

CAMunicate



The Newsletter
of
Cambridge Advanced Motorcyclists

www.camsiam.org.uk

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Editorial

Welcome to a bumper issue of CAMunicate that reflects the activities of our members during the last few months.

An international flavour is provided with articles including a description of a trip to northern France visiting the various war cemeteries of the area and an update from Roy down in Portugal making us envious of their well surfaced (EU funded) mountain roads. In a similar vein we also have David Schindler's story of his travels in Scotland.

Closer to home there is an account of the All-Day-Ride to the Cat & Fiddle road between Buxton and Macclesfield and how the Derbyshire authorities made sure we all had a safe day by virtue of their extensive speed monitoring and police presence. Unfortunately the second All-Day-Ride to the Humber Bridge needed to be cancelled due to illness so we had no chance to view the STEALTH initiative operating in Lincolnshire.



(Specifically Targeted Enforcement At Lawbreaking Two-wheeled High-end offenders).

There are more all day rides coming up in July and September and these will be reported in subsequent CAMunicates.

The theme of member's bikes continues, this time however it's a fleet of three machines and if rumours are to be believed since the article was written it has changed further. I need some more stories along a similar line; if you want some thoughts about what to include then have a look at the introductory article to this series that was put in the Mar-Apr 08 issue.

An event that needs to be in your diary is the Charity Ride scheduled for Sunday 28th September. If you would like to read about how the 2007 event went then have a look at the article in the Nov-Dec 2007 issue of CAMunicate. In summary this will be the third of these events organised by CAM and each year several thousand pounds is raised for Headway; a charity that assists those who have suffered brain trauma. The format is a ride around the boundary of Cambridgeshire calling at various checkpoints; either as part of an organised club group or on your own – if you go independently you can use whatever roads you prefer to get between the points. As this is a fund raising activity there is a charge for participation and an encouragement to get sponsorship.

There were some problems with organising the Skills Day this month due to complications with our preferred venue and it was decided to delay. The revised date is yet to be agreed and updates will be provided via the club website and CAMunicate.

Boris is the new Mayor of London so we can look forward to him opening up the Capital's bus lanes to motorcycles, as per his election promise. Once this precedent is established it is likely that other cities will follow; including hopefully Cambridge. Future early morning rides to London might well be able to use the significant proportions of the available carriageway currently denied to bikes. So far there have been two London rides, the first was written up in the previous CAMunicate and the second one that took place in June followed basically the same route. The next one, scheduled for the 24th August, will follow a new route to take in another set of London sights so get your name down and see London on a quiet morning without much of the traffic. More information will be published on the website nearer the date.

As a regular message I make an appeal to readers for articles to include in future CAMunicates; the content is reliant on input from the membership.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue

Visit to the Somme - May 2008

How I got involved with the trip:

I happened to be in the right place at the right time - for once!

I was on the London early morning Club ride and during the customary 'egg and bacon' stop, Steve Bradshaw mentioned that one of the riders had dropped out of a trip to the Somme and was I interested? "Yes I was!" So that's how I joined the ride. Incidentally the London ride was brilliant. Early start, progressive riding, crossed the Thames six times, seen lots of sights and back in Cambridge by lunch time - an enjoyable morning's work!

Day 1: Ride to Dover:

We left Stansted Services at 7.30am. The riders were Steve Bradshaw with his son Matthew on pillion, Teresa Bradshaw, David Parnell, Peter Allder and I. (Jim)



We reached Speed Ferries terminal at Dover by 10.00am. Whilst waiting to load the bikes David and Wendy Draper arrived to complete the group. David was to be our leader for the tour being a WW1 expert. We were loaded by 11.00am. Of interest, Speed Ferries use cradles to hold the bikes. The cradle frames are floor mounted with an integral front bracket to accommodate the front wheel. A similar bracket is attached to hold the rear wheel and strapped up tight – the combination of the two brackets holds the bike

'rockish' steady. It was a relief to see a proper bike securing system as opposed to being given a length of rope on a DIY approach. Also, the ticket cost to get bike and rider there

and back was very reasonable. The crossing to Boulogne was calm and didn't seem to take long at all. All in all Speed Ferries are worth considering if you're planning a tour abroad.

Ride to Avril's at Auchon Villers:

We rode out of the dock at Boulogne on the D901 / D940. The 'D' roads in France are the 'old' country roads and are great fun to ride winding through beautiful picturesque countryside and old villages full of character. The plan was to ride most of the tour on 'D' roads. This we achieved and we even managed to get a bit of 'track' training in too. Not 'race' track but 'cart' track thanks to our friendly navigator known affectionately as Garmin!! Even so, lots of fun which added to the overall enjoyment of the tour.

Our first contact with WW1 history was at the Etaples Military Cemetery. The reason for the location of the cemetery was that it was the site of a big military base camp for the British Expeditionary Force essentially the first place every troop came to prior to deployment. The location had three major functions these being stores, training and hospitalisation. About eleven hospitals were located around the area and the wounded from the front line, which was about 40 miles away, would be patched up and either return to duty or be returned to England for long term recovery. Sadly, there were casualties and the cemetery holds around 11,000 soldiers.



It's hard to comprehend the scale of the cemetery. The approach to the cemetery is up a slight grassy incline towards a white stone cross rising high into the sky. As you near the cross the lines of symmetrical white head stones start to appear. We recorded a video diary and just replaying the video now I can hear the gasps from us as the view unfolded. The cemetery is beautifully laid out and beautifully cared for. We left the cemetery in sombre mood to continue the ride to Avril's our B&B.

The tour happened to coincide with a 'heat wave' and this was quite draining so when we arrived at Avril's 'drinks' was the order of the day. The beer went down a treat again and again and a very welcome dinner was enjoyed by all later that evening!!



Avril's B&B in Auchon Villers is an old farm house which has been tastefully renovated over the years but still retains its original charm and character. It is on the edge of a small village which was on the front line in WW1. Avril loves her animals and roaming freely in front of the house were hens with their baby chicks, various cats and a dog. Penned in were sheep, lambs and cattle behind the house. The sheep with their lambs shared their field with a network of WW1 trenches. These trenches led to the underground cellars beneath the farm house.

The cellars acted as a hospital clearing station during the battles and various 'graffiti' has been scratched on the cellar walls bearing details of stretcher bearers who manned the facility. Avril spoke movingly about the people behind the graffiti. Avril's web address is <http://www.avrilwilliams.com> and it's well worth a visit.

Day 2: Long walk down!!

The day before had been a long day on the bikes so the consensus was to spend the day walking and visit local war cemeteries. (One extreme to the other now looking back!!)

During the walk we visited a group of cemeteries including Hawthorn Ridge Cemetery, Hunter's Cemetery, and 'Y' Ravine Cemetery. Further on we visited the Ulster Memorial Tower. We saw a plaque which was unveiled on 1st July 1989 by Her Royal Highness Princess Alice Duchess of Gloucester to commemorate the rededication of the Ulster Memorial Tower. We had a welcome light lunch at the Visitor Centre there and some of us got involved with the Irish caretaker's computer crisis which was successfully resolved through a little coaching. Before we left he showed us around the small museum and also explained how the timing device worked in the nose of the shells. We then walked on to the Thiepval Memorial dedicated to the Missing Of The Somme. This is a glorious brick built memorial to the missing of the Somme and would recommend opening their web site to explore images and history.



and history.

http://www.webmatters.net/cwgc/thiepval_memoorial.htm



On the return walk to Avril's we explored the 'Sunken Road'. As its name implies it is a cart track cut into the landscape to allow easy passage up the side of the steeply sloping field. It therefore offered natural protection to the soldiers waiting to engage the enemy across the field. On the order to attack the troops climbed out of the sunken road onto the field and were mostly lost in the advance such was the defensive strength of the enemy. There is a

cemetery nearby dedicated to the fallen. We saw a group of unexploded shells at a collection point adjacent to the sunken road and Steve insisted on a group photo with him holding the biggest of the unexploded shells. I took some coaxing to join in and to smile for the camera!!

The walk commenced about 10ish and ended back at Avril's around 5ish having covered almost 22 kilometres in the sun. We were relieved to arrive back at Avril's and evidence of 'battle fatigue' was on all our faces!! More beers soon gave us the power to speak again, testimony to the quality of that Belgian brew!

Day 3: Ride to Ypres in Belgium

We made an early start and rode north towards Ypres in Belgium. This was a full day which started with a successful search at a war cemetery near Ypres for the grave of Teresa's great uncle, Sergeant C E Ellerington, 31 years, of the 64th Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry Brigade killed on 9th April 1917 the first day of the battle of the Scarpe, part of the Hindenberg Line, a battle which lasted six to eight days before the objective was realised.

Our next stop was the Tyne Cot cemetery at Passchendaele. The inscription of the commemorative stone at the cemetery reads:

“Tyne Cot cemetery is one of the most important places of remembrance in Flanders. Every year almost 200,000 visitors come here from every part of the world. On 11 May 1922 King George the V visited the cemetery. Since then, many of heads of state and government leaders have followed him, as have millions of others, to remember and honour the dead of Passchendaele 1917”.

As you approach the visitors centre attached to the cemetery you begin to hear, faintly at first, the names of the fallen being read out over the loud speaker system in the gentle, melodic tones of a woman’s voice. This is a moving experience. There are five formidable German pill boxes left in the Tyne Cot cemetery. The two nearest the main entrance can still be seen today. We next visited a German cemetery. The visitor facility consisted of a long open ended square section building which had spaced along one wall a number of viewing screens (TV size). Images of the war and sounds of the war came eerily through loud speakers and were chilling especially when we heard the sound of ‘gas’. The cemetery itself was cold and harsh with the head stones being made from dark stone as opposed to the white stone used in the British cemeteries. Placed on the mass grave were wreaths amongst them were those from British Army regiments with notes of remembrance.

At about 3.30pm we rode into Ypres and parked up in the centre. We enjoyed a late afternoon meal and then walked to the Menin Gate to see the last post being sounded. There were a lot of people collecting against the barriers and we soon realised something special was to take place. It was the 60th anniversary of the AFS (American Field Service) Flanders. The AFS was created as an ambulance arm for the American Hospital of Paris but later the American Field Service cut its ties with the hospital to become a volunteer organization providing ambulance and transport services to the Allied forces in France during World War I. To celebrate the 60th anniversary a service was held including the laying of wreaths from various organisations. H.R.H Princess Astrid of Belgium attended and was present for the Last Post Ceremony at 8.00pm. The Last Post has been sounded each evening since 1922 by the local fire brigade as a tribute and mark of respect to those who were lost.

During the ceremony millions of poppy leaves fell from the three massive holes at the top of the memorial and gently fluttered to earth against a background of sombre music from the musicians present.

At the end of the service, as dusk approached, we rode back to Avril’s.

Day 4: Local ride and exploration:



This was a day for exploring local sights by motorbike.

We visited the site of the Lochnagar crater; the largest British mine crater on the Western Front. This was one of several mines exploded under the German front line positions on the Somme on 1st July 1916 - a charge of 60,000 lbs (26.8 tons) of Ammonal explosive was blown at 7.28am resulting in a crater 90 feet deep and 300 feet across. It is hemispherical in shape. Lochnagar Crater was named after the trench from where the main tunnel was started. However, the

enemy regrouped after the shock of the explosion and when the soldiers advanced they were mown down by the cross fire from many strategically placed machine gun emplacements.

At noon we rode to the town of Albert to partake of a most enjoyable lunch following which we visited the tunnels/museum beneath the city and finally during late afternoon enjoyed the quiet ambiance of the park before returning to Avril's for Dinner.

Day 5: Return to England:

We rode the 'D' roads the majority of the route back to the port. It was uneventful except that Steve's bike developed a fault and refused to go over 70 mph in top. Having got to the port successfully it was decided to form two groups with Steve's group leading to make sure all the bikes would regroup in the event of a stoppage on the ride home. In the event all went well.

Summary:

All agreed it was a very special and enjoyable four days tour. It was brought to life by David Draper's exceptional knowledge of the history of the Battles of the Somme which he shared generously much to everyone's appreciation.

Jim Roberts

Meldreth Manor Bike Show

CAM was pleased to attend and support the Meldreth Manor Bike Show as organised by the Royston & District Motorcycle Club (RDMC) on the evening of the 18th June. This has been an annual event since 1986 and attracts several thousand bikes from all across the region.



It is a charity event with proceeds going towards the Meldreth Manor School which is a Scope residential and day school for disabled students. Over the years additional recipients of donations have included MAGPAS (Mid Anglia General Practitioner Accident Services) and East Anglia Air Ambulance.



Cambridge Advanced Motorcyclists assisted with various marshalling tasks and also put up a small stand to explain to visitors what we can offer. A broad range of local organisations were also represented including Cambridgeshire BikeSafe, HideOut, Pavilion Bikes, SBW Motorrad, Allins, Wheelfit, St.Neots Motorcycles, Ultimate Bike Kit, Rospa, CAMRider and several others.



The real attraction was however the number of bikes; the exhibits included classic British and European machines through to a monster trike based on what looked like a truck engine. The parking field was full and all makes and style of bike were represented. If looking at bikes was your thing then this was the place to be on that Wednesday evening.

The weather had been threatening rain all day but fortunately held off through-out the evening; as the event was closing there was a trace of rain in the air and the stormy weather arrived about an hour later.

To see a video clip of the 2007 event follow the link;
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjsRnpTItVI>

Congratulations to RDMC for organising and delivering an interesting show for such a good cause and thank-you to our members who assisted with marshalling and manned our stand.

One is just not enough

Hello. I am David Schindler and this is a short article about my current bike fleet.

I have three motorcycles at the moment; a 2001 BMW R1150 GS, a 2001 Harley Davidson Dyna Glide FXD and a 1992 Honda Pan European ST1100.



The BMW is my alpha bike in that it does everything well.

I have taken it to France three times and also to Belgium, Luxemburg, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Spain and Portugal. In the UK I regularly use it for all-day rides, IAM Sunday runs and, as an IAM Observer, I frequently use it for observed rides with Associates. During 2006 and 2007 a surprisingly high mileage was clocked up in the planning of the annual Charity Ride route.

The bike rides particularly well and is very well balanced for what is a tall heavy machine. Having made a small modification to the tank filler cap I can now squeeze two more litres into the fuel tank which, given gentle riding, means I can get 270 miles to a tankful of petrol and on a recent continental trip including mountains I got 2000 mile per pint of oil. I do most of the servicing myself but this year I let the BMW dealer do the 36K service. To keep the engine smooth I balance the fuel/air supply to the injectors as if this is wrong the engine vibrates badly.



I bought the Harley - well my girlfriend bought it for me, just to chill out around the coast. Actually the BMW would do that and do so with a bit more lean angle and a lot less leg pulling from Mr Bradshaw.(Private joke).



The Harley does not shake out all your teeth and has not broken down since I have been riding it. It will cruise at 80 all day and I get 200 miles from a full tank of fuel. It does corner well but sadly not to the right as the silencers ground down; this makes roundabouts a bit of an art.



I bought the Honda as a winter project as I always fancied trying one. There were a few things wrong with it but bearing in mind that it is 16 years old, has 80,000 miles on the clock and I only paid £1600 for a model of bike that frequently reaches 200K miles I was fairly well pleased.

Overall I have been quite happy with the Honda with the only significant problem being the engine occasionally cutting out whilst riding alone. I tracked this to the tilt switch that cuts off the fuel if the bike exceeds a certain tilt angle, like when a crash occurs. It turned out that this

had been a Honda recall which had not been done and as rectifying the problem involved taking off all the plastic fairings to gain access I decided to change both the tilt switch and the associated relay. Replacement units were sourced via e-bay off a crashed bike and the chap also threw in the computer as both my bike and his were the less common Pan models that did not have ABS and TC. Good deal and once assembled and tested the bike ran perfectly with no more cutting out.

The picture of the Honda is at Snape Maltings in Suffolk; a fantastic place for a short day ride from Cambridge - lots of country roads and a pretty village. Snape has a Pub, Coffee shop, Gift shop and toilets. The large car park is free and the parking marshals direct you up onto the quay away from the cars and the gravel. As you can see the quay is level and made of concrete. You are not far from Aldeburgh if you like the coast, with Dunwich and Southwold further up the coast. Now that sounds like a day ride.

I am hoping to go to Scotland on the Honda this year and then sell it when I get back.

The BMW is booked in on a trip to the Italian Alps as the last time I was in that area I wanted to see the Dolomites but it rained all day and you could only see about 100 meters. This time I am staying in the area for five days so I should get a clear day or two or perhaps three - but who cares the roads will be great.

Best Wishes and safe riding

David Schindler

ps. *It is rumoured that there have been changes to this fleet during June and that a Yamaha FJR1300 should now be included and that an 'old friend' has left the garage.*

Cat & Fiddle all-day ride (May 2008)

All day rides are fun and when the destination is one of the more famous biking roads in the UK then an interesting day is assured. The Cat & Fiddle run takes its name from the pub that sits on the Woodhead Pass in the Derbyshire Peak District. The surrounding roads are challenging and the associated scenery stunning though rather bleak.



The ride was organised by Peter Alder and six bikes left Tesco Milton early morning and we later picked up a seventh bike at Norman Cross near Peterborough. As there were two

pillions our little group totalled nine. The weather was unspectacular, grey and dry; but perfectly OK for a day on the bike.

The route itself combined the bendy fen roads out towards Peterborough and then a combination of large and small 'A' roads to get up into Derbyshire via Ashbourne and Buxton. The Cat & Fiddle road itself is the A537 that links Buxton to Macclesfield and we followed this and then looped back to Buxton using the local 'B' roads. Return to Cambridge was via the outskirts of Nottingham and down through Melton Mowbray and past Rutland Water.

The Cat & Fiddle Inn whilst lending its name to this famous bit of UK biking road also has a story to tell in its own right.



At 1690 feet above sea level it is allegedly the highest licensed house in England and the current building can be dated to the construction of the A537 in 1823. Whether an earlier hostelry existing on this site is not known but this pass was not on one of the established coaching routes.

Some intriguing theories exist for its naming

It has been suggested that it is a corruption of the name 'Catherine Fidelis', also known as Catherine of Aragon who was the first wife of Henry VIII.

Alternatively but still based on a notable historical women is the idea that 'Cat' refers to Catherine, the wife of Peter the Great, Tsar of Russia – how the 'Fiddle' is relevant is less clear.

More relevant to the region is the story that one of the eccentric Dukes of Devonshire who would have used this road on his way to and from Buxton stopped at the summit on a regular basis to play his violin.

The game of 'Trap Ball' was a common pub game at the time when this Inn was established and this pastime involved a tapered stick called a 'cat' and presumably a ball. Add to this some musical accompaniment via the local fiddle players and perhaps this is the explanation.

It may of course have been simply derived from the nursery rhyme - 'Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle' and the carved stone plaque on the wall which seems to date from the construction of the building adds some credence to this idea

The road that descended down to Macclesfield from the Cat & Fiddle is truly awesome as it twists and turns with some of the bends appearing to be almost banked.

The camber shifts orientation, sometimes assisting other times giving the feeling that the road is just falling away under you



Musing over the day as I prepared to write up this article a key conclusion struck me; the roads in Derbyshire were great but the most fun was had on the journeys there and back. The reason seemed to be the almost blanket application of 40mph and 50mph speed limits through-out the County. I have no issue with speed limits that are in place to protect one member of society from the irresponsible acts of another such as through villages or in urban areas but I do object to the laws that intend to protect me from myself – I don't need it and don't want it.

In fairness though I thought I should research a little on the reasons behind the sharp focus on this particular area and specifically the Cat & Fiddle stretch.

Over the years many bikers using this Macclesfield to Buxton route have come to grief trying to take the sharp corners at inappropriate speeds and it has been rated as the most dangerous road in England and the second most hazardous in Britain.

Its notoriety attracts bikers from all over the country and abroad who test their riding skills on the narrow, twisting road across the moors. The local Police have battled for years to find an answer to the Cat and Fiddle casualty count and the reduced speed limits are enforced via cameras, marked and unmarked police vehicles plus spotter aircraft. The reality is that the danger of a piece of road such as this cannot either be engineered out through changing the geometry of bends, adding crash barriers or improving the road surface – though they all assist; and nor can the danger be legislated out as those who choose to push their abilities against the challenges of a road like this know full well that they are breaking the traffic law and do so intentionally

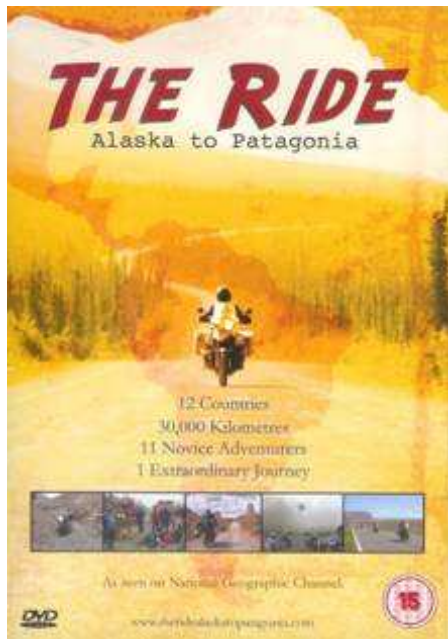
Looking through the RoadCraft book, as one does, I noted that 80% of motorcycle accidents are caused by 'user error' – this then being the core proposition for training and skill development. Putting oneself at risk is a well-established part of human nature and is expressed through a wide variety of lifestyles and sports that potentially injure. Why else would people bungee-jump, ski off-piste, sky dive, go caving, mountaineering and do many of the other aspects of life that carries risk – including motorcycling. Educate people as to the risks that their life decisions imply, encourage safe practice, protect the innocent and allow personal choice.

But back to the ride itself - it was a fairly strenuous day that included about 340 miles of riding punctuated by a petrol stop mid morning at Hathern, near Leicester, lunch at the Cat & Fiddle pub, more petrol at Macclesfield and then a coffee break in Matlock. The day had started around 8.30 and the group split around Earith in the early evening.

Thanks to Peter Alder for organising the ride.

DVD Review : The Ride – Alaska to Patagonia

by Kevin & Julia Saunders



Every now & then somebody comes up with an idea for a present that is a real winner. For me, receiving the DVD of 'The Ride' ticked all the boxes as it provided me with 2.5 hours of great 'motorbike' viewing.

So, what is it about? This is a travel documentary filmed by a Cambridge company for National Geographic and records an epic ride from Alaska through to the bottom of Chile. That's a great start but it gets better. The ride was led by Kevin & Julia Saunders who hold two Guinness world records for long distance expeditions. Based on their experiences, they organised the 2005 TransAm trip for eleven riders from the UK (none of whom had expedition experience). Together they travelled some 30,000 kms through twelve different countries.

The DVD is compelling because it features a great bunch of people doing something that they obviously enjoy and if you are nurturing a plan for a similar trip, then this should really whet your appetite. If you

simply enjoy learning a little more about other countries and seeing some great scenery through the eyes of a biker then this is also for you as the documentary approach provides a

fascinating insight into the tremendous variety of riding conditions and landscapes that they encountered along the way.

The DVD is split into 5 episodes with the first section showing the riders on a test ride in the UK (one of them falls off!) and then taking their BMW GSs to be crated up and flown to Alaska where they start their journey. Each subsequent episode deals with a different stage of their journey through Canada, the USA, Central America and the West coast of South America. If I were being picky, then there is a bit of repetition in the first couple of minutes of the last four episodes as they start with a recap. Also, condensing a four-month journey into just 2.5 hours means that you only have time to get a feel for the ride as opposed to the details. However, for me this was a very minor criticism as each episode is fast moving and filled with great shots of bikes, scenery and the personal experiences and interactions of the riders.

I felt this was a documentary with a feel-good factor. Not only is it a great present to receive but it's amazing how popular you become with friends who want to see it!

So, if you don't know what to ask for the next time a birthday comes round then this might be the answer!

*Buy new for £17.99 from http://www.globbusters.com/main/dvd_video.html
or watch out for repeats on the National Geographic channel*

Paul Raymond

Trip to Scottish Highlands 2008



'I am off on a trip to John o' Groats Scotland'.

'What for?' everyone said,
'There's nothing there'.

Well I've never been to John o' Groats so I planned a route, some accommodation and booked some leave from work. Then along came a petrol refinery strike; so a "must have" was a spare petrol can - Just in case for those long stints between towns. But there were no problems as long as I checked the mileage between towns and filled up with fuel.

First thing was which bike, well touring around the Scottish Highlands it's got to be the King of Tourers the Honda Pan European.

First Day.

From Cambridge was Erskine Bridge Hotel just north of Glasgow. 345 miles gets most of the UK out of the way. I left Cambridge at 8.30 and arrived at Erskine at 16.00 with one fuel stop at Crankenthorp on the A66. There's no petrol station after Scotch Corner.

Second Day

It starts to rain and keeps it up all day; it's still raining when I reach the Isle of Skye and the island is covered in cloud so I turn around and go and find the B&B for the night.

Soluis mu Thuath is down a narrow road with a cattle grid set in a bend in the road. The front wheel thinks this is fun and takes a slide to the right. Skillful clenching of my buttocks keeps the bike upright and I am soon drinking a hot cup of tea after putting my wet kit in the drying room. Mileage 190.



Third and Fourth Days

With gloves drying out clamped to the top box, the sun out it was a nice slow ride up to Ullapool for lunch. As is the way with bikers I meet a chap with an FJR1300, he recommended it, as they do, and claims he can get 300 miles to a tank of fuel if he drives slowly. This rings a bell as on some of my trips in France on a Sunday unless you stick to motorways petrol can be hard to get.



I take a few photo's here and start off again for the next stop at Gills just 2 miles short of John o' Groats. There's very little traffic on the roads and I stop at Durness for a cup of tea. There is a petrol station here but I will not need any for the rest of the day. It's very nice scenery all the way to Gills and actually I see more bikers than cars; most of them coming east to west. As I have the sun behind me I think I have the best route.

I filled up with fuel in Casletown to last the next two days and detoured up the B855 to Dunnet Head the most northerly (uninhabited point) in the British Isle.

The accommodation at Gills was fantastic and the owners offered to drive me to the local restaurant and pick me up later so I could have a good drink!!! I declined and rode there in lightweight gear. The evenings last for ages and were very warm. I drank a pint of Orkney Ale (pale ale) - you must try some if you get a chance.



The following day I rode around the area and visited John o' Groats, Duncansby Head with the two Stacks, and did the tour of Mey Castle, the Queen Mothers Scottish home.

To get your photo taken by the sign post at John O'Groats cost between £17 and £29 so I parked on the quay and took my own.



Day Five

I took the coastal road A99 down to Wick and the A9 all the way to Pitlochry 213 miles for my last night in Scotland and then my final day home to Cambridge

Day Six

368 miles including a detour around Northumberland National Park in a day that started in Pitlochry at 11.00, after a long breakfast, and ended when I reached home in Cambridge at 19.45.

It was very good riding the Pan European and it went well in spite of being 16 years old and having done 82,000 miles. It used half a pint of oil (quarter litre) in 1700 miles and it needed a new tyre from Wheel Fit.

I shall be going again and do more of the west coast. At Gills there is a vehicle ferry for the Orkney Isle and a day trip would be good.

The Pan is just run in now. Does anyone want to buy it?

Accommodation Recommended.

Soluis Mu Thuath Guest House
Margret and Gerry,
Braeintra, By Achmore, Lochaish IV53 8UP,
01599 577219



Burnside Cottages, Mrs Green,
Gills, Canisbay, Wick, Caithness, KW1 4YB,
01955 611316, www.burnside-cottage.co.uk

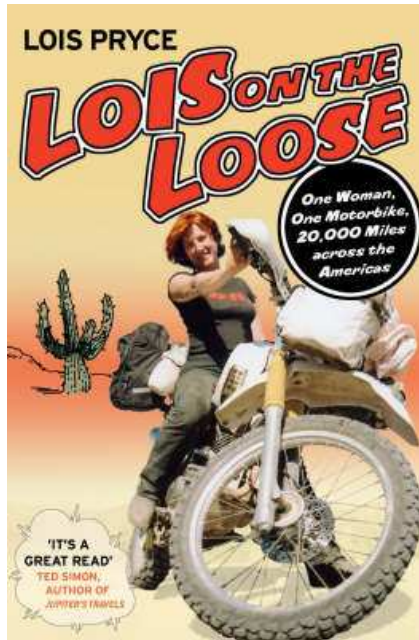


Rosehill, Jackie and Ian,
47 Atholl Road, Pitlochry, PH16 5BX
01796 472958

David Schindler

Lois on the Loose - Book Review

Lois on the Loose is the story of Lois Pryce's ride from Alaska to Ushuaia in Argentina, a place whose claim to fame is being the southern most city in the world.



It is an intriguing tale of someone who is frustrated by doing what she perceives as a mundane job for the BBC and has a desire to do 'something'. That something turns out to be a 20,000 mile journey over 10 months down the length of North and South America. It is a compelling read because of the adventures she experiences and the stories of the people she meets. It fits the genre of motorbike adventure stories to a tee; complete ignoramus at the beginning and a seasoned traveller and ace mechanic by the end. No challenge too daunting and lives to tell the tale.

Lois had several riding companions en route one of whom, Amelia, proved to be a real 'strain' on relationships. One moment all was relatively calm, albeit strained, and the next disaster struck. Amelia I suspect has not written her story and thereby hangs the salutary tale – those who overcome all adversity write tantalising books. I just wonder how many people have started off like Lois but we never hear of them simply because they fall by the wayside.

Still it is a fascinating story which shows what can be done despite heat, cold, monstrous side winds etc .Oh look, it is drizzling yet again and I've got an observed ride this afternoon. Puts it in perspective really!

Lois on the Loose, Lois Pryce, 2007, Arrow Books, £7.99 paperback

David Parnell

Charity Event -- sponsored row in aid of a rider's & children's fund

I am writing to you as part of a fund raising exercise on behalf of my little brother in law - Tony.

The charities he is raising money for are;

Chris Jones Riders Fund (www.cjnine.com)

Royal Navy & Royal Marines Children's Fund (www.rnrmchildrensfund.org.uk).

Tony is the ring leader behind a mammoth sponsored row. Ten Royal Marines and two Royal Navy will row 2400km (2.4 million metres or just shy of 1500 miles!) non-stop using two Concept II rowing machines.

The event will be held at The Henry Leach Building, Fleet Headquarters, Whale Island, Portsmouth and will commence at midday on 21st September 2008. It is anticipated that the distance will be reached by Thursday 24th September (approx four or five days of round the clock rowing).

Some of you may already be aware of the Chris Jones Riders fund as motorcyclists yourselves and may know that the fund is in memory of a young rider who lost his life whilst pursuing the sport we all love.

Tony himself overcame horrific injuries sustained in a start line incident back in October 2004 at Donington Park whilst club racing his GSXR1000. Luckily, thanks to the care Tony received and his inner strength he survived and is now actively pursuing this fund raising activity in aid of The Chris Jones Rider Fund and The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children Fund (well he is an officer in The Royal Marines and has been a Royal Marine since 1993 after all).

Will you please look at <http://www.justgiving.com/tonycreaney> and give generously?

Tony is linked to <http://www.centurionracing.net> who run three riders on Honda CBR600RR's in British Supersport and you will see Tony being interviewed by Jamie Whitham on the grid just before some British Superbike races on the telly.

Tony has also got support from many top riders for his marathon row, including James Toseland, Jamie Whitham, James Haydon, John Reynolds, John Hopkins etc etc.

Thank you and if you're at a British Superbike round, be sure to say hello to Tony (he's the one in the Marine uniform) and tell him you're a friend of mine!

Mark Aldridge

Down and Now Out (on the roads) in Portugal

If your view of the Portuguese Algarve is Sun, Sand and Sex, or Beach and Beer, then think again. It is a biker's paradise and I am not talking about the sun, sand, sex, beach and beer, although you could indulge yourself in these as well.

Five miles inland from the beaches there is a range of hills rising to a maximum of just on 3,000 feet. These run the full length of the Algarve and front on to hundreds of square miles of heavily undulating land which was pushed into monstrous heaps by the earthquake of 1755 which destroyed Lisbon and most of the towns in Southern Portugal.

These hills are criss-crossed by wonderful roads which are accessible from all parts of the Algarve. Better still there is a free motorway (the A22) which runs along the base of the hills giving rapid access to all parts within minutes. From leaving the beach, you can be on your first twisty road within 10 minutes. You can link the twisty roads together to form exciting circular trips of between 2 and 4 hours duration.

Unlike the roads on the coast, which are pretty rough, partly due to years of poor maintenance and not helped by the current introduction of natural gas, the roads in the hills are immaculate and the surfaces would put most UK "A" roads to shame. For example I have ridden, almost without exception, with my suspension setting in "Sport" mode and have been just as comfortable as if I had been in "Comfort" mode.

The surface is clean, dry, grippy and almost entirely empty of vehicles of any sort. Best of all, they are very twisty with, on average, a double bend every hundred yards or so. If you want to sharpen your skill at reading the road, this is the place to do it. Alternatively, if you have a GPS, you can set the resolution down to 500 feet and it will show you each twist and turn before you get to it.

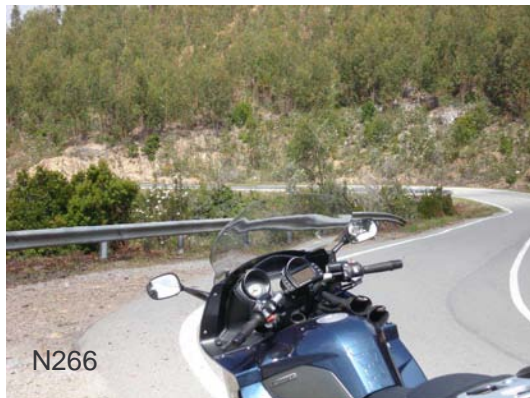


These are not frighteningly steep hills such as you get in the Alps with 1 in 3 inclines on 270 degree bends. Here the roads amble up to the top following every twist and turn in the terrain as they work their way up the sides of the valleys, sometimes running along the top of ridges giving spectacular views on both sides (if you want to tear your eyes off the road).

Because the road do not turn back on themselves, it is difficult to get photographs that shows the sheer exuberance of the twisting roads. This is more easily seen by viewing the route as a screen print from MapSource.

You can do 15 miles without getting above 4th gear (out of 6). 3rd gear is the most flexible providing engine braking when entering the corners and torque when pulling out. 2nd is useful occasionally if the corner is tighter and on a steeper bit. Speeds vary between 30 and 50 mph on the corners (on my touring bike) and on several occasions I have had my boot scraping the floor.

Imagine all the twisty racetracks in the UK (probably in the whole of Europe) joined together, dried out, resurfaced, emptied of vehicles and laid out for your motorcycling pleasure.



N266



N397 from Cachopo to Tavira



Tavira Harbour



Beach at Vila Real

Matthew might find this useful. Even in the deprived rural areas of Portugal many of the Arnco crash barriers are biker friendly and in some places where they are not, the local bikers have placed tyres around the supports. Perhaps CAM could lead a campaign to do likewise....

Where else can you have a half day ride that includes beaches, harbours, 70 miles of twisty roads, two international border crossings (one on a motorway suspension bridge, one on a ferry), navigable rivers and castles? Get here before the rest find it. You can get a double room in a hotel for 47 Euros B&B per night. It even has a secure underground car park.



Ayamonte Ferry



The A22 motorway bridge from Portugal (left) to Spain (right)

Roy Turner (our foreign correspondent)

Observers Co-Ordination Meeting

The Observers meeting was held on the 14th May 2008 at the Orwell Pavilion and was attended by eleven of the club's observers.

The meeting addressed three specific topics:

- Group riding
- Buddy System
- Radios

The conclusions were as follows;

- On group rides such as the Sunday ride-outs staggered road positioning should be used on straight sections and dual carriageways unless some hazard precludes this. Positioning for the optimum line takes precedence over staggered formations in the vicinity of hazards.
- To encourage generally good riding practice on group rides it was proposed to implement a 'buddy system' that interleaves experienced and less-experienced riders through the group.
- Observers will include staggered riding as a part of the Observed rides programme and the classroom theory session will include a section on group riding.
- Feedback from the AGM was that the use of the buddy system was a welcome development and was perceived to be having real benefits. It was agreed that discussion between the members of each pair should be seen as the 'norm' and encouraged.
- The Group has bought several sets of radios which some Observers are currently trialling. Once the trial is completed the experiences will be discussed and reported before extending the use of radios.
- There was general discussion on the topic of maintaining Observer standards and the desire for all active Observers to participate in several of the group events so as to ensure there is liaison and mutual help.

Observers are invited to participate in the classroom theory sessions.

Committee Feedback

Since the last issue of CAMunicate Committee meetings have been held on the 26th May and the 30th June.

Discussions included;

- Confirmation of the various Committee positions
- Ongoing support of the BikeSafe initiative
- Rescheduling of the Skills-Day due to venue complications
- Updating of training material used by Observers
- Approval of proposed club purchases
- Charity Ride for September – confirmation of organisers
- Support of Meldreth Manor bike show event
- Updating of website
- Forthcoming events
- Treasury & Secretary reports

If there are issues that you would like to be considered by the committee at a future meeting can you please send an outlining e-mail to David Parnell at dgpoforwell@btinternet.com

Test Passes

Congratulations for passing the IAM test to;
Russell Browning, Sarah Burge and Gordon Bligh.

Diary of Events - 2008

Date	July Events
4 th	Theory Session
6 th	Sunday Group Ride
20 th	Sunday Group Ride
20 th	All Day Ride
27 th	Ladies Ride
28 th	Committee Meeting

Date	August Events
3 rd	Sunday Group Ride
17 th	Sunday Group Ride
17 th	All Day Ride
18 th	Committee Meeting
24 th	London Early AM Tour
31 st	Observers Ride

Date	September Events
5 th	Theory Session
7 th	Sunday Group Ride
14 th	Assessment Day
21 st	Sunday Group Ride
21 st	All Day Ride
28 th	Headway Charity Ride
29 th	Committee Meeting

Date	October Events
3 rd	Theory Session
5 th	Sunday Group Ride
15 th	Observers Evening
19 th	Sunday Group Ride
27 th	Committee Meeting

Date	November Events
2 nd	Sunday Group Ride
16 th	Sunday Group Ride
24 th	Committee Meeting
30 th	Observers Ride

Date	December Events
7 th	Sunday Group Ride
21 st	Sunday Group Ride

To obtain the most recent information on club events, times and meeting places please check the web-site.

Useful Information

Observer's Contacts – removed on public version of CAMunicate

Name	Location	E-Mail	Telephone
Brian Farrow			
Chris Curryer			
David Bradshaw			
David Heales			
David Parnell			
David Schindler			
Ian Beeby			
Mac Lewis			
Peter Allder			
Stephen Bradshaw			
Steve Alsop			
Teresa Bradshaw			
Terry McKenna			

If an Associate has not heard from his or her Observer then please use the list above to make contact. Any problems then please get in touch with Steve Alsop or Ian Beeby and they will sort things out for you.

CAMunicate Contributions

Please send all contributions for CAMunicate to David Nobel at the e-mail shown below.

Alternatively if you have some ideas that you think would make a good article but would prefer not to write yourself then call me to discuss.

Name	Location	E-Mail	Telephone
David Nobel	Cambridge	david.nobel@ntlworld.com	01223 510559

Group Contact

If you require information for a friend about the Group's activities or have other queries please contact:

Ian Beeby
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or visit the website on;

www.camsiam.org.uk