



Newsletter

May 2017

Three Bike Weekend

For a few years now, Ann and I have made a point of getting away for a weekend in early May. I think it started with the Ducati Owners Club weekend at Glenuig and since then it has usually been up the West coast and an occasional visit to the NW200. This year we rang the changes and headed for the Borders to stay in Peebles. For further variety, I decided I would take the Ducati and we set off smart on Friday morning. Only a mile from home everything died without warning - complete electrical failure.

I coasted into a road-end thinking either a fuse had blown or perhaps a battery terminal had come adrift. Conveniently it only takes a second or two to un-bungie the luggage and lift the seat to get access to the fuse box. Everything seemed to be intact but turning on the ignition brought an audible buzzing sound from the general relay. No amount of tapping or plugging and unplugging would get it to switch properly, so jumping on Ann's Scrambler I went back to the shed to see if I had a spare relay in stock. I didn't but came back armed with a circuit diagram and jumper leads. Plugging the jumpers across the relay socket did nothing, leading me to think the ignition switch might be at fault, perhaps passing reduced current. I've been there before and its

remarkably easy to hot-wire. Suddenly, one more turn of the key had all the idiot lights back on and an experimental poke of the starter button fired it up. Happy not to be pushing it home but still no wiser as to the real cause, meant I just rode home, pulled out the Commando and left the Monster on the naughty step.

Still feeling a little out of sorts, I tied my kitbag on the Norton seat (thats when I noticed I hadn't returned the Monster manual, but it was just going to have to come with us, as I wasn't going back again!) and we set off again.

One of the reasons we tend not to head South so much is that we have to get through the central belt before we get anywhere interesting. The Commando really is capable of just about any kind of riding, but the fast lane of a busy motorway is not its natural habitat but the quicker we can push through the traffic, the sooner the proper riding begins.



We stopped at Ann's mums in Ayrshire and from there on the riding was a joy. East Ayrshire is fast becoming a suburb of Glasgow and the main routes are horribly busy, but once off those routes and onto the network of minor roads they are amazingly quiet.

From Mauchline to Sorn the road swings through beautifully tended dairy farms, the hedges trimmed and tidy, and heading to Muirkirk the ground rises turning to moss with the obvious remains of quarries and mines. Hard to believe this was once the main Edinburgh road. There was a bit of snarl-up at Bigger due to an accident but once on the back road past Stobo, enjoyment returned.

We arrived at our hotel - Castle Venlaw (<http://venlaw.co.uk>) - to a friendly welcome. Nice place, helpful staff, a good restaurant and no children. We spent the weekend eating and drinking, visited Traquair Castle and walked along the Tweed. Very relaxed and heading home too soon, the Commando didn't miss a beat.

The third bike? The Guzzi G5 had to report for its MOT on Monday. It passed without any problem but I'm very much a novice Guzzi rider, and with new tyres and brake pads I would rather not have battled through heavy rain and high winds to get there.

Variety may well be the spice of life!

Ben Lawers meeting

We have a new event this Sunday - a lunchtime meeting and run out from the Ben Lawers Hotel. The Hotel will have sandwiches and coffee anytime after noon or a full meal if you fancy something more substantial.

If the weather is kind, we could head out for a potter round Kinloch Rannoch via Fearnan, Fortingall and the Schiehallion Road. That would let us split up at Tummel Bridge for those that are heading east or Aberfeldy for those going south.

Of course if the weather is less than pleasant, indoor discussions would be a more likely outcome!

Forthcoming Events

May 21st
TVNOC lunch meeting
Ben Lawers Hotel

June 02nd-03rd
TVNOC Camping Weekend
Cumberlands Site, Fort Augustus

June 11th
Highland Classic Loch Ness Rally
Fairways, Inverness

June 17th
Ayr Classic Motorcycle Show
Ayr Racecourse

June 17th
VMCC Rock 'n' Roll Run
The Oven, Overton Farm, Rosebank

June 18th
Jimmie Guthrie Memorial Run
The Green, Denholm

Parts wanted

Alan Duffy has been in touch searching for a front end for a Tri-Bsa he is building. First choice would be a Roadholders and TLS, but if you have anything you think might be suitable, contact Alan by email at alangduffy@btinternet.com