



MOJACAR MOTORCYCLE TOURING CLUB

bulletin

A Club for Touring Motorcyclists founded by the late Ken Craven.
www.mojacarmtc.org.uk

September 2009
Issue 177

SECRETARIES BIT

The club weekend at Llanwrtyd Wells was a great success. There was a grand turnout, Jackie told me around 37 were in attendance. I am sure the venue for our evening meals and all the merriment - the Bell Vue Inn is a major factor; the service being efficient, light hearted and cosy. A report by Martin Heuter on the event is printed elsewhere in the bulletin.

Mulberry House Hostel; Abergavenney. As many members know the club has been holding a very successful weekend event at Mulberry House for several years - always organised by John & Kit Evans. It is consistently the most well attended weekend event on our annual calendar. As you also know, John had a nasty accident last year and is continuing to recover, but slowly.

I was approached by members at Llanwrtyd asking if this event was likely to be held again, if it was possible Paul Weston said he would organise it. I approached Mulberry House to ask if any dates were available early on in 2010 - the weekend 19th/20th March was available. I contacted Dave Boon and after discussion we decided that as no winter warmer has been offered we would place this event in our calendar as the winter warmer for 2010. The reason for the urgency is that it is a case of "first come first served" at Mulberry House, and if some other organisation steps in for that weekend it will be lost. I approached John Evans and asked if he was happy for someone else to take on organising what in effect is his event - he was delighted. He said he was hoping it would be taken on by someone and that we would see him and Kit for dinner on one of the evenings. As we need to reserve this date quickly I have placed a booking slip in the bulletin. If you wish to join please forward the slip with a cheque for £20 per person deposit payable to Paul Weston and send to his address on the slip.

The AGM:- Attached to the bulletin is the booking slip for your evening meal, please return this to me with payment and, for those camping indicate if you are bringing a caravan etc; so that I can inform Adrian at Hook Farm, please ASAP.

A.W. Maidens Hon Secretary,
8 The Cedars, Benson, Wallingford, Oxford. OX10 6LL
Tel No: 01491 838489
E mail ac_maidens68@hotmail.com
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NEW MEMBERS

We welcome new members Steve and Jane Taylor.
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LLANWRTYD WELLS

There is no such thing as bad weather – only unsuitable clothing (and sometimes attitude)!!

My Llanwrtyd Wells weekend began a couple of weeks earlier ... "going to Jackie and Brian's means it's going to be raining. And my visor will steam up". So I went out to buy an anti-fog insert for my reasonably new Arai helmet only to be confronted with the lack of lubrication on the visor mechanism so had to go to Cheltenham's Hein Gericke shop to seek expert assistance (anyway he lives nearby, highly recommended, the guy talked me through the how to etc. etc. and cleaned and lubed the mechanism and didn't earn a penny ...).

So, equipped with a mist-proof visor and my gear (and without Natalie who decided she needed our new house to herself ...) rode up to mid-Wales. When I pulled up at Brian's (and after being welcomed in his garage) I was greeted with the usual northern charm by some of the Mojacar crowd ("take yer boots off!!!!!!") - never mind the "how are you, haven't seen you for a long time". Some people never learn :-).

Friday night turned out to be a glimpse of yet another successful weekend – a record turnout of some 40 Mojacaran's descended on the Belle Vue for pre-dinner drinks and food. I wondered at an intermittent trip to the bar whether the door between the dining room was closed for our or the locals' benefit ... Noisy as ever.

Anyway, Saturday morning presented us with the predictable and inevitable ... RAIN. Well, no, it was more dense drizzle. As opposed to last year when most folk bowed out (whimps!) this time most of us went on the ride, not all in the same directions but so what. My

All correspondence on subjects other than events to:

anti-fog purchase paid off big time, at least until the coffee stop. Brian had chosen a lovely route as usual and, especially the Elan Valley was spectacular, with views (admittedly through the drizzle) of lush valleys, brook and gorse. The rain continued and if I had any doubts about whether or not to part company with my big lump of a tourer (yes, I have been considering changing my bike) I was taught a lesson. Mind you, there is another one in wait. My clothes kept dry (ok, my left glove was soaked, the right one stayed dry courtesy of wind directions). Rain ceased after the breakfast stop and we went off into more sunny conditions, a long 'snake' of bikes (I was however told later that a somewhat smaller snake was encountered riding in the opposite directions ... was that you, John Sellwood?). Almost forgot to mention the two cyclists who we overtook when coming down the pass from Elan Valley who commented on the wind to me ... "... you should be on my bike, it gets a broadside on the fairing..." – I don't think they quite understood what I meant.

After a lunch stop at the Belle View (who worked that one out., no seriously, it was called the Belle View) things had seriously dried up. Getting there took even Brian by surprise, un-announced roadwork's forced some major detouring but nobody got lost. The ride back was gentle, through rolling landscapes, a tad windy at times but the scenery and the mud on the road made it an experience. We came back in dry weather but in true fashion Llanwrtyd Wells greeted us with rain ... Ah well. I managed to find a bookshop to bridge the gap between riding and the evening get together. Brian pointed me to the local second-hand bookshop ... What an experience – walk in, nobody in there, a polite sign to ask you to put something into the honesty box and that was it ... ah, of course, books. Well, isn't that a light in the darkness of modern life. I ended up with a short novel which I gobbled up quickly and then made my way back to the Belle Vue ... it was Saturday evening and the local lads (and girls) were out in full force ☺. So we took shelter soon enough in our dining room whilst one of us confused this with the landlady's private sitting room ... imagine the surprise finding a strange man in her living room rather than her family ... Tut tut. The evening – as on many occasions before was a huge success, food excellent and spirits were running high. I took the liberty to encourage members to donate for my bicycle ride from London to Paris in September, after the previous evening Jackie cajoled us into donating for the local hospice. Thank you everyone for donating for both good causes.

My scheduled test ride on Sunday morning on Brian's R100 didn't happen – a number of happy hours were called for after a not-happy noise emanated from the rear end of the bike on Saturday afternoon. So I made my way back early on Sunday, choosing the 'long way round' back to Malvern. Again a wonderful weekend and as said – who cares about rain, it's always a question of clothing and attitude.

Martin Heuter

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AN OPEN LETTER FROM A RATHER VEXED
BRIAN & JAKIE CASWELL; organisers of the
Llanwrtyd Wells event.

In spite of a slightly mixed bag weather-wise the weekend seemed to meet with overwhelming approval and, from my and Jackie's point of view was well worth the not inconsiderable effort involved. However, the event was somewhat soured by one member who decided for reasons known to himself to quit the event early on Saturday morning and refusing point blank to honour his bookings for guest house accommodation together with Saturday evening meals at the Belle Vue. Luckily the guest house proprietor was able to re-book the room, unlike the pre-booked meals at the Belle Vue.

In past years when putting on this weekend, I have never asked for a deposit from anyone – it's always been done on trust. In future it may well be that I shall ask for a hefty deposit or even full payment in advance. I'm sorry folks but that's the way I feel - one has spoilt it for all.

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AGM reunion weekend:

Date 9th and 10th October. Organiser: Tony Maidens.
01491 838489.

The usual format for the weekend is as follows: many arrive Friday evening for a meal with friends; on Saturday those on motorcycles usually go on a ride out returning after lunch – Dave Boon is supplying a short route for this. We gather in the Pilot Boat Inn at 7pm for the meeting which is usually short, followed by supper.

If anyone has any proposals for discussion at the AGM please send to me a.s.a.p.

I have received some offers for weekend events published opposite. We have an offer for a summer tour next year from Dave Bexley and, an autumn tour from Dave Gilligan, if anyone else has a tour in mind please forward to me for discussion at the AGM

Whatever event you might have in mind please send details to me for discussion at the AGM.

The supper reservation form is printed in this edition, it may seem early but a prompt response from members helps me to organise the meals required and any camping requirement. Folk are most welcome to turn up on the night for the meeting and join in for a pint or two – but you may have trouble getting food to your liking if you don't reserve a meal prior to the meeting.

Hon Secretary

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AGM AGENDA

- Summary of 2009 events by chairman Dave Boon.
- Treasurers report on this years' accounts.
- Election of club officers for 2010: all this years' officers are prepared to stand for re-election.
- Election of club committee for 2010: all this years' committee are prepared to stand for re-election.
- Any proposals put forward to be considered by the AGM.
- Events on offer for 2010: in addition to the May reunion and AGM weekend other events on offer are detailed below.
- Any other business.

Proposal from Alan Simister

I must admit that I am not a great advocate of the charity culture. Too many people make a very comfortable living off the back of the charity industry.

I do support a number of smaller charities where I feel the money in the main gets to the people it is intended to help. Riders for Health is such a charity, its about motorcycling and motorcycles making a positive contribution to peoples health and teaching skills associated with the maintenance of motorcycles for the good of the community. The use of the motorcycle to reach outlying areas on the African continent is not new, large numbers of motorcycles were donated by many countries but were soon abandoned due to a total lack of any local skills to maintain the machines.

- I would like to propose at this AGM that the Mojacar Motorcycle Touring Club adopts this charity making an annual contribution to Riders for Health. A levy of 50p per member would raise £50 to £60 annually. If the club was to accept the proposal in principal the amount of the levy could be discussed and agreed. More information about this charity can be found by visiting www.riders.org.

EVENTS OFFERED FOR 2010

Winter warmer weekend based at Mulberry House Hostel Abergavenny. Dinner Bed & Breakfast.
Organiser Paul Weston.

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A weekend based in/around Malvern; Organiser Martin Heuter.

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Cumbria & Northumberland. A three night hotel weekend. Arrive Friday at hotel in or around the Lake District, ride via Hadrian's wall for two nights in Northumberland near the Kilder Forest area. Depart Monday morning for home; organisers Tony & Christine Maidens.

PROPOSED SUMMER TOUR FOR 2010

David Bexley

Proposed route – Through the Alps to the Italian Dolomites – June 2010.

Convene Sunday 6 June S.E. of Paris (50 miles radius of Troyes)

7 June (Mon) 250-260 miles to Black Forest (East of Freiburg)

8 June (Tues) 220 miles to the Oetzal, Austria (probably Lagenfeld)

9 June (Wed) 160 miles to Arabba in the heart of the Italian Dolomites where we spend 7 nights in Arabba – depart Wed 16 June giving time to get home for work (whatever that is) by Monday.

This is a trip to the mountains. The route from midday Tuesday takes us over ever more spectacular mountain passes. That is why the mileage is reduced from Tuesday on. The area is far enough south to get good weather by June and the Dolomites, though lofty peaks, have hardly any snow on them. Arraba is a winter ski resort with many large hotels that are pleased to see visitors in summer – no shortage of bars either! That said, the

mountains are busy with motorcyclists and walkers so everything is working and open for business. I have confirmed that there is a choice of hotels at less than 50€ (dinner, bed and breakfast) per night in Arabba. Prices for the en-route stops cannot yet be checked but at least the pound is improving against the euro. The Dolomite Mountains surround Arabba and there are lots of spectacular rides in the area. Cable cars are in operation to the highest points from the tops of some passes. Every summit will have a café and be swarming with bikes. I have met some fascinating, even famous people at the tops of these passes. For those with an interest, the area is known for “via ferrata”, high level walks connected with WW1 Alpine “trench warfare” including wire or rope bridges across ravines on the routes. The history is fascinating. The area, now known as the Italian Tyrol, was once the Austrian Tyrol until it was given to Italy as part of WW1 Reparations. For that reason, German names abound and the German language is almost universally understood. It is about 75 miles to the foot of the Grossglockner Hochalpinestrasse in Austria, making it a possible day's ride. For the very keen, or as a follow-on to the tour, it is about 150 miles south, mainly on fast Autostrada, to Venice. The route due north home could include Prague and the Czech Republic.

David & Barbara Bexley
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PROPOSED TOUR FOR EARLY SEPTEMBER

by Dave Gilligan.

A one week tour of Britain from September 3rd to 11th 2010, the routes would pass through twelve of the National Parks and other areas of outstanding natural beauty. Accommodation would be at nine YHA which can provide breakfast and evening meals. The start would be on a Friday at Treynon near Padstow and finish the following Saturday at Ilam near Ashbourne. This last location being fairly central would allow time for participants to return home on the Sunday. The most northerly YH will be at Aviemore. The locations of the other hostels will be St. Briavels (Lydney), Manorbier (Tenby), Liverpool, Wast Water, Glencoe and Whitby. All accommodation will depend on availability. I would provide daily suggested routes. The cost per participant for nine nights bed and breakfast is £196.

HELP FOR SAT NAV USERS!

I know that several members use Garmin Zumo GPS like mine. Recently I have had a fault when on my travels. The Zumo was working ok when suddenly it shut down and wouldn't respond to any button operation. I did discover that if you remove then replace the battery normal operation is resumed. I had to do this twice during my recent trip abroad. Following this it has worked faultlessly for the last 3000 miles. Never discovered the true cause of this fault but removing/replacing the battery (not renewing it) cured the problem. Perhaps this operation is a little like rebooting a PC. Hope that this may be of help to other users.

Dave Gilligan.