



Northumbria Branch Newsletter July 2019

(Sent out late June in anticipation)

As I write, the National Rally (which for some reason has been called something like the Fortress Rally, or the Parapet Rally, or the Battlement Rally), is approaching with all the inevitability of a combine harvester with brake failure. The committee has been out and about organising everything, while your scribe has been given the job of providing a staggeringly boring talk and slide show about having ridden his Dommi across Canada no less than 13 years ago (with Lizzie on the back).

So he hopes all members come, and maybe they would be advised to bring their ear plugs.

There will be at least four organised rides out. Leaders and tailers have been appointed. Food, band, alcohol etc, on tap.

If you have not booked, please do book now as it is not that long before Simon will need to know final numbers. Just get onto your vintage/classic hand-cranked computer and key in “www.nortonownersclub.org”, then click “events” and you will be led on.

Meanwhile there have been happenings happening, aided and assisted by weather.

- Like the first evening ride out:



Norton Owners enjoying a wayside pee-stop.

This one was a meteorological cliff-hanger – with forecast of heavy rain, then of heavier rain, then no rain, and finally a low chance of rain but a high chance of being struck by lightning. This must have been seen as a delightful prospect, as eight bikes set out (quite a lot on an evening ride). The route,

carefully chosen by your scribe, consisted of muddy, gravelly lanes but with magnificent views. Since the air had the consistency of pea soup, we got to enjoy, well, only the muddy gravelly lanes, on the slopes above the Tyne valley, - oh , and a bar meal – oh, and a pee stop – see the picture above. But no rain – or lightning. Quite boring really. There was no mutiny.

- **and then , like the Clive Taylor Memorial Run.**

The route was organised by Bob. I do not know which weather god he worships, as I could do with getting the address.

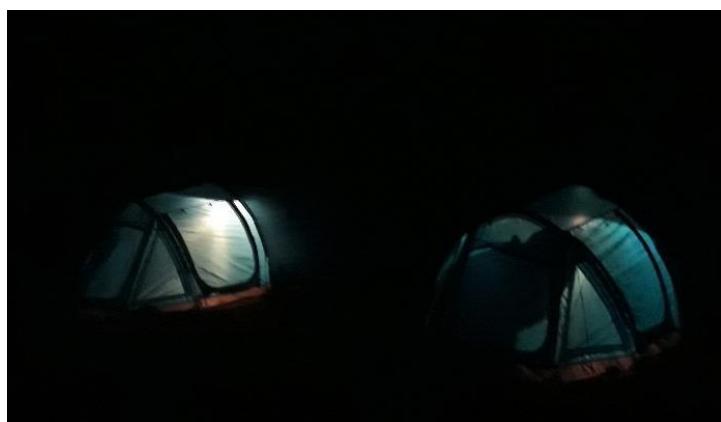


“Here’s to Dr Clive – cheers!”

At Simon’s request, the route roughly mirrored that of the first ever Clive Taylor Memorial run. (Simon was off riding around on airyplanes again). Though this time it was not September, and therefore there was no heather in bloom, but there was glorious sunshine, and all the colours of Spring. Campbell (hon. Member) came down from Aberdeen, and Don re-appeared for the ride on his e-bay Honda, with Janice bravely on the back. Sadly we somehow we managed to lose them, and afterwards we learned that the e-bay Honda had also had gremlins. But lots of us did get to the little road over the moors to Ros Castle, and climbed up to the summit for the sensational views. Here the traditional toast to Dr Clive Taylor was drunk in tank-bag wine, along with coffee and cake. We lunched at Swarland, where the ever-faithful Francis joined us. A while ago Don was talking about having his Commandator, or Dominando project ready for the rally. Update please?

Then your scribe and his lady retired for a week’s sojourn on board the good ship “Obsession B” – a week largely spent huddled in a small cabin listening to the rain-drops on the deck, while the low cloud scraped the mast-head. Even the ducks hid from the rain. Address of Bob’s weather-god badly needed. And then they returned for more REAL weather -

The great Wooler camping weekend and barbecue



(Tranquil picture of campers failing to get to sleep)

The forecast rain came in as promised in the evening, and continued until well past breakfast time. But our 2 faithful hon-members, Bill and Simon from Aberdeen had reached us before it hit. Meanwhile cancellations kept coming in on Simon's mobile (Simon on the ground, now, and suffering from airplane withdrawal symptoms). What do we do with the 32 sausages and all the Burgers? But as the rain eased off a bit, it was decided (by Bob?) that there would be a ride to scout one of the rally routes – which was a tour of castles. This continued well into the afternoon, by which we were satiated with castles, or anything Bob could make look vaguely like a castle. Here's a pic of the last one.



Northumbrian Norton Owners admiring the effects of their explosive mixture.

In fact the riders only met a few rain drops, while, on return, we learned that the rain in Wooler had been non-stop, as it had also been in Newcastle. Definitely Bob has a weather god!

And, in fact, members started to turn up, so at the end there were only 2 sausages and 2 burgers left. A few brownies (quickly kidnapped by Amy), 1 or 2 of Judy's amazing choc.chip cookies and her special sticky-biccy things the contents of which must be a mystery even to Bob's weather God, but definitely included peanut butter. Huge thanks to Simon and Judy for all the catering.

Dawn, dryness, and a chance to dry the tents

For the International Rally in Holland, Bob definitely over-stimulated (or over-worshipped?) his weather god. A few days were spent touring Friesland, in increasingly warm weather, followed by the rally (enhanced by the arrival of Garry and Amy), but in weather now reaching super-heat. After the ride back to the ferry Bob (now with a scarlet face) had to be peeled out of his motorcycle clothes with a noise like two fly-papers being pulled apart. Temperature 34 degrees c.

Rally rides out included a trip to a place building 17th century Dutch East-India ships, and for a boat ride through a maze of small canals winding through a pretty little village (various crashes with people in hired boats accompanied by much cheering).

Your scribe's tent must have been suffering from an infestation as he is still covered in bites. His sleeping bag has been boiled on return.

Apart from which much pan-European company and good cheer. Rudolf from Switzerland got adopted and on his arrival for a Scottish tour, was grabbed from the ferry and led around Northumberland and the Borders. APART FROM WHICH: -----

Makkum for the Mackems??

When we saw a place called Makkum on the map, it had to be checked out. Mackems should be proud to share a name with Makkum. (Makkum being Dutch for Mackem).

- and it turned out to be a gorgeous little place. A twin town status should be set up ASAP.



There is also talk of the Aln Valley Steam Railway event, and a classic vehicle show in Blyth.

What horrors/delights are still in store?

- a. NOC National Rally, Morpeth – 26 to 28th July.
- b. Tyne Valley Classic Show at Stamfordham – 4th August. The organisers have welcomed us as participants and we will display at the show.
- c. TVNOC Camping Weekend at Applecross – 9th to 11th August, Contact David Templeton; smokeyjoe750@gmail.com
- d. The Glendale Show – 25th August. For information.
- e. Norton Motorcycles ‘burnout’ – 31st August to 1st September. For information.
- f. TVNOC Yetholm camping weekend – 6th to 8th September. Contact David Templeton; smokeyjoe750@gmail.com
- g. Kamtrek – 29th September. (John Powell organising).
- h. NOC National Under Cover Rally, St. Audries Bay, Somerset – 27th to 29th September.
- i. Northumbria NOC Christmas Dinner – 18th December. (Note: this is a Wednesday as an alternative for members who cannot attend meetings on a Thursday). It was suggested that an alternative venue is considered in order to allow everyone to be in the same room for dinner, as this is not possible at the Melton Constable. After discussion, the secretary proposed the Ridley Arms at Stannington, to be investigated.

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