

SEAX

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

April 2009 Issue 160

contents:

- | | | | |
|------|------------------------------------|------|-----------------------|
| 2. | Rep's Rambling. | 3. | Deputy Rep (North). |
| 4. | Ride Out – 15 th March. | 5-6. | Working Day Ride-Out. |
| 7-8. | My First Ever Bike. | 9. | April Ride-Outs. |
| 10. | C19 Meeting Dates. | | |

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Rep's Rambling.

What a welcome sight it has been these last four Sundays, the sun has been shining and temperatures into double figures and members turning up for a Sunday ride-out. The long cold winter seems a distant memory now.

Now is the time to clean and polish your bikes in time for the Essex Crusaders ride-out calendar, which starts on Sunday 5th April. First off is the Whitstable Easter Egg run, (don't forget your Easter Eggs), we will be meeting up with centres 13 and 15 to ride together to Whitstable, lets hope this the start of warm dry times ahead.

There are a various ride-outs, every Sunday for the next six months, hopefully there is something there that will encourage members out on their bikes during the summer season. Check your SEAX each month for meeting points and departure times. If you do require any more information on ride-outs or rallies please get in touch with myself or Peter.

On the ride-out calendar Manningtree High School vehicle show should read Sunday 26TH April and on Sunday 17th May there is the 6th Vehicle and motorbike show at Brightlingsea.

If anybody is interested in going to the Irish Rally 1st- 4 May please contact Peter for more details.

Over the last few years we have been running a voluntary ride-out donation, if you would like to contribute to the club funds, a £5-00 donation would be greatly appreciated.

REEPER, the Friday night band at our rally, are playing at the Riga Music Bar London Road/ Milton Road, Westcliffe, on THURSDAY 30TH APRIL, £5-00 on the door, should be a good night out.

SHORT WEAK END Rally, (NOT VSOC) 8th-10th May, at The Sun & Anchor pub, Steeple, tickets, £10-00 pre-booked, on the gate £15-00 This is becoming a favourite with Essex Crusaders, if you are interested in going please let me know by 30th April and I will get the tickets.

Your VSOC membership renewal is due now, remember there is a £5-00 penalty if you do not renew by the 31st April

The good news is my 22year old Virago, 61,000+ miles, paint and chrome has seen better days, has just sailed through its MOT with flying colours, the bad news is I cannot have a new bike for another year.

As the MOT Inspector said , "they don't make them like this anymore".

John

Deputy Rep' (North).

Centre 19 North meeting 2nd March 2009

It was good to see Jim at the meeting and he was welcomed back, lets hope we see him again.

Apologies from John and Carol as they were just on the way back from Scotland, someone suggested they could have made a detour !! On this occasion they are excused.

Thanks to Alan for Seax and the 2nd edition to include the tea shirt flier, once again a gentle reminder that a contribution to Seax now and again would be appreciated. A reminder to all, that monies for the day trip to France were required and membership fees were due by the end of the month, please fill in a renewal form with all details so that a correct record can be kept at HQ.

Jim raised the question of paying subs by BACS and was told that the VSOC do not have a system in place to deal with this, PG explained that BACS payment would be hard to monitor and the admin to deal with it would be time prohibitive. Malcolm Bland has since confirmed that the VSOC has no system in place to deal with a BACS payment, he also confirmed that payment of subs on line through Paypal (which was requested by the membership as an alternative to a cheque) attracts an additional £1 to cover the costs so renewal would be £18.50.

It is hoped that as Malcolm Bland has taken the trouble to explain the situation the matter is now closed.

A discussion was then had about the 'once a member always a member' rule and PG felt that as a result of the feed back from members, it was likely that there would be no foreseeable changes, however the feedback would be scrutinised and any positives may be used to modify the club rules in the future. PG thanks those C19 members that had taken the time to respond.

The meeting then became very constructive with discussion on insurance quotes, bad service, bikes, non qualifying percentage of bikes in the club and a variety of other topics.

Peter

Pin-Badge Keepers

Anyone with badges on their waistcoat or leathers; maybe interested:

This is a link for a web site with all sorts of goodies including the pin badge holders that lock on to the pin badge and prevent them falling off.

<http://www.caveofdelights.co.uk/pin-badge-pin-keepers-241-p.asp>

Ride Out Sunday 15th March

Sunday 15th. March and it's a lovely sunny day, wonders will never cease. 19 of us on 13 bikes meet at Boreham, even a couple of new faces, welcome to those I'm sorry I didn't get your names.

After some time to catch up with some old faces it was decided we'd ride to the 'Famous Comfort Cafe', always makes me laugh that one, John 'satnav brain' Evans, I don't know how he does it he rarely goes wrong, leads as usual on an excellent ride through the Essex countryside into Cambridgeshire to the 'famous' cafe. We parked the bikes with the usual interest from bystanders and joined the queue in the cafe, probably why it's famous. There's one bloke serving who I think had his sense of humour surgically removed and was not in any hurry so it takes an age to finally get served, but that won't dampen OUR spirits. We sat outside in the sunshine waiting for our toast and breakfasts chatting and laughing. All to soon it was time to leave so after saying our goodbyes and the mandatory photo call we went our separate ways.

Terry, Chris, me and my wife Margaret decided to stop for a pub lunch before taking the scenic route home, excellent.

It was great to be back on the bike again after a long cold winter, what more could you ask for, great ride good company and sunshine, the perfect sunday.

Trev

Working day rideout

At the South meeting on Monday 16th March 2009 it was decided that the retired members of C19 should get together during the week at some point and go out to play, the club was to be called the 'Retired riders Club', I then had a thought that this could be viewed as yet another break away outfit so decided that we would be called the 'Retired riders group' which soon got re named the 'Retarded riders group' so the idea was born.

Tuesday was our first day out together, Barney, Terry and myself, not to be out done, Trevor (semi retired) decided that whatever work he had on Tuesday could wait until Wednesday, poor old customer let down again !! so there was four.

An early morning social call from Roger prompted him to take a day off at short notice and then there was 5, the sun was shining and at about 11am off we went to Lowestoft, the further North we got the colder it got until as lead rider I decided enough was enough and with freezing hands and other bits, I pulled in to a café for a re think, it was agreed that we would turn round and head back to Aldeburgh where we knew we could get the best fish and chips in England.

It was no warmer at Aldeburgh but at least we managed to park up on the sea front, free of charge and only a stones throw from the chippie,

It was at that point that Terry got off his bike, kicked his tyre, expressed a few expletives, swore again and then realised why the bike had been handling so badly, he had a puncture, what a result, right outside the chippie, could have been miles from anywhere, how considerate !!

Anyway, Terry got the priorities right and ate before contacting the recovery people and it was hoped that the tyre could be repaired, the recovery company was called Red Rocket and would be with us in 30 mins, after an hour someone suggested he needed a rocket up his a--- anyway when he turned up the bike was loaded on, the Red Rocket guy took some flack, all in good fun and Terry saved the cost of petrol for the return journey as he was dropped off at the tyre menders in Maldon, then got a lift back home on the back of Trevors bike.

As we rode back to Colchester we could see the sun was still shining and realised that we should have gone South on that day, oh well we will check the weather forecast next time.

Nevertheless a good day was had by all and if there are any other retired members (or workers on a day off) out there want to join us again you would be more then welcome.

Mr K
Secretary !!
Retarded Riders Group



MY FIRST EVER BIKE RIDE

Long ago in a far off time and place, I attended university in a city called Antofagasta, north of Chile, a long narrow sun-baked conurbation in the Atacama desert, squeezed between the barren Andes mountains and the Pacific Ocean, where I had lived most of my life.

The university campus was situated out of town, a couple of miles beyond the southern city limit. This gave me grounds to borrow my dad's car because, as I explained to him in earnest tones, public transport was unreliable and it wouldn't do for me to be late for lectures, now would it? The truth was that a young guy driving a car in a third world country in those days gave him loads of kudos with members of the opposite sex. Dad no doubt picked up on this but I guess he had been young once too, so he let me have the car on condition I took care of it's oily bits. I became very proficient at tinkering with oily bits!

One of my fellow students was a chap called Nestor Castillo, who worked part-time in the meteorological department of the local airport. Nestor was a busy man, always on the move, and in need of personal transport. He informed me that he was rebuilding a 175cc two stroke Gilera motorbike for the purpose, but was having trouble adjusting the carburettor to achieve a smooth tick-over. So in the misdirected belief that I was an expert in such matters, he asked for my help. Allowing my ego to overrule common sense, I agreed.

The next day at the university cafeteria I sat among several classmates soaking up lashings of ozone-free sunshine (ignorance was bliss!) awaiting the arrival of my new pal and his restored machine, carrying only a screwdriver and a fervent wish he wouldn't show up! No such luck, a distant wail signalled his approach and soon after he burst into view. Slowing slowly he finally came to a stop, dismounted with a flourish and propped the motorcycle against a wall. When I say motorcycle, it is correct to describe it as such because it had two wheels, a frame, a fuel tank and an engine, but nothing else. He explained enthusiastically that components such as lights, instruments, mirrors and mudguards would be added later!

Wondering why smooth idling was more important than serviceable brakes, I plucked up courage and wandered over to exercise my "expertise". After several kicks on the starter pedal Nestor succeeded in coaxing the engine into life and, after a couple of twists of the throttle, it settled down to a rather lumpy performance. I studied the carburettor: one screw for fuel and another for air. All I had to do was balance these two ingredients – simple!

To add to my discomfort a small group had gathered to witness an expert at work so, applying my screwdriver with earnest concentration, I twiddled the screws this way and that, hoping I wouldn't make matters worse. After a few intense minutes

and several bursts on the throttle I was amazed the revs settled down to a very smooth idle! Nestor was delighted; the onlookers nodded and murmured their approval. I, naturally, gave the impression this was the inevitable outcome and enjoyed the moment.

As I turned to resume my sunbathing, Nestor called after me “aren’t you going to test it?” “No need”, I answered, “besides I’ve never ridden a motorbike before”. “Nonsense” came the reply “you can ride a bicycle, can’t you? It’s the same but without the hard work!” I continued to protest, but to no avail. The onlookers, too, felt I should have a go and among them the word “gallina” (chicken) was mentioned. That did it! After some very basic instruction I was on my way; no protective clothing, no helmet, no gloves, no instruments and no experience - just a very acute sense that I might be pushing my luck beyond reason.

I tentatively made my way out onto the coast road heading south; a good tarmac single carriageway with very light traffic. Ideal! I changed up through the gears without a problem and as my confidence grew, my speed increased. Without a speedo I had no idea how fast I was going, but with the throttle wide open it would have been between 60 and 70 mph. I was feeling great and scenes of films such as *The Leather Boys*, *Easy Rider* and *On Any Sunday* hovered in my mind. After a few miles I decided the best place to turn round would be the circular car park of a seafood restaurant overlooking the beach. As it came into view I eased off the throttle with the intention of changing down through the gears, but after several attempts top gear was still stubbornly engaged, the brakes were uncooperative and the car park was fast approaching!

Having taken the decision to “go for it”, I left the road and entered the car park at an unadvisable speed, partly due to my lack of control and partly because I dare not stall the engine. Adding to my woes was a soft sandy surface and ahead a group of middle aged customers strolling towards the restaurant. Fortunately the absence of a silencer made the exhaust so rowdy the senior citizens in my path were warned of my approach and nimbly cleared a path for me. The lack of a number plate ensured I was not reported to the police! Having completed my “speedway” circuit miraculously without mishap, I rejoined the road for the return journey.

Gratefully handing the bike back to it’s proud owner, I mentioned the problem I had experienced with the gears. “Oh yes”, he exclaimed “that happens sometimes, and I wondered...”, but I was ahead of him for once and interrupted: “sorry, I don’t do gearboxes!”

John H. (Footpeg)

APRIL RIDE-OUTS

SATURDAY 4TH

BMF EASTER-EGG RUN

Meet Brentwood services, Total garage, A12/M25, depart 11-30am for Stratstone Harley Davidson, Loxham Road, E4 8SE. The ride is to Stratford in aid of Community Links. Don't forget your Easter Egg.

SUNDAY 5TH

WHITSTABLE EGG RUN

Depart Marks Tey, 09-30 for Thurrock services, (petrol station) depart Thurrock services 10-30 for Medway services M2 where there will be a 1hour stop for breakfast, depart services 12-30 for Whitstable. Centres 13 and 15 will be joining us on this run.

The ride will leave Whitstable 02-00pm for Canterbury. Don't forget your [EASTER EGGS](#)

SUNDAY 12TH

LOG CABIN, ABRIDGE.

Depart Marks Tey, 09-30 for Boreham services, depart Boreham services 10-00am for the Log Cabin.

MONDAY 13TH

ACE CAFÉ, SOUTHEND SHAKEDOWN

Depart Marks Tey, 09-30am for Boreham services, depart Boreham services 10-00am for Southend.

SUNDAY 19TH

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

There is a scenic ride to the pub, departing Boreham services 10-30am or make your own way there for about 12-30. This is a family day out so come by bike or car, great food and good company.

FRIDAY 24TH

SOUTHERN SNAKES PARTY, KONINGSBOSCH,

Depart Thurrock services 06-00 for Dover, fuel stop in Dover before boarding the ferry

SUNDAY 26TH

MANNINGTREE HIGH SCHOOL, VEHICLE SHOW

Depart Boreham services 10-00am for Langham services (shell garage, A12, north of Colchester) depart Langham services 10-45 for Manningtree High School.

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 6th April 2009.

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

South meeting.

8pm Monday 20th April 2009.

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

On the B1418 between Bicknacre and South Woodham.

May

North meeting.

8 pm Monday 4th May 2009.

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

South meeting.

8pm Monday 18th May 2009.

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

On the B1418 between Bicknacre and South Woodham