

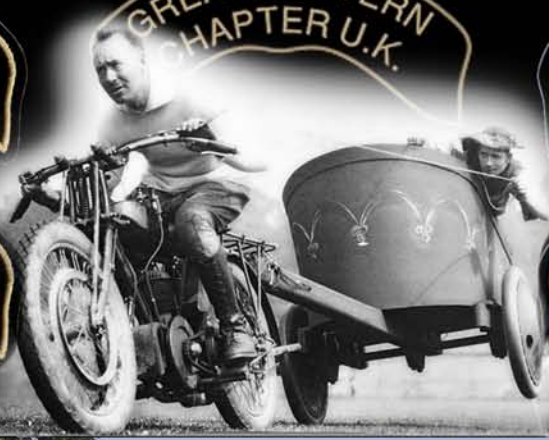
HOG the IMM

Autumn Edition 23.03

Lindum Colonia's CONCURSUM

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Lindum Colonia UK Chapter 7828



another great rally



Sponsoring Dealer: Robin Hood Harley-Davidson, 401 Meadow Lane, Nottingham NG2 3GX

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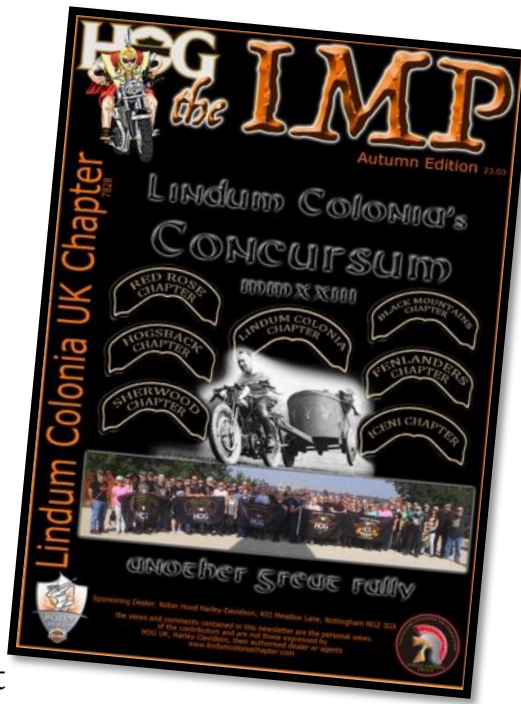




Editorial...

In this Autumn edition of the IMP...

- The Rally in the Valley
- Gaz's update on his RoSPA training
- The Dambuster's Tour
- Hogsback's Convergence Rally
- An Ode to Kevin
- Liz's European adventure – read how Liz Cousins managed to ride to the 120th Anniversary Rally in Budapest and managed to find her way back home in one piece..!
- And we have the usual plethora of editorials from an assortment of Chapter Officers



Lindum Colonia UK Chapter HOG

Committee 2023/24

Paul Redhead
Chapter Director

Jason Clarke
Dealer Principal

Dai Gunter
Assistant Director

Bernice Gordon
Secretary

Liz Cousins
Treasurer

Pete Abbott
Head Road Captain

Charlie Gordon
Webmaster & Membership

Tracy Abbott
Activities

Clare Leigh-Tonks
Merchandise

Deb Sowter
Head Photographer

Gaz Sowter
Safety Officer

Cathy Bourne
Editor

Chris Bourne
Historian

Contact Details:

editor@lindumcoloniachapter.com

We finally have a new Editor and Historian. Cathy Bourne will be picking up the scribe from the next edition of the Imp – that's due out early 2024 – so please give her plenty of support by way of sending in your write-ups, etc to the usual email address:

editor@lindumcoloniachapter.com

Meanwhile, Chris Bourne will be completing this year's History chapter by year end. Excellent news on both counts. We also now have a new Merchandise Officer; Clare Leigh-Tonks is joining taking up the role and will be available to contact for all things merchandise. Great news all round.

If you have any material that can be used in the IMP, please do send it to editor@lindumcoloniachapter.com All sorts of topics are welcome.

Remember to see Charlie Gordon at the next club night or ride-out for your new Lindum Colonia UK Chapter pin. He still has a number to give out.

WANTED:

Your input is always welcome, whether it is a write-up, pictures, a joke no-one has heard, a poem perhaps, or just a proposal for an alternative ride-out destination, we are always wanting to hear your views.

Please make your comments constructive – remember we don't get paid to hear your moans & groans, but we do smile in sympathy..!

editor@lindumcoloniachapter.com





Greetings & Salutations

...from Paul Redhead, Chapter Director

It's been an interesting couple of months since I last exercised my thumb on my phone's WhatsApp and sent them to our Editor, Dai to decipher. Ok, so we've had a little hiccup in the last month and it came as a surprise to a lot of members as well as myself. What am I talking about? Well it's the challenge for the Director's position. Let me say this, I've always run the Chapter like glass, never hidden anything from anyone, and in return I hope you've all felt I've done a decent enough job. So, come last Thursday's AGM, I can say I was a bit anxious about whether Charlie or I would be closing the AGM. Thankfully the vote went my way, but I've learned a lot and will look at how I can improve certain areas that need improving, all for the good of the Chapter. I'd like to thank you for your continued support.



The good news is that Charlie will remain in post looking after the Website and Membership Officer roles. And even better news is that we welcomed two new faces to the committee, Chris and Cathy Bourne, who will be looking after the Historian and Editor Officer roles. And then the cherry on the cake was after the AGM Clare Leigh-Tonks offered her services to fill the Merchandise Officer position. So we now have a full committee, and we've not had one for some time, so we're rocking and rolling again.

I've just come home after attending the Director's Meeting, now known as HOG Regional Officer Connection. A very interesting session this year with a lot of exciting and positive talk about how HOG is focusing on Chapters and their members. I had a good chat with Amy Sparrow, our UK & Northern Ireland Customer & Experience Lead (Events & Community) – now that's a fancy title. We talked about a number of things and her response was very positive. A lot of our conversation was around how committees are run and the need for by-laws, something I'll be bringing up at our next committee meeting. Judging from Any's response and the up-beat atmosphere at this year's meeting, things are looking up. Let's see how 2024 pans out with HOG and its members.

It was with great sadness we heard of Kev Clifton's passing. It brought a tear to my eye and when we held a moment's silence at the Concursum rally for all our lost friends this year, it really hit home. Like so many of you, I will be at Kev's funeral giving him the send-off he would have loved. Charlie has had some 'I Rev for Kev' patches made up and I'm sure we'll wear them with pride as we remember the big man as he used to rev his Harley at every tunnel given the opportunity.

Keep safe, Paul





...And Another Thing...

...by Dai Gunter, Assistant Director

As we come to the end of another riding season, I look back on some of the highlights of 2023.

We've had a great programme of ride-outs with some fantastic venues and a turn-out of Chapter members that is consistently around 20% of the Chapter. Not many HOG Chapters can boast a consistent turn-out of members for their ride-outs. That's a testament to how hard our Head Road Captain, Pete Abbott, and his Road Crew have worked this year on getting their ride, routes and venues right to appeal to our members and entice them out to ride and have fun.

Now add to that the superb events that's been organized by our Activities Officer, Tracy Abbott, and you've got another bumper year of fun and frolics. And that's without the success of this year's Concursum Rally. How many Chapters can boast sell-out rallies? We've not welcomed November onto this year's calendar yet and we've already received requests for 35 rooms from guest Chapters for next year's rally, so our members need to be quick in booking their places to avoid disappointment. 2024's Concursum will sell out fast.

Lindum Colonia Chapter has also been visiting rallies and taking trips onto the Continent. This year's Dambusters Tour was excellent, especially as Lindum and Hogsback Chapters combined for the trip. A small group of members took a 3-week road trip to Italy (and we look forward to reading about that one in the next Imp); and there was the 120th Anniversary HOG Rally in Budapest – more on that later thanks to Liz's write-up.

There's also been sadness this year. We've lost five Chapter members: Vince Porter, Nick Major, Ed Richardson, Sue Jebbett and Kevin Clifton. All will be sorely missed but we will keep them alive in our hearts as we remember them. We'll never forget Ed's wicked sense of humour, Sue's lovely smile and of course, Kev's tunnel antics as he'd rev his Harley at every opportunity. Rest in peace brothers & sister.

But life is for the living, or so the saying goes, and how about this winter season programme? 10-pin Bowling, Remembrance Sunday ride to the IBCC, Lincoln Ghost Walk (back by popular demand), Christmas wreath making, our Christmas party in December, our Christmas ride-out to Blair House, Billingham – woah there Tigger, that's three mentions of the 'C' word...! Well it will be upon us soon enough I suppose. And talking of Blair House, this year we are holding a Christmas (there's that 'C' word again) raffle with a fantastic prize of a £400 voucher for servicing at Robin Hood Harley-Davidson (£200 donated by RHHD and £200 by Lindum Chapter). 20% of money raised from the sale of raffle tickets will help fund a karaoke machine for Blair House as our Christmas gift to the residents, so please make every effort to support this and attend the ride over to Billingham on 10th December.

And there's more to come in the winter months too, the annual pilgrimage to the Royal Oak, West Bridgford, for our 'throw the turnip at the wooden pillars' Skittles, our winter breakfast at Messingham, and the Easter Egg run. All details on the events will be shared via our new website and eBriefs.

So let's not waste any more time reading my nonsense.





Safety Officer... the Story So Far

...from Gaz Sowter

Hi All,

Following on from the last edition of the Imp, I was intending to talk more on the subject of drop-offs. I have been putting together some diagrams and slides on positioning etc but these are not yet complete. I hope to have them ready for the next edition.

A first Aid course has been sourced for the Road Crew and anyone interested in becoming Road Crew. Details of which I hope to finalise at the next committee meeting.

The RoSPA training I have been undertaking is, I have to say, really going well and is extremely enjoyable. I have learned much more than I could have imagined, particularly about positioning.

I started as a fairly "middle of the road" rider with scores of 2-3 but you will see from the weekly progress reports how things have improved. The test, which I will be applying for in the next few days, is done by either a serving or ex Police examiner. Hopefully by the next edition I will be able to let you know how this went. In conversation with my instructor, he has agreed to attend on a club night to give us a talk about safe riding techniques, cornering and tyres etc.

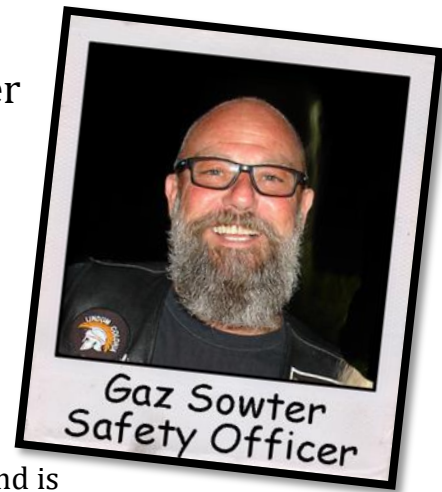
This year I planned to lead my first ride to the Shires Inn in Leicestershire but was disappointed to have to cancel due to adverse weather conditions. I was disappointed more so because this was due to be my first ride to qualify as a Road Captain. Prior to that I was asked by our illustrious Director to take over his ride to Tan Hill. This was due to Paul having an unfortunate breakdown and was unable to continue. Paul handed me a scrap of paper with a post code on it saying "Take 'em there"!

'No pressure' I thought. As I set off, Paul had left his highway pegs sticking out which I managed to clatter with my own pegs. Despite Deb (who was on the back) calling me an unpleasant name we got there and back with no issues.

The following week I led another ride to Guy Martin's Pub, the Marrowbone & Cleaver which went without a hitch despite far more riders than anticipated. I am hopeful that our Head Road Captain now deems me suitable. I may even get a patch!?

I will keep you all appraised on future plans but if anyone has anything, they would like to suggest please feel free to email me at safety@lindumcoloniachapter.com

Hope to see you all soon, until then, safe riding.



Gaz Sowter
Safety Officer

Gaz

Rider: GARY SOWTER	Date: 11.09.23
Vehicle: Harley Davidson	Mileage: 22443
750 mile done since last wet training	Put in some big miles well done
TUTOR: ANDREW MCNEIL PROG	Weather: Started dry, ended wet
Marking	1 2 3 4 5
System - IPSGA	X
Pre-Ride Checks: NA	X
Highway Code	X
Consideration for others	X
Concentration	X
Observation/Planning	X
Use of mirrors	X
Use of signals	X
Hazard negotiation	X
Use of speed	X
Space management	X
Overtaking	X
Safe progress	X
General positioning	X
Positioning in bends	X
Steering & Balance	X
Brakes	X
Gears	X
Acceleration	X
Vehicle sympathy	X
Dress & appearance	X
Attitude	X

Rider: GARY SOWTER	Date: 11.09.23
Vehicle: Harley Davidson	Mileage: 22443
872 mile done since last wet training	
TUTOR: ANDREW MCNEIL PROG	Weather: SUNNY/RAIN SHOWER
Marking	1 2 3 4 5
System - IPSGA	X
Pre-Ride Checks: NA	X
Highway Code	X
Consideration for others	X
Concentration	X
Observation/Planning	X
Use of mirrors	X
Use of signals	X
Hazard negotiation	X
Use of speed	X
Space management	X
Overtaking	X
Safe progress	X
General positioning	X
Positioning in bends	X
Steering & Balance	X
Brakes	X
Gears	X
Acceleration	X
Vehicle sympathy	X
Dress & appearance	X
Attitude	X

Rider: GARY SOWTER	Date: 26.08.23
Vehicle: Harley Davidson	Mileage: 22059
580 mile done since last wet training	
TUTOR: ANDREW MCNEIL PROG	Weather: SUNNY/RAIN SHOWER
Marking	1 2 3 4 5
System - IPSGA	X
Pre-Ride Checks: NA	X
Highway Code	X
Consideration for others	X
Concentration	X
Observation/Planning	X
Use of mirrors	X
Use of signals	X
Hazard negotiation	X
Use of speed	X
Space management	X
Overtaking	X
Safe progress	X
General positioning	X
Positioning in bends	X
Steering & Balance	X
Brakes	X
Gears	X
Acceleration	X
Vehicle sympathy	X
Dress & appearance	X
Attitude	X





Ode to Kevin...

...Friend of Heart and Steel

In England's fair land, a friendship was born,
With Kevin, a soul so hearty and warm,
A lover of life, with a heart full of grace,
In his presence, all troubles did erase.

He loved his wife, a devotion so deep,
Their love like a promise, forever to keep,
Through trials and joys, their bond only grew,
A love story cherished by both, not just few.

But Kevin had another love, a machine of might,
A Harley-Davidson, roaring with all its might,
Over England's green fields, he'd ride with glee,
The wind in his hair, his spirit wild and free.

With every twist of the throttle, he'd soar,
A symphony of thunder, he'd forever adore,
His Harley was more than just metal and chrome,
It was part of his soul, his true second home.

Yet fate can be cruel, a shadow in the night,
On his last trip to Germany, he took flight,
Not on his Harley, but to the heavens above,
Leaving behind memories, and those who did love.

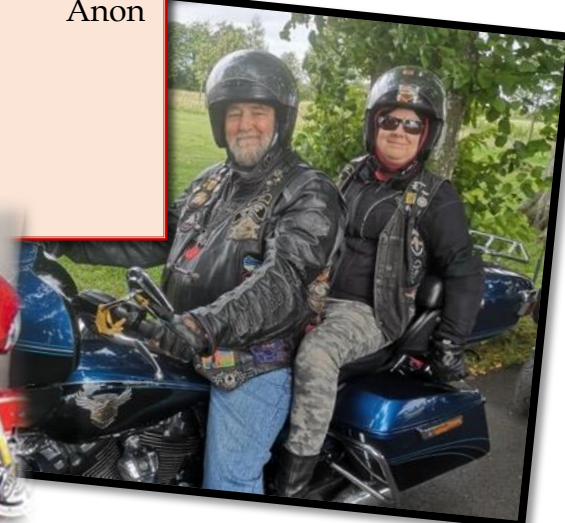
Though he's gone from our sight, his spirit lives on,
In the stories we tell, in the memories drawn,
Kevin, our friend, with a heart pure and true,
We'll forever cherish the moments with you.

As he rides on in the great beyond's embrace,
On highways of stardust, in a heavenly place,
We remember his love, his laughter, his grace,
In our hearts, he'll forever hold a special place.

Anon



Kevin Clifton
1956 - 2023



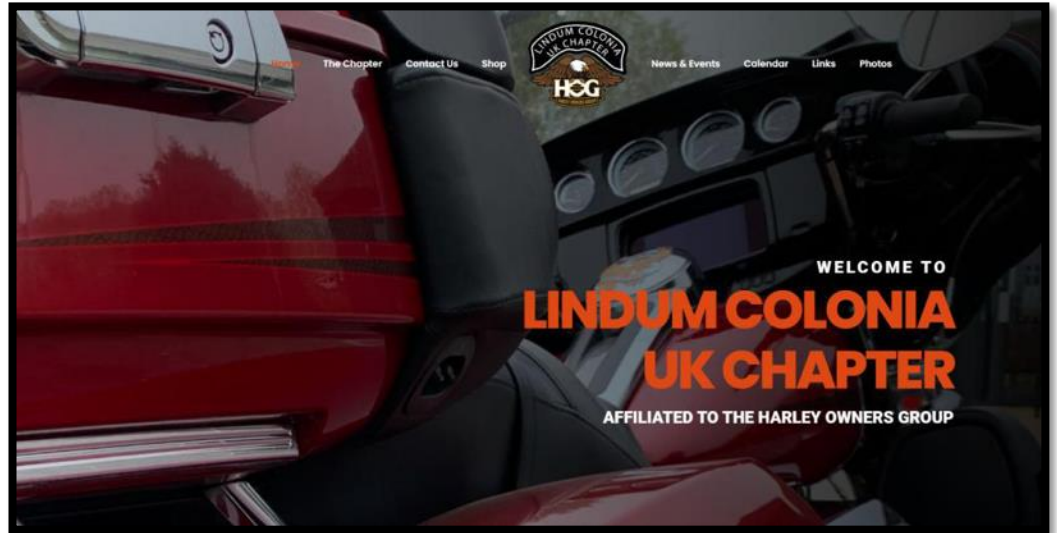


Welcome to...

...the new Lindum Colonia Chapter Website

The new site went live on the 15th September, as soon as you tried to access the old site you were transferred to the new one. As I said in the e-brief, we were unable to transfer the e-mail and passwords over so everyone had to re-register. So far 51 of us have now got our new passwords which allows access to all parts of the site.

I hope you all find it easier to use and that you like the new front page, I think it puts us up there with the very best of the other Chapter web sites, but there again I would. We have kept most of the features of the old web site and discarded some that we felt did not get much use. We can, at a later date add more if we feel it is necessary.



The usual scary pictures of the Committee and Road Crew will pop up when you access the relevant menu. All the necessary Road Crew documents are also listed and can be downloaded. The Chapter history is available along with back issues of "The Imp" and Committee meeting minutes. If anyone wants an older copy of "The Imp" let me know and I will send you a link.

One of the new features is the enquiry box with several drop-down options, any enquiry can then be fed straight to the relevant person to deal with. It has already been used by some non-members asking about the Concursum Rally and Membership.

Another feature takes in our meeting places and will, provided your phone or pad has the capability, direct you from wherever you are at present to the meeting place you select. We will add more items to the shop shortly, once we have sorted out the prices, and you will be able to purchase the items on line. It will be a

click and collect system, you can pay on line and then collect at the next club night. It may be possible to make other collection or postal arrangements for members that

Message Us

For any information required, ie posting address etc, please email us using the form below and we will respond as soon as possible.

Subject *

Name *

Email *

Message *

Meeting Places

<p>Wragby Market Place</p> <p>Market Place, Wragby, Market Rasen, LN8 5QU</p> <p>Get Directions</p>	<p>Caenby Corner</p> <p>Caenby Corner, Market Rasen LN8 2AS</p> <p>Get Directions</p>	<p>The W.A.V.E.</p> <p>The W.A.V.E, Sleaford Rd, Lincoln LN5 9FG</p> <p>Get Directions</p>
<p>Windmill Farm Hotel</p> <p>Windmill Farm Hotel, Off Whisby Rd A48, Lincoln LN6 3QZ</p> <p>Get Directions</p>	<p>Willingham Woods</p> <p>Willingham Woods Bikers Meeting Place, The Picnic Kiosk, Market Rasen LN8 3QT</p> <p>Get Directions</p>	<p>Holdingham Services</p> <p>Holdingham Garage, Lincoln Road Junction, A15/A17, Sleaford NG34 8NP</p> <p>Get Directions</p>



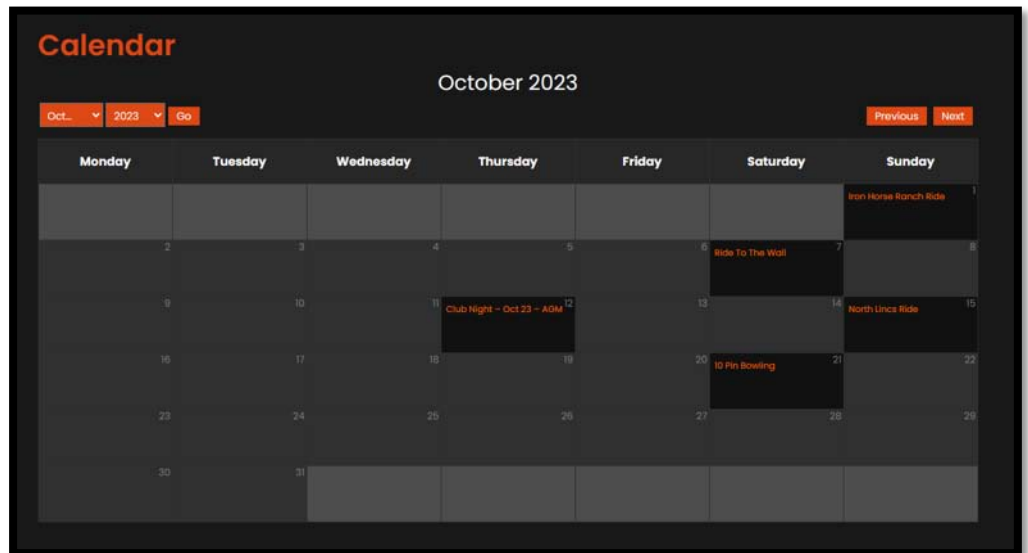
cannot make club nights, but please remember we are not Amazon.

The calendar is what it says but will now, once you click on a ride or event take you straight to it where you can see the full details which include the meeting place, time, and any other relevant information. It is now possible to send a link from a ride or event straight to our Facebook page.

One advantage of this is, if there is a cancellation or alteration to a ride or event as soon as it is amended on the website it will automatically be updated on Facebook.

I do not think there is much more to say apart from the best way to see what the website can do is to go and have a poke about in it. If you have any comments or feedback or need any help please let me know.

Charlie



"When a group of tourists visited a crocodile farm, the owner of the place launched a bold proposal:

"Whoever dares to jump, swim to the shore, and survive, I'll give you \$1,000,000".

No one dared to move.

Suddenly, a man jumped into the water, and desperately swam, and made it to the shore, while being chased by all the crocodiles. The owner announced, "We have a brave winner!!"

After the man collected his reward, he and his wife returned to the hotel. Upon arrival, the manager told him that he had been very brave to jump. To which the man replied,

"I didn't jump, someone pushed me!"

His wife smiled.....

Moral - Behind every successful man, there's a woman who pushes him!

🤪 Author unknown,



Cirencester 2023...

...Hogsback Rally, by Cathy Bourne

After meeting at the Windmill at 9am on Friday 18th August and a debate about 'waterproofs or not' 12 bikes and 1 car (Steve & Bonny) set off to Cirencester. On bikes were Charlie and Bern (leading the way), Pops and Amy, Barry & Debs, Dai, Pete & Ingrid, Kev & Julie, Chris & Cathy, Richard, Anni and Debs with Gaz, Pete & Tracy bringing up the rear.

Waterproofs turned out to be a good decision as within a few minutes it began to rain and continued pretty much all the way to Hinkley where a stop for a brew & a snack was much welcomed.

Lunch was at the Old Mill in Baginton and we were joined there by Liz and Will-I-am. The service was a bit slow but the food was good, well apart from the kimchee!

After lunch the clouds lifted and we headed down the lovely Fosse way, through some pretty honey-coloured stone Cotswolds towns and villages to Cirencester and the Royal Agricultural University where the rally was being held and where Chalkie joined the group.

An old established building (think Hogwarts), the RAU provided us with student accommodation rooms which were functional but clean with showers and tea/coffee making facilities in each room.

We registered, picked up our goody bags, had a quick clean-up & then headed straight for the bar. Giant Jenga was already set up in the marquee which was proving very popular.

As it started raining, we bagged a couple of tables in the marquee and went for dinner in shifts to ensure we kept the tables. This was a good move as the rain had started again and the marquee was rammed with people dressed in Hawaiian shirts & grass skirts. The band for the evening was 'Devious' who played a couple of sets that



seemed to go down well with everyone. Beer was flowing freely and there was a real party atmosphere inside the marquee. Lots of different chapters were in attendance & it was great to meet with them (networking!)

After a good & much needed breakfast the next morning, all the bikes assembled along the old tree lined driveway of the RAU ready for the ride out.

It was 'stands up' at 11am and just under 200 bikes set off through the town. As it was market day

in Cirencester, there were people everywhere waving and taking photos (including Steve & Bonny) along with a few looking a bit bewildered by what was going on & little people covering their ears.





Unlike last year, none of us got lost and the ride took us around 50 miles through the Cotswolds quieter roads to the village of Toddington near Evesham where we stopped for a BBQ very kindly provided for us all. With over 200 people to feed, there was obviously a big queue for the food, although the road crew could just jump straight in – lucky them! Whilst it rained while we were eating, the rain stopped in time for us to set off back to the RAU. It was a lovely ride back and the rain pretty much held off all the way.

The afternoon consisted of more drinking and an Inter-chapter welly-wanging competition. Kev, Pops and Chris all had a go for Lindum however it was a member of the Manchester chapter that ended up winning the competition.



Whilst the welly-wanging was going on, the Ladies all met for prosecco,

strawberries, nibbles and a raffle with Julie winning a body scrub.

Giant Jenga continued in the afternoon with both Debs Sowter and Kev doing really well in their games.

After dinner, it was back in the marquee for the nights band – Women in Rock who belted out classics by likes of Suzy Quatro, Blondie & Tina Turner.

It was quieter in the marquee than the previous night as it was dry and people were able to sit outside but it was still a great atmosphere.

After speeches and presentations by the Hogsback team, the raffle was drawn and 1st prize of a £700 Harley Leather jacket was won by Pete & Ingrid with Kev & Julie winning 2nd prize of a Eurocamp holiday. Liz won two prizes and Charlie also picked up a prize so a great night for Lindum in the raffle.

Despite really good food provided by RAU, there were plenty of people filling their faces with burger van fare & more beer late into the night.

After another good breakfast the next morning, we were ready to head for home. It was a dry run and after a little detour around some roundabouts near Warwick (!!) we stopped at Leicester Forest East for coffee & food. From there we headed back to Newark and the Friendly Farmer services to say our goodbyes.

All in all, a very enjoyable, well run rally. Great venue, great atmosphere and great people.

Massive thanks to Charlie, Bern, Pete, Tracy and Gaz for getting us there and back safely and here's to next year!





Dambusters Tour 2023

...a tour through WWII history with Hogsback

The ride up to Hull for our overnight ferry crossing to Rotterdam set the scene for the whole trip. William Bailey arrived at my place just in time for a sandwich and a cuppa before we left for the ferry. It was dry and overcast, but not for long. As soon as we were on the A15, the rain came – not too heavy at first, but by the time we arrived at our rendezvous point on the A63, the drizzle was intense – the type that gets right under the skin and down to the bone.

Not deterred, the few who met at the McDonalds on St. Andrew's Quay braved the busy Hull city centre traffic and met our rogue brothers & sisters just prior to boarding the ferry. We settled in quickly after strapping down our Harleys. A few beers and the crossing flew by. Before we knew it, we were having our early morning call courtesy of the ship's Tannoy system. It was 6am, breakfast was being served and the disembarking would commence from 7am (or was it 8, or maybe 9...?). No-one felt the effect of motion sickness as the crossing was gentle on us. The odometer from home to the ferry read 58 miles.

Thursday morning was just like Wednesday morning – bright but overcast, a little damp on the edges, shite really – where's summer?

Our first destination on our long day's riding was Rotterdam Harley-Davidson. Although we remained relatively dry so far, the clouds were threatening, especially when we were about to leave the dealership and the heavens opened – needless to say, we stayed a little longer.

Time was on our side as a group from Hogsback Chapter were going to rendezvous with us at Guy Gibson's grave in Steenberg-en-Kruisland, Roman Catholic Cemetery, Netherlands. We had been pre-warned of a bridge closure by the mechanics at Rotterdam H-D, and the route we were taking didn't appear to impede our ride.

We were wrong. The route took us directly to the road closure, and typical of continental EU road traffic diversions, there weren't any diversion routes clearly marked out. We eventually found a way around the barrier and about a half-hour later, and some 20 miles or so, we were back on track. As we entered Steenberg, we approached a roundabout just a few hundred yards away for Guy's resting place, we saw the Hogsback group arrive – perfect timing.

We topped up with fuel, said our 'Hello's' and met up with Chalkie and Eleri, who had travelled with Hogsback from the Chunnel/Calais.

A short walk from the bike park to Guy Gibson's graveside and a wreath was laid as several ex-RAF servicemen offered a salute to honour the two servicemen who were resting at our feet. It was a very poignant moment, especially as the rain started during the quiet moments at the graveside.



Our next stop was a large war-graves cemetery, Reichwald Forest Cemetery, where so many young men (and possibly women, but I only saw men's names) were at rest after paying the ultimate price for our freedom today. Another wreath was laid at the grave of one of the Dam Busters veterans and the rain continued

to remind us how lucky we were today because of what they had given back then during the war.

After helping Dom (you'll get to meet Dom at our Concursum Rally) and lifting his bike back onto two wheels in the gravel carpark of the cemetery, we went our separate way for our overnight accommodation. Hogsback Chapter took the left turn, and Lindum Chapter took the right.



We still had around 150miles before we would arrive at our overnight accommodation, so no time for fun & games, let's get a move on.

We arrived a little later than expected, great, but there was a problem, the motel's restaurant was closed – no staff...! but all was not lost though. With most restaurants in Germany taking orders up to 8pm, we split into two groups and headed to the nearest restaurant just a 15minute walk away – not time to lose. They couldn't take a party of 16, but we managed to get in as two parties of 6 and 10 – work that one out...! By the way, to food was superb.

Friday and things were looking up. Although some rain was on the forecast, the clouds were brighter. Today's adventure was a trip to Essen and the Gasometer at Oberhausen, but first, a ride over to Hamminkeln to visit Thunderbike HD.

At Thunderbike, you have the regular dealership feel plus the contrasting specialist and custom builders. If you need anything for your bike, you'll get it here. Some of our group took the workshop tour and saw how large 400kg blocks of aluminium were machined into custom wheels for their custom bikes.



A good hour or so was spent perusing the place and also another hour eating lunch at the Thunderbike eatery next door – a typical American Diner, with the exception that its German...!

Next stop, Essen. We managed to dodge any rain and the weather was finally looking brighter. We arrived in Oberhausen, Essen and the Gasometer – a huge gas storage tank that was used to supply local industry, but has since been converted into a museum, was a fantastic place to spend an hour or two with great displays of the history of Earth and its possible future – a bit like National Geographic magazine on steroids.

After the Gasometer, it was another long ride to our hotel, the Sauerland Alpin Hotel, at Graftschaft, Schmalleberg.

When we were just 7 miles from our hotel, there was a road closure. Once again, the EU's brilliant system for diversions failed us – there weren't any! Some local knowledge helped us out and soon enough we were motorcycling again, only to find ourselves back at the road closure some 15 miles later. More satnav consultations and debate and we were on the move again. We arrived at the motel just before 7pm – we had taken almost two hours to travel the last 7 miles.

Credit to the hotel staff, they really looked after us – with the restaurant busy, we were offered a room to ourselves where we could eat and make as much noise as we wanted. And once again, the food was excellent.

Saturday and 'Operation Chastise' - today's run was to take in all three of the Dams – Sorpe, Möhne, and Eder. It was an early start to meet up with the Hogsback group at 8am. Once again, the hotel staff came through and organised food for us before the scheduled opening time of the restaurant for breakfast.

It was a cool morning but ideal for riding provided the rain stayed away. We arrived at our rendezvous point to meet with Hogsback at the agreed time (8am) but no sign of the group. After some consultation, it was agreed we'd carry on and meet the latecomers at the Sorpe dam. We were following a route designed by Al – one of the Hogsback Road Crew – and that took us up and over some mountains with brilliant sweeping roads, corners and views. As we approached the Sorpe dam, we stopped at a junction only to see the Hogsback group on the main road flying passed – they obviously missed our scenic route to catch us up.

The Sorpe dam is an earth bank that retains the water in the reservoir. This was the only dam not to be breached during the Dambusters Raid.





A group photo and we're off to the second dam – the Möhne, but not before we traverse more scenic views, bends and twisty roads.

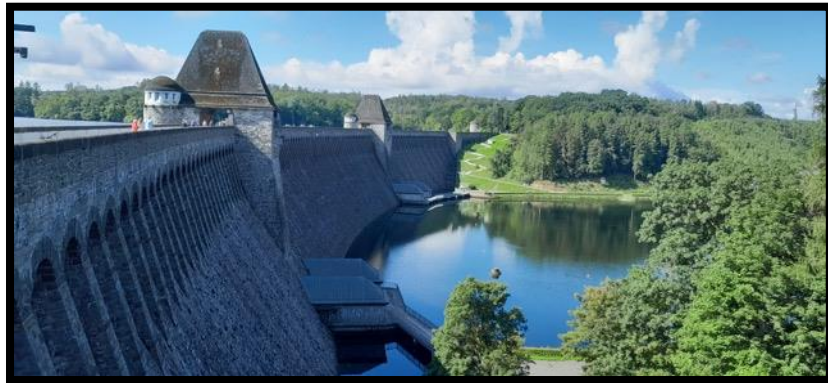
The Möhne dam is more like you'd expect – a long curved structure made

from large stone blocks with two towers and built-in sluices to control reservoir water levels – downstream would be the power generation plant where water is flowed through turbines to generate electricity.

Breaching the dam in 1943 meant that the power feeding Hitler's massive war machine was stopped and this in turn meant that

manpower and effort was diverted from the western front, probably making a significant impact to the German defences during the D-Day landings. It took 5 bouncing bombs to breach the Möhne with the last bomb causing the most damage and breaching the stone structure.

We were given interesting history lessons at each of the locations by Jim & Dell, telling the heroic stories of what happened on that May night in 1943 – those guys were so brave (the Dambusters, not Jim & Dell), it sent chills up my spine as you listened and took in the sight of the structures and then imagined what it must have been like on that night when the bombs did their worse.



Our third site visit was the Eder dam. Very similar in design to the Möhne, the curved stone massif threatened German might. Even today, Germany sees the dams as national monuments and the tourists flock to each of the dams to visit. We were getting some strange looks as we all bore our Lindum & Hogsback Dambusters Tour 2023 t-shirts.

We enjoyed another history lesson from Jim at the Eder and then engaged in some

coffee and ice-cream at one of the Edersee's cafes. Some pictures and then we left for our hotel with Hogsback following several minutes behind as they were taking a slightly different route back to theirs.

Once again, the roads were brilliant, and with the weather behaving itself, it was such a beautiful ride back to the hotel, especially with no diversions this time.

Back at the hotel, we opted tonight for the fully inclusive meal deal – that all-you-can-eat buffet and all-you-can-drink beer & wine. Needless to say, we made sure we had our money's worth.



Our Sunday plans were scuppered by the rain – yes, it rained, and it rained, and it rained. Our planned visit to the Dechenhohle Caves were abandoned and we opted for a lazy day instead – no riding bikes and keeping as dry as possible. But we didn't waste the time snoozing. Nope, we headed off into town for a wander and look around. We were given courtesy bus tokens so the bus ride was free (whoo-hoo)



and we quickly found a nice little café-bar to while away the afternoon where we met with Benjie – the friendly little barman – who educated us on Parma ham, beers, brandy and especially for Barry, cheesecake. Later, we hopped back on the S40 bus back to the hotel where we had reserved the bowling alley for a couple of hours.

Another all-inclusive restaurant package and we all retired quite happily pacified, even though we missed out on the day's riding.

Monday and the weatherman says... 'it's raining'. So not to be deterred, we decided to take a short ride around



midday to a curiosity museum some 30 miles away. It was wet, as promised, but once we arrived at the Curiomuseo there were signs of relief in the skies. The museum was certainly interesting to say the least. A mix of someone's junk with prize possessions worth thousands of pounds. From old pushbikes to MV Augusta, from a home-made bench seat fitted with a single cylinder motor to an e-type Jaguar, from a doll's pram to a rather large phallic symbol. Needless to say, the ladies loved the phallicism whilst the more conservative men amongst us enjoyed the historical sea-going vessel models and the large train set. Will.I.Am on the other hand, just wanted to take pictures of wooden boobies. We arrived back at the hotel to find Paul Robson rather upset. He & Nicky (and Barry & Debs) decided to stay at the hotel rather than take a ride in the rain. Paul decided to take a sauna, so dressed in suitable attire (swimming trunks) he relaxed in the hot, sweaty sauna. Moments later, a German couple joined him – both naked, as is the way with our German cousins in hot sweaty saunas. Paul didn't know where to look, so traumatised by the experience, he quickly vacated the sauna and went for a lay down to allow the calming effects of the Valium take effect after his PTSD moment (that's Post Traumatic Sauna Disorder).

That evening, we took a bus ride back into town for a lovely meal at a Gasthof, the name of which has left me, and we enjoyed a fantastic meal (Steak for some of us) and a couple of beers for about €30. After, we took a taxi back to the hotel and we were treated to a fantastic ride by a relative of Sebastian Vettel (or was it Michael Schumacher) anyway, we get back to the hotel, some 2.6 miles, in less than 2 minutes... in a Transit Van!

Now there's another little ditty worth mentioning. During the Hogsback return from Edersee to their hotel, one of their members' bike broke down with a knackered front wheel bearing. Stranded for several hours before the roadside assist turned up, they survived on morsels from the local Aldi Supermarket. For the next two days, Tim fretted and stressed over the recovery of his beast whilst simultaneously had to juggle a suitable mode of transport to get to Hanover HD (where his bike was going for a repair). So, Charlie managed to arrange a room at our full Alpin Hotel for Tim and his good lady was kept company by Nicki and Paul, who were taught the fundamentals of Gin Rummy.

Our last day on the continent was a misty morning departure. Chalkie and Eleri were staying in Germany for a couple of extra nights to visit a friend en route home. We had 275 miles or so to ride to get to the Europort at Rotterdam. Thankfully, the weather forecast was pretty good with some showers expected early then brightening up in the afternoon.



But first, a little jaunt to Pfeiffer HD so Kev and Julie could buy another t-shirt and poker chip. What a fantastic little HD dealership – in the middle of nowhere. The rest of the day was spent dodging some fast-moving German machinery on the motorways and we made the Europort in one piece around 5pm-ish. We boarded, strapped the bikes down and headed to our cabins for a shower before a beer and

more food.

The crossing was a little rougher this time and a couple of the group were feeling the effects. They were glad to get their heads down after supper and a couple of beers and before we knew it, we were greeted once again with the friendly Tannoy message to wake up, get some breakfast down you, and get ready for disembarkation.

We docked a couple of hours earlier than scheduled so most of us were home by around 9am – great trip, even with the not-so-great weather.

Thanks to Charlie for arranging the week's tour. It was a blast.

...and now, all that's left to do is clean the bike...!



Not captured on camera:
Nicky & Paul Robson

the **Paint Shack**

07960017822

*Paint for Bikers
by Bikers*

TIM HOARE



Manor Farm

Wickenby

Lincoln. LN3 5AB



The Rally in the Valley... ...Diva Legion's Circus Maximus Rally 2023



Having enjoyed the Rally in the Valley last year, it was not a difficult decision to make when trying to decide whether or not to visit the small Welsh town of Llangollen, near Wrexham (or as you spell it in Welsh: Wrecsam) again this year for Diva Legion's 20th Anniversary Rally. The venue is the fantastic International Eisteddfod Pavilion; a large structure suitable for indoor and outdoor events. Camping was the order of the day (or should I say, extended weekend, Thursday to Sunday) and the camping site was the field adjacent to the pavilion, so all good, not too far to stroll from bar to tent if inebriated.

This year, I was joined by Pete Abbott and Pete Clifford (aka Pierre – to avoid confusion between Pete & Pete) as well as Andrew 'Chalkie' White. Pete, Pierre and I rode to the venue to arrive around 3:30pm, just a few minutes after Chalkie had arrived from his beloved Mumbles. We'd beaten all of the forecasted bad weather, apart from a light shower just as we arrived on the outskirts of Wrexham's 'county' borders, so arrived at the venue dry.

Job #1: register at registration. We did and we got our wrist bands, bike wrist bands (for security, although not really that secure, but a nice gesture) and goody bag. Check.

Job #2: find a nice camping spot. I headed across the field to where we had camped last year to find someone had beaten us to it. Buggar! Ah well, we'll just pitch tents next door.



Job #3: Pitch tent. Now this is where the weekend's fun began. As I was offloading my kit from the Glide, I recognised a voice coming from the tent occupying my former pitch from last year. It was only Dick Hayes (Fenlanders Treasurer and long-time friend) along with Roger Stern (former Fenlanders Director) and a couple of other Fenlanders members. Good start I thought. After a welcoming welcome and a brief chat with Dick and Roger, I turned to see Pete starting to pitch his brand-new tent. I must let you all know at this stage that Pete has never been camping at a Harley rally until now, and his tent was brand spanking new, straight of the shelf at Tesco, at a bargain price for a 2-man outfit. Needless to say, Pete was soon scratching his head and amusing us all as we watched a grown man lose his rag over a tent he should have given his grandkids last Christmas.

Anyway, as Pete took a short break and headed in the direction opposite to where he'd laid his tent, Chalkie and I took pity on the former Chief Petty Officer and erected his tent within a couple of minutes. It only took a couple of minutes because it was... tiny. Lesson no.1, when buying a tent, make sure you have enough room in it to lay out without your feet (or your head) having to extend through the entrance.

Job #4: Finish making camp and get a beer. Soon enough, we were happy with all four tents and with air beds now inflated, and Pete calm now that he could get something reasonably comfortable to sleep in/on, we headed to the pavilion for a beer or four and something to eat.

But first, we had a formal ritual to perform. As this was Pete's first camping rally, and it was in God's country, it was only right that we couldn't let him feel un-loved and alone if the night was to get a little chilly. So, Pete was formally introduced to Lucy. Yes, Chalkie had managed,





at great expense, so convince Lucy that she should keep Pete company for the weekend. We did warn her not to expect much action, as there wasn't room in Pete's tent, but Lucy being the consummate ewe she is, did not complain.

Also, before neglecting the rest of our duties for the weekend, it was only right that Pete had something to sit on, since Pierre, Chalkie and I had brought our best camping chairs. From the magical pie in the sky, Pierre produced a miniature camping stool for Pete so he had somewhere to place his buttocks whilst we relaxed on the green, green grass. The only problem was that once Pete sat on his miniature stool, he couldn't get up with assistance.

All jobs now complete, time to relax and enjoy the rally proper, time for a beer.

We ordered a couple of ciders and a couple of beers and before we knew it, the glasses were empty and our fourth pint was in front of us. We were hungry by now, so we ate as we enjoyed the Thursday rain as it lashed down outside. Our timing was impeccable. The plan was to finish a few (4) beers and then head back to the camp to freshen up, but once you've got 4 beers inside you, other ideas and plans come into play. Let's just say it was dark, the rain had stopped and the ground was drying nicely by the time we saw our overnight accommodation again.

We had a rain shower overnight and awoke to a cool, misty, overcast morning. The breakfast ladies opened shop around 8am and we were a little early, so decided to stroll into town and check out any cafés there. The first café was Finley's; it was open, plenty of seating and one of the tables beckoned us to sit and order breakfast there. We did and ordered drinks and full breakfasts, and what a breakfast it was. So good in fact, that we ate there for the next two mornings.

Full bellies and set up for the day, we decided to give the organised rideout to Chester H-D a miss. Chalkie and I did the rideout last year and it was a race from the pavilion to Chester H-D and not as enjoyable as it could have been. Anyway, our alternative for the day was a tootle to the coast. Pete had given an old sailor pal, TJ, a call and arranged to meet up with us in Barmouth. The ride was, well, interesting – not just because the scenery and roads were brilliant, but also because we got stuck in a road works traffic jam in Corwen on the A5 north of Llangollen, and there, like a tortoise stuck on its back, we were fair game for anyone fancying a closer look at the bikes. Yes, I know how to attract them. A woman with her adult son was walking along the pavement when she decided to cross the road and accost me – well accost may be a bit of a strong word, let's just say she liked the colour of my bike. And she even started to stroke the tank.

"Are these all Harley-Davidsons?" she asked with her speech impediment making the scene sound like a sketch from Monty Python.

"Yes, they are" was my response. The brief conversation continued for a minute or two before her son (must have been in his mid-20s) called from the pavement with a similar speech impediment, "C'mon Mum, don't talk to bikers, you know what happened the last time you talked to bikers... me."

I told the lady to be careful as oncoming traffic was approaching. Meanwhile, behind me, in my mirrors I could see Chalkie and Pierre creased with laughter and to my left, Pete had a firm grin on his face too – perhaps he was worried she'd accost him next. She didn't, the traffic was moving and for me that was my signal to start to filter through the jam.

The road took us through Bala and west to the coast. Beautiful scenery either side with Snowdonia National Park to our right and the mid-Wales countryside and lakes to our left. We arrived in Barmouth and hunted out a parking space on one of the back streets. Barmouth was extremely busy so we were lucky to find a spot big enough to take five bikes, yes, the fifth bike was Pete's sailor pal, TJ, arriving as we were removing our helmets. Pretty good timing I thought.

We took a short stroll into the town and found a place to sit outside a small café and ordered some drinks. Pete & TJ caught up on old news whilst Pierre and Chalkie extracted the urine out of me, re-





enacting the old lady's actions and mimicking her voice as she stroked the Glide's tank, etc. I knew this was going to be an ongoing theme over the weekend, so hey-ho, take it on the chin and let the fun begin.

An hour or so later, we were back on the bikes. TJ headed south – he lives in mid-Wales, about a 90minute ride from Barmouth, and we had a similar distance to get back to the rally.

We took the northbound coastal road and rode through Llanbedr, stopping in Harlech for a picture with our Chapter flag (and Iceni's flag – there's a story in itself there, perhaps I'll share later) with the Harlech castle in the background, and then back on the road for a ride east through Snowdonia once again. En route back it was decided to take the Horseshoe Pass. If you've never done the pass, you're missing out on a lovely road that

gives you a brilliant view of the Llantysilio Mountain and Llangollen as it nestles deep in the Dee Valley. At the top of the pass is the Ponderosa, the famous roadside café that's starred in many TV programs and movies as well as being a popular venue for bike meets.

We pulled over and parked up in the Ponderosa's carpark only to find the café was closing, so no coffee for us. But we did take a picture of Iceni's flag, sharing the green grass and sheep sh*t, just to show our brothers & sisters at Iceni that we were looking after their symbol of HOG-ship.

Back at the pavilion, with the sun shining warm on our backs, we strolled over to the pavilion for refreshments. It was very thirsty work, all that riding through glorious scenery on brilliant roads in the warm sunshine. And yes, Pierre, Pete & Chalkie took the p*ss out of me and my new lady 'friend' we'd met in the traffic jam that day.

We didn't take much note of the bands playing the rally, we were having much fun in the eating area and on the benches outside. With July and August having been so wet, it was great to find a dry spell, so we made the most of it. It was also an opportunity for a little networking with other chapter's members as well as some promotion for our 2024 Concursum rally.

The next day, Saturday, we awoke to the dreadful news of Kev Clifton's passing whilst on a tour with Hogsback Chapter in Germany. A sombre start to the day and thoughts of Kevin stayed with us for the rest of the rally weekend.

After our second visit to Finley's for breakfast, we readied ourselves for the official rideout through Snowdonia. It was advertised as an 80-mile round trip with a stop for coffee en route. Once again, the morning mist burned away quickly and we lined up ready for the safety briefing and the ride.

As advertised, it was a brilliant ride, some of it the same roads we'd taken on our ride the day before, only this time, no Street Glide groupie as we once again queued in the traffic jam at Corwen.

The ride took us through Bala and then turned right onto the Snowdonia National Park proper. The scenery was outstanding, very similar to Northumberland or the Brecon Beacons, but with the Snowdon mountain in the distance. We pulled into a school yard where we parked the bikes and strolled a couple of hundred yards to a local café for drinks and a toilet break. It was another hot day and cold water supplemented teas and coffees.

Back on the road again and heading east now, I checked my mileage and we'd already clocked up 65 miles, and we were a lot more than 15 miles from Llangollen.





We rode through Mould and did a U-turn on a roundabout just so we could wave at the rest of the rideout (hmmm) and then finally picked up the road that took us up the Llantysilio Mountain and onto the Horseshoe Pass. It was just as enjoyable the second time in two days as it was the first.

As we approached the International Eisteddfod Pavilion, most bikes were pulling into the rally site, but we decided to top up the tanks since the 80-mile round trip turned out to be 125 miles. Luckily, the peanut tanks were few and none ran out of the go-faster-juice, but the reason we wanted a top-up was simply to save time in the morning when we were heading home.

Back at the rally site, it was time to replenish fluids. Yes, we were sipping beers again. I had scattered a bunch of business card sized 'Save the Date' adverts for next year's Concursum on the tables and there was a lot of interest. Two chapters asked for rooms (10 for Black Mountains and 15 for Dragon) – I informed them I wasn't taking bookings, and they needed to liaise with Tracy; first come, first served, deposit required, etc., etc..

Although we didn't really pay much attention to the live music, the bands this year were significantly better than last year's offerings. The food was great, and the beers reasonably priced. We even had table service from one of the ladies behind the bar – it pays to have a table next to the bar.

We woke on Sunday morning with tents soaked with condensation. The early morning mist was thick and took its time to burn off. Breakfast at Finley's and then de-camp. Tents would have to be aired when we got home – apart from Pete's that is, his tent would be tossed in the bin or given to the grandkids to play with.

We left Llangollen late morning; Chalkie headed south whilst Pete, Pierre and I rode east. The sun was shining through a thin veil of cloud which once again burned off as the sun rose in the sky.

Circus Maximus 2024? Could be, or maybe try something a little different, maybe a visit to Bristol to see what Great Western's new rally venue is like. A visit to Fenlanders rally (an old favourite of mine)? Jury's out for now.

It is safe to say though that Pete really enjoyed his first camping HOG Rally, Pierre enjoyed getting back into it after a few years' break, and Chalkie and I had a good time too.

So, what's next? The Lindum Concursum mmxxiii...

Dai





120th Rally in Budapest...

...or the Big Girls Pants tour metric version, by Liz Cousins

It was not the most auspicious of starts, having gone to the weekend away with the Iceni chapter I managed to pick up a puncture on the way back from the ride out. Luckily it was spotted as I left the Dealership and the back markers took me back to the dealership. Norwich Harley Davidson certainly went the extra mile to get an innertube with side valve found and fitted and other faults sorted so I was home by 9 o'clock - an early night ready to leap into action next morning to get the bike packed and travel down to Ashford.

Day 1

I should know by now not to trust the satnav, it took me to a T-junction and announced I'd arrived, a notice on a nearby property showed I was not the only one to be dumped there!

When you get/give directions it's very important to know which way the vehicle is facing! Still, it only took half an hour, one delivery driver, 3 phone calls and another lost guest to arrive at the B&B. After persuading another music loving resident to vacate the bathroom, it was a quick shower then off on the back of Hilary's trike to find dinner, once around the village to the entertainment of the locals we found "The Tickled Trout" nice food then back to the B&B.
285 miles

Day 2

Thursday Morning it was off to Tesco's to fill up then Channel tunnel for the journey to start. A quick breakfast of green tea/coffee and we were off to passport control and queuing for the train. Off the train in France; off we went to our lunch destination, the square in Mons (Belgium). I of course hadn't realized we'd crossed the border, and this was why the waiter had problems understanding my French.

Once lunch was finished (with a very nice chocolate crepe) we set off starting with a quick tour around Mons then onwards to Provence Namur for a tea break (did you know on some of the motorways they have launderettes (self-operating of course)) then through Luxemburg to Metz to our hotel for the night. Being in France dinner was of course Japanese. 519 Km

Day 3

After moving the bikes off the pavement and getting parking tickets (with the aid of several locals) we set off to explore Metz. Place de la Republique, the artillery, through the gardens to the fountains, then on to the Templars Chapel which was closed but an interesting use of baths. A trip on the nobby train around Metz to see the Cathedral, the dragon and a variety of architecture all accompanied by the singing of the school children in the next carriage. After

moving the bikes, we stopped for lunch just outside the town as we wanted to see the fort, but they were getting ready for a festival? So outside view only, the café didn't do food but were happy to serve us drinks and eat pizza from the takeaway down the street. The next overnight stop was Stuttgart so we hit the motorway, major roadworks three lanes down to one and of course there were the drivers who object to you filtering through. It was of course Italian day as we were in France/Germany so Italian restaurant for dinner the waiter was the male equivalent of Mrs. Overall Acorn Antiques.
357Km

Day 4

From Stuttgart we set off for Ulm, because of the name and the Cathedral. The weather getting hotter, so stopped off for refreshments at Café Extrablatt, where





they served impressive cakes and gin, luckily, they did an extremely nice non-acholic version. The Cathedral is the tallest church in the world with a steeple 161.53m tall very difficult to get it all in a photograph.

After all that culture it was off to Munich to our hotel for the night, a very modern hotel with an easy check in using technology, luckily there were at least three receptionist there to help

the bewildered guests all you had to do was type your name on the keyboard and it would find your reservation and then you needed to place a blank keycard onto the screen and it would activate it. A good theory only took two receptionists and about 20/30 minutes after a hot and sweaty ride to get us our rooms. Then there was the underground parking where the cars are parked one above another of course all the lower spaces were occupied so we had to find a space out of everyone's way easier said than done. It was off to the cellar under the city hall for dinner they were also holding a festival so beer scantily clad young ladies gay pride flags, lederhosen and dancing rose bushes abound. 266Km

Day 5

Today we were off to Austria, lovely roads windy curvy bends stopped off for a drink at a pretty café on the road but they weren't open yet for the season, still had an ice cream in the shade and found a helpful family who helped me pull the bike out of the parking space. We could hear Salzburg singing out to us (blame it the on Trapps) arrived there early afternoon. First stop after checking in to our B&B was the Mirabell Palace and gardens where we found the Dwarf Garden, there were 28 of them modelled on real dwarfs at court, peasants and foreigners but a later resident decided that they would harm his wife and unborn child so they were removed and should have been destroyed, luckily, they were sold off so now there are 17. The sound of Music should be mentioned they have puppet shows, a bit creepy, Dinner was in a Vegetarian restaurant ordering was done by screens just like McDonalds. 199 KM



Day 6

A visit to Salzburg castle in the morning, very hot, lots of decorative features inside especially as I'm about to redecorate. A very cultural morning, then down to the town and Mozart's house and refreshments. Then it was off to Drobollach am Faakersee. We were staying at Gastehaus Trink B&B a very friendly place with very good food would happily go back there a relaxing stay ready for the days ahead. 221Km

Day 7

After an enjoyable breakfast we sent off and stopped at H-D Ljubljana Slovenia for photos T-shirts and a drink as the weather was getting hotter then back into Hungary where we had to stop a couple of hours later due to the heat, and ended up in McDonalds Where I gave Hilary an important life lesson in how to order via the screen and then much to my delight, they had a robotic server!! It was back on the road and reach the hotel before we melted, the hotel was on a corner and part of a large block of shops, quite modern in appearance but the rooms were not had very impressive double doors though. Found a café just down the street for dinner and very nice fruit drinks. 386 KM

Day 8

Went for a walk around the town, lots of statues some very communist and others more recent, another one of Elizabeth. You can see the various influences as you walk around the town.

We set off and had lunch on lake Balaton a lovely place to stop and enjoy the view. From there we went to Budapest after going around the city twice, getting caught in traffic we managed to find the Ibis (turn down the pavement) where we meet up with several others from Hogsback Chapter, after some confusion over names what had and hadn't been booked and parking spaces, we got to our rooms which did mean the hot





water problem had been fixed so we were able to have a tepid shower not a cold one as everyone else had, had earlier!!
Found a vegan restaurant wonderful food and fruit drinks "Vegan Garden". 225 Km

Day 9

After breakfast we found the nearest tube to take us to the stadium, with a little local help we got our travel passes for the three days, off to the stadium first job was to get my rally pack, joining the right queue would have made it quicker, but then I wouldn't have bumped into so many people that I knew. Definitely hotter than was comfortable we browser the outside stalls before gratefully going inside to check out the bikes on display and collecting our wristbands for the free draw. After wearily returning to our hotel, we opted to return to the Vegan Garden for dinner and an early night.



Day 10

A visit to the Dohany Street Synagogue, the largest Jewish prayer house in Europe and second largest in the world after New York's Temple Emmanuel. It is more like a gothic catholic cathedral than a synagogue on the outside and the interior is very beautiful, there is a museum in the complex with a history of the last ghetto to be set up in Europe in 1944. Outside there is a memorial park with a weeping willow tree holding 400 leaves bearing the names of Hungarian Jews, if you look at the tree upside down, (our guide recommended putting our head between your legs to view) the shape is of a reverse menorah. It was pointed out to me after viewing the tree by the recommended method that all I had to do was take a photo the turn the photo upside down!

A walk down to the river then along the bank to the Jewish memorial, a very touching place.

Back to the hotel for a shower before meeting up with Titch and Claire for dinner, arranged by Claire she'd chosen a Vegan restaurant that didn't serve alcohol Titch is a meat-eating alcohol drinking lorry driver still the three of us enjoyed the meal.

After our hearty meal it was off to Buda castle for the "Dark history and Vampire walking tour" and walk we did all the way to the top of the hill and around the castle with the sky darkening and the wind picking up the atmosphere was certainly in keeping, once the tour had finished and we started off down to the town the darkened sky unleashed a deluge, everything stopped, four drowned rats dripped their way back to their hotels.

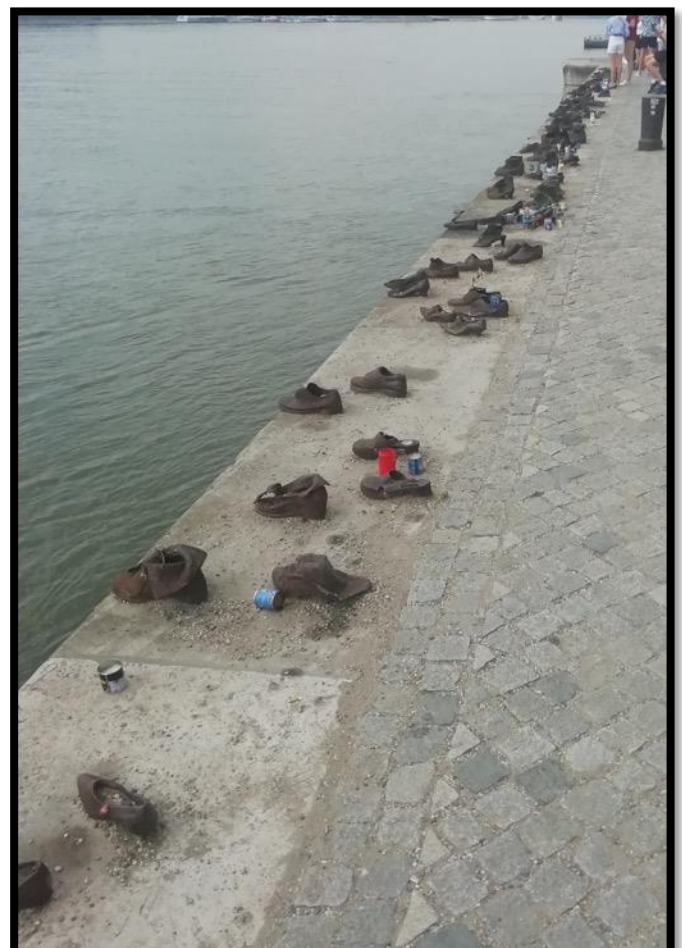
Day 11

After the downpour of the previous night the day was once again clear bright and hot, after a coffee/tea/beer it was time to watch the parade through the streets most impressive, though the classic American cars engines at the end weren't happy with the heat and slow pace.

Taking full advantage of our rail tickets we then set off to the Roman settlement (Aquincumi Muzeum). The evening was spent at the stadium music food and beer, the draw for the bike did take a while as the numbers drawn were not at the stadium.

Day 12

Back on road off to Uzhhorod Ukraine. The check point into Ukraine took a while and the scrutiny of our V5's was





most impressive. Our hotel was in fact a resort with swimming pools, walks, English camp etc. The beer was "bottom brewed" (the yeast works at a lower temperature at the bottom of the brewing process). Very friendly people not a fan of the beer though 348km

Day 13

The morning was spent attempting to visit the castle, riding on cobbled streets not my favourite type of riding, so having viewed the approach to the castle it was decided it was time for a cup of tea and a cobble free ride.

Back on the road we set off to Zilina Slovakia a good ride although finding the hotel was a challenge On a dual carriageway if you missed the turning it was back around again. 439Km

Day 14

After breakfast we set off for Budatin Castle which is one of the few water castles in Slovakia. This castle's legend concerns Katarina Sunog, her father decided she was to marry Jan she wanted to marry another knight so her father had her walled up in the castle tower, her knight rescued her but was then challenged by Jan, who killed him in the duel. So, Katarina had to marry Jan. There is a display of wire craft which nearly disappeared in the mid-20th century in the castle and views from the tower of the surrounding countryside. The castle also had an executioner's licence, so various swords on display with decapitated heads as well as some lovely wooden floors. A wander around the town looking for a drink and lunch (no food left so no lunch) found a well, covered in padlocks From Slovakia we set off to Brno in the Czech Republic. Rain put in an appearance, so several stops at petrol stations with cafes to prevent a soaking, funny things they think you'd need whilst on a stop at a petrol station. 223Km

Day 15

Not a good night for Hilary, so a drowsy start, off to the Cathedral St Peter and Paul still warm the cherubs were looking very cheesed off above the confessional, lovely building though, then a visit to the market and a well-earned rest with large pillows and a drink. Rain threatened so waterproofs were donned and off to Pizen. Walked around the square in Pizen, cathedral closed some odd shapes for fountains, had a well-deserved beer. Side roads and main roads it did appear that our route was closed due to roadworks, so we stopped for a drink to review the situation all the contractors in their lorries downed tools at 4.30 and started to park up in the petrol station not very good at parking spotted our route out and left them to their parking. 300KM



Day 16

Visited the Cathedral before setting out for Nurnberg. Got to Nurnberg and went to the Nurnberg

Rally site now a museum the main hall is being renovated so it's a temporary display very thought provoking and worth seeing. Went to the nearby café and lake for lunch giant ducks, swans or flamingos for pedalling on the lake. Traffic terrible roadworks and impatient drivers managed to find our hotel and get parked in the underground carpark then a walk back into town for dinner managed to find a picturesque

street with a café and a table on the pavement and to find the marriage merry go round fountain which is based on a poem "Bittersweet married Life", the "ship of fools" fountain and the beautiful Der Schoene Brunnen fountain, there are several other strange fountains to see. The small shops were next on the list, tiny shops crammed together by the city wall all stocked with hand-made items (luckily all shut window shopping only). 140Km



Day 17

Up early in fact we got to the castle before the staff, the Imperial Castle is well worth the visit. It has a "Double Chapel" one on top of the other and linked by an opening

in the centre, timeline of the Emperor and the Empire, and a museum. The café in the grounds do nice cakes. Off to Cologne.

Motorways and back roads parking on the street in front of the hotel. The hotel uses a computer to check you in, so simple all you have to do is type in your name take a key card from the dispenser validate it and you're done, so the

receptionist needs to help when the computer fails to recognise names and booking references and the old fashion lady helps the receptionist to release the key cards from the jammed dispenser. A walk around town and a quiet dinner. 459Km



Day 18

On the road to Calais, if you need a stuffed half an avocado toy a shell service station is the best bet Arrived in Calais, a pretty town, walked to see the mechanical dragon and Hilary was very taken with the

iguana still available to control even though the attraction was shut. A scenic walk and a wait while the swing bridge opened and shut, then dinner had to be moules and frites. The hotel was owned by a charity and was being done up so we could



have been the only guests, my room had a lovely bath. 474 Km

Day 19

To the tunnel and back to England, and off to Gainsborough. The Imperial version is available on Facebook.





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EDITOR@LINDUMCOLONIACHAPTER.COM