



HOG 'N' BLOG



HELLO, AND WELCOME TO PROVINCEWIDE CHAPTER

It is near the end of another year the end for those of us in the Northern Ireland the Riding Season probably won't begin until March or April if we are lucky. So until then there is time to make sure your Harley is ready and going for the start of the riding season

Feel free to contact us. We'd love to hear from you.

Don't forget to visit our web site www.provincewidehog.com Ride and have fun – we certainly do.

George McCarroll
Director



Do You Just Belong?

Are you an active member?
The kind that would be missed,
Or are you just contented
That your name is on a list

Do you attend the meetings?
And mingle with the lot
Or do you just stay away
And criticize and knock

Do you take an active part?
To help the show along
Or are satisfied to be
The kind that just belongs

Do you ever go and visit

Or call on a member who is sick
Or leave the work to just a few
And then call them a clique
Think this over fellow member
You know the right from wrong
Be an active member
And do not just belong



“Turn
on
your
Ignition,
get your Motor
Running, and, to
coin a phrase:
Screw it,
Lets Ride!”





IRELAND TO SWITZERLAND BY HARRY DUNWOODY



When considering attending the Irish Festival in Killarney this year Helen and I also thought about going to Switzerland by riding on to Rosslare and taking the ferry to Cherbourg. These plans were temporarily suspended when we heard the European Rally was to be held in Lugano in July. Julie and Stephen Polley also showed an interest in going and eventually we met up to discuss and organize our trip. Our hotel in Lugano was the first thing to be booked as everything else would then be fitted around those dates. Boats, route there and back also had to be discussed.

After all our arrangements had been made we met up with Julie and Stephen on Friday 9th July on the Bangor carriageway and headed to Larne for the ferry to Cairnryan. It was still raining when we rode off the boat but soon cleared and our first stop was at the last roundabout in Dumfries where we had a coffee break and refuelled. A good run down the M6, another coffee and fuel stop to our first overnight near Uttoxeter.

Saturday morning took us back onto the road again to a 10 mile tail-back on the M25 approaching the Dartford Crossing. Fortunately for us the motorists moved to the one side enabling us to make good progress as it was really hot and we needed the wind to keep us cool. No charge for motorcycles and on we went to Folkestone to the Channel Tunnel. Off the train and north into Belgium. Julie and Stephen thought they had met a very friendly couple in a campervan waving to them only to find one of their bags had fallen off and was spread all over the motorway. Stephen and I went back to see what we could find whilst dodging the traffic as we ran back and forth across the road. Only half a bikini, some underwear, their camera and a condom which they denied belonged to them was salvaged. An hour later after we had gathered all we could find we made our way to our B & B which was for two nights at Varlet Farm in Poelkapelle near Ypres. Coffee and apple pie awaited us.

Sunday morning was spent shopping to replace the lost items and then looking round the 1st World War cemeteries of which there are many in the area. Back for coffee and then into Ypres (Ieper) for our evening meal and the nightly memorial service at the Menin Gate.

My Grandfather's memorial along with over 56,000 soldiers of the British Commonwealth with no known grave are remembered on the panels of this Gate.

Monday started off with heavy rain which lasted for around two hours as we made our way through Luxembourg, Metz and Nancy to our hotel in Baccarat.

Tuesday took us over the Col de Bonhomme pass to Colmar, Basle, Bern and into Interlaken (between two lakes) under the shadow of the Eiger and Jungfrau mountains for our next overnight. Another few days there would have been nice.

Wednesday we had an interesting ride over the mountains on a switchback called the Susten Pass. Then through the 11 mile St Gotthard Tunnel where we were checked by police for our vignette, their road tax, compulsory on Swiss roads. The Swiss motorcyclist beside us got a 100 Swiss Franc fine and still had to purchase a Vignette. Another coffee break and before long we were dropping down into Lugano after a brief stop at their local Harley dealer in Manno. The Parco Paradiso, Lugano was our hotel for the next five days. Expensive but we were in Switzerland.

Thursday after breakfast we washed the bikes, well you have to have a clean Harley. Helen and I took the Funicular railway to the top of the mountain and experienced the most fantastic views over Lugano, the lakes and the surrounding country side. The rest of the day was spent relaxing and exploring the area. By the time we made it down the front on Thursday the "Village" was almost set up with all the usual merchandise from the local traders on display. The local Ticino H.O.G. Chapter had their headquarters on a boat moored on Lake Lugano across from the village and were most hospi-



table with free cold drinks and ice-creams. The entertainment stage had been erected and Harley had their substantial demo fleet already unloaded and getting fuelled for the Friday demo-rides. Everything that should be at a good Rally was in place or would be by Friday morning.

Friday we manage to make it down in the late afternoon and 'did' the stalls all over again.



MEMBERS STORIES



Saturday was Parade Day and we all spent the day down at Rally Headquarters. Helen and I found a bench under a tree and waited for the bikes to ride past. Thousands of Harleys and tens of thousands of people made for a great atmosphere. People from all over were there for the biggest bike festival ever to be seen in the area. Every side street as well as the promenade was lined with Harleys from all over Europe and beyond. The firework display planned for the evening was somewhat overshadowed by the thunder, lightning and torrential rain that followed. Fortunately we had all left earlier to get a better view of it from our hotel balcony before it started. It temporarily stopped the music and the traffic!

On Sunday we rode round the lake to the other site at Campiona d' Italia for a coffee and to see the stalls although by then most of them were packing up to go home. Back to Lugano for lunch and a last look round the town as we would be packing and leaving first thing Monday.

Monday morning, up early, big breakfast, we left our hotel for the long journey home. St Gotthard Tunnel, Luzern, Basle, Strasbourg and to a Camponile Motel in St Avold near Metz for an overnight. Good lodgings and food at a good price.

Tuesday was another hot day, same as all the rest and we made good time again on the excellent toll roads across France through Metz, Reims and St Quentin to Pozieres in the Somme Region. We had prebooked this overnight and actually arrived early. It belonged to the Lord Mayor of the village and we were made very welcome in a real quality barn conversion. Bernard was very interested in the Harleys and had to have his photo taken on mine

Wednesday was spent visiting the war cemeteries and places of interest in the area. We took in Lochnagar Bomb Crater, Canadian Newfoundland Memorial, several Australian sites, the French/ British Memorial to the Missing and finally a guided tour of Thiepval Wood and the Ulster Tower. This Memorial is an exact replica of Helen's Tower in the Clendoye Estate, Bangor and was erected in memory of the soldiers of the 36th Ulster Division who trained there before going to

France. Then it was back on the bikes for a 90 mile ride back to Varlet Farm in Poelkapelle, Belgium where we had started. As it had just started raining when we arrived, our host Charlotte, telephoned her local restaurant, booked us a table, took us round and collected the four of us after we had eaten.

Thursday was back to the Channel Tunnel in good time and that made it possible to catch an earlier train as well as save an hour on our time. Back up the M20, M25, Dartford Tunnel, M11 and up through Cambridge to the A1(M). Coffee and fuel was followed by heavy rain for quite a while until our turn-off at Scotch Corner. More fuel and a really good run across the A66 as the sky brightened to Penrith and M6 to the Ibis Hotel in Carlisle.

Friday was only a short ride. We actually had time for a long coffee stop in the sun and arrived early at Cairnryan. Afternoon boat and home for tea. Our adventure finished on the Bangor Carriageway where it had started two weeks earlier.

On our trip there and back we did around 2700 miles, our Harleys went well and our wives suffered quietly, most of the time, especially on the days we had big mileages, short coffee stops and mountain passes. We had glorious sunshine most of the time with only a couple of hours of rain.

The Channel Tunnel for anyone thinking of using it is best booked both ways. An amazingly quick and uncomplicated way to cross the Channel.



A big thank-you to Julie and Stephen for making this a trip to remember.