

# SEAX

The newsletter of the Essex Crusaders, Centre 19, Virago Star Owners Club.

April 2008 Issue148

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ATTACHMENTS: Centre19 Merchandise - 2008 Rally T-Shirt order form.

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<http://www.vsoc.org.uk>

## Editor's "Soapbox".

Hi All,

As I write this, I look out over glorious sunshine with temperatures almost reaching 20! But I will finish before taking the Virago out for a run on lovely dry roads. What a difference a week makes? Snow and blizzard conditions; at times could not see the other side of the road.

Thanks to the few who wrote to acknowledge receipt of the last SEAX; Firstly it is good to know that you received it and secondly thank you for the positive feedback. I have to work from the latest membership list sent from VSOC and I have found a few errors with some of the data contained therein? Could I therefore please request that you let me know when you receive your copy of this SEAX; whether it is by e-mail or snail mail, then I can follow up with the members who do not respond.

Thank you to Bruce, Barry and Jim for sending me items for this issue and I apologise if the Southend shakedown seems to have a slight monopoly in this issue.

Hopefully, by now you have all re-newed your VSOC membership and your Essex Crusaders Hoodys are expected in 2-3 weeks!

For your delights this month, we enclose an order form for our 2008 Rally T-Shirt, a bargain at £11:

"This season's must have – even BSH magazine has copied the idea"

That's about all from me for this month. No creative writing as I have spent a lot of time trying to sort out the distribution details from the VSOC membership list.

ENJOY!

*Alan*

\* Copy date for the April edition: 25<sup>th</sup> April     Please!

## Rep's Rambling.

What a dismal start to the new rideout season, Whitstable was a wash out, Southend Shakedown saw 10 hardy souls brave the 4C temperature depart from Boreham for a leisurely ride to Southend where upon arrival we made for the nearest cafe to warm up with a good old fashion full english breakfast and coffees. After the warmth had returned to our bodies we ventured out on to the sea front to admire the bikes, sadly the numbers were only a fraction of last years 8000 due inpart to the inclement weather 'snow'. A few faces made it from Kent C15 and North London C13 and they had set out in snowy conditions. Hopefully the weather can only get warmer and drier, fingers crossed.

We have a very full calender for the next six months, hopefully there are rides/ events which will tempt members out into the glorious summer sunshine we are going to have this year.

We have 34 bikes going to France for the day, some of us are going to Holland the end of April despite the adverse comments on the warmth??? of the nights. The rally season starts a month later, Scrumpies Rally, I know you have heard it before, but it is appreciated by all the rally organisers if you can book your tickets as soon as possible, including ours.

Then there is the International in Finland, prices have now been finalised for the ferry crossings. Those of you who registered with Motorsport should have been contacted by them to discus final details and costs.

The merchandise is selling well (hoodies). In this months SEAX are the details of the 2008 Essex Crusaders Tour T-Shirts, which everybody has been waiting for. Remember to get your orders in by 30th April.

The plans for our rally are progressing well, still need a band for Saturday night. A full rally meeting will be held at the Bell Pub,

Woodham Ferrers, on the **21 APRIL** all members are welcome.

Please remember to renew your VSOC membership if you have not already done so, Malcolm must recieve your renewal by 30 APRIL the very latest, the dreaded £5-00 penalty payment kicks in from the 1st MAY

John

## North Essex Deputy page.

Ace café to Southend Shakedown 24.3.2008

After the weather of Easter weekend it was looking doubtful that the run from the Ace to Southend was going to take place.

Monday, believe it or not was dry, bright and sunny, but cold so after a call from Tony we decided to meet up at Boreham for the ride to Southend rather than going to the Ace and then Southend which seems to be the norm for C19 these days.

Ten of us left Boreham for an uneventful ride, taking the 'direct' route as it was felt that the side roads could be dodgy.

As suspected, the weather had taken its toll and for the first time in my memory we were able to park on the main drag opposite the amusement arcade, on previous years we have had to park a lot further on.

So as to get the priorities right the first stop was Roses café, our usual haunt for sustenance, problem was the place was full of bikers so seating was limited, but we managed, we were also joined by the local 'ole bill' who someone suggested was the strip o gram, all taken in the right spirit gov !!

The next step was the mandatory walk to inspect the bikes and we immediately came across the C13 valkyrie club bikes, for the uninitiated C13 have got several members with the aforementioned bikes, thought we were a Yamaha club guys !!.

It was nice to see so many from the VSOC with members of C13 and C15 in abundance, braving the weather, which by this time was beginning to look a tad dark. Too late, down it came and as it was blowing off the sea was not very pleasant at all, in short, the blizzard we encountered whilst riding along the front stirred up all the dried up road salt which attached itself to the bikes and as quick as it came, it went, leaving us with 4 hours of cleaning, all that good work undone in the flash of a blizzard.

It was otherwise a good day, if not unexpected but nevertheless appreciated cos otherwise the week end would have been a total waste of time. Till next time

Ta ta for now

Mr K

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**southend shakedown** (from another viewpoint)

WELL FOLKS YOU WILL BE GLAD TO KNOW THAT WE WILL NOT SEE ANOTHER EARLY EASTER IN OUR LIFETIME.

AFTER THE SNOW THE WEEKEND I THOUGHT THE SHAKEDOWN WAS NOT GOING TO HAPPEN, WELL I WOKE TO A DRY MONDAY MORNING ALTHOUGH IT WAS COLD, SO I GOT MYSELF READY AND WENT TO BORHAM, 1ST ONE THERE THAT MADE A CHANGE. ALL FUELLED UP I GOT A TXT FROM STEVE IN ROMFORD SAYING IT IS SNOWING AND HE WILL TRY AND MEET US THERE, WELL IT NEVER STOPPED SNOWING IN ROMFORD APPARENTLY.

THEN PEOPLE STARTED SHOWING UP.

THE BRAVE 10 RODE INTO SOUTHEND THE ROADS NOT TOO BUSY, AND WE ACTUALLY GOT PARKED UP BEFORE OUR USUAL SPOT BY ROSES CAFE. GROUP PHOTO TAKEN (CHECK WEBSITE)

WELL IT WAS STRAIGHT FOR THE CAFE AND A FULL ENGLISH, WE GOT THE BIG TABLE AT THE BACK OF ROSES THAT I NEVER KNEW WAS THERE, SAYS SOMTHING ABOUT THE COLD, THERE WAS PLENTY OF ROOM. IT WASNT A BAD TURNOUT OVERALL BUT NOT LIKE PREVIOUS YEARS WHERE YOU COULDN'T MOVE, LATER ON I DIDNT EVEN HAVE TO Q FOR A CUPPA TEA , YOU SEE THAT AGAIN IN A HURRY. A FEW OF US DECIDED TO MAKE OUR WAY BACK HOME, AND JUST GETTING OUT OF SOUTHEND, YES IT STARTED TO SNOW LIGHTLY AT FIRST ,AND THEN IT STARTED TO SETTLE ON THE ROAD, BUT LUCKILY IT WAS OVER AS QUICK AS IT STARTED AND ALL GOT HOME SAFE. LETS JUST HOPE THE SEASON ONLY GETS BETTER I HAVE PUT AN ORDER IN FOR THE SUN TO MAKE A GUEST APPEARANCE ON SUNDAYS AND FOR THE RALLIES SO FINGERS CROSSED AND RIDE SAFE.

BRUCE

### A Different Way to Travel to the 2008 Rally in Finland

For quite some months now the June 2008 International Rally in SF-Säkylä has been promoted on the VSOC web site and in Clatter. There have also been numerous announcements about getting to the rally site using ferry to Denmark and riding across Sweden and on to Finland.

Towards the end of last year, a letter appeared in Clatter asking whether anybody would be interested in riding to SF-Säkylä the “long way round”. There were three takers, Bob Lawrence from C17, and two “old Faithfulls” (Trevor Lathrope & Phil Snell) from C19. It is also very likely Ralph who was “met” on a bikers web site will also be joining us. Checking with our friends in Finland whether this would be OK, received the response “. . . as long as he is on two wheels he will be very welcome . . .”.

Since Nov07 the provisional route has been Calais, Berlin, Gdansk, The Baltic States, Tallinn, Helsinki and Säkylä, stopping off for a day or two in places of particular interest. The thought was put forward that the return ride could possibly include St Petersburg.

A ride to Moscow, a few years back, presented hell and high water in obtaining necessary paperwork. It was decided to look into getting visas immediately. To visit Russia, one needs a visa. To obtain a visa one needs an invitation – or more precisely – a visa support document.

The last ride to Russia involved a lot of heel dragging by the Russian Authorities. This necessitated a costly last minute panic rush to finalise paperwork. One could be forgiven for thinking they intentionally delay things, just to squeeze every last Penny from Punters. It was hoped to avoid this for the coming trip.

It was thought that if visas are obtained, a trip to the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad would also be worthwhile on the out trip. This would involve obtaining “double entry” visas.

Initially there was quite a bit of delay. Gentle persuasion over the months finally established contact with Tatiana. She has been extremely co-operative, efficient and helpful allowing invitations for double entry visas to be with us within a few weeks. Next step is a visit to the Russian Embassy in London.

Phil highlighted the need for an International Driving Permit (IDP). No thought had been given to that here as none was obtained for the last trip. Even now, it is not known whether it was necessary at that time. In any event no request was received to produce it so why worry now? Thanks, Phil.

Obtaining an IDP is quite straight forward. Locate a Post Office which issues them. Turn up with passport, (both parts of) your UK driving licence, a signed-on-back passport photo and £5.50. Wait an eternity in a Post Office queue,. Wait for the monotone synthetic announcement “Next Customer, Counter number #, Please” and eventually walk away with your IDP.

In Mid March 2008, Jim announced he would like to dedicate the ride to the local children’s hospice, EACH. To make the trip worthwhile it was decided to extend the return journey to include Warsaw, Auschwitz and Prague. Fine, in theory. Not so fine in practice Lack of time would be a problem. The fixed time/date return tickets would attract a hefty penalty charge for

late arrival at the Eurotunnel terminal in Coquelles. There was no way the extended ride could be completed and arrive in Coquelles in time for the booked return train.

Why not approach Eurotunnel to ask if they will provide “flexible returns”? They would be only too happy to oblige, mentioning “. . . However the fare for Flexiplus tickets is £99.00 per single journey each . . .”!!! less 20%. Wow !! This was gently rejected. After a little persuasive “to-ing and fro-ing” they kindly provided “flexible returns” at no additional charge. Well done, and thank you, Eurotunnel.

Last year a challenging ride to the Arctic Circle was undertaken on behalf of EACH. You can read about that adventure in Clatter 53 or by visiting <http://www.vsoc.org.uk/index2.html>. The ride to the Arctic Circle raised in excess of a much needed £1300,00. This helped EACH continue the essential work they provide for terminally ill children in this area.

It may be worth repeating here a message received from a family, on hearing about the June 2008 trip. This family frequently has to depend on the fine services of EACH.

Morning Jim

Can I say once again a big thank you for the fund raising you did before for EACH. Let me also say another heart filled big thank you for what you are doing once again, it means so much to us as a family & to many other families who use & need the services of the EACH

Many thanks for everything

L\*\*\*\*\* , D\*\*\*\* & T\*\*\*\*\*

Reading between the lines, you will probably agree it shows how very grateful they all are for any help given to the children’s hospice, no matter how small.

Please take a moment to familiarise yourself with the essential free of charge services EACH offers needy children and their families, by visiting <http://www.each.org.uk/>. Please also help exceed last year’s total by kindly contributing at <http://www.justgiving.com/eachhospices>.

You can be sure EACH, all five “across land riders”, the poor children, and their families, will be so very appreciative for your support in allowing the hospice’s fine work to continue.

Many thanks.

Jim Truscott.

## Take bikes seriously? Never!

I have, on a number of occasions, seen articles and letters in the motorcycle press complaining that the government does not take bikes seriously when considering transport plans.

Lets think what may well happen if and when they were to give us serious consideration. It is easy to assume that any consideration would follow the pattern they have used for cars.

With cars, the basic thought seems to be Electric = Very Good. Small = Good. Medium size = acceptable. Big = Bad. Big 4WD = Very Bad. The VG to the VB position of a car on their scale is recognized by their road tax band and things like Congestion Charge and even parking charges in some areas. There has even been talk of banning big 4WD cars.

I think it is quite important to note that things like safety and convenience, are not considered. Neither are for what use the vehicle may be used for, other than transporting its occupants and their hand luggage.

So, if the government were to give bikes serious consideration, what could we expect?

How about: 50cc = Very good. 125cc = Good+. 350cc = Good. 500cc = acceptable. 750cc = Bad. 1000cc = Very Bad. 1000cc+ Very, Very Bad.

What sort of censoring could we expect? Cars have a special place in the national psyche and there are tens of millions of them. The general public consensus would be that cars are good. Bikes have a very different place in the national psyche and they only form some 3% of vehicles. The general public consensus would be that bikes are bad!

I get the impression that the Government would like to ban the Bad and Very Bad cars altogether, but there is a lot of influential owners and owners who actually need a 4WD vehicle for their business. There is also a substantial manufacturing base for such vehicles in the UK. The best they can hope for is to keep them off of city streets and to impose an extra tax burden.

I suggest the same cannot be said for motorcycles. A prohibitive road tax on the larger capacity bikes could be introduced without it hitting the front page of the national papers. Manufacturers would stop selling the bikes in the UK and if Triumph had to retool or even shut down, it is hardly relevant.

Many bike dealers would probably have to close meaning that servicing and parts would be hard to get, further eroding bike ownership. Motorcycling would cease to be the recreational pastime it has become.

Bikers may say that by riding a bike you take a car off the road. Governments think less on bikes = more on public transport. Less motorcycle accidents. Fewer bikers disturbing the countryside.

I suggest that the last thing we need is for the government to give us bikers serious consideration, or give us any thought at all. They should just ignore us.

Lazyrider

## APRIL RIDEOUTS

### SUNDAY 6<sup>TH</sup>

#### OGRI'S CAFÉ, HORAM, EAST SUSSEX.

Depart Marks Tey 09-30 for Thurrock services, depart Thurrock services (petrol station)10-30

### SUNDAY 13<sup>TH</sup>

#### LUNCH, ANCHOR PUB, STRATFORD St. MARY, SUFFOLK

Rideout from Boreham services, depart 10-30, lunch approx 12-30  
If its raining bring your car. This lunch is now a favourite with C19 members.

### SUNDAY 20<sup>TH</sup>

#### MANNINGTREE HIGH SCHOOL, VEHICLE SHOW.

Depart Boreham services 10-00 for Langham services (Esso garage, A12 North of Colchester). Depart Langham services 10-45 for Manningtree High School.  
Centre 19 will be having a stand at this show. If you would like to put your bike on show please arrive before 10-30.

### FRIDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> TO SUNDAY 27<sup>TH</sup>

#### SOUTHERN SNAKES, KONNINGSBOSCH, HOLLAND

Depart Thurrock services 06-15 for Dover

### FRIDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> TO SUNDAY 27<sup>TH</sup>

#### V.S.O.C. JUMPSTART PARTY, GOLBOURNE, nr. WARRINGTON

### SATURDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> TO SUNDAY 27<sup>TH</sup>

#### CUSTOM BIKE SHOW, EARLS COURT, LONDON.

For more details contact Sue

### SUNDAY 27<sup>TH</sup>

#### IMPROMTU RIDEOUT, Depart Borehem services 10-00

For more information contact your reps  
Please have sufficient fuel for rideouts so we can keep fuel stops to a minimum

## Centre 19 meeting's dates:

### April

#### North meeting.

8 pm Monday 7th April 2008.

The Anchor, Upper Street, Stratford St. Mary, CO7 6LW.  
West of A12, North of Colchester

#### South meeting.

8pm Monday 21st April 2008.

The Bell Inn, Main Road, Woodham Ferrers, CM3 8RF.

On the B1418 between Bicknacre and South Woodham.

### May

#### North meeting.

8 pm Monday 5th May 2008.

The Anchor, Upper Street, Stratford St. Mary, CO7 6LW.  
West of A12, North of Colchester

#### South meeting.

8pm Monday 19th May 2008.

The Bell Inn, Main Road, Woodham Ferrers, CM3 8RF.

On the B1418 between Bicknacre and South Woodham.

# ESSEX CRUSADER 2008 RALLY T-SHIRTS



*Back by popular demand, at just £11 each.*

If you're planning to attend any of this year's VSOC Rallies, Parties or Events, then this is the item of you! Fly the flag with our official Centre 19 merchandise and support the Essex Crusaders.

Black, red, green or blue "Fruit of the Loom" T-Shirts with the colour Essex Crusader logo printed on the front and the 2008 VSOC Events List on the back. Become one of the first to own this very special, bespoke item. This season's must have – even BSH Magazine has copied the idea..!

Rally T-Shirts will be available for collection from your Local Centre Meeting, or delivered to your home address for £2.50 (per order) - please specify. This is a limited offer, and only available until **30th April 2008**.

**Order early to avoid disappointment!**

**T-Shirt sizes:** S = 35/37", M = 38/40", L = 41/43", XL = 44/46", XXL = 47/49", 3XL = 50/52"

Please send cheque payable to **VSOC Essex Crusaders** to:-  
Centre 19 Merchandise, 10 Woodlow, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3RL

|                            | S | M | L | XL | XXL | XXXL    |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|----|-----|---------|
| <b>BLACK</b>               |   |   |   |    |     |         |
| <b>RED</b>                 |   |   |   |    |     |         |
| <b>GREEN</b>               |   |   |   |    |     |         |
| <b>BLUE</b>                |   |   |   |    |     |         |
| Order value @ £11 each =   |   |   |   |    |     |         |
| Collect (free) or P&P =    |   |   |   |    |     | £2.50   |
| <b>2008 Rally T-Shirts</b> |   |   |   |    |     | Total = |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Limited availability – Orders to be received by 30th April 2008**

Centre 19 invites you to the



# Third Essex Crusade

**VSOC Rally**

**Runwell Hospital Sports & Social Club**  
Runwell Chase, Runwell, Wickford, Essex SS11 7XX  
**Friday 4th to Sunday 6th July 2008**

**Free Tea/Coffee - Top Bands - Disco - Trade Stands - Tattooist**  
**Free camping - Inn nearby**  
**fires and barbeques will not be allowed on the camping field at any time**

**Saturday night Theme-night... Doctors & Nurses..!**

**Cars/non-bike or trike strictly limited – by prior arrangement only**

**Member tickets** @ £16 x \_\_\_\_ total: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Limited to full members & their immediate family).

**Associate members & Guest\* tickets** @ £18 x \_\_\_\_ total: \_\_\_\_\_  
\* Guest tickets by arrangement only. Applications through Centre Reps.

Total: £ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Centre Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cheques payable to:- VSOC Essex Crusaders  
send SAE to Third Essex Crusade, 10 Woodlow, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3RL