

# SEAX

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

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Attachment: Essex Crusader 2009 Rally T-Shirts

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## Rep's Rambling.

What a difference a week makes, from rain, floods and ice a week ago to warm sunny intervals 12c last Sunday. It was a pleasure to be out on the bike again, with the other 8 bikes that turned up at Boreham services. We might have only gone to Southend but it was a travelling distance of 40 miles which was enjoyed by all, with a decent breakfast, more like lunch by the time we got there. Everybody was of the opinion that it was great to be back on the bikes after such a long winter. Lets hope this is the start of better times ahead for the following months.

It was great to see Coogy back on his bike and riding out with us. He was feeling O.K.but his bike was a bit tempamental, we had to push start it a few times, he 's promised he'll have it fixed by the next rideout, twins take a lot of effort to push start.

It's with great pleasure to announce that the 2009 tour T-shirts are now available to order - SEE FLYER, with delivery in mid April.

If any member would like a HOODIE £22-00 or SWEAT-SHIRT £20-00 please let John or Carol know and we will try to arrange delivery with the T-Shirts.

There are still a few places on the French day trip left at £22-00 on the 21 June, contact me as soon as possible, the price cannot be guaranteed at a later date.

Don't forget your VSOC membership renewal is due by the 31st March

Those of you who are going to pre-book the West Midland Rally and T-Shirt your order must be in by 31st MAY.

Reeper, our Friday night rally band, are booked to play at the International Rally in June. They are playing at the Riga Music Bar, London Road/Milton Road, Westcliff on Sea, Tickets on the door £5-00 on Thursday 30th April, should be good night out.

John

## DRIVING LICENCES - photo card

Unwitting motorists face £1,000 fines as thousands of photo card driving licenses expire. Thousands of motorists are at risk of being fined up to £1,000 because they are unwittingly driving without a valid license.

They risk prosecution after failing to spot the extremely small print on their photo card license which says it automatically expires after 10 years and has to be renewed - even though drivers are licensed to drive until the age of 70.

The fiasco has come to light a decade after the first batch of photo licenses was issued in July 1998, just as they start to expire.

Motoring organisations blamed the Government for the fiasco and said 'most' drivers believed their licenses were for life.

They said officials had failed to publicise sufficiently the fact that new-style licenses - unlike the old paper ones - expire after a set period and have to be renewed.

To rub salt into wounds, drivers will have to pay £17.50 to renew their card - a charge which critics have condemned as a 'stealth tax' and which will earn the Treasury an estimated £437million over 25 years.

Official DVLA figures reveal that while 16,136 expired this summer, so far only 11,566 drivers have renewed, leaving 4,570 outstanding.

With another 300,000 photo card licenses due to expire over the coming year, experts fear the number of invalid licenses will soar, putting thousands more drivers in breach of the law and at risk of a fine.

At the heart of the confusion is the small print on the tiny credit-card-size photo license, which is used in conjunction with the paper version.

Just below the driver name on the front of the photo card license is a series of dates and details - each one numbered.

Number 4b features a date in tiny writing, but no explicit explanation as to what it means.

The date's significance is only explained if the driver turns over the card and reads the key on the back which states that '4b' means 'license valid to'.

Even more confusingly, an adjacent table on the rear of the card sets out how long the driver is registered to hold a license - that is until his or her 70th birthday.

A total of 25million new-style licenses have been issued but - motoring experts say - drivers were never sufficiently warned they would expire after 10 years.

Motorists who fail to renew their licenses in time are allowed to continue driving. But the DVLA says they could be charged with 'failing to surrender their license', an offence carrying a £1,000 fine.

AA president, Edmund King said: 'It is not generally known that photo card licenses expire: there appears to be a lack of information that people will have to renew these licenses.

'People think they have already paid them for once over and that is it.

'It will come as a surprise to motorists and a shock that they have to pay an extra £17.50.'

The AA called on the Government to use the annual £450million from traffic enforcement fines to offset the renewal charge.

## Deputy Rep' (North).

### Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2009 rideout

After Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb, Sunday was a bit overcast and not as warm but I thought I would get my ' new ' bike out and try to re build some confidence, the roads were dry and not greasy for a change.

The last of 8 to arrive at Boreham was Cougar who was on his bike for the first time since his hospital visit, he got off stretched his arms in the air and declared " well its nice to be alive " and it was nice to see him, no harm done it appears. Well done.

It was decided to do the scenic route to Southend, all ready to go but it was apparent that Cougar was going nowhere as his bike refused to start, in fact it didn't do anything, it was dead, lights functioned but no starter, a bit of fiddling didn't do any good either, no immediate problem cos a push soon got it going and off we went. He blamed it on Italian electrics !!

Southend was quiet but a couple of lads on Dragstars were parked up on the central reservation and John gave them some details of the club, maybe some new recruits, one of them gave Cougar a push to get going then laid down flat on his back on the central reservation, knackered, a bit of a character !! After food and drink at Rose's it was time to saddle up and go, but it just had to spit on the way home !!

Peter

## **CENTRE 19 ON TOUR - (Snow way to go !!)**

A proposition was made for a trip to southern Spain last autumn, which, due to other commitments had to be deferred to this year. We decided that due to the wait we would fly down and give the place a good going over in the mean time. That was it then, Peter (aka VC, I think that's Viet Cong), Dennis (aka Barney) and myself, who now probably has a few additional suffixes, got flights booked into the nearest available airport, Granada and that was that. Unfortunately I chose the day of the big snow dump and arriving at Stansted found the airport basically closed. After an hour or so our flight was reinstated and after some okey cokey at the gate, two de-icings and three hours on the plane before take off we were away. Dennis became a celebrity prior to take off with all kinds of preferential treatment and scoff just because he has an ailment or two and left Peter and I to waste away !!

Granada was a welcome sight. We got the car and were off to Roquetas De Mar near Almeria. I promised them a coffee break on the way (about 100 miles) but they soon found out that I tell lies. We unloaded at the apartment and then went off to the local Grand Plaza for some supplies and nosebag coz the restaurants that I wanted to go to were not open and finished up with a fast food alternative, not a good start. Peter declared that as we were on the third floor and closer to the sun, we should benefit from higher temperatures. Dennis and I are still having nightmares about that gem. We finished up in a local Brit' bar for an equaliser or two and some English style tapas that went down well. That was it then, first day over, tired but happy

The following day was just a continuous bombardment of sunshine. I took them to my favourite "Spanish" tapas bar where we all filled our boots. It was a magnificent "gastronome" of local food. We returned to the Brit bar in the evening where Peter embarrassed us with a song or two, harassing the women and winding up one or two visitors from our northern territories. Anyway, it was good to see the owners again and had a good "hands across the sea" reunion.

A sunny, but windy start to the next day. We all seemed to be in quite a rapid de pressurising mode. After a lot of banter and piss taking, Peter declared that as he was the chairman of vice and a dirty wrongun, he would pull rank and have his own way. Foxtrot Oscar was the reply and I took them up into the mountains to Enix and Felix. This was a nice ride with a few hairpins that resulted in even more venting from Peter. We had a confusing conversation with an ex miner in a café that resulted in a premature exit. The day was concluded with a Great meal in a local Bistro and off to Chaplins for some more banter before bed. Is tonight going to be an encore to the previous nights snoring contest that NOBODY took part in ???

First thing in the morning we decided to carry out remedial repairs on my patio door. It came out, was cleaned, runners sorted and back in like a rat up a drainpipe. Then off to my local agents to get the car itinerary sorted. Nothing mentioned at the pick up but some frontal damage that we may have been liable for. This was sorted and OK and was followed by a serious discount on my management fees. This was a good win treble and we had not even got to the tapas bars yet !!! Lunchtime was a follow on from the previous day. Dennis and I were in heaven and Peter (renamed Bananarama by Dennis) was highlighting a really bad eye on the Patrons face that he was trying to hide and trying to talk Italian to an already confused bar owner. We finished up paying a few more euros for "our cheek" that day. The evening was dominated by a Paella of majestic quality and proportion followed by a wander to Chaplins to finish off. Need to have more brandy just in case last nights symphony gets going again.

On Friday we headed for a bar in the old Spanish area to meet up with Nigel who was a centre 19 member prior to escaping to the sun permanently. He was in the company of many other Brits who had also made the move. An interesting experience and opportunity to expand on in the future. We finished at our usual Tapas bar and retired for siesta. It is probably worth mentioning at this point that the shade temperature on the terrace when the sun was shining was around 72' and the thermometer left in the sun and out of the wind reached on one occasion 96'. A trifle better than the UK !!!

Saturday was home day in the late afternoon. We did the usual tours prior to leaving and chose a route around the north of the Sierra Nevada mountains for the return trip. We went through some very scenic areas and got a look or two at the housing for the locals. Caves ! with in most cases a nice front door and respectable rendering to finish them off. No need for permission to extend, just dynamite ! The temperature in the mountains dropped to -1 for a while with a light spray of snow. The flight was on time and the return was uneventful with a smooth transition home apart from a pull by the local constabulary. Dennis's car had so many lights on it looked like a Christmas tree. After Dennis got off his knees ( he insisted it was a breathalyser !!), we got on our way again.

This was a very enjoyable trip with friends who made it even better. We did a lot in a short period and were never ever other than relaxed, contented and full of the joys of living. The person who said, "three is a crowd" is obviously someone who never knew anyone worth talking to or listening to. We shall return (whether they like it or not !)

Phil #1712



PS – Message for Mrs Gale from Peter and Phil. Next time Dennis wants to come out to play, can you make sure he has matching sox and he leaves his decorating trousers at home. Thank you.





## TWO OLD GENTLEMEN GO MISSING

To save members asking John and Carol what has happened to the two old rejects from Centre 13, I thought I had better let you know. No, our daughters haven't finally got us into care homes for the elderly yet, although Ray's daughter has been making enquiries.

We are off to Spain for 3 months, from the beginning of March to the end of May, and are we taking our bikes? Of course, and are we riding them all the way to Spain? Sod off, it's cold. Well when we were younger we were tough but that was a long time ago, so we are having them shipped over there. It will cost us £640 for both bikes and the transit time is 2 days, but we will be riding them back.

Our idea is that if we like it there and the pound becomes stronger against the Euro and Ray and Julie can sell their house in the UK and the price of villas start coming down and when Mars is in conjunction with my anus or his anus well someone's, we could be making it a permanent move.

OK, so its not the right time financially to move over there but at our age there is no guarantee we will be around in 5 years time, well I will be but with Ray its very doubtful.

Now keep this to yourself, but because Ray has trouble walking up hills with his dodgy old back and there's loads of them in La Marina which is where we are going, he was even considering getting one of those mobility scooters but when he found out that Harley Davidson don't make one, the idea was soon rejected.

Of course while we are away, we will take great interest in studying what the English weather is like on Sunday mornings when you have your ride-outs (and then laugh).

See you all in June

Laurie

## Centre 19 meeting's dates:

### March

#### North meeting.

8 pm Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009.

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

#### South meeting.

8pm Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

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

On the B1418 between Bicknacre and South Woodham

### April

#### North meeting.

8 pm Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

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

#### South meeting.

8pm Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

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

On the B1418 between Bicknacre and South Woodham.