

  **Halloween 2012 Rideout Report**


Monday 29th Oct. 2012

There were a few scary masks and costumes around but none as frightening as the faces on the mob of CRRG members who had assembled, brooms in hand, for the Halloween bank-holiday rideout. It was a great turnout with 9 bikes and 10 riders - Andy2 & Andrea, Mark1, Paul, Gary, Mick, Marco, JR, Derek and myself. As a complete surprise to myself, but in keeping with the festive mood, members had unexpectedly turned up dressed as scary monsters !

Derek went as Boris Karloff,



Mick dressed up as Uncle Fester in the Adams Family



Andy2 did a very realistic version of Dracula



Andrea played Fester's sister, Morticia

(actually, this was just his reaction when we told him we were climbing the hill at Fore Abbey!)



But I digress. Back to the actual rideout. Everyone was on time at their respective meeting places. In fact, I feel as though members were badly shaken by some of their poor Annual Reports and are now making a big effort. Possibly too much of an effort by certain members as I was constantly being thanked, flattered, praised and offered buns throughout the day. We had hoped that Mark2 and Gavin would be joining us but, alas, poor Mark2 had a dose (of the Man-flu that is) and Gavin may have been working (or maybe his bike wasn't).

Dermot and Claire sadly couldn't make it either - pity as I would have loved to have seen Dermot's Halloween monster!

Before I report further on Monday's rideout, I feel I owe Paul an apology. We had gone for a spin 2 weeks ago to Slane and Drogheda but I never published the "19th Rideout Report"as nothing happened ! And we had no cameras..... But I can assure Paul that the rideout still counts for "Bonus Points" which can be redeemed at any of the hundreds of CRRG outlets across Mongolia. He was obviously emotionally scarred by this oversight on my part, even mentioning it over coffee, so I hope this makes him happy!

Anyway, we set off from Clonee on shiney, spotless bikes in cloudy but dry conditions but soon encountered damp fog. Paul complained that his visibility was impaired which might explain why he was heading back towards Dublin after the roundabout opposite the filling station on the M3! Thankfully, Gary was on hand to guide members onto the N3 towards Navan. We encountered some bad fog patches along the way and, sitting at the back of the group, I could see the definite advantages of wearing Hi-Vis gear. We took the turn for Athboy and Delvin and the roads were wet in places and patches of manure and other sh*te in others. Thankfully, everyone took it handy and we made good time despite the conditions. Marco's Beemer was guzzling the fuel and we had a quick smoke break in Collinstown as Marco frantically searched for a petrol station. It was beginning to brighten up as we reached Castlepollard for a well deserved breakfast.





We had another milestone event on this trip as Marco's will-power weakened and he finally scoffed a small Irish Breakfast ! Although it wasn't very cold, a good breakfast was needed by all after the long spin and we were soon warmed back up and ready to go. The staff at Castlepollard



Hotel were really nice and gave us an area at the back of the lounge all to ourselves! (Maybe they were afraid that the CRRG members would scare the other customers away!!!). Gary said *Grace Before Meals* and during breakfast I had to endure more praise from members hoping that they'll get higher marks next time. A few members muttered some complaints under their breaths about the remarks on their reports but they were mostly ignored.

After a lovely breakfast, we decided that, as Fore Abbey, is only a few miles up the road and most of the group hadn't been there, we'd pay a quick visit. The sun came out for our visit and we had a good look around the impressive Abbey. We explained about the "Mysteries" or miracles associated with the site but "Doubting Andy" was having none of it. The "Prayer Tree" fascinated some members but the ever-practical Gary decided to take advantage and managed to get another matching pair of socks off the tree along with a nice scarf for the missus. JR left a cigar as recompense.... Despite the obvious religious and sacred aura of the site, Mark1 insisted on telling a string of jokes about the poor old **Sir Jimmy Saville O.B.E.** God help any kids who know at *his* door on Halloween !!!

We left Fore Abbey, promising JR that we'd return next year and climb that big hill opposite the Abbey. We headed towards Mullingar with a planned stop along the way to see St. Munna's Church in Crookedwood. Despite a detour, we found the church which was locked so all we could do was walk around it!! It was an impressive building okay and in very good condition. But the lads were more impressed with the group historian, Paul's description of the "Sheelagh-Na-Gig" !!! . Derek was particularly impressed with the figurine above the window of the church.....

As we walked around the church, two lovely dogs came over to welcome us. Poor Andrea was distraught when Andy cruelly and point-blank refused to put the little puppy in the side case. She cried all the way to Mullingar.

We headed back via main roads, Andrea's wails in our eardrums, and decided to stop in Kilcock (not Kinnegad, Derek!) for a smoke and a coffee. Although our regular haunt - Rye River Café and coffee shop - was closed, they opened up just for us and we had buns and coffee outside. Mick kept pushing me to have the last bun but I knew what he was up to and refused to take any form of bribe. After a quick chat, we bade our farewells (*nice bit of writing that*) hoping that maybe we might manage to get out for even a short run over the Christmas.

Paul sped home giving him enough day light to wash the new "Zed". Amazingly, Gary left his dirty bike for another time. Marco didn't sleep that night, thoughts of dirt eroding the fancy paintwork and metal on the Beemer keeping him awake. JR's bike was cleaner than when we had started out!

Another great day out with great craic, great laughs, great company, great scenery, great breakfast....in fact everything was great. 'Til the next one,

Ride safely.

Alan