not signed up any new members since the last issue but there have been a number of enquiries.

We've had some very varied weather conditions on recent runs. Generally good on **Steve Middleton's** excellent Braemar Run, wet on **David Jerome's** Chip Shop Run to Anstruther and bright sunshine plus heavy downpours on **Ken Eddie's** Arbroath Run. Just your average Scottish summer, really.

Les Mackie pointed out recently that there are still some members who do not have access to the internet and rely on **BikeBytes** for news, so:

September Events

Thursday 4th: Chip Shop Run – Details to be announced. Meet West Port Hotel car park 18:45.

Sunday 7th: David Jerome's Run to Arran. Meet at Ardrossan Ferry Terminal at 09:15 from 09:45 sailing.

Saturday 20th: David Jerome will lead a camping weekend to Applecross. Meet Stirling Services at 11am – ride to Applecross – pitch up at the campsite there – short walk to the Applecross Inn for shelter, food and beer. Sunday – a leisurely run back home.

Saturday 27th September: Borders Weekend, staying Saturday night at the Clonyard House Hotel, Colvend. Pre-booking essential – please contact Janet Moss. Meet Tontine Hotel, Peebles 09:15 (To be confirmed).

If you do have access to the web site, please check for up to date information. If not, please contact a committee member.

Steve MacKinnon

THE AGONY COLUMN

Dear BB, I badly need your advice. For some time now I've suspected my wife of cheating on me. She has seemed very distant for ages and we row constantly. Sometimes, when the phone rings and I answer it, there is only silence from the far end and then the caller hangs up. She has far more 'nights out with the girls' than she used to and 'working late at the office' has become a common occurrence. When she arrives home on these occasions she always gets dropped off at the house by her boss. She says he is just being kind and that I'm being paranoid. Anyway, last night she worked late again so I decided to discover once and for all if she was being unfaithful. I went outside and hid behind my motorcycle which I park at the side of our house. From there I'd be able to hear anything they said. Concealed from the road, I watched for the arrival of her boss's car. Sure enough, around 10pm they arrived and parked up. In the illumination form the street light I could see my wife lean towards the driver. At that moment I happened to glance down and saw that a small pool of oil had formed beneath the shaft drive of my BMW GS1200 Adventure. Do you think this is something I could fix myself or should I book it into the workshop?

Concerned of Scotland

THE BEST ROAD TEST.

In 1965/66 the journalist Hunter S. Thompson spent a year with the Hells Angels Oakland Chapter, absorbing the culture and collecting material for his book 'Hells Angels: A Strange and Terrible Saga'. Unfortunately for him, the association ended violently when the Angels took offence at the fact that he intended to make money from hanging out with them and promptly beat him up.

Thompson's main claim to fame and notoriety was due to his book 'Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas, published in 1972, wherein he described a few lost days spent there with his attorney. They were in Las Vegas ostensibly to cover a desert motorcycle race, the 'Mint 400' but soon got side tracked into consuming vast quantities of alcohol and every type of recreational pharmaceutical imaginable, in addition to a few unimaginable ones. (Just what did they do with a *pint* of ether)?

"I hate to advocate drugs, alcohol, violence or insanity to anyone," he once said, "but they've always worked for me."*

In 1995 the editor of the American motorcycle magazine 'Cycle World' commissioned the now legendary Thompson to write a road test.

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Cycle World's intention was for HST to assess and describe a ride on a Harley Davidson Road King. Thompson wasn't interested in testing the Harley and instead demanded a Ducati sports bike. The top Ducati at the time was the iconic 916 but Ducati North America was well aware of Thompson's manic appetites and reasonably judged that their valuable superbike and its rider would probably end up trashed on a freeway. Rather than lending him a 916, they let him test ride a 900cc Super Sport, itself no mean machine.

The resulting article, written by a guy who had a keen interest in bikes but was not a regular motorcycle journalist is a truly original, perceptive and very funny road test. I have not reproduced the article as I assume it is covered by copyright. Also here, as in most of his writing, Hunter S was not averse to illustrating a point with some colourful language. Thompson called his story 'Song of the Sausage Creature' (which is not as rude as it sounds) and it can easily be found by entering the title in any search engine.

**On 20th February 2005 Hunter S Thompson committed suicide.*

Steve MacKinnon

BRAEMAR AND BRECHIN RUN, 2ND AUGUST 2008.

Eight motorcycles and riders gathered at Kinross Services slightly earlier than usual for a 9.30a.m departure on a bleakish Saturday morning. Once Steve Middleton, leading this run, had ensured everyone knew or had a copy of the route sheet, we set off in good spirits in a northerly direction up the M9 .Our route took us through the fruit growing Perthshire countryside to Blairgowrie and from there up the A93 to the Spittal of Glenshee. We stopped there in a Hotel of the same name for a well needed break and coffee, as the day had so far remained grey with the onset of rain. Tommy Taylor from Aberdeen was there waiting for us on a comfortable looking Honda CB1000.Whilst having coffee in this very old Hotel (boasting of 200 odd fires in its 1000 year history) we were also joined by Ruby Rennie on her lovely new Suzuki GSX 650F had arrived at Kinross 7 or 8 minutes late, but to her credit followed us up to the Spittal to join the run.

Wet weather gear on, we carried on over the Spittal and down to Braemar. I followed Una on her new Ducati monster for this stretch. What a lovely bike and wonderful noise from the V twin engine. Shortly after Braemar castle, we pulled in for petrol. The weather was brightening up, the rain diminished and Steve led us at a brisk pace through Royal Deeside. This is a lovely stretch of the A93 which is well maintained with sweeping bends. Fantastic. We passed through Ballater, and on through pleasant Aberdeenshire countryside before turning south on to the Cairn o' Mount road. What a road, taking us up over a mountain affording terrific views of Angus and the seas, and then down to picturesque Edzel and Fettercairn, before taking us to the Northern Hotel in Brechin for a late lunch. The Hotel did us proud. They were expecting us, welcomed us and served us up decent sized portions.

Re-fuelled and with the sun now out we headed south through Dundee, crossed the Tay road bridge and followed a scenic country road running parallel to the Tay through Newburgh. I found myself at the back for this stretch in front of David Jerome who was tail end charlie on his new Aprilia Caponord ,which looked even comfier (particularly for a pillion) than Tommy`s Honda. I stupidly commented on this to David whilst waiting at a junction and we were suddenly well behind! We returned to Kinross via Glen Farg, and I observed Janet and John Moss in front enjoying the sweeping bends. We returned to our starting point at Kinross Services by about 4.50pm,most of us with about 200 miles.

An excellent day was had by all. Thank you to Steve Middleton for planning, organising and leading this run, and to David for bringing up the rear. Steve used the drop off system, which as a newcomer to I felt worked really well, adding to the variety of the run, and keeping us all together as a group.

Hamish Davidson

7TH SEPTEMBER TRIP TO ARRAN

The summary of the trip:

Meet at Ardrossan CalMac ferry Terminal for 9:15, for the 9:45 sailing, if you want to meet up for the journey to Ardrossan let me know.

Tour round Arran with nice tourist stops, great views and a hearty lunch.

Ferry from Lochranza to Cloanaig on Kintyre at about 14:30 or 15:45 depending on time spent on Arran.From Cloanaig it as about 145 miles to Livingston, so allow on 4 hours to get home. The route home will be via Loch Fyne, Inverary and Loch Lomond.

The CalMac hopscotch ticket is £ 23.75 for the bike and £9.05 for the rider. This is cheaper than paying for 2 separate tickets. It would be preferable to book tickets on-line or via the telephone number 0800 066 5000 However, if you think the trip is too long then I can modify it to be Arran only, but you have to let me know. In total as a guide from Livingston the total trip is about 260 miles. If you would like to go e-mail at david.jerome@tesco.net so I have an idea of numbers.

This will be a fantastic trip and I thoroughly roughly enjoyed doing the recce.

David Jerome

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