JUNE - 2011

BikeBytes

The Monthly Magazine Of The Scottish Motorcycle Club

Welcome

What a great weekend fifteen of us had in Donegal, as guests of **Ken Russell** in his 200+ year old farmhouse. For several of us it was the first time we'd travelled beyond the confines of the UK on motorcycles and this only added to a hugely enjoyable few days away in Northern Ireland.

Allan Hamilton joined the club at the start of **Paul Broughton's** Treasure Hunt last month. Allan lives in Lanark and owns a Yamaha Fazer 600 and a Honda Hornet 600. Welcome to the SMC, Allan, and we hope to see you on many of the runs.

Coming up in the next few weeks:

Wednesday 8th June - Club night. Black Bitch Tavern, West Port, Linlithgow. 8pm. Archive film show.

Saturday 11th June – Ken Eddie's half day run. Meet Strathclyde Country Park at 12.45 for 1pm departure.

Sunday 12th June – John Hill's Rannoch Station run. Meet at Dobbies, Stirling at 9.45am. Approx 180 miles.

Sunday 26th June – John Hill's Distillery Challenge run to Campbeltown (Springbank distillery). This will be a long run of approx 300 miles, so note the early start. Meet at Dobbies, Stirling at 9am for 9.15am departure.

Saturday 2nd July – Janet & John's Kielder Water run. Longish day (190 miles) so note early start. Meet at New Craighall Services, east end of Edinburgh bypass at 9.15am for 9.30am departure.

***Editor's note: I know that it isn't an SMC event, but remember that British Superbikes at Knockhill on the 18th/19th June!!**

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

Steve MacKinnon
secretary@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

Editorial

Hello again, and though it's currently a damp June evening, we've had some great riding days recently and I've even managed to find enough time to get the Tiger out and about. In fact, today, I've spent rather a long time getting rid of around 700 miles worth of grime, dead insects and general road dirt. Have you noticed that, although washing a bike is never as much fun as riding one, once you start, it becomes a 'labour of love'?

Anyway, this month, there's an article from Arthur about a vehicle type that many of us will never really have considered. I've started to notice a few on the road these days and they certainly don't seem to be confined to fields with bales of straw in the back!

Firstly though, a shameless plug for the BMF Kelso Bikefest!!



The BMF Kelso Bikefest this year is on the 9th and 10th of June, with camping available from the 8th. The usual venue (Border Union Showground, Springwood Park, Kelso – In the Beautiful Scottish Borders) will be the destination for around 20'odd thousand bikers and their families and friends over the weekend. With lot's of trade and club stands and exciting arena entertainment, there will be plenty to keep everyone engaged.

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For weekend campers, there's great evening entertainment, with bands; Kick, Alma Fiera, Piledriver and Guns 4 Hire, headlining in the main hall. There will, of course, be the excellent Custom Show, with lot's of beautiful (and some weird!) creations to have a close look at. Don't forget to vote for your favourites in each class!

There will also be an organised run on the Saturday afternoon around some of the best Borders roads.

We're due for some great weather at Kelso this year, so please try to spread the word amongst non-club members. Tickets are available in advance at a reduced price, even more for BMF members (including affiliated) (£10/£7) and, this year, accompanied children (under 16), are free! To order tickets:

http://www.thebmfshow.co.uk/buytickets.html

The SMC will be well represented in the re-organised club-village, so, even if you're not volunteering to come down for the weekend, come down on a run through some of the best biking roads in Scotland and drop in to the stand for coffee and a blether. This year there will some crazy games for the clubs to participate in, so, the more the merrier!

Ken Glendinning

OLD FINE ART'S NEW HONDA

Recently, I had the unexpected and exciting opportunity to test ride a brand new, big, shiny red Honda and this is my test report. Verdict? Fantastic - and I want one!



When Neil, who had only just received his magnificent new beast, suddenly asked if I'd like a shot on it and I quickly said "Yeeaah!" before he could change his mind. So we climbed on board – and I then realised that he was inviting me to take ***control*** of his new machine and trusting me to ***drive*** it, rather than just being a watching pillion passenger as I had thought. Neil started it up and showed me the essential controls. It is nothing like any of my previous Hondas, as the brief description below will reveal.

I engaged first gear and opened the throttle a bit – more revs but no motion. Brakes off? Check. More throttle – more revs – and a leap forward – close throttle – compose self – Neil worried. This is like some off-road bike. Right, ready – throttle – motion – hang onto the handlebars – we're off out of the farmyard where it's kept, across the road - and into a field. OK, continue, this bike can handle! As we go over a grassy knoll, a watching Fiona (jealous or worried maybe) loses sight of us. I change up a gear as Neil was clearly a bit concerned about the rising revs, swing round in a wide ark under Neil's expert guidance. Now we were approaching the gate and I was having to aim to get through it rather than take it with us or scratch the shiny, red paintwork. Success – back across the road and into the farmyard – stop safely and exhilarated. Neil must have been somewhat relieved as was Fiona.

As I said, this is unlike any of my previous Hondas. It has a longitudinally mounted, fuel-injected, liquid-cooled, dry-sump OHV 420cc single-cylinder, four-stroke engine with a crankshaft in-line with the frame. Now get this: it has ***five*** forward gears and one ***reverse*** gear! It doesn't have a clutch lever – you select the gear you want using a left foot pedal – so this particular model is classed as having manual transmission with an automatic clutch.

On the left handlebar, there are the park brake lever and reverse gear selector. On the right handlebar, there are a front-brake lever and a thumb-operated throttle, which I found rather fierce. There's also a back-brake foot pedal on the right side.

This awesome machine has Honda's patented Suretrac torque-sensitive, limited-slip differential system, whereby power is automatically delivered to the wheel that has most traction, resulting in light, positive steering and a tight steering circle.

OK – I have to spill the beans: this astonishing vehicle is called the Fourtrax Rancher ATV and has ***four*** wheels. It has Honda's TraxLok system enabling you to switch between 2WD manoeuvrability and 4WD traction. Honda's unique system gives you the choice at the flick of a switch or push of a lever.

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The suspension is by an independent double-wishbone with 160mm travel at the front and a single shock swingarm with 160mm travel at the rear. Ground clearance is 165mm, dry weight is 256kg and fuel capacity is 14 litres.

I said I wanted one so I've ordered one. Fiona doesn't know yet and you may remember what her reaction the last time I ordered a Honda!

If you'd like to see a video walk-around of an (auto) Rancher there's nice one at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Af3wsR2r_MU

Arthur - Old Fine Art
Ride well, ride safely, have ***fun***!

Scottish Six Days Trial

Last month, I told you about the Pre-65 trial at Kinlochleven and some of the characters and beautiful old trials bikes. That was on the 29th and 30th of April….but it is always followed by the full Scottish Six Days Trial (SSDT), based in Fort William and, this year, it's the 100th anniversary!

Not many people know that the SSDT (and the Pre-65) are organised by the Edinburgh & District Motor Club and that the trial originally started in Edinburgh. You were expected to ride from Edinburgh up to Fort William (with some stages along the way). That was in the days when trials bikes had seats of course….you wouldn't be able to do that on today's machines.



These days, trials bikes are highly specialised and certainly not built for comfort.The main manufactures are Gas-Gas, Montessa (owned by Honda), Ossa, Beta and Serco…..mostly two-stroke and around 300cc. There seems to be a move back to two-stroke in trials engines!

A few of the trials world-champions were in Fort William this year, though, for some strange reason, the SSDT isn't part of the world championship rounds. 'The Scottish' is the TT of the trials world and is probably much mote challenging than most of the world events. Dougie Lampkin is one name that many people will recognise, but James Dabill, Alexz Wigg and Amos Bilbao are riders that are known around the world.
Normally, trials events are organised in one place, with stages, either indoor or outdoor, set up to challenge the rider's skill. The Scottish though, is a little different, as it includes an additional test of reliability over long distances, with riders completing up to 100 miles each day over a combination of rough moorland, rocky tracks and public roads. Up to 30 sections each day for six consecutive days requires strength, expertise and exceptional reliability from both rider and machine.



We had a particular interest in this year's event as one of my brother in law Stuart's friends, Johnathan English, who's a Canadian champion, was competing. It's fair to say that Johnathan hadn't encountered anything like the Scottish before and his undoing was getting lost on the moors and missing two sections on the first day. Unfortunately, this meant that he couldn't get a finishing place at the presentation, but he still got a centenary medal for his troubles.

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Some of the sections, I wouldn't even climb with my hands and feet, never mind ride a motorcycle over…but, 270 riders (it's always way over-subscribed) made a brave attempt at each section….with widely varying degrees of success.



Dougie Lampkin was the favourite for this year's event, and started off very well, leading on the Wednesday. However, despite the excellent weather (sun-tan lotion required in Fort William…weird!) he fell and hurt his ankle on the Thursday and retired on the Friday evening after a couple of trips to the hospital. It really amazed me that, despite the terrifying nature of some of the sections, no-one was badly hurt. It's probably the risk of injury that stops many of the world-championship competitors coming along to the Scottish…like short-circuit motorcycle racing, there's lots of sponsorship money involved these days, so discretion would seem to be the better part of valour as far as the 'big-boys' are concerned.



Anyway, James Dabill won this year's Scottish with a score of thirteen…that's right!...over the six days, approximately 600 miles, around 180 sections…he only put a foot down on **thirteen** occasions!! Ridiculous!

Our friend Johnathan came in at 194th, with a score of 466, though the 100 he received for missing the two sections on the first day really messed up his event.

If you are interested in finding out more about the SSDT, then www.ssdt.org is the place to start and if you want to see some of the best trials riders in the world in Scotland, then you don't have very long to wait. The 30th and 31st of July will see the UK round of the FIM World Trials Championship at the Nevis Range near Fort William…for more details, see:

http://www.ukworldtrial.com/home.html

It's amazing how many facets there are to motorcycling!

Ride Safe!

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 (We've been to Go Ape and have a couple of BBQ's already lined up!), 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.

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Run reports

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

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

Here's a short report from **Steve Middleton** about the Donegal weekend:

'27/5/2011 - Donegal

I'll leave Ruby (and others?) to report the weekend details, but here record Ken Russell's contribution to an excellent weekend for the fortunate fifteen who went to Donegal.

Poor Ken didn't get a good start - a late request for some work kept him late at home and he didn't arrive at the Thursday overnight hotel until eleven o'clock. He than spent the next three full days leading us around the coast of Northern Ireland, the sights of Donegal and explaining Irish culture and history. I got an expert one-to-one tutorial on the formation of the Giant's Causeway and the ball-and-socket horizontal joints in the columns. We used his firewood, made a hole in his ceiling, filled his bins with bottles, cans and food containers, and probably blackened his name among the neighbours. But we did write nice things in his Visitor Book.

The scenery was magnificent, particularly the Ballymacstocker Bay we looked down onto on Sunday morning in the sun (and the wind, pulling spume off the breakers). The weather was sunshine and showers, with the brightest sun one minute and gentle showers the next, mostly accompanied by a stiff breeze. Dinner and breakfasts at the local hotel were good and eliminated the need for lunch. The talk and games were fun, on several occasions hilarious, and on one just short of hysterical.

The deckhands on the ferry were quite impressive, roping the bikes to the support rails expertly and carefully, but one got mighty upset when Steve Mac showed some initiative and went to ride up the ramp before instructed. The roar of STOP! penetrated the exhaust sounds and my earplugs as clear as anything!

I had a great time, and I'm sure we all did. So, thank you, Ken, very very much.'

Articles for BikeBytes

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

bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

FOR SALE

1/ 04 Honda CBF600. In Saltire Suzuki for sale. Immaculate condition, only 19500 miles approx.
2/ Front and Rear Paddock stands
3/ New Open Faced Helmet Black with detachable sun visor size small
4/ New battery Optimiser III

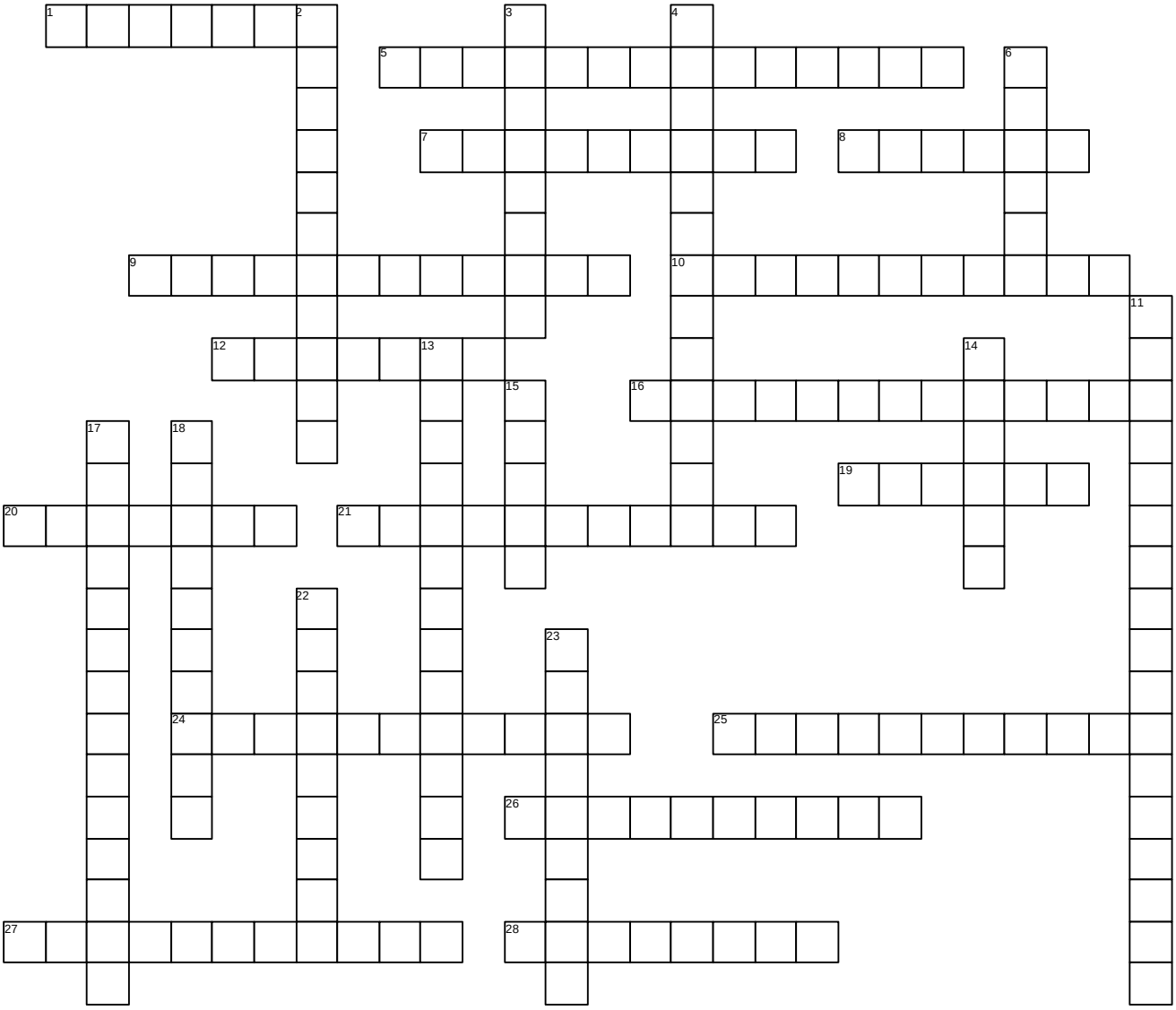
With reference to 2/3/4/ above all reasonable offers will be considered.

Contact **Norrie Millar** at:
maureen.millar@blueyonder.co.uk or home number 01506 493783

BikeBytes Crossword

Most of this month's crossword clues are dedicated to the world-famous TT races and the Isle of Man….so, get googling!
Answers next month.

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www.CrosswordWeaver.com

ACROSS

1 Isle of Man capital (7)
5 131.578mph average speed!! (4,10)
7 Racing is thirsty work..but you wouldn't want to stop here (4,2,3)
8 Island national flower (6)
9 You'd need a big hamster for this (4,8)
10 Great views from this house (3,8)
12 He wasn't cleaning windws in this movie (2,5)
16 Another Hawick TT winner! (6,7)
19 Yamaha 660 Adventure bike (6)
20 World's oldest continuous parliament (7)
21 Kiwi supersports star (5,6)
24 First rider to lap the TT course at 100mph? (3,8)
25 Racers go here for luck (5,6)
26 Most ever TT wins (4,6)
27 New Honda V4 (11)
28 Italian's jump at the bottom (4,4)

DOWN

2 Won the senior in 1994 and mentioned in a previous BikeBytes (5,6)
3 The TT course is the ? Mountain Course (8)
4 Fastest point on the island (5,8)
6 Italian muscle (6)
11 TT Start/Finish (13,4)
13 Five wins in a week? (3,10)
14 Put a spark into the IOM (2,4)
15 Only one wheel here (5)
17 End of the road on Sunday (7,7)
18 Sleep soundly with this Norton (10)
22 Faster on the mountain than on water (3,6)
23 Aprilia V-twin (9)

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