

## Welcome

Welcome to the May edition of BikeBytes and welcome back to **Norrie Millar** who, having had a gap year in 2010, is now the owner of a Honda CBF600S and rejoined the club at the AGM last month. Nice to see you on two wheels again, Norrie.

Talking of membership, thank you to all those members who have already paid their 2011/2012 subscriptions. If you haven't already done so, be sure to take advantage of our early payer discount. Membership renewal costs just £12, a saving of £3, if you pay by the end of April. Please print off the renewal form which is included with this edition of BikeBytes.

Coming up in the next few weeks:

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> April** – Ken Eddie's Chip Shop run to Biggar. Meet at West Port, Linlithgow at 6.45pm.

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April** – Ken Eddie's run to Supermoto Round 2 at Crail. Details TBA

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April** – Club night. 8pm in the Black Bitch Tavern, Westport, Linlithgow EH49 7AZ.

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April** – Ken Eddie's Cairn O' Mount run. Meet at Broxden Services, Perth at 9.45am.

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April** – Janet & John's Distillery Challenge run, visiting Edradour, Dalwhinnie and Ben Nevis distilleries. Meet at Dobbies, Stirling at 9.15am.

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May** – Chip Shop run. Details TBA.

Please keep up to date by checking out the website:  
[www.scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk](http://www.scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk)

**Steve MacKinnon**

[secretary@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk](mailto:secretary@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk)

## Chairman's Bit



Well, following on from the AGM during March, that's you stuck with me for another year!! However, I did intimate at the meeting that this will be my third and final year in the "chair", which gives ample notice for a successor to come forward. While I'll be happy to continue on the committee in some role, it will be good for the club to have a new rudder to steer us in new directions every couple or three years methinks. All we need for next year then is for someone to stand up to the plate. Don't be shy!!

We had a nice start to March, with the club awards dinner at the Mercat Bar in Edinburgh. There was a good turnout with 21 attending, and seven castle challenge completion certificates were awarded, five awards for various achievements and the Merit shield, which went to Susie Dundas. This will now be an annual event, and the awards up for grabs for this season will be publicised soon.

The first run of the season followed the day after the awards night, and was very well attended with 15 participants on 13 bikes. March is a bit of a hit or miss month in terms of the quality of the ride, and after the winter we've had there was still a lot of residual grit, gravel and general muck on the roads to deal with, not to mention the potholes. The same applied on last week-end's run, which was made worse on one of the roads opted for, by the fact that some wind turbines had been getting "delivered" to their site and the fourteen wheelers had left oodles of mud on the road, which were conveniently rained on just prior to our arrival. No mishaps, but it did make progress interesting.

On the domestic front, March has seen the return to the road of Sarah's 125, after its flyaway exhaust valve shutdown last October. Having had "issues" in getting the various parts required to do the necessary repairs, and after getting it rebuilt, I was having a bit of problem in getting it to start and sustain itself.

Contact the Scottish Motorcycle Club via the Membership Secretary:

Steve MacKinnon

Tel: 01786 475948 07802 200964 E-mail: [Stephen.mackinnon@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:Stephen.mackinnon@tiscali.co.uk)

Even before the valve let go, it never was the best at starting and keeping a decent tick over. However, in troubleshooting this, I started to think less of the remote possibility of getting the valve / ignition timing wrong or fuelling problems, and started to look at the quality of spark. Right enough, a multimeter across the secondary windings of the ignition coil confirmed all was not well, and one new ignition coil later, we now have a bike that starts first time, every time, and will chunter away at tick over for ever. Having, in my time, pulled helicopters apart and rebuilt them to see them fly away, I was hanged if a sodding Chinese built Suzuki was going to beat me!

We also have a new arrival in the Eddie **Bike** garage. A shiny new Peugeot V-Clic 4-stroke 50cc moped which is Alexandra's first powered two wheeler, having turned 16 and completed her CBT during the month. Now, I had intended to rent a van or a trailer to pick it up for her from the dealer in Glasgow, but alas, there was non availability of either when I needed it. No worries, I thought, it comes complete with an engine so I'll just ride it home.....Did you know, it takes 1 hour 35 mins to get from Finnieston Street in Glasgow to Dunblane on a moped. I suppose it would be just as quick (??) with a tractor!! Which, incidentally, you can also drive when you are 16.

There are already some photos appearing on the distillery challenge gallery, indicating that some of you are already active on that particular activity. Just a note that, while we will have an award for an outright winner, as we did for the castle challenge, it is not "first past the post" who wins. In other words, you may finish the challenge first, but not necessarily get the award. Organiser, Mr Middleton, has a cunning formula, based on postcodes, and google maps to determine that, so, chill folks. Take your time and enjoy. Most of all, just participate, and visit as many of them as you can manage. Don't forget, twelve from the sixteen completes the challenge. You can do all sixteen if you want, but no extra brownie points for doing so. Personally, I probably will try to do all sixteen, 'cos I like whiskey, but just declare the twelve furthest from my gaff (there's a clue.....). Oh, and don't forget my little word of caution from last month....." we are not expecting you to sample the wares of each one while riding your bikes.....!"

At this point, next outing will be a chip shop run on the 7<sup>th</sup> April, getting on the road 7pm sharp from West port car park Linlithgow. No one seemed to want to pick up the baton, so I decided to pick it up, and we will be going to Townhead Cafe in Biggar. We need to get there for eightish, as they close at nine, and apparently the proprietor is a bit grumpy when you pitch up close to closing.....so it says on t'internet.

I will, once again, unfortunately miss the next Club night due to work commitments that will see me in China, but I hope to see you all soon after on runs.

**Ken Eddie**

## Editorial

It's a short editorial this month, you'll all be glad to hear!

It's great to be 'back in the saddle', so to speak and I've had some great runs recently, despite the changeable weather.

BMF Scotland had it's annual regional meeting at the Spittal of Glenshee hotel last weekend and we had a great time. The hotel was extremely reasonable and the food, drink and company were very convivial. Not that I have any connection with the hotel at all, but it's a great location and the new owners are VERY bike friendly.

It was good to see so many members at the club AGM last month and thanks for all your comments on the newsletter. I'll try to include as many run reports as I can from the web site, but, remember, it's your newsletter and the content comes from you!

Also, just a reminder, this is my last year as **BikeBytes** editor. I'm struggling to find the time these days and it always seems to be a last minute rush. So, that's nearly a year's warning for someone to get themselves 'psyched-up' to be next year's editor!

Anyway, safe and enjoyable riding!

**Ken Glendinning**

## Steve Middleton Says "Thanks"!

At the AGM I withdrew from my committee post, with only the minutes to write as a final act. At the end of distributing the annual Club awards chairperson Ken suddenly turned to me and thanked me for my contributions to running the Club over the years, and presented me with a gift voucher on behalf of the members.

My flabber was truly gasted, and I managed to stammer some thanks to the meeting.

I now say "Thank You" to all the members for this generous gift, which will be traded against a new visor for the Shoei.

I've enjoyed helping the Club run and meeting members, and look forward to many years riding with you yet.

Again, thank you. Ride safe.

**Steve Middleton**

## The cost of having fun

Recently, on a motorcycle forum, someone asked the question, 'Does anyone consider what the cost of a Sunday run will be this year?'

So, I thought I'd check it out.

In March 2010, a 200 mile club run would have cost me £16.56, purely for fuel. (Unleaded was 115.9p/litre in Stirling and the Versys returns a fairly reasonable average of 14 miles per litre).

Today, at 131.9p, the same 200 miler would cost £18.84. At a dreaded 150p/litre we're talking £21.43.

Of course, in 200 miles there will be at least one coffee stop plus a lunch break so a 200 mile day out would probably cost me around £35. This only takes into account fuel for bike and self, ignoring the cost of the bike, tax, insurance servicing etc.

However, there are always economies to be made to fund the biking budget. Does the cat need to be fed every day?

Is a long club run an expensive day out? Well, no I don't really think it is compared to some other leisure pursuits. Just a quick search on the internet suggests a round of golf, as a visitor, could cost you anywhere between £20 (Bridge of Allan) and £100 (Gullane). I didn't even bother to check out St. Andrews!

Angling is allegedly popular and we have a local 'fishery' (definition: a tiny puddle of water surrounded by some of the most miserable people you're ever likely to meet) where you will be charged £25 for the pleasure of sitting almost stationary for eight hours. If you fancy a more 'natural' fishing trip, taking a boat out on the Lake of Menteith on a Sunday, will leave your wallet £54 lighter.

Of course, there are far less expensive weekend pastimes, such as walking and cycling which, if you can set out from home, are considerably cheaper and almost certainly a lot better for you than motorcycling.

When all is said and done, I don't believe the cost of biking has yet become prohibitive and hopefully it won't for some time, especially as we can pick and choose between the runs we attend. If the cost of fuel (and therefore the value of a nice scene) rises

unchecked, there is always the option of trending towards smaller and more economical bikes.

Remember Ken Russell's trip to Applecross on his 125? While that may be a step too far for most, I remember, in the '80s, having a great time on an 80mpg, 90+mph, single cylinder Honda CB250RS. Though not very suitable for transcontinental touring, something similar, ridden solo would probably be fine for a club run.

The bottom line, for me at least, is that the return I get from riding a bike, participating in club events and enjoying the social side of motorcycling far outweighs the pounds and pence I spend on it, and I hope this stays true for a long time to come.

**Steve MacKinnon**

"Here is an article from waaaay back - the first SMC Treasure Hunt - and my "appreciation" published in October 2000 - before I became editor in the next year.

An aside is that the CBX750 is still going strong and currently my active bike until I get the VFR out of SORN later today, and Laura is still an active pillion on her husband's bike.

(Son Martin is not mentioned, but he has just ridden up the West coast of USA (LA to SanFran and back) on a hired FZ1.)"

## Treasure Hunt - an appreciation

If you missed this one you should be kicking yourself; we had a great day in great company and with terrific extras over and above the biking.

My daughter Laura has been a frequent if short-distance pillion on the CBX and its Z550 predecessor, and has declared it as the best way she knows of toning up the stomach muscles. I thought some additional brain-power would be of use for the treasure hunt and she was keen to come along, so the catering was checked for veggie compatibility and promises made.

Preparation included some air in the back shock and tyre, upping the rear damper setting and fitting the topbox - the last has a backpad and Laura felt more secure against being slid off the back! (aren't kids trusting!)

I bought an intercom (not much point in an extra brain if it can't communicate) - see the attached review - and spent Saturday night fitting out the helmets.

The usual last minute rush saw us sorting out the last minute details over the i/com on the way to Livingston for the rendezvous (we had a holiday in France this year!).

Ronnie explained the bridge-counting exercise and off we all went in convoy over some familiar roads with Laura and I agreeing the count while trying not to point and give the game away to others, and deciding not to include some "maybe"s. Good job too since we were two over anyway on ones we were sure of! (There was this tiny burn in Winchburgh before the canal .....)

The coffee stop at base camp/caravan in Lochore looked more like a lunch, but t'was a good thing given the later events. The catering crew was in two parts - the humans giving it out and the dogs cleaning up the scraps.

While Ronnie collected keys to decide the starting order - the boxful must have been worth a fair number of tens of thousands of pounds, aren't we a trusting lot! - we put up the awning against the drizzle and donned waterproofs and inspected the clues, map and list of bits to collect. The Middletons were last off, but even so only had the waypoints identified but little idea of how to answer the questions. The first problem was which way to turn out of the country park - basic instincts told me north was left so left it was and it worked. Naively I expected to navigate by roads signs but the places I remembered or Laura suggested didn't match what the sign makers had decided to offer - sometimes they didn't even bother to put up a sign! Local knowledge was clearly of benefit, so being off base and last to start I thought there was little chance of seeing anyone else all day!

The intercom proved its worth on a double tour of Auchtermuchty while we debated the answer and agreed on a convoluted justification for the best answer we could find (US presidents have played golf at the Forest Hills course, haven't they - or was that tennis? oops!)

The first sighting of others was in Newburgh - two bikes leaving as we entered. Then later - too much later, we were not sure what we were looking for - as we left we found three bikes, but sadly one was Craig's after his equine interface. He had it under control and so we continued.

I had thought there would be no gravel today but lo and behold, Brunton brought the narrowest village main street I have seen in a long while and the central friction-free frightener. How the bus gets through there I don't know - the hedges get clipped for free!

What's this - a group of SMC bikes, some pointing the wrong way? The graveyard was before its village, and their presence saved us a U turn, and gave the opportunity to see that we were not lagging as I had feared. Soon after this we crossed standing water

and traffic obliged us to forego the crown of the road and oops, was that aquaplaning I felt - probably not but I was glad I'd prepared a straight course and steady speed.

A back road past a caravan site we have used in the past on the way into St Andrews did not give any advantage but released us from the tin box traffic and brought back happy memories. That was about the only bit of useful local knowledge we could summon up all day! On the way out of the town Laura hopped a fence and killed three collection items in one go - corn can be ground up for flour, used for eating and to make an alcoholic drink.

By now we were behind the others we had seen, over the time Ronnie had promised to start the barbeque and well past when I had promised my stomach something to play with. A move-on was got on the way to Crail and Laura practised her hanging on technique accompanied by the occasional "oof" over the i/com while I enjoyed the chance of some overtakes.

Eagle-eyed Laura spotted a golf ball and commanded a stop - it turned out to be a holey practice type but acceptable to Katharine - but we missed the carpark fee sign and visited the coastguard station searching for it - down another friction free frightener! We hoped the No Parking signs would have a penalty to quote as the parking fee, but none was stated, so we cobbled together an answer and set off again.

The Civic Trust award sign was easily spotted at long distance - one of the benefits of living in Linlithgow where there are several - but our enthusiasm was waning and our hungers were doing the opposite. We stopped to discuss tactics and more importantly ease our aching rears. A fairly straight route on mainish roads was possible from the East side of Leven, abandoning the last three clues, so we set off - to find the road signs didn't mention any of the four placenames we had carefully memorised for the route! Basic homing instincts and avoidance of places we knew we did not want eventually gave favourable readings on the signs and got us back to base.

Some feverish activity and attempts to explain our logic made some of the answers worth half marks and raised some laughs. I ate the grass that Lara wanted for blowing over to make "music", forgetting the corn was to be the edible food! We gave back the sugar - honest - after claiming it as an ingredient for alcohol - again forgetting the corn. Such is the negative effect of hunger on a Middleton.

The weather had cleared, so waterproofs were doffed and down to the real business - only two hours late! The food was GOOD, and it kept coming. A third dog had appeared but all three were in the car - perhaps they had decided that they should not distract us from the nosh and politely withdrew from our



company. (NOT - we have a dog so I know the above is as likely as a chocolate teapot.)

We were all pleased to see Craig and hear there would not be any major problems with a claim against the horse owner - they will have got their value-for-money out of the third party liability policy this year!

I've written far more than I intended - this was meant to be a straight THANK YOU to the organisers and not much more, but I hope readers will have worked out I enjoyed the event hugely. Having my daughter along for the trip was special in itself and she really enjoyed it, but the work put in and the results produced by Ronnie, Katharine and all the others involved was terrific, in both senses of the word.

So, THANK YOU, and can we do it again next year, pretty please. (applause)

**Steve Middleton & Laura & CBX750F**

Laura adds:

It was the first time I had been on the back of a bike for more than an hour at time, and it hurt. I struggled to sit down at the BBQ and had a miserable time the next day trying not to pull my stomach muscles while laughing.

The treasure hunt was fun and the club members certainly seem to be a bit of a laugh, but I still say there are 25 bridges!

**Steve Middleton**

## Run reports

Remember, there's lot's of reports online and photos in the gallery!

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

26/3/2011 - Half day run

I was not sure, until this morning, whether or not I was going to go on run but as the sun was out and it was fairly warm with no wind to speak of I decided to go for it and headed off at about 1115.

On the way to Perth it seemed to get colder and duller so much so I wish I had put on my winter gear.

Anyway I arrived in Perth a bit too early and went to Morrisons to fill up returning to Broxden at 1245.

There were seven bikes and eight riders including Sarah as pillion on Ken's bike.

We headed off just after 1300, with me as TEC, towards Blairgowrie and it seemed to get colder and damper.

We were scheduled for a pit stop at Aberfeldy but Alex, Fraser and I got separated from the others and when we arrived at a main cross road in Aberfeldy there was no sign of anyone and we had no idea where the pit stop was. We were supposed to be operating a do not let anyone out of sight in your rear mirror system but it did not seem to work just when we needed it to and so there was no one waiting at crossroads for us.

We tried a couple of roads but to no avail and so we headed off towards Kenmore where the three of us went for a coffee and a scone.

There was still no sign of the others by the time we had finished our coffee and after a wait in the car park we headed for Killin where Alex said he was just going to head for home and Fraser said he was going to see a pal in Killin.

I waited at a prominent position in Killin and about five minutes later the rest came along and I resumed TEC position before we headed to Lixtol and then onwards to Dobbies at Stirling where the run ended.

It was really quite cold, dull and the roads up that way were really wet with rain showers and there was a load of crud, grit and mud on most of the roads we travelled.

After we said our goodbyes at Dobbies I headed off towards Livingston and arrived home about 1830, with a total of 187 miles on the clock, and dumped the bike in the garage until tomorrow when it will get a much needed deep clean .

Thanks again to Ken Eddie for organising and leading the run.

**George Kay**



**Sarah looks freezing!**

### Articles for BikeBytes

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

[bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk](mailto:bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk)

### BikeBytes Crossword

OK, here's the solution to the March crossword quiz. Apologies to all the younger members who won't have a clue to what half the TV programmes were!

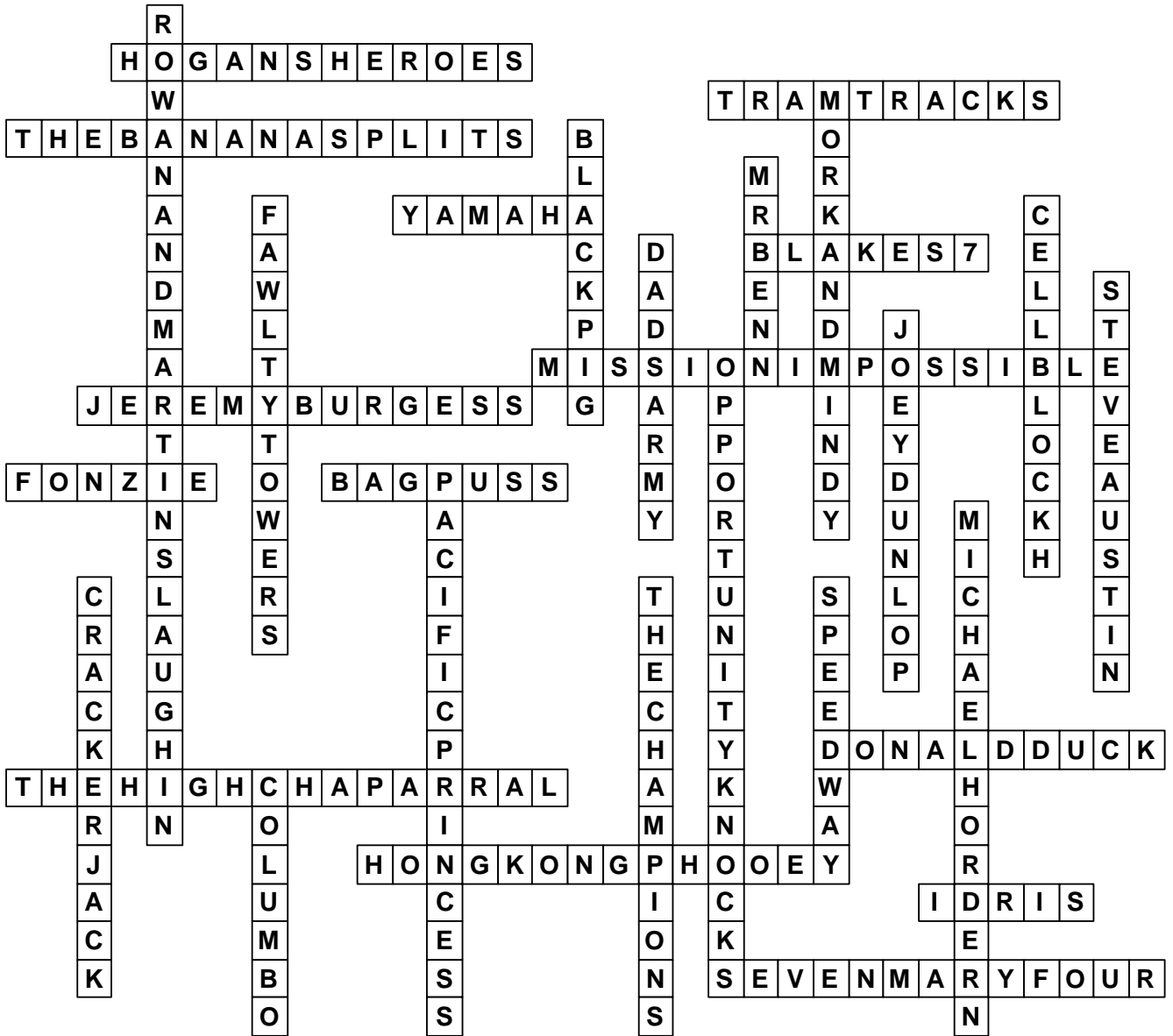
A new quiz in next month's edition.



Well, it's....'Green'!



Difficult to categorise this one!





## SMC Membership Renewal Form

**Current membership fee = £15 for each member**

**Early payer discount fee = £12 if paid before the end of April 2011**

### PLEASE PRINT IN BLOCK CAPITALS

Name					
Signature					
Address					
Town					
Postcode					
Telephone Number				Date	
Mobile Number					
E-mail Address					
Membership Number					
Motorcycle(s) Currently Owned					
Do you use your bike for?		Commuting		Saturday runs	
				Sunday runs	
Are you a member of:	RoSPA	IAM	BMF	MAG	Other Club (please specify)
What length of run appeals most?		<150 miles		150 – 350 miles	
				>350 miles	
Annual mileage			Year of full licence		
Do you have a suggestion for a ride out route or destination?					

**Please make cheques payable to 'Scottish Motorcycle Club' and send to:**

**Steve MacKinnon, 21 Parkdyke, Stirling, FK7 9LR**