

# Chapter Six

2003

## Chapter Officers

	January - May	May - November
Director	Kev French	Kev Taylor
Assistant Director	Kev Taylor	Dave Sanders
Secretary	Dave Sanders	Teresa Taylor
Treasurer	Gillian Dutton	
Editor	Richard Eaton	
Membership Secretary	Teresa Taylor	
Senior Road Captain	Shaun Sunderland	
Photographer	Susan Winning	
Ladies of Harley	Hazel Carlin	
Area Representative (Lincolnshire)	Jeff Bayne	
Road Captains	Aron Burghart	
	Steve Cranston	
	Dai Gunter	
	Steve Pye	
	Guy Raynor	
	Neil Rose	
	Mark Waller	
	Ian Winning	

## Membership for 2003 – ?

2003 was a very traumatic year for the Chapter, brought about by the closure of Big Rock Harley-Davidson. Big Rock was owned by the Dixon Motor Group, a company that controlled many car franchises and also owned Motorcycle City and Carnells. When the Dixon Motor Group was sold to the Lombard Group (Bank of Scotland), the latter were only interested in continuing the car business and subsequently sold off the motorcycle assets. On the 13<sup>th</sup> May, Big Rock Harley-Davidson closed its doors for the last time, leaving Sherwood Chapter without a sponsoring dealership.

The news that the Stapleford Big Rock Harley-Davidson shop had closed, with the subsequent transfer of the Harley-Davidson franchise to Harleyworld, which would be operating out of a store situated in Beeston, was posted on the Big Rock H-D website during the month of May.



Unfortunately, the current Harley Davidson store at Stapleford closed on 13 May 2003. If you have any issue arising from the closure, please call **01405 744666** and speak to our Customer Services Team.

The Harley Davidson franchise has been transferred to another authorised Harley Davidson dealer and the new store at Beeston is expected to open in June. Please keep watching this web-site for more details.

In the meantime, the new dealer (Harleyworld) will help with all your Harley needs (servicing, bike and parts and clothing sales, job enquiries) and can be contacted on **01246 450850**.

Figure 6.1 The website announcement of closure.

The closure also instigated a change in three of the primary officer positions, due to the Director, Kev French, having to resign on account of him being a Big Rock H-D employee. All other committee positions remained as originally selected.



Figure 6.2 Position of the Harley-Davidson shops in Nottingham. (VF)

Fortunately, the new sponsor, Robin Hood H-D was not far away, in distance and time to opening, (see the map). Although they had plans to open one month later on the 16<sup>th</sup> June, this was slightly delayed, however, due to the refurbishment taking longer than expected. Based in Queens Rd, Beeston, Nottingham, the shop officially opened on the 5<sup>th</sup> July. Just as Big Rock H-D was part of a large motor group, so Robin Hood H-D is part of Harleyworld, which in turn is part of Autoworld.

# STOP PRESS

21<sup>st</sup> May 2003

Andy Chapman, Dealer Principal of HarleyWorld (Chesterfield), and Nick Matthews, HOG UK Northern Area Rep, attended the Sherwood Committee meeting last night to explain the situation regarding the new dealership which is opening in Beeston.

They are aiming to have the shop open for trading by 16<sup>th</sup> June, however, due to the complete refurbishment of the building, this may be delayed, hopefully not beyond the end of June/early July.

In the meantime, if you need a service or parts, or have other Harley enquiries, please ring HarleyWorld and they will be pleased to help. Their number is 01246 450850.

Andy will attend the Chapter meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> June to explain their plans/aims and answer any questions you may have. Floor plans of the new building will be available for viewing.

Andy confirmed that he was happy for Sherwood Chapter to continue in its current form, and both parties are enthusiastic to work together for the mutual benefit of the new dealership and Sherwood Chapter.

Figure 6.3 Stop press announcement in the May/June issue of the Q & Q.

Although this disruption caused many to consider the future of Sherwood Chapter to be uncertain, it is to the committee's credit that they carried on, under the leadership of Kev Taylor, and emerged with the Chapter in good shape. The staff at Robin Hood H-D should also be thanked for their efforts in easing the transition of the Chapter from one shop to the other. The following photographs show the new shop, including the Chapter area.

Richard Stevens made the first bike sale at the shop, a V Rod to Paul Holmes.



Figure 6.4 Front door area.



Figure 6.5 Front display area.



Figure 6.6 Main counter area.

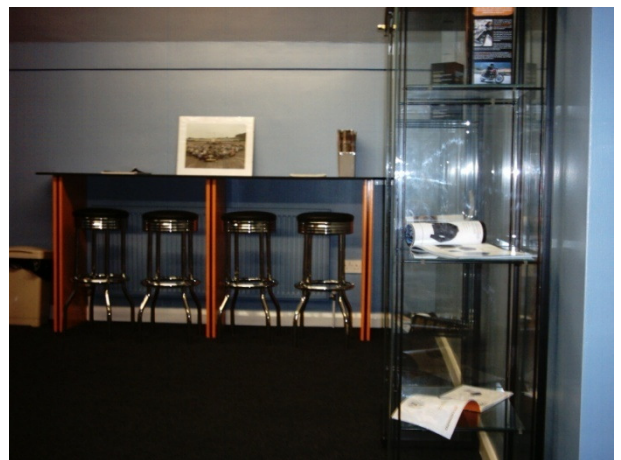


Figure 6.7 Chapter area.



Figure 6.8 Chapter area.



Figure 6.9 Main frontage. (VF)

## Events Programme

Date	Event	Type	Destination
18/01/2003	Post Christmas Bash	Party	Nottingham
23/03/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Lincolnshire border
29/03/2003	Big Rock Demo Weekend	Shop	Nottingham
21/04/2003	Sceg' Ride	Ride-out	Skegness
27/04/2003	Quiz Run	Ride-out	Mystery
30/04/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Heckington
04/05/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	North Yorkshire Moors
14/05/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Cliff Run
22/05/2003	Shaun's Ride-out	Ride-out	Damon's American Diner
25/05/2003	The Bros Ride-out	Ride-out	Derbyshire
26/05/2003	The Bros Ride-out	Ride-out	Newark & Gunthorpe
28/05/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Gunthorpe Bridge
01/06/2003	Shaun's Ride-out	Ride-out	Stratford-Upon-Avon
11/06/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Revesby (East Lincs)
15/06/2003	The Bros Ride-out	Ride-out	Newark & Gunthorpe
22/06/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Peak District
23/06/2003	The Bros Ride-out	Ride-out	Matlock
25/06/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Caistor
04/07/2003	Shaun's Ride-out	Ride-out	Hard Rock - Nottingham
04/07/2003	Wales Weekend	Weekend	Tenby
07/07/2003	The Bros Ride-out	Ride-out	Vale of Belvoir
09/07/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Vale of Belvoir
13/07/2003	The Bros Ride-out	Ride-out	Bourton-on-the-Water
20/07/2003	Shaun's Ride-out	Ride-out	Cadbury World
23/07/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Mansfield
07/08/2003	Shaun's Ride-out	Ride-out	Cantonese Restaurant
10/08/2003	The Bros Ride-out	Ride-out	Scarborough & Goathland
18/08/2003	The Bros Ride-out	Ride-out	Knockerdown
20/08/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Folkingham
29/08/2003	5th Sherwood Rally	Rally	Tattershall
03/09/2003	Lincoln Area Ride-out	Ride-out	Winthorpe
07/09/2003	The Bros Ride-out	Ride-out	Hunstanton
08/09/2003	The Bros Ride-out	Ride-out	Country
20/11/2003	AGM	Meeting	Nottingham
13/12/2003	Christmas Party (Nottingham)	Party	Awsworth
18/12/2003	Christmas Party (Lincoln)	Party	Lincoln

Considering the difficulties encountered this year, the events list was amazing! This was, without doubt, due to the Road Captains from the various areas. Senior Road Captain Shaun Sunderland took control of the Nottingham area, operating from the Hogs Head, Awsworth, Steve Cranston again leading the Lincolnshire ride-outs from the Fox and

Hounds, and 'The Bros', brothers John and Peter Allsopp took it upon themselves to lead the North Nottinghamshire (Mansfield) area from the White Gates Public House, Clipstone Rd, Forest Town. Later in the year there would be changes in venue for both the North Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire areas. The North Notts area would move to the Oak Tree Public House, Southwell Rd, Mansfield in September, and the Lincolnshire area would move to the Sun Inn, Bridge St, Saxilby in October. The Chapter meetings continued to be held at the Hogs Head.

On a happier note, 2003 was also the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Harley-Davidson and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of HOG. This resulted in several members making trips to the United States of America in order to participate in the celebrations being held in Milwaukee. Their experiences are recorded later in this chapter.

This year's selection of reported activities includes:

- a. Copy of the Tenby based 'Welsh Tour' report by Dai Gunter, taken from the July/August issue of the Q & Q.
- b. Copy of the report on Sherwood Chapter's donation to STRUT, taken from the Christmas issue of the Q & Q. STRUT in the Community is a charity that gives much needed respite care to disabled children and their families in Lincolnshire.
- c. Copy of the 'Sherwood Rally' report by Dai Gunter, taken from the September/October issue of the Q & Q.
- d. Copy of the 'Ride-outs' report by Jeff Bayne, taken from the November/December issue of the Q & Q.
- e. Copy of the report recording a visit of a motorcycle instructor to give tips on safer riding techniques, taken from the Christmas issue of the Q & Q.
- f. A collage of Christmas party photographs, taken from the 2004 February/March issue of the Q & Q.

Plus three reports of members experiencing the 'American dream':

- g. Copy of the 'Why Fly to Denver When You Are Going to Michigan – 3000 miles Away?' report by Roger Williams, taken from the 2004 February/March issue of the Q & Q.
- h. Copy of the 'It WAS a Dream Come True' report by Steve Insley, taken from the September/October issue of the Q & Q.
- i. Copy of the 'Death Valley – Welcome to Hell' report by Keith Pinnock and Sarika Lynch, taken from the November/December issue of the Q & Q.

Finally, a copy of the new Sherwood Chapter Affiliation certificate issued by HOG, showing Robin Hood H-D as the sponsoring dealership.

## Wales Tour, Tenby 2003

### Sherwood Chapter with Brothers from 'Cangen Cymraeg'

#### ***Passports at the ready***

Wilson Ramsay suggested it around October last year - "How about organising a trip to Wales?" I took up the challenge and here's the result...

Jeff Bayne and I met Kev Taylor, Boyd Johnson and Richard Osborne at the Little Chef on the A17/A46 junction. The sun shining, it looked like it was going to be just like it said on Sky News Weather the night before... hot and sunny. (Del, my missus, was taking the car with Kath Bayne and Jean Pettifor as passengers. They were setting off about an hour after us and taking a more direct route to Tenby.)

At the Bingham Roundabout we met John and Janice Allsop with Tony and Elaine Coyne. Seven bikes thumped through to the Tamworth services where Glyn and Chris Barnes with Nolan Coyle were eagerly awaiting our arrival.

So where's Mervyn Pettifor? Well poor old Merv had to be in Solihull, Birmingham for a job interview; he was going to follow us down to Tenby all on his lonesome... ahhh...

The sun bounced off the passing cars' windscreens and the heat of the day reflected off the tarmac. Yes, the first leg was about as boring as this write-up, so far, but it soon improved when we met with four Cangen Cymraeg members at Abergavenny bus station - a popular meeting point for bikers, particularly on Sunday afternoons.

Rob Gunter, my brother; Paul Harris, Andy Peate and Andrew White (aka Chalky) all greeted us with a welcoming smile, a handshake and some bad news... the little café wasn't cooking, so there weren't any bacon butties... doh! Undeterred, we settled for a cuppa and a sandwich. By now, the temperature must have been at the high 20's (Del reckoned she had 29°C on the car's ambient temperature gauge). I disrobed of my leathers, and rode, along with several others, in T-shirt and denims - sweet memories of St. Tropez.

Once out of Abergavenny and through Crickhowell, with Rob leading us and Paul as Tail-End-Charlie, we followed the A40 west; the roads, smoothly tarmac'd and a pleasure to ride upon, twisted nicely towards Brecon. We took our first photo opportunity just as we approached the edge of Brecon National Park with Mynydd Llangyndir in the distance.



Figure 6.10 On the A40 between Crickhowell and Brecon, with Mynydd Llangyndir in the distant background. L-R Jeff, Chris, Tony, Elaine, Glyn, Nolan, Richard, Boyd, Janice, John, Andy, Chalky, Kev, Rob and Paul.

The group of 13 bikes were split by some light traffic, and inevitably, the latter half of the group, following slower traffic, lost sight of the leaders and inevitably took a wrong turning at the Brecon by-pass. So we in the tail end got to see Brecon's by-pass as well as the quaint city of Brecon after we doubled back on ourselves to team up with the leading bunch. Brecon is a cathedral city, and if you blinked, you'd miss the cathedral, as did most of the team.

We met up with the rest of the team a few miles on, on the road to Llandovery, where we stretched our legs and gave Chalky some stick over his knack of the second man drop-off technique.

Pacing ourselves at 50mph through the beautiful scenery enabled everyone to take in the rolling hills and luscious greenery, dotted with occasional creamy-white sheep from time to time. Passing through Halfway, a village halfway between Brecon and Llandeilo, and Abergavenny and Carmarthen (take your pick), we could see Mynydd Bwlch-Y-Groes to our right.

Motoring on through Llandovery and Llandeilo, most felt like it was time for a drink. Rob knew of a nice pub 'just down the road' and asked me if I fancied stopping for a drink and stretch of legs. I agreed and 'just down the road' turned out to be 15 miles later, where we turned left into a nice looking country pub that sat on the banks of the River Cothi.



**Figure 6.11** Jeff and Rob discuss their wake arrangements and their choice of ale.

I asked the landlord "How did you know we were coming?" There we sandwiches and cakes spread over several tables. "Help yourself," he replied, "but you'll have to fight the farmers for it, see... and who's coat is that jacket!?"



**Figure 6.12** Chalky, Kev and Andy at the Cothi Arms. It turned out that we had arrived at a farmer's wake. In true Welsh tradition, we were given a full tray of cake to help us

drink our beers. Now where else in the UK would you find hospitality like that but in South Wales?

After a good rest and watering, we decided to push on. Tenby was still a good 35 miles away and it was already past four o'clock. Through Carmarthen and onto St Clears with Tenby on the horizon. Did you know that Carmarthen is supposedly the birthplace of Merlin the Magician? There was an ancient oak tree stump in the town centre that prevented the council from building a by-pass route around the western part of the town. It was said that 'should Merlin's tree be uprooted, then the town would drown in a flood'. The tree was uprooted about fifteen years ago; many of the townsfolk are still waiting with their sandbags for the rainwaters to burst the banks of the Dyffryn Tywi.

We said farewell to the superb A40 (a bikers dream road) and took the A477 and A478 through Begelly and into Tenby. We rode through the old castle walls of the town several times; some say for posterity, others because we got lost. But, we found Kiln Park Campsite on the Penally road.

We pitched tents and as we drove in the last peg on Mervyn's tent, he arrived... perfect timing, for Merv.

We met up with Jeff and Kath, John and Janice and Tony and Elaine (B&B'ers in Penally) at the five arches in the town's walls. And the first port of call... the Five Arches Inn. It wasn't long before the alcohol took effect. Soon enough we were well oiled... some more lubricated than others though.



**Figure 6.13** The 'Gals' in the Five Arches Inn – Elaine, Janice, Kath, Del and Jean.

By 00:30 Jean and Del decided it was time for sleepbobs. Of course, Mervyn and I being the decent fellows we are, couldn't let the girls walk home all alone in a strange town (and besides,

Mervyn had promised Jean he'd give her cramp that night), so we volunteered to escort them back to the tents. Megga Brownie points for us there Mervyn! The B&B'ers hailed a taxi and found themselves back at base camp before they knew it. The Cangen Cymraeg lads, plus stragglers, took on Tenby in style, and Chalky found himself on the receipt of a very very nice man's telephone number! Which, of course, he ended up with quite some stick over.

### **St. David... the Patron Saint of Wales**

The morning started a little damp. A sea Harr had drifted onshore causing a misty start to Saturday morning. But already, there were signs of the cloud burning off. By 10:30ish, the mist had disappeared and we were soon saddled up for our ride-out, furnished by Andy Peate. After our 300-mile ride the day before, and some coaxing from Andy, he assured me he had a nice ride up his sleeve, through the Pembroke National Park along roads and lanes that were frequented only by locals. 14 bikes rode through the exit of Kiln Park and into the adjoining petrol station, but we were soon down to 12 when Richard and Boyd had to leave us, an early departure due to work commitments. With Paul tail-ending again, the Dirty Dozen set off, riding



**Figure 6.14 Wales Tour members: Top row Dai, Jeff, Mervyn, John, Paul. Middle row Glyn, Kev, Nolan, Andy, Chalky, Rob. Bottom row Chris, Kath, Jean, Janice, Blaine, Tony. MISSING, somewhere on the A40, Richard, Boyd!**

through Pembroke and over the Milford Haven bridge which enabled us to see for miles as it spanned across the Haven at a height of about 500 feet (room for some exaggeration there). Through lanes with passing places, we found our way into Little Haven, a quaint old fishing village where we stopped for a while for coffees and teas. Even Nolan had his little pinky in the air as his sipped his Earl Grey.

All sipped out, we left Little Haven taking the sharpest, steepest hairpin bend in the country. Jeff's little legs scurried as he took the uphill corner making sure he didn't lose control... of his bike. Any steeper and we'd have been mountain climbers.

Riding along St. Brides Bay with its beautiful sandy beaches, we soon arrived at Newgale, then into Solva where we stopped for late lunch.

and a Cathedral. A quick turn about and we were on the road to Haverfordwest, Narberth and back into Tenby for another ride around the town. Jeff reckoned it was for the girls, but everyone else reckoned it was because he could see himself in the shop windows.

That evening we decided to meet the B&B'ers at The Plough Inn in Penally, just a stroll from the campsite. Jean had let us into a secret... Mervyn was celebrating his 49<sup>th</sup> birthday, but what Jean neglected to tell us was that it was her birthday the following day, and she looks good for a 56-year-old too. In true tradition, Chalky decided to make a little impromptu speech and give Mervyn a little gift. "What are these?" Jean asked. "Oh, you just roll them over the ends of my mufflers, to stop liquids leaking in," came Merv's reply. "No no," said Chalky, "it's to help with the cramp!"

To celebrate the birthday couple's birthdays, we decided to hit the town again. The B&B'ers had other ideas and decided to stay in Penally for the night where they got locked in some place where there was a bar conveniently situated in the corner and a toilet in an adjoining room.



**Figure 6.15 St Bride's Bay looking down to Newgale.**



Figure 6.16 "Something to help Jean with her cramps".

### The Ride Home

The next morning, we arose and broke camp and by 10:00 were packed and ready to move... well almost; Nolan was still out for the count. But, by the time Jeff, John and Tony arrived, Nolan had packed and strapped and was ready to ride - must be the quickest moving camper in the Chapter. The Cangen Cymraeg group split the pack at Carmarthen, where Glyn, on autopilot, almost followed the lads down the M4. Another pleasurable ride on the A40 put smiles on everyone's faces. We stopped at Abergavenny for a Bacon Butty and as we got out passports ready for passport control, we had a sprinkle of rain, enough to wet the roads and tempt most to don wets. A couple of miles past Abergavenny and it was bright again.

Resting at Tamworth services, we met up with Eddie and Molly Richardson who had been out on the Stratford run with Shaun. Nolan and Glyn split from the group and the rest of us headed towards Nottingham and blacker skies. We thought we'd just miss the shower, but got caught on the A52 dual carriageway at Radcliffe and got a good soaking before we could stop to get suited up, and by the time we did get suited up, the shower had virtually passed and we were pretty damp to boot.



Figure 6.18 The organiser and reporter himself.

We ordered up three taxis and found ourselves in one of Tenby's finest pubs where several team members were accosted by a couple of Tenby Slappers; and they couldn't get away from them fast enough. Next stop was the Five Arches Inn again then onto some other pub, who's name I can't recall, where Glyn found himself a new job as bouncer with mobile toilet in hand (ice-cream tub to double up as urinal) and Nolan explained the intricacies of Harley-Davidson engineering, and he still couldn't get served at the bar!

After Kev had a brief discussion with the local Tattooist who also rides a H-D, we headed home, well oiled and full of beer.



Figure 6.17 Nolan tells Mr Tenby that the clearances must be within 3 thousandth of an inch or it might as well be a mile.

All in all, everyone had a really good time. It was a laid-back weekend with some really good riding. And, Glyn and Chris Barnes had their first visit to Wales without seeing rain, well, almost.

Already there's talk of a repeat visit next year, but watch this space... it could be Scotland... Wilson?

Ride Safe

Dai

ps... several have asked me what Cangen Cymraeg means... well... you'll just have to keep wondering. But here's some other words that you've probably already guessed the meaning to: Mynydd = mountain; Llan = church; Dyffryn = valley; Afon = river; Aber = estuary or stream or confluence or mouth of river; Llangyndir = Church Before The Common (that's a good 'un).

Figure 6.19 Touring South Wales report and photographs by Dai Gunter.



Many thanks to Dai Gunter for organising a brilliant weekend down in south Wales. He even got the weather right for most of the time!!!!

Kath and I were most impressed with the magnificent coastline scenery, the A40, Tenby, the beer and of course the excellent company!!!

Nice to see it was similar to last years trip to Northumberland in that we didn't get lost or split up till we met the locals and let them 'help' out.

Many thanks once again to Dai and Del for a great run.

Steve Cranston (Lincoln area) and the Bros (John and Pete Allsopp) (Mansfield area) have been organising some great rideouts on Monday and Wednesday evenings along with some Sundays. They put a lot of effort into these events and run them even if nobody else turns up, but considering that Sherwood Chapter has one of the biggest memberships in the country it is a shame that even in good weather it is not unknown for only half a dozen bikes to attend. Thanks go to all who do support these events (and others organised by the other road captains) but more support would be nice to see. Are there too many rideouts, do you want to ride the Hog, is there something wrong in the places they go to, have you any suggestions???? Please reply to the Q and Q, don't forget these events are for all of us. If you are new to the chapter, have no fear as you will be made most welcome. Enough said!!!!!!

Jeff the Geordie

Figure 6.20 A tribute to the ride-out organizers in a difficult year.

# Sherwood Rally 2003

Friday morning started off on a bad footing. Not only was the rain falling, but I also had a puncture in the rear tyre! I quickly dropped the wheel and took it to Nick at Cycle Haven to see if he could help. He did, with a bottle of Ultra Seal that cured the problem in a matter of seconds... and there was no need for me to have taken the wheel off!

After pitching the tent alongside Boyd (aka Mr Cigarette – 'cause he likes carrying empty fag-packets around), we decided to get a swift pint before doing our thing on the gate. It was soon beginning to look like a record year for the Rally. By the time we finished our 2½-hour tour of duty, there were more than 120 guests who hadn't pre-booked.



The sun set, and the air a little chilly, we hit the clubhouse where the first band of the evening was just finishing off their set. After some sound-checks, the main entertainment of the evening (a Rock-A-Billy band whose name I forget) blasted everyone away. Although not really my cup of tea, they were excellent and everyone had a really good time. Even the band members were having fun, standing on their instruments and setting fire to cymbals.

By something past midnight, I staggered back to the tent, looking forward to some shut-eye. I didn't realise I'd pitched in front of a pair of lumberjacks... working the nightshift, sawing wood! I think I managed four hours shut-eye, and wishing I had a pair of earplugs.



Saturday morning came too soon. Awake at 6:00am, listening to the lumberjacks, I decided to read the Rally edition of the Q&Q. Tossing the contents of the Rally Pack onto my lap, I found my pin, t-shirt, Q&Q, plastic bin-bag, various smoking related goodies, and... a pair of earplugs! I was made! I knew at that moment, Saturday night was going to be a peaceful event.

By the time I read through the Q&Q, chuckling at the endless jokes and cartoons, it was time to beat the crowd and take a shower. No complaints here, there were plenty of empty cubicles to choose from with extra facilities on the site this year.

Before I knew it, I was on the bike and headed for the gate and the Rally ride-out. We were applauded on our way by two fireworks that were meant to unravel into the US Stars 'n' Stripes, only, there was a technical hitch, and things didn't go quite to plan for Mr Fireworks as the two rolled-up flags floated to earth under mini parachutes. Never mind... it was the thought that counts!

The ride-out headed off on its mystery ride. Being the Tail End Charlie, I had the honour of watching every Harley leave the gate; and what a sight it was too. There must have been a few over the two hundred this year, and with fluffy white (nay, grey) clouds interspersed with royal blue skies, we were looking at another repeat performance from Shaun's ride-out of 2002. But, things didn't quite go to plan and the tail end of the ride-out got split from the main body, soon, memories of 2001's Ride-out came to mind. So, as we had a slower travelling machine with us, I decided to do a little catch-up and created a little ride-out of my own – it is allowed you know; I am a Road Captain (on my mother's side). Through a heavy down-pour, we arrived at the parking area in Skegness (doh! It was meant to be a mystery) two minutes before the main ride-out, so not to look embarrassed, I made out like it was all planned and I directed riders into the allocated parking area... seemed to work, nobody noticed, except Shaun and Rainy Dave who couldn't work out how the tail-end managed to beat the lead rider to the finishing point!



After a bag of chips and a couple of hours in my most favourite place in the UK, it was time to head back for Tattershall. The ride home went without a hitch, and we all managed to stay in one bunch. Well done all the Marshalls and thanks to Shaun for organising the ride and parking facilities.

The ride-in show was well attended; bikes ranged from an old Knucklehead hardtail to fancy paint-

jobbed customs, all in fine fettle. It must have been a difficult task for the judges this year and many of the exhibitionists (and let's face it, you must be an exhibitionist to get your shiny bits of chrome on show in a Harley Rally, ain't that right Tom?) must have reduced their grubby fingernails to grubby finger stumps.

The evening came soon enough and I think all of the Sherwood Chapter members were in the bar to support our former Director's band, 'Jester'. If only Kev French could fix Harleys like he can play guitar... Anyway, back to the BS. The band played well and there was plenty of cheering from one or two deaf fans at the front of the hall and the rest joined in so as not to make them feel too embarrassed.

There was a good sprinkling of back patches. I think the main supporting chapter was Fenlanders, followed closely by everyone else, including Aire Valley, Nene, Surrey, and the Scottish lads to name but a few. We even had the lads from Robin Hood Harley-Davidson come along to join in the fun, with Patrick looking out for this year's 'Show Us Yer Tats' competition winner, even though we never had one (a competition that is), he still looked!



when he was a little boy, but she's not too sure if he still is, he'll print a list of winners in the Q&Q perhaps.

We also had our very own fireworks display. Another thumbs-up to Mr Fireworks who put another fiesta of pyrotechnics (that's fireworks Rainy Dave) for the Rally.

Needless to say, by the end of the evening, I had a beer or two inside me and after mixing with anyone who'd put up with my rambling on (and dribbling), I soon realised I was one of the last in the bar. Chalky (our Welsh friend from the Tenby trip – if you remember) and some American guy from Fenlanders were discussing something I don't remember; isn't it strange how alcohol makes you forget things? We'd finished our drinks, and the bar was closed, so there was little left to



Between bands, Kev Taylor did his Chapter Director's bit and called out the raffle prizes (none of which did I win!!!) and the Ride-in Show winners. I was pretty busy, running about, taking photos of prize-winners and the body surfing, and have since forgotten who won what! Anyway, if Richard is a good fellow, and his missus reckons he used to be



do but wander aimlessly back to my tent and listen to our lumberjacks sing in unison. It was 2:30am and time I joined in third-part harmony, with earplugs-and-all.

**W**armth from the early Sunday morning sunshine raised hopes of a dry tent to pack away. It was 8:30 and the earplugs had worked a treat. By the time I had packed the bike, I was more than ready for a shower. I reminded the Welsh lads that by the time they reached Nottingham, I'd be soaking under a nice cool shower, smelling sweet and looking forward to a nice Sunday roast, whilst they'd be soaking under a blustery wet cloud. You can imagine the replies I got?



**T**he Rally was another success for the Chapter and it's worth noting that had it not been for a handful of individuals, the Rally would not have happened. I certainly would like to thank all who assisted in getting things organised, from doing a bit of gate duty, running around like a lunatic (Rainy Dave trying to sort out wristbands for late arrivals), selling raffle tickets, organising who camped where, to the bouncers on the door; the list is long, so basically, everyone who made the Rally happen, I thank you for a great time!



Ride Safe

**Dai**



Figure 6.21 Report and photographs by DG.

## Sherwood Chapter Members Deliver to STRUT

Sherwood Chapter's Mark Wilkinson posed with other members of Sherwood Chapter when they delivered over £700-worth of washing machine and dishwasher to STRUT, Lincoln, in October. Thanks to Robin Hood Harley-Davidson, the units were delivered in the shop's van, escorted by a dozen Harleys. There were big smiles on the kid's faces when they heard the 'Rolling Thunder' approaching the new STRUT premises, on Wragby Road, Lincoln, and even bigger smiles when the kids sat on the bikes and imagined they too were Harley Riders. Mark's wife, Bev, works at STRUT as a Team Leader and Fundraiser, where the new premises are in the process of being equipped for short-term care for children with disabilities who live in Lincolnshire. "We give the children the chance to have a social life. We encourage their independence by teaching life skills in a safe, fun environment. With greater independence comes more self-esteem and confidence."



Figure 6.22 STRUT receive new equipment from Sherwood Chapter.

## Motorcycle Instructor Takes Sherwood Chapter Members Through Their Paces

Geoff McManus, motor instructor with CY of Lincoln, visited Sherwood Chapter's Lincoln Area venue at The Sun Inn, Saxilby on the 13<sup>th</sup> November, to give a short presentation, nay, chat on general motorcycle safety and handling. Geoff touched on various aspects of the craft, from the use of the rear brake for u-turns to finding your line when riding through bends. Most of the evening's discussion centred on a common sense approach... but not everyone has the common sense needed to be a safe rider. "It's amazing how many people think they are good riders. Until I was trained properly about five years ago, I thought I was a good rider," says Geoff who's owned various sets of two-wheeled machines for over thirty years. "It's only since my training have I realised what I've been missing out on. Now I can really enjoy my motorcycling, knowing I'm a safer rider."



Figure 6.23 Report on the motorcycle instructor's safety tips for riders.

## Christmas Parties for Sherwood Chapter Members

Members of the Chapter attended Christmas Parties in December at the Hog's Head and in Lincoln's Big Wok & Chicago Rock Café...



Even the locals enjoyed the HOG party atmosphere at Chicago Rock Café, Lincoln.

Figure 6.24 Collage of Christmas party photographs.

## WHY FLY TO DENVER WHEN YOU ARE GOING TO MICHIGAN - 3000 MILES AWAY?

I flew into Denver, Colorado with my parents, wife and children and the holiday got off to an exhilarating start with white water rafting on the river Arkensaw. This called for a very early start after a late arrival the previous evening. A calmer two days followed with our journey which included stopping off at Fort Laramie, the Mammoth excavations and viewing Buffalo in the state park – where was this journey leading? The route was cleverly chosen to end up in Custer to visit Crazy Horse and Mount Rushmore. The rest of the party remarked on the large amount of motor bikes on the road and the centre of the road in Custer had been reserved for motor bike parking with stalls selling bike gear etc along the side of the road. Even the churches had joined in to provide food. What a co-incidence that there was a Harley Rally in this town and our motel was booked for 3 days!

Am I in heaven or is this just a dream. Bikes as far as I can see in front of me, which ever way I turned. A parking space was found and the rest of the day spent in Sturgis. There was just so much to see and you could buy from a bulb to a fully customized bike complete with every add-on you could wish for. The rally was so big that people were stopping as far out as 100 miles and biking in daily. Sturgis was transformed into bikers' paradise with some very nice moving scenery, officially banned, but it kept appearing. We left Sturgis at the end of the day footsore with walking and investigating just about every stall and of course I had to buy a few t-shirts and pins.



The following morning I assembled our party and we motored off to see Crazy Horse from the road, the Christmas shop, too many bikes coming the other way to cross over and look around and a view of lake Pectola from the Highway, perhaps we can stop on our way back. But where are we going? Why are we the only four wheeled vehicle on the road? Why can't we stop now to look at things? Perhaps we could stop at the next town – sure, we can stop there – sighs of relief from the entire family, old and young. The next town just happened to be Sturgis!!

On our return journey to Custer we did stop at the lake and the next day went to visit Mount Rushmore and the Badlands. We finally left Custer to complete our journey through Wyoming, Minnesota, Wisconsin and yes we did get to our relatives in Kalamazoo, Michigan.



This is what I call a trike!!!

**Jolly Roger**



Shop Till You Drop



Practically perfect, just one thing missing – my bike

Figure 6.25 A visit to Sturgis and the Black Hills Rally by Roger Williams.

## **The Ride Home with Keith Pinnock and Sarika Lynch**

**Day 3 – Sunday August 17<sup>th</sup> 2003**

### **Death Valley - Welcome to Hell**

“You will not notice much difference in temperature between up here and down there” the helpful lady said from behind the counter in the air-conditioned visitor centre, “especially on your motorbikes” sounding as if she knew what she was talking about.

“Up here” was at Beatty, Nevada, on Highway 95, midway between Tonopah, 100 miles north where we had breakfast that morning, and Las Vegas, our destination for the night.

“Down there” lay the notorious Death Valley, a place of American folklore – an isolated and uninhabitable cauldron I had only read about and seen in films or on television – a place I was not sure I really wanted to get any better acquainted with !

Beatty was at altitude, and was a relatively comfortable 105 degrees – Death Valley was around 6,000 feet lower and holds all the records going for the lowest, driest, hottest and meanest bad-assed place in the USA.

Okay, the facts were that Beatty was already 105 degrees and down in the valley 115, allegedly. Therefore, upon hearing “you will not notice much difference”, you could be mistakenly persuaded into thinking an extra 10 degrees probably would not feel that different – DON’T YOU BELIEVE IT !

Deceived by the lady’s reassuring words and not wanting to upset our travelling companions (typical people pleasers), we reluctantly turned west towards Death Valley. Ahead of us was 25 miles of descending into the valley, 50 miles through the valley and 25 miles of climbing, to get the hell out of there. I glanced at my watch – just after midday – what the hell were we doing? We were taking on a 100 mile loop that should have been named and properly signed “Hades Drive - Enter at your own peril”.

During the descent, just after crossing the state border into California, we passed a viewing area at Daylight Pass, 4316 feet above sea level and I thought “we can still turn back – we don’t have to do this” but Sarika and I agreed we would carry on – with hindsight, this is where we should have waved our friends on and returned to Beatty and Hwy 95 but, as they say, hindsight is 20/20 vision.

Even after passing Hells Gate we went blindly on - for every 1,000 feet we descended into the valley, I swear it felt like the temperature was going up 10 degrees, at least!! By the time we reached the junction at the bottom and turned left towards the aptly named Furnace Creek, it was as if we were inside a fan assisted oven, turned up to gas mark 50!

I remember seeing the sign - Furnace Creek 19 miles – and thinking at the time “that should not take long”, by 18 miles I was thinking “this had better not take long” and by 17 miles, “please God, don’t let it take long!!

Sarika and I agreed it was our own fault, we had opened Hell's Gate, the Devil was there to welcome us, and we were ignoring him and riding right on in. I then thought perhaps I should have gone to Church instead, it was a Sunday after all, but it was too late – we were already in the middle of the Devil's inferno!

I started humming *Mad Dogs and Englishmen* to take my mind off it– the sun had really gone to my head – which, by the way, had to have a crash helmet on, being the law in California and Nevada. I later recalled when we were riding through Texas, without crash helmets, and it was around 105 degrees (at 5pm!) would Death Valley have been any more bearable without a crash helmet? The answer I am sure is still a resounding NO!! Later that afternoon, I could have been heard humming various other tunes including *Bat out of Hell* and *I Survived!*

We passed signs telling us we were 250 feet below sea level as the sun beat down upon the desolate valley bottom. The lowest place in the US is 282 feet below sea level and is near Badwater, 20 miles from Furnace Creek.

The sun baked salt flats reflected a glare that my Ray-Bans had problems coping with and I spent a lot of the time squinting in my mirrors to see if the others had broken down, passed out or maybe just stopped to

admire the view !

The heat was so intense and so dry

that as quickly as

Sarika poured

water down the

back of my neck it

almost instantly

evaporated. I felt

like a chicken being

basted in the oven.

You had to drink

vast amounts of

water to avoid

dehydrating – the

problem being that

as soon as you took

the bottled water from the cooler and outside the air conditioned store, it was hot within a couple of minutes. One thing I understood though was that hot water was better than no water and carry as much as you possibly can!!



About 45 minutes out of Beatty, we finally reached Furnace Creek, the only inhabited place with a museum, visitor centre, gas station, refreshments and most importantly, air-conditioning! A few minutes earlier, Sarika had begun hyper-ventilating and had some serious problems breathing. You simply cannot imagine how intense the heat was and it was very easy to panic and think you were never going to escape from this hell hole of a place! Half an hour of air-conditioned comfort and a few litres of ice cold water made an immense difference to her wellbeing before we were forced

back into the heat. We didn't want to, but we had no choice – although Sarika had considered calling in a helicopter to finish the journey to Vegas, and she meant it!

I met another helpful person in the museum – perhaps an elderly relative of the lady in Beatty. When I asked if there was somewhere we could ride to within a short distance to get instant relief from the extreme heat, he proceeded to tell me about Dantes View, a 20 minute ride away and at 5,475 feet high, a lot cooler than where we were. “Great! Please can you show me the route on a map?” He very politely, and carefully, and slowly, outlined the route on the counter top map. After taking this onboard and sadly, sounding a lot less polite, I asked why the hell would we would want to go there when it was a dead-end and the only \*\*\*\*ing way out was along the same road and back through Death Valley. Poor man, he was only trying to help!

After the obligatory photos taken next to the plaque showing we were 190 feet below sea level and a temperature gauge that showed 115 degrees (in the shade !!) and only taken to prove we really were mad enough to go there, we mounted up once again and headed for cooler altitudes and the



delights of Las Vegas. We were pleased to eventually climb back up to Hwy 95 and 6,000 feet, appreciating the relatively far cooler, mid-afternoon 100 degrees.

The three bikes (two nearly new 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ultra Classics and a 10 year old Fat Boy) had mercifully coped very well with this ordeal. All three thankfully kept on beating and came out the other side none the worse for the experience – a credit to the

factory! And thanks to a few prayers said along the way, I am sure. I was even concerned that various parts of the bike would start melting especially after risking 1st degree burns when using the brake or clutch levers - next time I must wear gloves – asbestos ones!

The day had originally been planned by me as a nice and easy 200 mile cruise through the desert of Nevada, stopping off at the Death Valley visitor centre just to see what all the fuss was about, but proceeding on our way South on Hwy 95 and NOT turning right. It became a 300 mile ride of which 100 are never to be repeated – apart from possibly in the comfort of a very air conditioned car with the knob set on the darkest bluest part of the dial – or maybe....perhaps....on a Harley in January or February, when it is a positively cool 70 or 80 degrees. On the other hand, HELL NO – why on earth would I want to go back to such a god damn awful place?

Who can I blame and what lessons have I learned from this – should I blame the lady at the visitor centre or my friends for wanting to do the Death Valley Loop or God or the devil, for creating such a place? Alas, no, the only person I can blame is me – firstly, for planning the route from San Francisco to Las Vegas (we could have easily gone via LA – even the most notorious areas would have been 40 degrees cooler and probably safer!) and secondly – for me saying yes! The lessons learned are to

stop being a people pleaser, learn to say no, and never trust a visitor centre official ever again – unless they have actually been there and done it and not just wearing the T-Shirt!



I guess some bikers may view our ride as the touring equivalent of a sports bike rider doing a track day – or maybe dicing with others at 150mph+ on Mad Sunday at the Isle of Man – well, if that's the case, I now know that I have grown up and do not need to prove my balls are any bigger (or smaller) than any others – I will leave that for the boys!

Keith and Sarika shipped their own bike (100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ultra Classic) to San Francisco. They then rode down to Las Vegas where they picked up 'The Ride Home to Milwaukee' for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations. They did a total of 3,800 miles on American roads and along the way they managed to get the Chapter flag signed by Willie G himself!!! The flag was presented at the September Chapter meeting and in future it will be displayed at Robin Hood H-D for all to see.

Figure 6.26 Death Valley report.

## It WAS a Dream Come True!

More than 2 years in the planning, Bruce and I decided to make the trip this year, Harley Davidson's 100th anniversary year. To ride across America on a Harley is many people's dream, and we were no different, the difference was we were going to do it!

The talking stopped and the action started. I booked the hire bikes by e-mail in July 02. Between then and H-D releasing any details about the festivities seemed an age. We looked on the web site at places to stay in Milwaukee but decided to take pot luck.

Earlier this year my riding buddy booked 2 nights in San Francisco, at a hotel that my mum and dad recommended, to start the adventure off and we also booked the flights with BA.

H-D started releasing details of the various rides home, so we decided to join the south west route, one of 4, a great choice as it transpired.

The departure day came hurtling towards us like an express train and the excitement grew. We got the dollars and packed 2 holdalls each, 1 large and 1 small, not bad for 23 days; my daughter said she would need 3 suitcases. We both took tents, sleeping bags, leathers, spare shoes and the essentials, then off to the airport on the 10th August and after a long flight found San Francisco in a heat wave. It is a great city, Eagle Rider, the hire company, sent a stretch limo to pick us up, nice touch!

The first thing we did was head for the Golden Gate bridge, riding across it was awesome, what a feeling! then down the pacific highway, wow! We turned in land and headed for Yosemite. We stayed in a motel in Merced along the way; it was still around 90 degrees, phew!

Yosemite was stunning, mountains, trees and lakes, we got the last spot on a campsite by a lake, and the sunset was beautiful, although the danger of bears along with the cold didn't aid sleep. Up early and across the desert to Las Vegas, past death valley, the heat was almost unbearable. That day there was a distinct lack of gas stations, one building we saw on the horizon turned out to be a brothel; we made it to Beatty on fumes, at a crawl.

Las Vegas had grown since my last visit 5 years earlier and air conditioning is still a must and such a relief. I gave Bruce the tour and we checked out the H-D cafe which included Captain America, the new hotels and yes a lap dancing club.

The dealership in Las Vegas is the biggest in the world and we watched as Peter Fonda and Nancy Sinatra led a celebrity ride. We made contact with some Geordie lads and lasses who said they had somewhere to camp in Milwaukee, so they'd ask if we could join them.

I also met Terry Jackson of Las Vegas HOG who does their newsletter, she asked me for my thoughts on the trip so I've e-mailed her.

The 2 of us left for Flagstaff, Arizona that morning on part of the old route 66, stayed overnight, then off to the Grand Canyon. The views are breathtaking, not just the canyon but the roads all around, wonderful rock formations and colours. After a night at Kanab, Utah, we sought Bryce Canyon, stunning! Then on to Bluff where we watched humming birds feeding and stayed at a motel resembling a big log cabin.

Monument Valley the next morning was everything we expected and more, we were totally gobsmacked. This is real cowboy and Indian country. Passing back through Arizona destination Albuquerque, New Mexico the land got flatter but the heat was still on as we crossed the Rio Grande. They had a street party for us, thousands of bikes, bars and fun.

Into Texas on the interstate the smell from 2 massive cattle pens was powerful, just like my Electraglide. The Amarillo dealer party at Tripps was in our opinion the best, as we arrived, there were free burgers, hotdogs, water, sodas, and a band. Willie G signed my waistcoat and said he liked my mohawk haircut. After breakfast borritos, doughnuts and coffee we made for Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the heat again was incredible, when we got to the city we checked out the brickyard where the street party was starting off, then onto the dealer party similar again to Amarillo, but it started lightening and thundering. We were so overheated that we stood in the rain and got soaked, bliss. At night we visited the memorial to the Oklahoma City bombing, quite moving.

The next stop was Kansas City, Missouri, very hot and very flat. Passed a sign for El Dorado. Thunder in the Heartland was the bike meet, the numbers were growing, and we also went into the factory. Although we didn't see much. Then we carried on north to meet the Brits from Las Vegas, into Iowa and then with them across the Mississippi into Wisconsin to meet Dick our host for the last five nights in a small town called Neosho near Milwaukee, the excitement and expectation still growing.

Fifteen of us camped in his garden, though there was plenty of room. There was a pool and an open fire we would sit round at night talking about the day's events, drink beer and eat chilli and sloppy Joes. We visited the summer fest park, state fair park, the art museum and veteran's park to see as much H-D stuff as we could, as well as the Wisconsin dealers to get our points card stamped to give us a chance to win a new Harley.

The big concert on the last night was great although some of the yanks didn't think much to Elton John as the main artist (did seem an odd choice) but the fireworks were the best ever.

Monday afternoon 23 days and nearly 4400 miles later we rode into a very wet Chicago to part company with the bikes and get the plane home. Absolutely tired out but still amazed that we had done it, we made new friends from all over the world and we actually did LIVE THE DREAM!

**Steve Insley**

Figure 6.27 The dream ride across America.

## A Selection of other Photographs



Figure 6.28 Fenlanders rally ride-out.



**Figure 6.29 Heart and Soul rally camping area. (DG)**



**Figure 6.30 Collage of photographs from 2003.**



**HARLEY OWNERS GROUP® LOCAL CHAPTER**

**This is to certify that**

**SHERWOOD CHAPTER**

**is hereby approved as an official local chapter affiliated with the Harley Owners Group as of**

**December 1<sup>st</sup> 1998**

**This chapter is sponsored by**

**Robin Hood Harley - Davidson**

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**Benny Suggs**  
Senior Director - General Manager  
Harley Owners Group  
Harley-Davidson Motor Co.

**James A. McCaslin**  
President and Chief Operating Officer  
Harley-Davidson Motor Co.

**Figure 6.31 The Sherwood Chapter certificate recording its affiliation to HOG.**