

Riders' Chronicles



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Crossword

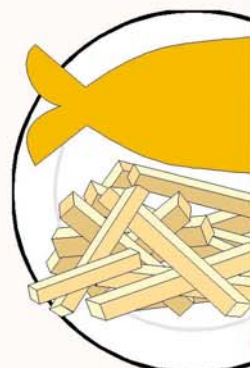
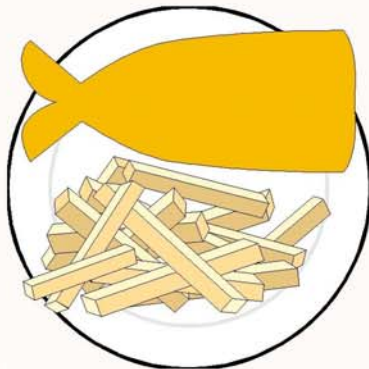
Much More



Oct / Nov 2006

**The Newsletter of Northumbria
Advanced Motorcyclists**

Fish & Chip Run July 2006



Chairman Wayne Monk

At the July Committee Meeting Chairman Wayne Monk announced his resignation as Chairman, with immediate effect, due to personal reasons.

Wayne has been a loyal and very active member of the group and will be greatly missed.

Perhaps at some time in the future he may find the time to return to the Committee in some shape or form and meanwhile, we wish him well.

Vice Chairman Dave Lucas will pick up the reins until the AGM later this year.



- o0o -

"BIKERS IF"

with apologies to Rudyard Kipling

IF you can stay on your bike when all about you are falling off theirs, and blaming it on you.

IF you can trust your abilities when others can't, but make allowances for their doubting too.

IF you can ride and never tire of the road or being overtaken don,t give way to speed, or carrying a passenger always think of you load and don,t mind too much when others lead.

IF you love your bike and not make the bike your master.

IF you can maintain and polish it and not become a pain, remember a BMW or a Triumph, (or even a Harley) with vigilance will get you there just the same.

IF you can ride your bike with dignity in rain, although your soaking, while others disregard the weather like fools, or look at the bike you've worked your life for broken and stoop to repair it with your very own tools.

IF you can race your bike and only think of winning and lose the race and never give a toss, race again and start at the very beginning and never breathe a word about your loss.

IF you can help other bikers while on the road and only think of making their rigid problem supple, and never mention the good deeds you've done, only to say you helped a fellow biker in trouble.

IF you can stand back and admire other bikes, or ride with Barry Sheene, nor lose the common touch, your friends or foes will respect you, you will be proud of yourself but not to much.

IF you can fill every rev counting minute, with sixty seconds of riding fun, yours is the road and every curve that's in it, and which is more

YOU, WILL BE A HELL OF A BIKER MY SON

B9

COVER PICTURES AND CONTENTS

Front Page: A June evening run out in Mid Northumberland by two NAM Members. Inner covers: Photographs of Fish & Chip Run. Contents: I am pleased to see different contributors submitting articles and I welcome interesting features from Allan Thompson, Simon Lupton, Tony Forster and Sid Corke to compliment the regular writers. Please keep them coming in, I don't mind how they are written as I am quite happy to edit them to suit the newsletter.

Ray Charlton
Editor

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Ian Mills B J Tucker A Thompson Al King

R M Penna Paul Harris

CONGRATULATIONS

Dierde McNally
Obs: Geoff Spencer

Phillip Beharall
Obs: Ron Patrick

Ian Mills
Obs: Ray Charlton

John Notton
Obs: Richard Salisbury

John Fagan
Snr Obs. Test

Neil Fitzgerald
Obs: Martin Wilson

Bernie Wisnieski
Obs: Simon Hadden

Bernard Paton
Obs: Gary Polworth

Michael Stoneman
Obs: John Fagan

On passing the I.A.M Advanced & Snr Observers Test - Well done

Please let me know when you have passed to appear on this page



IAN BELL (MOTORCYCLES) LTD
62 Rothesay Terrace
Bedlington
Northumberland
NE22 5PT
Tel: 01670 822311



Blandford Sq. Newcastle
(Bottom end of Westgate Rd)
0191 2612097
www.hein-gericke.co.uk

The New 2006 seasons range for top to toe quality rider's gear is now in. Just pop in to collect the new catalogue but you'll not be able to resist spending more time in store to find out more!

Committee

Honorary Group President: Jack Lormor

Chairman: position Vacant: Acting Chairman: Dave Lucas

Vice Chairman: **Dave Lucas**

Secretary: **Simon Hadden**

Treasurer: **Jim Stephenson**

Training Officer: **Kevin Wellden**

Training Group: **Vacant, Dave Lucas**

Membership Secretary: **Debbie Polwarth**

Advertising & Liaison: **Martin Hutchby**

Promotion & Events: **Helen Gardner**

Website Co-ordinator: **Louise Bennett**

Rideout Co-ordinator: **Ron Patrick**

Merchandising: **Louise Bennett**

Newsletter Editor: **Ray Charlton**

Team Leaders

Northumberland: **Simon Lupton**

Tyneside: **Ray Charlton**

Newcastle & West: **Gary Law**

Website

www.nam-online.org

Telephone: 07956 618965

Durham Advanced Motorcyclists

Durham Advanced Motorcyclists meetings are on the last Tuesday of the month at The THINFORD INN, starting at 7.30pm.

The Thinford inn is located on the junction of the A167 and A688.

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The NAM Email group can be found at:

<http://www.smartgroups.com/group/group.cfm?gid=3372386>

Join it there!

By joining the NAM email group, you'll receive club news as it happens.

You can also send emails to the group, which are automatically forwarded to all the members of the email group - handy for getting technical help in a hurry!

If you have any problems, send an email to:

simon.hadden@longfram35.freemove.co.uk

or

raycharlton@tesco.net

Wanted

An enthusiastic member to take on the role of NAM Website Editor. Experience of website management would be a great help. Contact the Secretary or Newsletter Editor if interested.

Fish & Chip Run

July's meeting saw the first fish and chip run of 2006 and was well attended with 34 bikes turning up for the pilgrimage.



The venue this year was the exotic location of North Shields Fish Quay and was reached after a meandering 21 mile route through Dinnington, Hazlerigg, down Sandy Lane and skirting around Killingworth, on through Backworth and onto the old road to Holywell to access the challenging twisties of the Bee Hive Road towards Seaton Sluice.

The final leg being a run along the sea fronts of Whitley Bay, Cullercoats and Tynemouth arriving at the Fish Quay at 8.15 pm.

Judging by the comments, everyone seemed to enjoy the route and the fish and chips, with many remarking that they had never been on sections of the route before.

The ride-out was marred slightly due to some new Members not being familiar with the 'drop-off' system and too many hi-viz jackets being worn which confused some riders into thinking the back marker had arrived and moving off early from the drop off point.

This was in no way the fault of the new Members as unfortunately due to the fact that the fish shop was scheduled to close at 8.30pm and we had to depart from the Wheatsheaf at prompt 7.30pm.

It was unfortunate that some of the new Members turned up spot on 7.30pm just as we were moving off and they simply joined the group as we left.

At the briefing 10 minutes earlier, new Members were asked to come forward to be briefed on the drop-off system and only one new rider came forward.

As a direct result of this, the drop-off rules will be printed in every future newsletter as a permanent feature.



‘Didn’t we have a lovely time the day we went to Donington!’

by Allan Thompson

After years of intending to visit the British MotoGP, I finally decided in 2005 to stop thinking about it and do it. I could see in my minds eye how it would go.



Buy the £37 tickets on the internet, have a leisurely ride down with my eldest son as pillion through the beautiful bright summer morning and finally arrive for a sunny June day by the trackside.

I sat in the queue for the computer behind my 3 children. Finally, I got onto the site only to find I had left it too late to pre-book the ‘cheaper’ £37 tickets and I needed to pay full price at the circuit. Oh well I thought, better planning needed next time!

The intention was to leave at 5am on race day until my pillion announced “Dad, I have to work the night before the race, I’ll not be home till 4am”. A vision formed in my head of my son sliding off the back asleep! ‘Damn, I’m going to

have to use the car!’

With 5 miles to go to the circuit, we had made good progress. This hasn’t been so bad and we have plenty of time I thought as I joined the traffic jam.

10 mins later and we’re still barely moving. “This can’t be the queue” I answered my son, “We’re still 5 miles away”. This was the queue! As bikes filtered by in their hundreds, my enthusiasm for the journey by car diminished.

75 minutes later and we’re finally parking up, it’s dry and the car parking is free. Things are looking up!. “2 tickets, that’s £108 sir!” I looked up in disbelief, £54 each! We are finally in the circuit (another queue) and my stomach is talking to me.

As the vendor extracts £8 for 2 bacon sandwiches, I glance up at the van expecting to read ‘Dick Turpin Catering’. As a vision of haemorrhaging cash throughout the day begins to form, an approaching engine sound is heard from behind Dick’s van.

I glance to the side to see a ‘Moviestar Honda’ scream past on a practice lap, Marco Melandri on board. A smile begins to form!.

We finally get infield and start looking around the stalls. The circuit is now full of the sound of racing engines and Yamaha Racing are giving away free T Shirts to anyone who can prove they have a Yamaha. Amazingly, my ‘Thundercat’ keys are in my pocket. I collect my shirt as a light drizzle begins to fall.

We walk past a wizened old trader opening boxes of umbrellas however at this point, bike goodies are more appealing. 30 minutes later and the flow from the heavens has changed from a trickle to a torrent.

Everyone’s focus is changing from exhausts to anything that keeps rain off. Before long, there is not an umbrella for sale on the circuit and as I walk back, the old umbrella trader seen

previously is sat on a deck chair with a beer in hand and a Cheshire cat smile presumably considering his day's takings!

We've made occasional visits to trackside for the 125's and 250's between sheltering in tents but with 20 mins to go till the start of the big race, it's time to brave the elements and stand at the fence at the bottom of Starkey's Straight just before the Foggy Esses.

Behind us on the banking is a sea of plastic covered heads precariously perched on the mud bank. Donington is famous for it's mediocre facilities and this location was no exception. We were about 8ft from a loudspeaker and couldn't hear properly, there was no large screen in sight and the rain had finally penetrated my 4th layer of clothing. The day had hit another low point.

Finally, a faint noise could be heard from across the circuit, the noise was building and then changed to a deafening din as bikes roared into sight under the Dunlop Bridge.



The circuit was like a river with the rain bouncing up 2ft off the track and a sea of blinding spray followed the cluster of leading machines each braking hard into the 'Esses' in a manner I wouldn't dream of doing on a bright sunny day.

Much later and off the back of the pack, Repsol Honda Factory Rider Biaggi appeared covered in mud obviously having been off on the first lap.

A few laps later after tasting the mud again, he was viewing the race from his helicopter on the way home having had enough. MotoGP stars were now dropping like flies with the number of riders diminishing every lap.

Rossi and Barros had a head to head battle for lap after lap with each showing total disregard for their own safety and levels of skill that had to be seen to be believed.

Finally Rossi gets past, leaves the rest as though they are standing still and treats the crowd to a master class in how to ride a 230BHP machine in the worst conditions imaginable. 29 laps completed and it's all over.

I'm standing in a giant puddle – I can't feel my feet – I wouldn't be any wetter if I'd swam the channel in my clothes – I'm about £200 worse off than I was that morning – I'm shivering uncontrollably – I've just joined the 20th queue of the day to get back to the outer field – **I'm smiling from ear to ear.**

That's a day I won't forget in a hurry!



Annual General Meeting Notice



NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by order of the Group Committee that

the

4th Annual General Meeting of *NORTHUMBRIA ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS*

Will be held at

7.30pm on Tuesday 14th Nov. 2006

**at The Wheatsheaf, Hotel (beside Newcastle
Airport)**

**to enable the Trustees of the Group to present their
Annual Report and Accounts for year ended
30th September, 2006 for approval by the
Group Members and it may be necessary to
conduct an election**

**All Members, Associates and Friends are invited to
attend but only Fully Paid Up Members of the
IAM and of the Group may vote should an
election be needed**

**Please put this date in your diary or as a reminder or
an alarm call in your mobile telephones.**

MISTAKES WE HAVE ALL MADE

by Tony Forster

I was into bikes from the age of sixteen, but no amount of begging would get my parents to help me get a "nifty fifty" Yamaha FS1E of the day, which was the hot ticket for spotty teenagers back in the long hot Summer of '75.

No, I had to wait until I was seventeen and complete the RAC bike training course (a sort of voluntary forerunner of CBT) at Fenham Barracks in Newcastle (there's a BMW car dealership there, now), my dad did the course as well and came out top, mainly because he'd ridden Triumph Thunderbirds and Speed Twins for years, before the death of a close friend in a motorcycling accident had persuaded him to get a nice sensible Reliant Robin three wheeler, thankfully before I was born...oh the shame of it.



Anyway, money wouldn't stretch to a 250 Japanese bike, so not knowing any better, I was persuaded to have a brand new, wait for it, CZ 250 twin, two stroke with a tickle carb and a gearlever that doubled as a kickstart (you pushed it into the crankcase and it swivelled round into the kick position) altogether now, "oh the shame of it" (you'll get the hang of this, so bear with me).

I picked up the bike from the dealer, whose name I can't remember; in a back street in Seaton Delaval, (no doubt someone will enlighten me) (***Behind what is now Wilson's Hardware shop – Ed***) wobbled off down the road L plates flapping in the breeze (you could ride a 250 as a learner in those halcyon days) and the bike just stopped.

I did all that my limited knowledge allowed... checking there was petrol by unscrewing the filler cap and looking in the tank, putting the cap back on...and it started first kick, eureka!

Off we went again and half a mile later it stopped again. The same process was repeated, off with the filler cap, loads of petrol, started first kick. I can see the amateur mechanics among you shaking your collective heads, but, well, I wasn't very bright (nothing changes) and my dad, who was following in the family car, Austin Maxi, I think we'd "progressed" to by then, went back to the garage and my new pride and joy was trailered back to be checked over, leaving me in my fetching bright blue nylon waterproof jacket and trousers to mull over the joys of motorcycling.

I picked the bike up the next day, with the breather hole in the filler cap unblocked. See? It was a vacuum in the tank which prevented the fuel from being fed to the carb and, every time I took the filler cap off, it released the vacuum for a while.

Anyway the bike was crap, but I didn't know that until I realised it had begun rotting from the moment I got it. I even wished I had an MZ 250, as that had more street cred...honest.

I only properly fell off the CZ once, sliding off the bike on a greasy night near the "Sporting Arms" (aka "The Knackered Athlete") near Scotswood, which wiped out my bright orange top box (with a green bike? Altogether now "Oh the shame of it")

The tyres were Barums, some dodgy East European make, which were supposedly great for dirt bikes but horrible on the road. I passed my test soon after getting the CZ, helped by doing the RAC course again (it cost about a fiver, I think, for four weeks training of two hours every Tuesday and Thursday, somebody might correct me, as I really can't remember).

Mind you passing your test then involved riding between two roundabouts, while the examiner observed you on foot, so the only way you could fail was if you fell off in front of him or ran him over doing your emergency stop.

Anyway, deciding I wanted more power, about a year after getting the CZ a guy along my street had a virtually unused Jawa 350 ("Oh the shame" etc) for sale at £190, and I managed to convince my old man that it would be good to have two bikes, so he could gallop (sedately) round the countryside with me.

Anyway the Jawa turned out to be an old nail as well, but provided me with my first ever accidental wheelie, cowhorn bars and a light flywheel coupling to scare the crap out of me.

I fitted it with clip-ons which I thought looked great, but were really so I could get it into the side passageway by our house, which the original equipment bars wouldn't permit.

I can't remember how long I had the two bikes, but eventually got rid of them both and bought a secondhand CB400 Superdream with Comstar wheels from a guy round the corner from me. I loved that bike, it had an electric start and twin front discs and was like a rocket compared to the old nails I was used to.



I'd been reading bike mags ever since I got the CZ, and had read about far way places like France and Germany (you have to bear in mind this was before Budget airlines had ever been thought of and the Chunnel was only an idea), so quite fancied the idea of going to the Bol d'Or, which, back then, was held at Circuit Paul Ricard in the South of France. So, one year, I think it was 1980 or 81

I bought throwover panniers, a stuffa bag, tank bag, a screen and a Michelin map, then shoved my mystified girlfriend on the back and set off.

Back then, the only way to talk to your pillion was either by shouting or installing a Sonic intercom. I opted for the Sonic, as I wanted my pillion, Sue, who was studying French and German to navigate..... before you all start on women's navigational skills, she was very good and we only had a couple of cross words throughout the whole two week trip.

She was dead good at getting us booked into B&B's in France as well.

Anyway, the purpose of the trip was to go to the Bol D'or, but we had no concept of the distances involved and the saddle of the Honda, crucified our tender young butts after 100 miles. This, coupled with appalling buffeting from the screen and the fact that earplugs weren't even thought of then, kept our speed down to a sedate 60mph, especially as I couldn't hear the intercom above that speed.

If I was wanting a break from conversation, I would waz up to about 80, although the windnoise was atrocious and it felt like Mike Tyson was using my head as a punchbag.

We took the ferry from Dover to Calais and started to work our route down the East of France on the Route Nationales, the idea being to avoid Paris and stay in towns and villages.

We were pretty vague as to where we would stop, simply thinking we would stop when we found somewhere nice or got tired and still have plenty of daylight to look around. We weren't going to camp, as neither of us had any idea how to put up a tent, even if we'd had one.

We rode across Northern France, which was boring, but strangely moving, when you suddenly came across field after field of white crosses and memorials to the dead from the World Wars.

Tip here for all those World "leaders" who wish to go to war; walk round the cemeteries of Northern France, count the crosses, then decide if you want to commit genocide.

France in September is supposed to be nice, but most days it absolutely poured from the heavens and, at one stage, I nearly cost us our lives.

Coming to a junction, to turn left, in the pouring rain, I momentarily forgot which side of the road to drive on and pulled out right into the path of an oncoming artic, which braked, locked up and slid towards us at a rate of knots.

Thankfully, there was a sort of hard shoulder on the left so I swung into that and the artic slid by gracefully. My life did flash before me (the boredom nearly killed me) and the scream from my pillion, will never be forgotten. All I could do was mumble an apology and ask if she needed clean underwear...the response was unprintable, as well as anatomically impossible.

It became apparent, we were never going to make it to the Bol and back in the time we had, without seriously pressing on, which neither of us fancied, particularly with the weather being atrocious, so decided instead to just tour and take it easy.

France was a revelation, as, in preparation for this tour, we'd had a week in the Lake District and North Yorkshire and found the B&B's uniformly rubbish, run by disinterested owners, who only cared about how much cash you were paying.

They really did look down their noses at you for being bikers, obviously believing we were evil maniacs out to make their pets into pies. Whereas the French thought we were cool and even the car drivers treated us with respect.

Being different in the UK is a negative, whereas the Continentals actually celebrate it. We didn't stay in a bad B&B in France, and they were perfectly happy to show you the room before you checked in, not something the suspicious English were prepared to do.

One place in France springs to mind, it was a farm that looked pretty run down, with old, tired buildings and a dirt track leading to it. It didn't look promising, but we steeled ourselves and

were shown to the nicest room I've ever stayed in, with a huge en suite bathroom, massive four poster bed and crisp, fresh bed linen. It was a tenner for the night including a magnificent continental breakfast, which would put any UK effort to shame. I just wish I could remember where the hell it was.

There is something good about travelling without an itinerary, the only real fear being that you won't get a bed for the night. I guess it might happen now, but when you're young and naive, it never even crosses your mind.

Back to the journey, I guess we weren't covering a great deal of distance, maybe 150 miles a day, but we were enjoying looking around and we decided to divert into Switzerland and take a break for a day or two.

Switzerland was and still is expensive and B&B's were dearer and generally poorer than the French ones. Nonetheless, we stayed at Lausanne and took the train into Geneva for the day.

The weather was gorgeous in Lausanne when we arrived and I was able to dry out my boots, which had even been replaced by fetching green wellies at one stage.

We ate bread and cheese by the lake and life felt good. The next day when we went to Geneva it was once again pouring from the heavens. We decided we'd had enough of Switzerland and loaded up next morning to head back into France, travelling North.

Leaving Switzerland was accomplished by riding through very low cloud and yet more rain. Most brake discs of that era suffered from wet lag of about a second and caused frequent heart stopping shocks.

I noticed this as we crossed the border into France and began descending a series of hairpins, slightly faster than I would want and elected not to tell Sue, as I didn't want to worry her and didn't want to have my eardrums shattered.

Heading back to Calais we decided to try and cross a few countries and noticed we could clip West Germany (eeh, remember that), all of Luxembourg (deux points) and a bit of Belgium (dullest country on earth), before crossing back into France.

It was a good day and we did it with ease. We wanted our passports stamped as evidence of what well travelled young people we were, but no-one at border customs points seemed to bother. Gits!

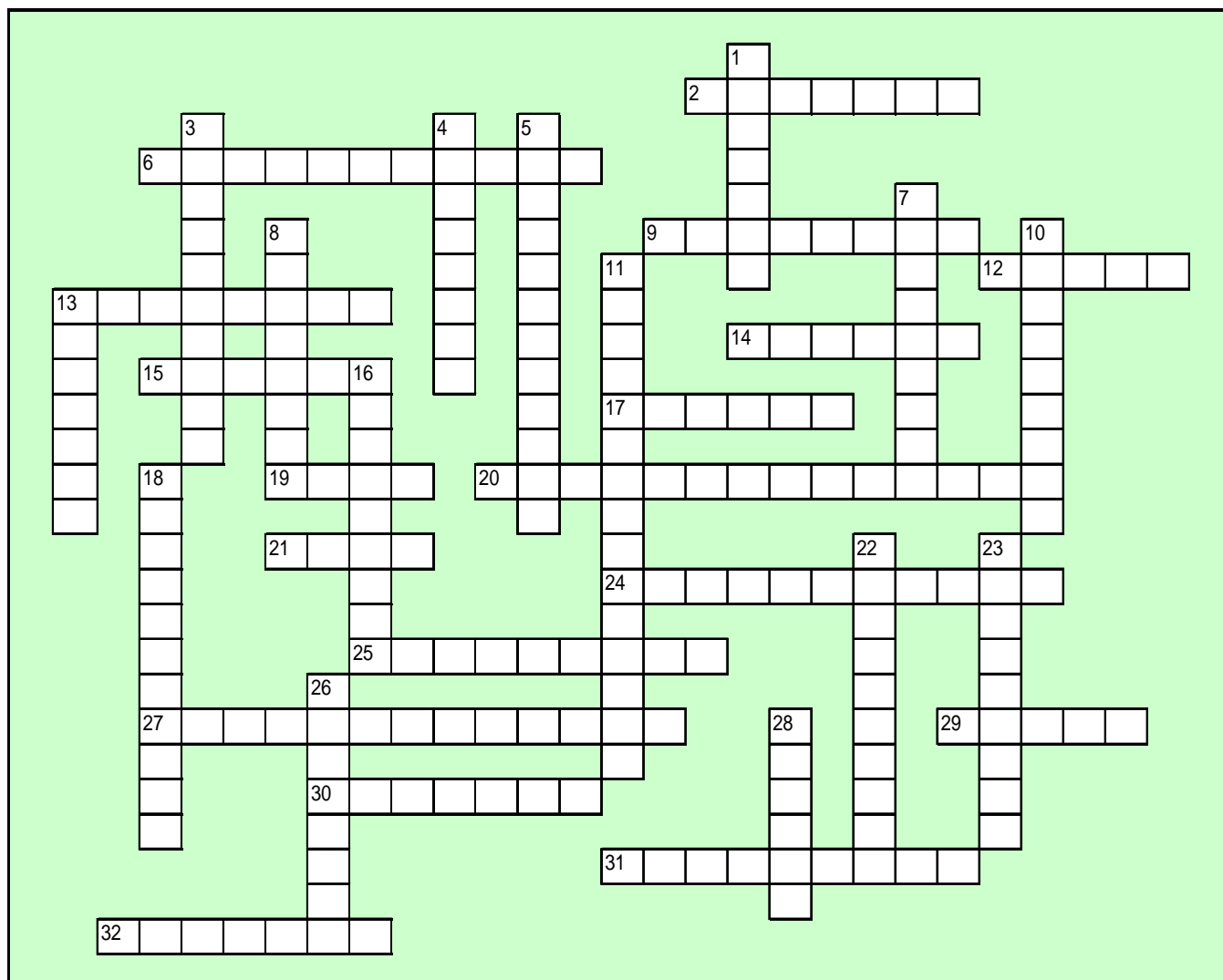
After we crossed back to the UK on the ferry, we headed to Donnington and watched an eight hour endurance race, well until we got bored and needed to make tracks home.

Despite the poxy weather it's one of the few holidays that really produced loads of memories, even twenty five years on and I can't understand why I haven't done it again since.

(To be continued.....in next issue)

Crossword (Answers on Page 25)

by Allan Thompson



Across

- 2 Rossi's Second Skin
- 6 Bologna Valves
- 9 Blei Frei
- 12 Korean SV
- 13 Suspension Limb
- 14 Rubber Embrace
- 15 Oriental Endurance
- 17 Morse's Security Products
- 19 Lid Maker
- 20 Journal (5)(5)(4)
- 21 The Bard's Rubber
- 24 Survival Skill
- 25 Gathering Suite
- 27 Victoria Circuit (7)(6)
- 29 Erik's Hog
- 30 Hardwearing Material

- 31 Toseland's Steed
- 32 Racing Clutch Footware

Down

- 1 TT Sidecar Dealer (3)(4)
- 3 NAM Departure (6)(4)
- 4 Prospector's Flight
- 5 TT Legend (4)(8)
- 7 MotoGP Rookie
- 8 F4 (2)(6)
- 10 200 Road Race (5)(4)
- 11 'Ago' (7)(8)
- 13 Classic British 'Shaftie'
- 16 Slovenian Racing Exhausts
- 18 Fast Food Outing (4)(4)(3)
- 22 MotoGP's 'Corkscrew' (6)(4)
- 23 Italian Eagle (4)(5)
- 26 Transparent Danger (5)(3)
- 28 Professional Stoppers

Tips for New Riders

by Ray Charlton

Awareness of different types and conditions of road surfaces are the signs of a good advanced rider. The road can be likened to a book and its content and like a book, unfolds as you ride along.



Learn to read the road or 'book' to extract knowledge of what lies before you and use this knowledge to plan your progress carefully and safely.

By constantly scanning the road surface and responding to what you see is essential for safe riding. Machine handling characteristics are very much dependent on tyre grip and changing road surfaces can vary these characteristics greatly.

Fundamental riding control is determined by tyre grip as it plays a major role in riding control as it affects steering, cornering, braking and acceleration.

The average rider does not pay sufficient attention to changes in road surfaces whereas the better riders are constantly aware of the road surface and its surroundings and how it can affect them.

A rider who has developed these skills is constantly looking well ahead to identify changing road surface conditions and adjusts his speed and strength of his braking, acceleration, banking and steering to retain adequate road holding and remain safe.

A thinking rider is constantly aware of the surroundings and how they can affect the road surface and the handling of his bike.

Different situations call for vigilance in different ways:-

- **Urban Roads** – Be aware and try to avoid riding over metal drains or slippery metal inspection covers, tar-banding, pot-holes or repaired sections after excavations, oil, diesel and petrol spillages and road paint.
- **Country Roads** – Tar banding (the tar joint around repairs) mud or other droppings, (from cattle!) spilt grain in summer and wet leaves in autumn, cats-eyes and road paint. (White lines, 'Slow' markings etc:)
- **Filling / Service Stations** – Fuel spillages on roads, roundabouts and bends, especially on or near motorways.

Be aware of the camber of the road on a curve or a bend. Know the difference between a Crown Camber and a Super Elevation.

The slope of the camber increases stability if it falls in the direction of lean, but reduces stability if it rises in the direction of lean. (A Super Elevation bend provides stability in both directions, unlike a normal Crown Camber)

If you cross over the crown of the road on a left-hand bend you enter an area where the slope of the camber is destabilising.

Most road surfaces are good for road holding when they are clean and dry. At hazards such as roundabouts, or junctions, tyre deposits and fuel spillages may make the surface slippery at precisely the point where effective steering, braking and acceleration are needed to negotiate the hazard safely.

Be particularly vigilant if it suddenly rains following a long hot dry spell as the surface can be particularly lethal due to an abnormally high deposit of tyre deposits building up and creating a slippery film on the surface when wet.

These deposits are normally washed away with frequent showers and do not normally present such a hazard to bikers.

There are four types of road surface that each vary in characteristics and have both advantages and disadvantages to riders.

Tarmac or Asphalt – Give a good grip when they are dressed with stones or chippings, but, in time become polished and lose some of their skid resistant properties. Watch out for shiny and worn sections that may not offer as good a grip as the dressed area.

Concrete – Often have roughened ribs which give a good skid resistant surface, but can hold water, which freezes in cold weather and creates a slippery surface that is not easily seen.



Cobbles – Low grip when wet and any rain increases the likelihood of skidding.

Anti-skid Surfaces – Good when new but deteriorates with age, reducing grip.

Road Surface Irregularities

Keep a careful lookout for any irregularities in the road surface. If you can alter your position to avoid them without putting yourself into other dangers, then do so, but remember vital checks such as head-checks before changing position.

If you are unable to avoid them, carry out rear observation and reduce speed. Where possible, ride over them in an upright position to maintain control and stability.

Common surface irregularities are:-

Road Paint – The white plastic paint used in road markings is very slippery when wet and the edges can be likened to tar-banding.

Where possible avoid riding over such markings, or choose a position that will minimise the danger.

For example where there is a 'slow' sign painted on the road, **ride** between the letters rather than over them

Road Joints – Take care where road repairs have left poor joints between the reinstated surface and the original road surface.



Even slight variations in height can affect machine stability, deflecting the bike from its intended course and can catch you out very easily.

Avoid road joints running along the length of the road, usually where an extended trench has been excavated.

Tar-banding provides less grip than the surrounding surfaces, particularly when wet.

Metal Covers – Manhole covers, drain covers and temporary metal sheeting (cattle grids can be included in this list) provide poor grip especially when dusty or wet.

Unfortunately manhole covers and similar hazards are often in the natural line of a bike.

Avoid them where you can or at the very least try to keep the bike upright.

Physical Defects – Potholes, projecting manhole covers, sunken gullies and general debris are serious danger to the rider.

Keep a constant lookout for them and ride around them if possible.

Otherwise, brake while you are on the approach and pass over them slowly.

Always consider rear observation before you brake or deviate in any way.

Conclusions

Maintain your vigilance through good observation and early identification of potential hazards, formulate an action plan and negotiate the danger safely.

Develop this skill and your riding will certainly be a lot safer.

RIDE-OUT SAFETY AND RULES

- **YOUR** riding is **YOUR** responsibility.
- The purpose of the ride is an enjoyable and safe ride out, **not a race**.

THE DROP-OFF SYSTEM:

At the front of every NAM Ride-out there is a **Leader** who will be identified at the pre-ride briefing. He is permanently at the front of group and is identified by either a hi-viz H belt or hi-viz jacket.

At the rear of every ride-out there is a **Back Marker** who will also be identified at the pre-ride brief and will also wear either a hi-viz H belt or jacket and will remain at rear of group at all times.

At no time will any rider overtake the Leader or drop behind the Back Marker.

Each time the ride reaches a junction or round-a-bout, the rider at No 2 position, behind the **Leader**, will stop and mark the junction for the rest of the group.

When the **Back Marker** arrives, that rider will then re-join the group ahead of the **Back Marker**.

At the next junction or round-a-bout, the next rider in No. 2 position behind the **Leader** will drop off and mark that junction, rejoining the group in front of the **Back Marker**.

This procedure will be repeated at each new junction.

OVERTAKING is permitted between the **Back Marker** and **Leader**, but **ONLY IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO**. When overtaking other vehicles, take care not to merely follow bike in front.

If traffic conditions slow progress, do not worry as the drop-off system works and ensures that no-one is left behind.

Riding in a group presents additional hazards, so ride to the system, and remember, **Safety first**.

Riders who are not part of the group are a significant hazard. Stay safe.

-o0o -

Social Events Planned For 2006

Christmas Dinner – 16th December – watch this space

These events will be first come first served, details on the website and at monthly meetings

RIDE-OUTS 2006

Oct 29th

Alan Richardson TBA

SPARE A THOUGHT FOR THE HOLE DIGGER

BY Simon Lupton

Roadworks, don't we all love 'em! Okay, I know you don't but some of us make our living from them so I'd like to take this opportunity to put forward the story from the other side of the cone.



Firstly, less than 10% of congestion on England's' trunk roads is caused by road works, the vast majority is caused by "incidents", ranging from accidents to phantom jams usually caused by people travelling too close, car in front brakes, the one behind has to brake harder, the one behind that has to brake harder still until eventually someone has to stop.

That's the sort of jam where there is nothing to see when you get going again. So it's probably fair to say a good percentage of congestion is caused by crap driving.

To avoid causing un-necessary delay to the road user, or customer as the Highways Agency like to call them, significant amounts of road works are carried out at night. Great for the motorist but pretty awful for those having to work on the road at night.

There are a few problems associated with night-time working, not least the fact that it is dark, material suppliers are closed or charge considerable fees to open at night, labour is more expensive and progress is inevitably slower.

There is also the noise issue to think about in urban areas, people don't seem to appreciate a 40 tonne planer ripping the road up outside their house in the wee small hours, don't understand why not!

However the biggest problem at road works is in fact the road user themselves, no surprise there then, and it seems particularly so at night. As traffic densities drop speed increases significantly, often all the operative has to protect them from a vehicle is a plastic cone weighing 12kg and a 4' (or 1.2m in new money) safety zone, not much versus a 40t truck travelling at 56mph (unless of course it's downhill!).

I once saw an American safety video aimed at promoting road worker safety, it depicted a nice quiet office which suddenly had a huge truck driven through it at speed 4' from the office workers desks, the results were quite spectacular but a good analogy of the environment we work in.

The Highways Agency did a similar safety campaign a year or so ago, but unless you watch Channels 4 or 5 in the middle of the night you probably missed it!

Some of the things people do beggar belief, I've seen dozens of vehicles come through cones at the taper attempting last minute overtakes into lane closures. Some actually decide to turn into the side of the vehicle they're trying to overtake, causing damage, congestion and sometimes serious injury to themselves or others.

People regularly try to come along roads which are completely closed. We had one in February on the A66(M) near Darlington, slip-road closed with hundreds of cones and diversions signed but still a motorist came through and tried to travel through the works, fortunately she crashed into the roller (no damage to that but the car was wrecked!) as there were nine blokes and a

paving machine just yards along the road, the possibility of someone being killed was real. Needless to say she was drunk and had no licence, a recurring theme.

The next night, same job, a motorist drove past the cones onto the hard-shoulder and over the grass to get to the A66, when the traffic management lads caught him his excuse was “that’s the way the satellite navigation says I’ve got to go”. Are these people really that dim?

Driving into the back of standing traffic at traffic signals seems to be a problem too. A fatality at works on the A1 near Alnwick has been mentioned in the press recently, the signs were criticised, they were over the national standard required at that type of works, the road was straight, dry, visibility good, there were only three vehicles in the queue which could be seen from over half a mile away.

Still a truck ploughed into the queue killing one person and a dog, no attempt to brake and the driver had been through the works on previous days and there were “other issues” with the driver. Didn’t hear much criticism of the driver in the press, although he has since been charged with death by dangerous driving!

A few weeks after that we had another wagon drive into a two vehicle queue at night despite having the job lit like a Christmas tree from over a mile away. Fortunately this one was injury only but could have very easily been a fatal.

You motorcyclists aren’t immune from stupidity either, I quite often see bikes dodging into cones to jump queues, we’ve all seen the photo of the police bike up to the axles in wet concrete – it can happen, then there is the risk of hitting someone.

Throwing things from vehicles is a favourite too, bottles, food, batteries, you name it’s been thrown at us, I had one operative hit in the face with a yogurt, perhaps amusing to some but potentially dangerous when thrown from a travelling vehicle.



One of our more naïve members of staff enquired in a meeting why there were so many half full bottles of Irn Brew on the road – it ain’t Irn Brew and you wouldn’t want to be hit by one!

On a lighter note it’s amazing how many female assets are displayed to road workers particularly after closing time around the Western Bypass!

Road works have to be done and there probably is never a good time to do them. If there is no one working in them it could be because materials are cooling or curing, tarmac can take hours to cool enough to take traffic and concrete can take days to gain sufficient strength to carry the necessary loads. It maybe the traffic management crews are working elsewhere, these people are some of the most highly trained and regulated (and paid) within the highway maintenance industry and are as rare as rocking horse poo, there’s never enough.

Be patient at road works and keep the speed down for the sake of those working there, not just the temporary speed camera. Finally, don’t bother shouting abuse at us; we’ve heard it all before!

First aid in Real Time

As ever with Nam, John Fagan's July ride-out was well organized and took in some wonderful roads and scenery.

.Some twenty odd souls turned up that were quickly sorted into two groups.



Group one consisting of nine bikes, three with pillion passengers, with the remaining members forming group two.

The Scottish borders beckoned, and off we went at a pace that was perfectly suited to my own style of riding with the other riders in the group being well matched, making the ride all the more enjoyable.

Our first stop was at the Border Café and the patter was great with all involved in good friendly banter. Pressing on passing the stunning scenery of St. Mary's Loch and onto a road which was new to me. This being mainly a single track shared with an abundance of sheep, which led eventually to Moffat Woolen Mill, an ideal place for lunch.

Good facilities, good food and again great friendly banter, we all got on so well that when John stood up and announced it was time to go, we were all a bit peeved because he was spoiling our fun.

I remarked that John was a slave driver and that Bob Cratchett got longer breaks. Back on the bikes, fuel top up at Langholm and off to Newcastleton.

Approaching traffic began to flash us and gestured to slow down, a police speed trap perhaps? No, a biker had failed to negotiate a bend, went through a fence and entered a field, the police waved us on, and so we didn't stop.

Forging on to Kielder for a welcome comfort break. (my bum was a bit numb) We were treated to what seemed like a never ending supply of sweets from the Lady, (Apologies, I don't know her name) riding pillion the red Pan Euro from Darlington.

Moving on again, we were down to seven with the drop off system being used as usual, I marked the route as waiting for all to pass and Ron Patrick on the big 750 thumper to picking up the rear.

By now, three extra bikes (Non Members) were intermixed with our group, consisting of two GS 1200 BMW's and a Varadero, preventing me from pulling out in front of Ron, so I let them all pass,

I overtook the first BMW and attempted to pass the other two non members but they were determined not to be passed and took off at a fair rate of knots, the BMW behind me eventually blasting past also, and all three of them proceeded to pick their way past all seven of us as a matter of urgency! We were all quite happy to let them go on their way at silly speeds.

On reaching the Corbridge roundabout, as previously arranged, the Pan Euro rider from Darlington, waved goodbye, the 'sweety' pillion girl (**Careful Sid. Ed!**) smiled and waved so enthusiastically, I blew her a kiss, it had been that good a day, (I hope her husband didn't think it was aimed at him)

Pressing on to the beautiful B6318 (Military Road) to Heddon a lovely fast stretch with a few obvious hazards such as the odd junction and the Robin Hood pub making it very tempting to pick the pace up.

Resisting the urge to use excessive speed, I was riding at number two position; we were progressing at a useful pace when things took a turn for the worse.

Up ahead two cars had stopped, there was debris on the road, and a few people standing around. We slowed right down and as we approached saw the horrendous sight of pools of blood all over the road, marking a pile of intestines and other pieces of what appeared to be flesh and bone.

A biker was lying motionless face down, his BMW lying some 30 yards further up the road on its side, as was a Varadero. It was the three riders who had passed us earlier.

The sight was quite a shock and John Fagen pulled in behind the cars, I stopped alongside. Being a qualified first-aider I felt I must offer what help I could and rode past, parking the bike some ten yards from the casualty giving myself time to compose myself and remove my helmet etc. Two bikes were damaged so my first thought was they had collided.

The other male biker was on his mobile phone and was just ringing off as I reached him. He confirmed he had telephoned for the Police and Ambulance, so I proceeded to the rider lying face down on the road. He was motionless, I knelt down close to him asking if he could breathe alright. He confirmed that he could, which at least confirmed he was still conscious and told me he had hit a sheep.

This was a tremendous relief to me as I now realised the blood on the road was not his. I then carried out some basic checks with him. He confirmed that he was seriously injured and that he was in severe pain in both arms and his left leg.

Further checks confirmed his head and neck were OK as he ably demonstrated by moving it vigorously from side to side. Satisfied he had no neck injury and following his request, we removed his helmet following the guidelines in supporting the head and neck.

With his helmet off we confirmed there was no bleeding to his head, despite his helmet being quite deeply marked. Ron Patrick now in attendance, reacted quickly by removing his own jacket and holding it up as a screen from the hot sun.

Further checks and questions were carried out confirming he had no bleeding and by now he was breathing normally so a make shift pillow was arranged to support his head. This was obviously a comfort to him and he then told us he was getting slight discomfort in his chest with his breathing indicating possible rib damage.

Assessment completed and the patient as comfortable as we could make him whilst waiting for the Ambulance, I asked him what had happened. He confirmed that he had hit a sheep that run out into the road.

At that point, a car pulled up and young woman approached announcing she was an A+E nurse, which was a great relief to me and I was only too happy to let her take over.

I gave a brief description of his problems and she thanked me and confirmed that an Ambulance was on its way. Soon the ambulance arrived on the scene and four of our group assisted in lifting the injured man onto a stretcher.

I advised the nurse that the rider of lady biker (Who was the wife of the injured man and had been riding the Varadero) had also come off her bike and injured her wrists and knee and she attended to her.

The police arrived, and after taking a few names and addresses and we were allowed to go.

Before leaving I went up to the casualty's wife and gave her small pat on the shoulder, wishing her good luck was all I could think of saying.

She thanked us for the help we had given and I got on my bike and somewhat traumatised by the sequence of events I eventually arrived at the Wheatsheaf,

I was shaken by the whole affair, which has brought home a few frightening home truths. I know this road well as it is only twenty five miles from where I live and in the past have had many a brisk ride on it, but after the events of this day, it will never be the same and graphically shows just how easy major accidents can happen with little or no warning.

The other point being it is a different kettle of fish when having to apply first aid in such a major incident compared with the normal cuts and jammed fingers I am used to treating at work.

Sid Corke

- oOo -

A Holiday Tale

by Peter West

My wife Janet and I went on holiday to a small Greek island called Theses, just off mainland Greece. It was very hot and quiet, just as we like it, but the week we arrived there was a strike by power workers, so we had no electricity from 4am to 11pm each day.



As we had planned to eat out each night this became a problem. We found a pizza restaurant that cooked by gas, overcoming the power crisis. It had a nice menu and pleasant waitresses who were all very friendly.

After a week we befriended one of the waitresses, a blonde, blue eyed Austrian, called Rosemary who spoke seven languages and had a real nice personality. We told her we had a large house in

England and we did bed & breakfast and if she ever wanted to come to England we would love to see her and would make her most welcome.

Years latter we received a telephone call from Rosemary asking if she could come to the UK and stay with us with her boyfriend Stvros, who we hadn't met before as he was in than army in Greece.

Following their stay, we became very good friends as Rosemary and Stavros went to Edinburgh to study for 12 months. Stavros taking a course in football refereeing and Rosemary a degree in English Literature.



On their return to Greece thy decided to get married and we were invited to their wedding in Vienna. We accepted the invitation and decided to go on my bike I have a Honda Pan European, an ideal bike for touring.

We had to think about packing two weeks clothes, including a new suit, new dress and hat together with wedding present: essentials such as tent sleeping bags, inflatable mattress, all stretching the luggage capacity of the Pan to the limit.

The invite eventually arrived.... "Janet and Peter are cordially invited to the wedding of Rosemary and Stavros at the Schloss Wilhelmineberg Hotel, Vienna."



The day of departure finally arrived and our plan was to try to get to the German border the first night's stay. We took a week to get to the Wedding Hotel, the German autobahns were great, the restaurants very nice.

Unfortunately it rained every day during the trip, but eventually arrived at the hotel, an impressive huge building that looked like Castle Howard. We entered the reception carrying our panniers, on to a luxurious red carpet and enormous crystal chandeliers. It was sheer luxurious splendor.

On the day of the wedding the weather was wonderful, bathed in warm sunshine we had champagne and strawberries in the garden to the sound of Greek music.

The wine was superb and it is amazing how it can break down barriers.

When it was all over, we said our good byes and came home via the black forest to the wonderful smell of pine.

The only sting in the tale is the marriage only lasted two years Stavros is now with another partner and Rosemary is on her own, but she still sends her love every Christmas.

- o0o -

Answers for Crossword on Page 15

<u>Across</u>	<u>Down</u>
2 Dainese	1 Ian Bell
6 Desmodromic	3 Seaton Burn
9 Unleaded	4 Goldwing
12 Comet	5 Mike Hailwood
13 Swingarm	7 Vermeulen
14 Hugger	8 MV Agusta
15 Suzuka	10 North West
17 Oxford	11 Giacomo Agostini
19 Arai	13 Sunbeam
20 Motor Cycle News	16 Akrapovic
21 Avon	18 Chip Shop Run
24 Observation	22 Laguna Seca
25 Callerton	23 Moto Guzzi
27 Phillip Island	26 Black Ice
29 Buell	28 Brembo
30 Cordura	
31 Fireblade	
32 Slipper	



Billy Davison

Will the real Billy Wilson stand up!

I must apologise to Billy Davison for misrepresentation as on two occasions in the newsletter I have called him 'Billy Wilson.'

I don't know where I got this from, but I hope Billy accepts my apologies and assurance that he will get his real name in future issues.

Britain's Smallest Car Ferry

Venture to the far corner of the Black Isle, north of Inverness, and you'll find Britain's smallest ferry, the Cromarty Rose.

Built in 1987 at Ardrossan, near Glasgow, she can carry two cars and about three motorbikes.

She sails across the Cromarty Firth, connecting Cromarty on the Black Isle with Nigg on the north side of the firth.

The crossing takes about ten minutes, costing £4 for a motorcycle and rider. A half-hourly service runs from May to the end of October.



Loading and unloading is via a single ramp at the front of the vessel.

The cars drive on and park next to each other on a turntable. This turns the cars around so they face the ramp, ready to drive off.

Then the bikes go on, to one side and the ferry sets sail.

On arriving at the far side of the firth, the cars drive off.

Then the bikes are pushed on to the turntable, spun round and off you go. Simple!

Fish & Chip Run 2006



Contributions Required

This is your newsletter, articles, observations, letters and pictures are always needed. Maybe you have a question on Roadcraft or a tale to tell

Please send any contributions to:

raycharlton@tesco.net

**Deadline for contributions for next newsletter
Friday, 27th October 2006**

MONTHLY MEETINGS

NAM meets on the second Tuesday of every month at the Wheatsheaf Hotel on the B6918 at Woolsington at 7.30 pm.



nam-online.org

Tel: 07956 618965



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