

# Riders' Chronicles



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Again!**

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**Nov - Dec 2007**

**The Newsletter of Northumbria  
Advanced Motorcyclists**





**RECENT RIDEOUTS**

## Chairman's Ramblings



Winter is approaching fast and another biking season draws to a close and it seems as you get older the months fly past, or is the same for you younger ones also?

We have had quite an eventful year with a steady growth in New Associates and test passes, although on the negative side, we have seen one or two test failures, which always leads to the inquest afterwards whereby the Observers involved cannot understand the reasons why.

Test failures can be attributed to many factors as no two people react to test situations in the same manner. To some it is simply another ride-out and to others it is a major ordeal.

Test nerves are probably the most common reason, which in themselves can trigger a break down in concentration, causing the candidate to make silly mistakes that they would not normally make.

It should always be remembered that the Associate is only as good as the hour or so he is under the microscope during a test and may have ridden perfectly whilst under guidance but falls apart under test conditions.

It stresses the need for an Associate to not only take guidance from his Observer, but to supplement this guidance with knowledge from Roadcraft as well as practical riding experience to perfect the new skills.

The important thing is to put it down to experience, not lose heart and focus on getting the next one right.

I have some changes to announce: Malcolm Lonsdale has been appointed Regional Motorcycle Adviser by the I.A.M and has relinquished his position as Team Leader (Northumberland) to Nick Maddison. Clive Taylor stands in as Vice Chairman in place of Simon Lupton.

Gary Law has stepped down as Team Leader West and the West Team Area is to be absorbed into the other two areas after the A.G.M. May I thank Malcolm and Gary for their services and welcome Nick onto the Committee.

Northumbria Police have announced that they are now supporting Bike Safe which will replace their own Cornering Clinics. Bike Safe is an initiative run by Police Forces around the UK dedicated to reducing casualties among motorcyclists. 20% of all accidents in the UK involve motorcyclists yet motorcycles only represent 4% of the total registration, which brings home the problem loud and clear.

Kevin Wellden is leading this initiative within Northumbria Police and NAM will be offering support in any way that is helpful to the cause.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

G L Wray	C W Hopkins	N V Lane
P C J Martin	P Howey	L Johnson
	R Slater	

## CONGRATULATIONS ON PASSING THE IAM TEST – Well Done

J M Johnson	Observed by	Alan Richardson
Stan Bennison	“	Ron Patrick
Tony Sainter	“	Simon Hadden/Simon Lupton
Mick Goodwin	“	Clive Taylor
Eric Fitzpatrick	“	Michael Sutherland
Christopher Loftus	“	Dave Walton
Louise Harris	“	Kevin Wellden
Kristian Grundy	“	Michael Sutherland
Kevin Burton	“	Dave Crampton
Denis Denham	“	Mick Ingledew
Carol Rowland	“	Nigel Hore
Michael Robinson	“	Gary Law
Neil Mordue	“	Simon Hadden/Jim Knowlton
Edward Turnbull	“	Kenny Moreton

## NAM MERCHANDISE

**Contact : Louise Bennett for all items of merchandise  
(On sale at all monthly meetings )**

Equipment Badges	Self adhesive - attach to fairing	£1.00
Woolly Hats	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
Caps	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
T Shirts	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
Polo Shirt (Black or White)	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
Sweatshirt	With NAM Emblem	£20.00
Fleeces	With NAM Emblem	£25.00
Tank Pads	With NAM Emblem	£10.00
Key Fobs	With NAM Emblem	£1.00
Sew-on cloth badge	With NAM Emblem	£3.00
Lanyard	With NAM Emblem	£3.00

## Committee

Honorary Group President: **Jack Lormor**

Chairman: **Ray Charlton**

*Vice Chairman:* **Clive Taylor**      *Secretary:* **Simon Hadden**

*Treasurer:* **Jim Stephenson**

*Training Group:* **Clive Taylor, Alan Richardson, Geoff Spencer**

*Membership Secretary:* **Carole Kibble**

*Assistant Secretary:* **Michael Sutherland**

*Website Co-ordinator:* **Glenn Knowles**

*Rideout Co-ordinator:* **Ron Patrick**

*Merchandising:* **Louise Bennett**

*Newsletter Editor:* **Ray Charlton**

### ***Team Leaders***

*Northumberland:* **Nick Maddison**

*Tyne & Wear:* **Alan Richardson**

### **Website**

**[www.nam-online.org](http://www.nam-online.org)**

**Telephone: +44 (7951) 035038**

## 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.

- o0o -

### **The NAM Email group can be found at:**

<http://www.groups.google.com/group/nam-bikes>

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:

**hadden101@btinternet.com**

or

**raycharlton@tesco.net**

## IN THIS ISSUE

Latest Test Passes, which are up on this time last year.

Chairman's Ramblings, A.G.M Date and Venue. Sid Corke on the departure of his Fazer and the arrival of the TDM, plus a report on the Scottish Rally.

Another Crossword from Alan Thompson and more funnies from Jim Knowlton.

The usual Tips for New Riders and a report of a threat received by the Editor.

A report on the Wedding of Helen and Gary. Biking problems in Canada and a different approach on a Scottish Trip by Wing Commander Neil Hamilton.

## Rideouts

Date	Leader	Destination
<p><b>All Ride-Outs meet 10.00 am prompt at the Travelodge Car Park, Seaton Burn.</b></p> <p><b>Other dates will be published as they come in.</b></p>		
<p><b>Don't forget that, on most Sundays, many Members meet at 10.00 am at Seaton Burn for their own impromptu runs.</b></p>		

### THE DROP-OFF SYSTEM:

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

**At the front:** There is a **Leader** at the front of every NAM rideout who will be identified at the pre-ride briefing. He is permanently at the front of group and is identified by either a hi-vis H belt or hi-vis jacket. At no time will any rider overtake the Leader

**At the rear:** There is a **Back Marker** at the rear of every NAM rideout who will also be identified at the pre-ride brief and will also wear either a hi-vis H belt or hi-vis jacket and will remain at rear of group at all times. At no time will any rider drop behind the Back Marker.

### At junctions and roundabouts:

Each time the ride reaches a junction or roundabout, 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 roundabout, 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:** this 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 the 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.

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## NORTHUMBRIA ADVANCED MOTORCYCLISTS

**Group Number 4245**  
(Registered Charity No. 1099238)

**Give Notice that the**

### **5th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Will take place on**

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2007 at 19.30**

**At**

**The Wheatsheaf Pub, beside Newcastle Airport**

**(Further details to be circulated to all Members)**



## Gone is the Fazer !

by Sid Corke

It is with a mix of trepidation and anticipation that I have to report the departure of my beloved Fazer and the arrival of its replacement.

Anyone who knows of me will be more than familiar with the way I have pampered it for four long years enjoying exciting and reliable service over many miles in this Country and on the Continent. Sadly the time came for us to part company.

I first got the urge for change when I spotted an Aprilia Tuono in M & S but after consultation with many friends I was advised against it having been told they are an expensive toy not really suitable for everyday use. Enquiries also revealed that increased insurance premiums were also a factor.



I suppose using a Tuono for commuting to and from work is comparable with using Concorde for crop spraying, so it was soon removed from my wish list.

My next thought was for a Kawasaki Z750 and I arranged a test ride to find it had a beautiful gearbox and powerful engine but that did not compensate for the physical size of the bike. I am not a big bloke but I found it small and cramped and, couldn't envisage myself doing the run to St. Mary's Loch on such a small machine.

The Land of the Rising Sun's infatuation with weight saving and performance are making today's bikes far too small

Where do I go from here? My requirements for a bike were as follows something powerful, comfy, but bigger than the miniscule R6 or CBR600.

Scouring the local dealers, I ended up in M & S yet again and spotted a one year old, metallic blue TDM900 in immaculate condition, with only 4,000 miles on the clock.

As soon as my buttocks hit the seat I knew it was the one for me so now was the time to find out what I can get for my old Fazer.

I don't know about how you feel when doing this, but it always transpires that the Dealers reckon your bike is at least a £1000 less than what you thought it was worth.

However, the Salesman was very impressed with the Fazer but was astounded at the mileage of 30,000, claiming it to be more than twice the annual according to his book.

This is another frustrating situation as far too many bikers buy bikes as toys, only use them between May and September, only go out on Sunday (Only if it is dry!) and never venture beyond Rothbury.

This results in a two year old bike only having 2,500 miles on it and setting the standards which ultimately penalize the REAL bikers who use their bikes as intended and clock up many more miles.

However all that polishing paid off and the Salesman offered me a reasonable trade in price, but, not being one to rush in I decided to think it over.

The next day as luck would have it Ray Charlton called in to see me at work and I asked him to go over and take a look at the TDM.



Later that evening he phoned to say he was very impressed with it, and having sat on it and rather fancied one himself.

Next morning as soon as the doors were open the deal was done. **(Thought you were not one to rush in?....Ed)**

I don't think I drove to work, I think I floated there. An hour later Ray appeared and I never said a word but simply produced the bill of sale and showed it to him.

He told me that he was not shocked as he knows me too well and, rather out of character, he made a hasty retreat and left leaving me rather puzzled.

However, I later found out that he had hot-footed it up to Ian Bells to have a test ride on Ian's TDM Demonstrator, only to order a new one for delivery in September.

I should have known better, but now realise just how contagious these TDM's are!

- oOo -

## Unusual Tale from Gordon Jenkins

I was talking to my cousin in Canada and he was telling me of a bike he had sold to his neighbour

The neighbour kept complaining of little faults with the bike then one day went to his work on the bike he stopped for coffee and dropped the bike.

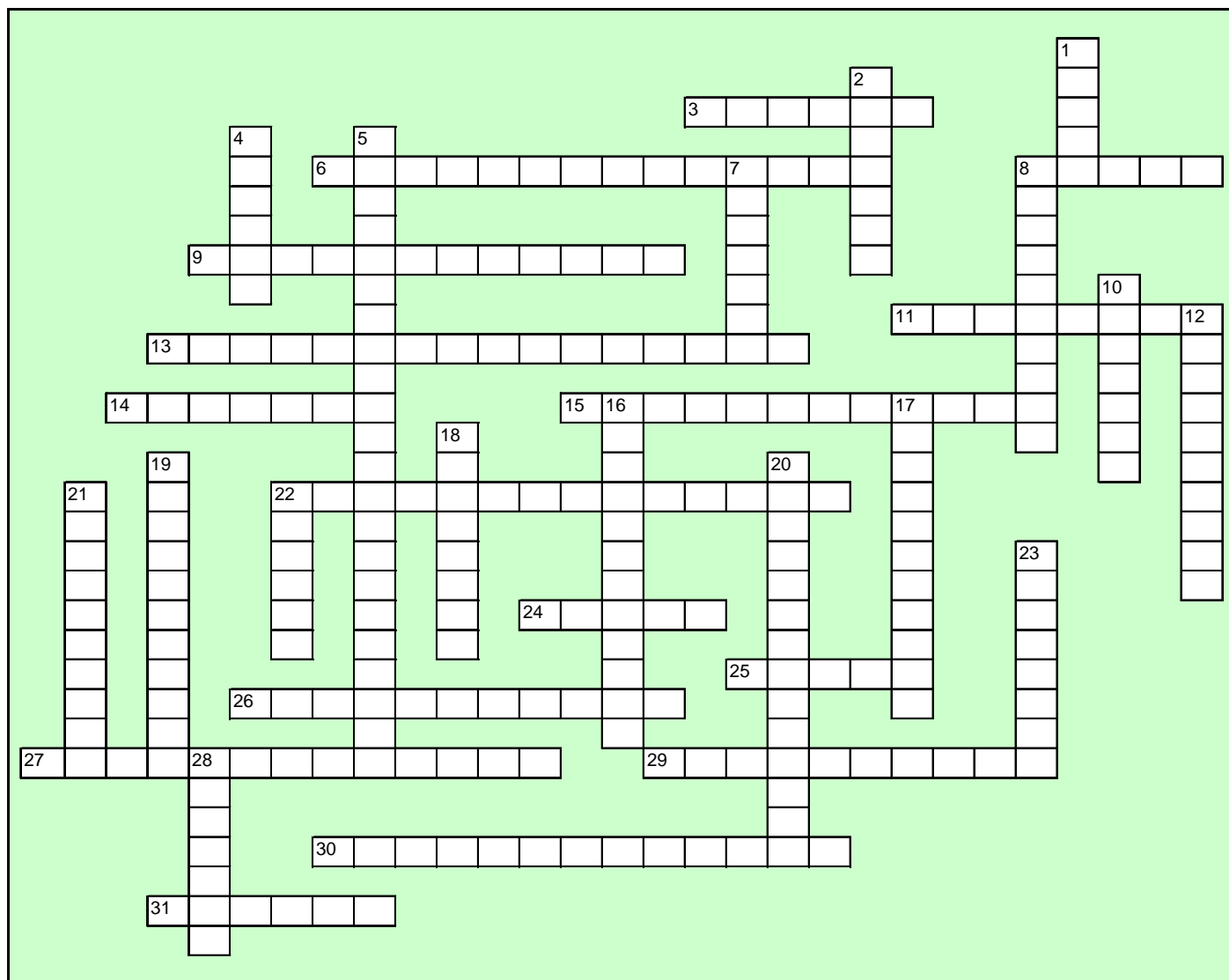
After this the bike would not start so my cousin was called to see if he could get the bike running after some time trying the usual things to get it going he went to collect some tools.

On his return he started to strip the bike and pulled off a pipe to the air filter to find it was full of Peanuts!

It turned out that a Chipmunk had been stashing the nuts and when the bike fell they were dislodged and cut off the air intake to the air filter.

***Wonder if the diagnostic computer is programmed to find this kind of nut? Ed.***

## Crossword (Answers on Page 20)



### Across

- 3 Native American Machine
- 6 Sandy Floridian Triple (7)(7)
- 8 Dry Rubber
- 9 Gyroscopic Turning Technique
- 11 Travolta's Gang (4)(4)
- 13 80's Essex Racing Flick (6)(5)(5)
- 14 'Mission Impossible' Machines
- 15 Samurai of Slide (8)(4)
- 22 Milwaukee Manufacturer (6)(8)
- 24 Doomed MotoGp Team
- 25 Erik's Hog
- 26 Rizla's Anglo American (4)(7)
- 27 Ten Kate WSB Star (5)(8)
- 29 'Rocket Ron' Jr (4)(6)
- 30 Doctor's Assistant (6)(7)
- 31 Gallic Track (2)(4)

### Down

- 1 British Bike Cleaner
- 2 Security Label
- 4 Irish Racing Tyre
- 5 Charitable Chopper (5)(5)(3)(9)
- 7 WSB HANNSpree Honda (3)(4)
- 8 No Honda Nightmare !
- 10 Classic Spanish Scrambler
- 12 Auto Lube
- 16 Scarborough Racing (7)(5)
- 17 Winged Satanists (5)(6)
- 18 Brough Diamonds
- 19 Oriental Rubber
- 20 TT King (4)(10)
- 21 Monza Sweeper
- 22 CBR Stinger
- 23 Suspension Limb
- 28 Clutch Footware

## Scottish Rally 2007

### by Clive Taylor

For years Simon Hadden has yearned to take part in the Scottish Rally. This is right up his street with plenty of miles and lots of navigation to do.

Hitherto the universally acclaimed Longframlington Village Show has stood in his way. As chairman and also chief judge of the cake competition he has been honour bound to attend and to his chagrin this august event has always clashed with the weekend of the Scottish Rally.

Not any more. Having resigned from the Village Show committee he was now able to indulge his navigational talents and concentrate fully on the Rally. Only the motorcycling God was able to join him this year with weak excuses being proffered by previous attendees.



As a magnanimous gesture new boy Hadden was allowed to select the challenge and with many miles ahead of us we elected to start at Kelso. The plan was to describe a large "S" shape from East coast to west and back again and finish at Aviemore.

There were another three people starting at Kelso on the Saturday morning. One guy had come up from Bristol the evening before after work. Arriving at about midnight he shoved his tent up in a field down the road. He looked a bit rough which was hardly surprising. We never saw him again, I wonder if he is still doing it.

Our route required a bit of juggling as some control points were open all night but some closed at about 5.00 pm. Needless to say getting round the daytime ones caused us a bit of a problem. The day mileage was about 285 in seven hours. Not too bad an average but having to stop six times to check in slowed progress somewhat.

We had fourteen control points to visit in all and as we pressed on were surprised to observe that there was no rain. Heading south west and then north we realized that there was no way we could get to Tyndrum by 5.00 pm. Slightly hacked off, we got there just before 6.00pm to be told that they didn't close until 10.00 pm. Some relief as it began to drizzle.

We stayed there some time in order to scoff a doughnut and some other dodgy cake that Hadden had bought back in Helensburgh. His choice was somewhat lacking as he proffered me one he had rejected. It was awful !

As darkness fell we headed south to Stirling. It gives me great pleasure to report that the Supreme Being actually went the wrong way as we approached this control point. I, of course took the correct road and waited for him with the smuggest look on my face that I could muster. I don't think he thought it very funny ! We scoffed a sandwich here and as we munched a lady competitor arrived on a Velocette LE.(Police Noddy bike) Very old with a hand gearshift and lever starter (the bike not the lady!). She admonished us for hanging around and pattered off into the night.

At Maddiston, south of Falkirk we encountered another competitor in a Reliant Robin. After consulting his maps he fired the thing up in a haze of exhaust and roared off.

Round the south of Edinburgh to Musselburgh then the Forth bridge and up the Fife coast to Arbroath via the Tay bridge. It took us a while to find the control point at Reid's Taxis in the back streets and as we headed north towards Aberdeen at about 2.00am tiredness crept upon us. We stopped in a lay-by and fell asleep on the grass verge. I woke up at 5.30 as Simon was searching for his bike keys. He assumed they were several layers down in a rarely used pocket so pressed his spare one into service.

He recovered his navigational skills and demeanour to find our checkpoint in the centre of Aberdeen with great skill and as time was getting a bit tight for our arrival in Crianlarich by mid day we hussed on a bit to the last checkpoint in Aviemore. I asked Simon how far it was from Aviemore to the hotel at the finish. "About 60 or 80 miles" he said. The silly man was wrong again as my milometer showed 103 as we trundled in to the finish at about 11.30am.

We sorted out our paperwork and guess what. Simon realised that he had probably lost his bike key in the grass during our layby kip. Not only that but he had lost one of his receipts from earlier in the day as well. He is such a tosser. Mine of course were all pristine and in order as I handed them in.

There were loads of people at the finish talking about deeds of daring do and also the lady with the little LE velocette. She had completed her challenge for the first time in several years of trying. To get home she just removed the wheels and shoved the whole thing in the back of her Volvo estate.

We relaxed for the rest of the day at the hotel and enjoyed a good meal in the evening. A good nights sleep saw us ready for breakfast and a scenic ride home avoiding as many motorways and dual carriageways as we could.

I always enjoy this event and it seems Simon did too. I expect he may be up for a more remote challenge for next year's event, maybe up in the highlands.

- oOo -

## Christmas dinner 2007

**The Northumbria Advanced Motorcyclists  
Annual Christmas Dinner and Disco will take  
place in the Callerton Suite, Wheatsheaf Hotel,  
at 7.00pm on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2007  
Tickets £15.95 per person to be paid no later  
than 20<sup>th</sup> November. Menu and Booking Forms  
will be with you by now.**



## Tips for new riders

by Ray Charlton

Over the last few weeks we have had a few test failures attributed to varying faults ranging from potentially dangerous practises to events that clearly demonstrate the Associate was not up to the required standard for a pass.



Ironically, in each case, they had put in an impeccable ride during their pre-tests and in the eyes of their Senior Observer, were, “more than ready to face the test”.

It remains a mystery as to why Associates should behave differently under test conditions as in most cases they know exactly what is expected of them, yet for some unknown reason things go wrong.

The simplest answer to this question is possibly test nerves as the pressure of facing a test can I suppose psychologically play on their minds and affect judgements when facing different situations.

I have had to refer a couple of Associates back to their Observers recently whilst carrying out pre-tests, for quite often faults that were almost basic and avoidable.

In most cases they were aware of what was expected of them, but had failed to carry out the procedures correctly for whatever reasons.

It is better that an Associate faces a test having the best possible chances of passing rather than risk a fail and wasting the test fee by not being properly prepared.

Advanced riding is all about understanding fully why we ride to the ‘System’ and being able to apply it in a confident and safe manner.

To give some examples of what I have seen recently includes an incident whereby the Associate joined the Motorway and was in Lane 1 and it appeared that Lane 2 was moving much faster, so he immediately moved into Lane 2 only to find in a matter of seconds that the traffic in that lane had bunched up and was travelling at exactly the same speed as Lane 1.

Had he used his forward observation he would have noticed that both lanes ahead were bunched tight up and moving at the same pace, so any change of lane was a fruitless exercise.

In this case this lack of forward planning had a further knock on effect as in a matter of a quarter of a mile, Lane 2 became Lane 3 and he needed to move into Lane 1 to join a slip road off. Because of the volume of traffic he found it difficult to move across in to Lane 1 and had created a problem for himself that was completely avoidable.

I remained in Lane 1, which became Lane 2, travelling at exactly the same speed as the

Associate, but was able to move into the new Lane 1 (Slip Road) without the trauma he faced.

Ironically during the de-brief at the end of the ride, he immediately mentioned this incident as he had realised he had not used his forward observation to the best advantage.

He unfortunately repeated this fault several times during the rest of the ride, ending up in the wrong traffic lane on several occasions.

In addition to this incident, he repeatedly did left and right head checks on every occasion, yet managed to fail to make the odd head check where it would have been advantageous to do so.

Another habit he had was remaining in gear whilst stationary at traffic lights when neutral should have been selected for both safety reasons and vehicle sympathy.

His major fault was not making progress in every speed limit situation, being constantly 3 – 5 mph under speed in 30, 40 and 50 mph limits and running at speeds ranging from 45 – 55 mph in the National Speed Limit sector where he could have comfortably been up to 60 mph quite safely.

Fortunately for me, this Associate had an excellent attitude towards learning advanced riding skills and took the points on board without taking any offence.

Again, on this occasion, his Observer had seen him put in impeccable rides during Observed Runs and was yet another example of things going pear shaped during a pre-test (or potentially the real test!)

I have had him out since and his riding is now much better focussed and he has a better understanding of what is expected.

I did stress the need to supplement his riding skills with theoretical skills obtained from Roadcraft.

On another pre-test I have had an Associate exceeding the speed limits by considerable margins, overtaking on solid white lines, totally missing speed limit changes and running wide on bends through being in too high a gear.

I must stress that these examples are the minority as most Associates are usually well prepared to face the test and carry out safe and competent rides, demonstrating a sound understanding of the system and being able to show a high standard of riding.

As I have said on many occasions before, it is the performance of the Associate during the test that is being judged and only he/she can demonstrate their advanced skills during that occasion.

It doesn't matter how many good rides they have had previously, it is that ride that counts.

So make sure you are well prepared, having practised your new skills until they are almost second nature, read and understand Roadcraft and prepare yourself mentally for the test.

If approached with the right attitude **IT IS** only another ride-out.

## Helen and Gary are hitched!

Our wedding by Helen Law (nee Gardner)

On Saturday 7 July 2007, Gary Law and Helen Gardner said "I do" to each other half way up a Cairngorm mountain in the Highlands of Scotland. After 15 years together and the birth of baby



Walking down the aisle, Scottish-style

Aaron in December, we hosted a celebratory weekend with family and friends at Rothiemurchus Lodge, a military adventure training centre near Aviemore. The weekend started on Friday with the arrival of over 100 guests, including many of our NAM friends, who congregated in the bar and drank a barrel of the local Cairngorm Brewery beer in about 5 hours! Just the kind of start we were hoping for. Thank you to Wayne Monk who insisted on buying single malt whiskies - this gave me a rather bad hangover on Saturday morning which gave Gary something to embarrass me with during his groom's

speech! On Saturday we woke up to rain, rain and more rain but that didn't matter as we knew it would improve for our outdoor wedding at 3pm! The weather did put off many from the clay pigeon shooting that we had organised but the hardcore keenies were there – congratulations to Wayne Monk's wife Hilary for being the ladies champion and Debbie and Gary Polwarth's son Dale for being the best male shooter. Other guests also spent time walking, fishing and cycling around the Rothiemurchus estate.

At 3pm, the rain stopped and Gary, his best man Keith, ring-bearer Jasper the dog and all guests followed by the bride, her father and niece Emma walked to the lochan where we had chosen to say our vows. The umbrellas, raincoats, walking boots and of course kilts looked fantastic, along with the piper playing wonderful Highland music.



The newly weds greet their guests with a piper

After a short but special ceremony in a beautiful setting, we all returned to the Lodge for the reception, starting with Pimms and lemonade, whisky and oatcakes with cheese. This was followed by a barbeque meal in the marquee, a traditional Scottish dancing demonstration, ceilidh dancing with music provided by a local band and disco-karaoke by NAM member Dave Williams (who brought all his kit the 500 or so mile round trip for the occasion – many thanks Dave!). Thanks to all the NAM members and their partners who came along and helped us make this weekend special, including all the

guys who wore kilts and special mentions for Stu Fawcett (sorry Stu, had to mention it!) for showing me his crocodile (!) under his kilt and Chris Darling for doing a fantastic karaoke duet with my cousin Lisa (we have some great photos!). The evening finally ended at 4am with a photo of Gary and I outside as the sun started to rise.

Official wedding photos can be viewed online at [www.studiointhesquare.co.uk](http://www.studiointhesquare.co.uk).

**An elderly Irishman lay dying on his bed.**

While suffering the agonies of impending death, he suddenly smelled the aroma of his favourite cheese scones wafting up the stairs

He gathered his remaining strength, and lifted himself from the bed.

Leaning against the wall, he slowly made his way out of the bedroom and, with even greater effort, gripping the railing with both hands, he crawled downstairs.

With laboured breath, he leaned against the door frame, gazing into the kitchen.

Were it not for death's agony, he would have thought himself already in heaven, for there, spread out upon waxed paper on the kitchen table, were dozens of his favourite scones.

Was it heaven? Or was it one final act of heroic love from his devoted Irish wife of sixty years, seeing to it that he left this world a happy man?

Mustering one great effort, he threw himself towards the table, landing on his knees in a rumpled posture. His parched lips parted.

He could almost taste the cheese scone before it was in his mouth, seemingly bringing him back to life.

The aged and withered hand trembled on its way to the nearest scone at the edge of the table, when his hand was suddenly smacked with a spatula by his wife.....

**Leave them alone" She said, "They're for the funeral"**



**It's catching on**



Threat received through the post by Editor

***The following notice was received through the post accompanied by a CD containing a Word file.***

***Quaking in my boots (as usual) at receiving such threats, I felt I had better publish it!***

This contribution is intended for publication in the NAM Riders Chronicle.

Please be aware that you will be in big trouble if you choose not to include it in the next issue.

### **Some Changes Afoot ?**

by K.T.D. (Whoever he may be!)

There has been some discussion lately about the advancing years of some of the NAM members. Whilst not a paid-up member myself, I must admit to noticing that this is the case.

The chap with whom I live is certainly in this category. He's not in the first flush of youth at all. Whilst I have only met a few of the other members they are all either pensioners or behave as if they were. Some are inclined to dribble a bit but I have this problem myself and don't consider it a particular disadvantage.

With this in mind, I understand that a proposal is being put before the committee to make certain changes to the club rules. These are likely to include a 50% reduction in the annual club membership fee for people over fifty years of age. Ownership of a BMW motorcycle will qualify for a further reduction, maybe up to as much as 75%.

Apparently there has been some heated debate at committee meetings over the current range of NAM merchandise. If you hanker after a club baseball cap, buy one while you still can. No more will be ordered once the current stock has been used up. Next year's line up will see them replaced by a more suitable range of cloth caps.



I am told there was some talk of banning those under fifty from the club completely but this is likely to be rejected. Apparently, it's convenient to have a handful of members under that threshold. There was a grudging acknowledgement that these youths can perform the more demanding activities for older members, like putting their bikes on the centre stands for them.

Not surprisingly, the monthly rides have also come in for scrutiny. I hear that, from next year, the over 50's will have their own groups. Younger members will be expected to begin their ride much earlier in the morning in order that they do not occupy the bogs at the coffee stops. A start time of 06.00 hrs has been suggested for them.

I am told that the AGM is coming up fast but the notion of the under 50's only having a half vote might cause a bit of a fuss.

There's great enthusiasm for all these developments, of course, on the new email forum that's been set up for the over 50's. Of course, if you're under 50 you won't have been notified about it, though it's somewhere on Google Groups, I believe. If you do stumble across it, the password's "Codger\_50+". Don't forget the first letter's a capital C.

Ah well, it's only a poxy bike club so who cares anyway. I'll just continue to while away my time irritating people.

***Don't change the habits of a lifetime KTD, but remember that it is the old decrepit fogies who are the 'doers' in this and similar Groups. They get on with whatever tasks they are allocated dedicating a lot of time and effort to make it succeed. Remember that with age comes experience, commitment and reliability. Until a better alternative comes along its doubtful whether this situation will change. Ed.***



**Picture of Billy Wilson being regurgitated by dead shark after being persuaded to act as bait by a group of local fishermen on a recent foreign holiday.**

**Billy the Bun (Billy Davison) missed out on the picture as he was away looking for a large enough bread bun to make a sandwich out of it.**

*But would it fir into your top box Billy? Ed*



## Answers to Crossword (on Page 11)

<u>Across</u>	<u>Down</u>
3 Indian	1 Ariel
6 Triumph Daytona	2 Datatag
8 Slick	4 Dunlop
9 Countersteer	5 Great North Air Ambulance
11 Wild Hogs	7 Ten Kate
13 Silver Dream Racer	8 Superdream
14 Triumph	10 Montesa
15 Noriyuki Haga	12 Scottoiler
22 Harley Davidson	16 Olivers Mount
24 Ilmor	17 Hells Angels
25 Buell	18 Speedway
26 John Hopkins	19 Bridgestone
27 James Toseland	20 John McGuinness
29 Leon Haslam	21 Parabolica
30 Jeremy Burgess	22 Hornet
31 Le Mans	23 Swingarm
	28 Slipper

### Durham Police supporting lady riders

an update on the Ladies Nights by Helen Law (nee Gardner)

Durham Police have once again been hosting ladies nights as part of their Bikewise safety campaign. This year, PC Ali and her (male!) colleagues have been running a monthly get together for lady riders of the north east, supported by local IAM groups.

So far, 3 sessions have taken place on Wednesday evenings during April, May and June – each one with a specific theme.

April was the introductory session, attended by about 30 ladies of all ages and skill levels – the session covered advanced riding techniques as well as being an opportunity for ladies to discuss their riding concerns.

The May session started the more practical activities with riders being able to practice machine control techniques as well as having assessed rides with police riders and IAM observers.



Gary talks about dealing with the aftermath of an accident with the ladies

These options continued in June as both were well received previously.

In addition participants had the option of a “first on scene of an accident” session.

With no meeting in July or August to allow for holidays, a ride out took place on Sunday 5

August, led by Ali. Starting at Washington Services at 10 and Durham Services at 10.30, and after a quick photo shoot by Sgt Bob Brown, we headed off down the Sedgefield back road to Darlo.

From there, it was down the A167 past Croft to Northallerton then on to Thirsk for a chip shop stop. We were met here by a journalist who writes for an American lady biker magazine (UK version just launched) who rode with us for the rest of the trip.

After another photo shoot, we set off (I swapped my tail-end Charlie duties with PC Ali for a chance to ride with the group) for Masham via the B6267.

From here we continued along towards Leyburn until we reached Brymor Farm a tasty ice cream shop. After all it was a gloriously hot day so we needed something to cool us down! With over 20 flavours to choose from, I opted for a double waffle cone with cranberry crunch and raspberry cheesecake flavours – they were both lovely.

After yet another photo shoot by a bloke who couldn't believe that so many girls go out on their bikes together and wanted to be photographed with us to show his mates (his missus took the photo – she must be very forgiving!) we reached Leyburn then picked up the busy road to Richmond then finally Scotch Corner.

We all went our separate ways from here as there were girls from as far apart as Northumberland and Billingham. Photos of the ride out can be seen in the photo gallery on the Bikewise website.

The final evening session arranged for September 12 (7.30pm) will cover motorcycle maintenance so that we develop a better understanding of bikes and their workings.

Many of the lady riders who have attended so far have said that this has been a great opportunity to be able to learn without feeling pressured or intimidated by partners and other male riders; and given the continuing high levels of attendance (even if it was raining the day of the June session!) there is a clear demand for this kind of support.

Ali and I would like to pass on our thanks for the support of Debbie Polwarth, Kev Wellden, Gary Law and Dave Lucas for their participation in running these events.

I would also like to thank Ali, Bob and their colleagues for giving lady riders the opportunity to develop their skills in a non-pressured and safe learning environment.

I would also like to wish Bob all the best for his retirement and to thank him for the support he has given local IAM groups over the years.

He will be a big miss! Enjoy the wine Debbie I gave you at Croft British Superbikes!

Information on the Ladies Nights is available at <http://www.durham.police.uk/bikewise/>

## 10 reasons to NOT ride a motorbike in Canada

By Helen Law (Nee Gardner)

Actually I don't mean it but there are some issues you should consider if thinking about a biking holiday in Canada

1. They have moose, which are huge and love standing in the roads
2. They have bears which can eat you
3. The maximum speed limits are too low (100kph on highways)
4. The extremes of weather destroy the roads
5. Its too hot in summer to wear protective clothing
6. Its too cold in winter to ride anything other than a skidoo
7. Road signs in cities are no use whatsoever for navigating as they simply give the names of the roads (not where the roads take you to!)
8. Lane discipline is negligible and driving standards are poor (we saw drivers hurtling along the hard shoulder in a traffic jam and others weaving between lanes)
9. Most roads are long and straight – there are hardly any twisties
10. The police have guns



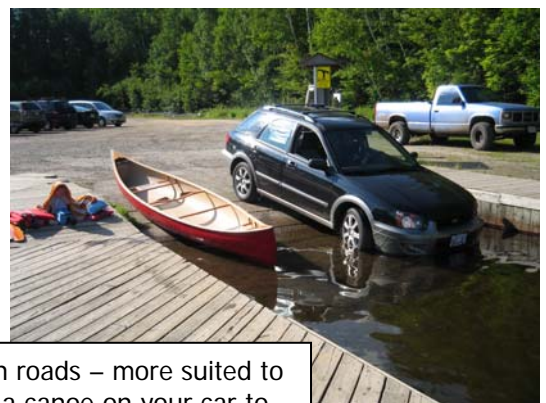
Better off with a small German 4-wheeler on Canadian roads?

Whilst on honeymoon in Ontario and Quebec (not on bikes unfortunately as we had baby Aaron with us) we spoke to many motorcyclists and observed all sorts of driving and riding.

The speeding penalties are similar to the UK with fines and points and it is not illegal to undertake, so even as a driver you have to be ultra-alert of what is happening around you.

But an advanced rider would certainly make the most of a biking holiday in Canada with roads through some amazing scenery throughout the country.

We saw a good mix of sports bikes and cruisers and we even saw a British Y-plated BMW 1150 loaded up with baggage riding along the scenic drive past Niagara Falls.



Canadian roads – more suited to carrying a canoe on your car to the many lakes than biking!

There were far more 600cc sports bikes about than 1000cc models – after all with speed limits so low, there's not much need for anything bigger!

We spoke to a bike racer who was clearly jealous of the standard of tracks in the UK – he mentioned that Canadian tracks lack quality because of the extremes of weather. Maybe when Aaron is a little older we will hire a couple of bikes and do some touring as it is a beautiful place with excellent facilities and services for tourists. And the fuel is cheap too!



## Boxer Leader: Bandits at six o' clock

by Neil Hamilton

September started in fine fettle with the weather set for an "Indian Summer". All set to take advantage, a family Scotland expedition was planned for mid-month, participants thus:

### **Boxer leader**

Neil Hamilton  
BMW R1200RT

### **Bandit One**

Mark Hamilton  
Suzuki Bandit 1250SA

### **Bandit Two**

Chris Hamilton  
Suzuki Bandit 650SA  
(33 BHP restricted)



## Day 1, Sunderland – Spittal of Glenshee, 221 miles

Departed 16:30 via the A1 Western bypass and after fighting traffic until Ponteland, the tranquil A696 was welcome. Snapping past the odd truck, Otterburn was soon upon us followed by a glass smooth Catcleugh Reservoir and the sweeping curves up to Carter Bar.

Boxer Leader, heavy under the load of camping gear, spare kit and food for three, wallowed at slow speed but over 10 MPH shrugged off the burden and cruised. Much progress was made although I have seen fewer cameras outside a movie premier.

First fuel stop just South of Dalkieth with accompanying pain in the wallet (out with Bandit One and Bandit Two I seem to average around 14 MPG, methinks I have bred highwaymen!)

Work seems in hand on a Dalkieth bypass which is long overdue as, if one were looking to give Edinburgh an enema, Dalkieth would be first choice.

Rush hour on the Edinburgh City Bypass never seems quite like rush hour back home and soon the navigation lights of the Forth Road Bridge beckoned.



Once across the Forth, Scotland becomes much grander and even the 30 motorway miles to Perth were a pleasant introduction to the sweeping curves of the A93 winding its way North to Braemar.

Failing light, heavy eyes and empty stomachs forced a landing just beyond Spittal of Glenshee for mince and dumplings, tea and bed.

### Day 2, Spittal of Glenshee – Inshegra, 218 miles

Departed 08:00 having fed midges whilst packing up tent etc. Good “midge magnet” tip discovered however: Midges find their prey by homing in on CO<sub>2</sub> as a Sidewinder missile uses heat, a decoy was needed.

Three motorcycles idling well away from the work zone fooled the little bu\*\*\*\*s and provided welcome respite. Sweeping down through the gentle curves which now take the place of the infamous “Devil’s elbow”, Braemar was soon upon us for a second fuel stop. Onward to Grantown on Spey and the famous, often closed in winter, Cockbridge to Tomintoul road.

Today no snow, no traffic, just chasing the morning light and bacon rolls in The Lecht Ski Centre. Fed and watered and onward to the A9 to Inverness, Kessock bridge, pausing to take in the viewpoint on the Struie Pass before dropping down to Bonar Bridge and lunch in Lairg. Third fuel stop saw an ironic meeting of Boxer Leader (Brit on BMW) with a German guy on a Triumph Bonneville before pressing north for the Kyle of Tongue and rain. Scotland has rainfall that would make Noah wince and today was no exception.

Today’s rain however wasn’t falling it was horizontal, driven by 60 – 70 MPH gusts which caused some interesting moments on the Kyle of Tongue causeway. By Loch Eribol the cold and wet forced a tea stop and the kind proprietor suggested parking the bikes in the lee of his house lest the wind blow them away!

Beyond Durness we encountered the peculiar Scottish economy measure that requires water and vehicles to follow the same course. Highway engineers often call this “standing water” but ours was bouncing. Safety forced a b&b stop at the Old School, Inshegra and many thanks to our host Alan Donaldson for the warm rooms and the local caught haddock. Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzz.

### Day 3 Inshegra – Cluanie Dam, 210 miles

Morning sun, bacon & eggs and on the road south to Scourie. Fourth fuel stop with £1.08.9/litre reflecting the cost of transport in these remote areas. Empty roads, sun and much less wind gave pleasant progress towards Ullapool.

The “Broadband Britain” initiative has undoubtedly benefited data communications but the double cast iron manhole covers which now populate this and many other country roads certainly don’t benefit the motorcyclist.

A particularly clever one was spotted on the northbound side of the road, just over the brow of a hill, on a bend, with its very own microclimate of a stream running across it.

Puts a whole new slant on the term “dead ground” and a reminder of always being able to stop within the distance you can see. Likewise, the large white arrows painted at regular intervals must provide a good reminder to foreign visitors which side of the road to drive on but do the highway engineers not appreciate that putting them on bends is not such a good idea?

After brief respite in Ullapool it was onward past the now anthrax free Gruinard Island, Gairloch and the long winding shores of Loch Maree for fuel (fifth stop) in Kinlochewe and a lunch stop at Shildaig.

Aberdeen Angus dealt with, in the saddle again bound for Lochcarron, the movie-famous Eilean Donan Castle (The Ghost Goes West, Highlander, Loch Ness, The World is not Enough) and a roadside camp just beyond Cluanie dam.

Three guys, a campfire by the side of the road, just like a scene out of Easy Rider. Fortunately this camp ended better than that of Messrs. Fonda, Hopper and Nicholson and we all survived.

### Day 3 Cluanie Dam – Sunderland, 299 miles

Weather forecast was for rain moving South early morning so an early start was called for. Bikes loaded up and ready to go 07:30, just as the rain started. Well before Glen Garry, the rain was left behind with even a little sun. A brisk ride through The Great Glen was followed by a fuel stop at Fort William (sixth stop) at 08:30.

Along the shores of Loch Linnhie to Glencoe and onward past Bidean nam Bian and the Shepherd of Glencoe Buachaille Etive Mor, onto the wilds of Rannoch Moor, regarded as one of the last truly wild places in Scotland.

Robert Louis Stevenson referred to it in his novel Kidnapped as '*A wearier looking desert a man never saw*', but today we were running before the rain and at times, the sun shone.

Tyndrum provided some respite from the cold at the Green Well Stop and sustenance from three Green Welly Breakfasts (no, not each!!). On the road again and encountering things not seen for several days, traffic!

Plenty of opportunities however to punch past the trucks, coaches and sightseers with good progress being made through Crianlarich, around the Lix Toll and through Lochearnhead to Callander, (Tannochbrae in the BBC series Dr Finlay's Casebook).

Bandit One and Bandit Two were almost waylaid by the pleading eyes of a pickup-load of Border Collies but managed to tear themselves away for a welcome fuel stop (seventh stop) before the dubious delights of the M9 and the Edinburgh City Bypass.

The old chestnut of the A68 again, taking the alternate return leg via Coldstream and Wooller. Bandit One required a detour via Westgate Road for a replacement tyres as the Dunlop SportMax fitted the previous Saturday was down to less than 2mm.

Time will tell if the Michelin Pilot Road 2 bring home the bacon. Boxer Leader required a visit to Hein-Gericke for replacement (under warranty) boots due to a zip failure.

Four days, 948 miles, a spectacular tour of the highlands and probably some of the best riding in the country on some of the quietest roads. Life doesn't get much better.

Simple explanations of Haynes manuals.  
(For anyone who has tried to work on their bike using one!)

**Haynes: Should remove easily.**

Translation: Will be severely corroded ... clamp with adjustable spanner then beat repeatedly with a hammer.

**Haynes: This is a snug fit.**

Translation: You will skin your knuckles! ... Clamp with adjustable spanner then beat repeatedly with hammer.

**Haynes: This is a tight fit.**

Translation: No chance matey! ... Clamp with adjustable spanner then beat repeatedly with hammer.

**Haynes: Weekly checks...**

Translation: If it isn't broken don't fix it!

**Haynes: One spanner rating (simple).**

Translation: Your Mum could do this... so how did you manage to botch it up?

**Haynes: Inspect.**

Translation: Squint at it really hard and pretend you know what you are looking at, then declare in a loud knowing voice to your wife "Yep, as I thought, it's going to need a new one"!

**Haynes: Apply moderate heat...**

Translation: Unless you have a blast furnace, don't bother. Clamp with adjustable spanner then beat repeatedly with hammer.

#### **HAYNES GUIDE TO TOOLS OF THE TRADE**

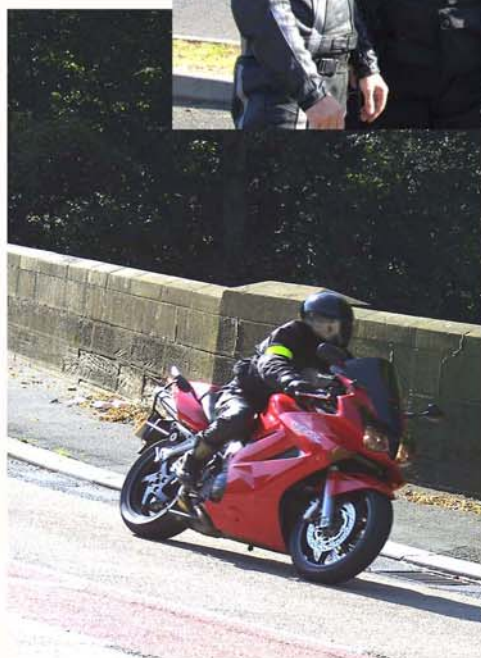
**HAMMER:** Originally employed as a weapon of war, the hammer is nowadays used as a kind of divining rod to locate expensive parts not far from the object we are trying to hit.

**PLIERS:** Used to round off bolt heads.

**HACKSAW:** One of a family of cutting tools built on the Ouija board principle. It transforms human energy into a crooked, unpredictable motion, and the more you attempt to influence its course, the more dismal your future becomes.

**MOLE-GRIPS/ADJUSTABLE SPANNER:** Used to round off bolt heads. If nothing else is available, they can also be used to transfer intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

**PHILLIPS SCREWDRIVER:** Normally used to stab the lids of old-style paper and tin oil cans.



**RECENT RIDEOUTS**



# 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 to next newsletter**

**Friday, 30th November 2007**

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

NAM meets on the second Tuesday of every month at the Wheatsheaf Hotel on the B6918 at Woolsington, near Newcastle Airport, at 7.00pm for 7.30pm.



**nam-online.org**

**Tel: 07951 035038**



**Supported by Northumbria Police**



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