

The Robert Sebbage Appeal round Britain ride

This all began several months ago when John Manns contacted me with a view to enlisting the support of the LCS for the ride. I agreed at once of course, not just because John had emphasised that the LCGB were supporting the ride but because I knew the LCS members would love to help out and boy was I right!

The real story begins with 14 year-old Robert who suffers from NBD (Neuropathic Bowel Disease), a rare but treatable disorder. However, unlike most sufferers, Robert's condition is not responding to the treatment. Only when John took the time to explain to me what this situation is doing to Robert and his family did the full extent of the problem come home to me. The aim of the fundraising was to get Robert and his parents Stateside to try innovative treatments and, hopefully, give them a well needed break too. As I've hinted at, perhaps not the most 'glamorous' of appeals at first glance but that, the condition of Robert and his family (as vividly portrayed by John) and the chance to take part in an historic of event is what got me buzzing – apart from the leather-cleaner in the shed that is!

I'll spare you all the comings and goings leading up to the ride (or perhaps digress to them during the body of this article – as is my want) and cut to the chase. Our commitment to the event was to ride the 1956 Model 'D' Lambretta a thousand miles or so around the Scottish coast and arrive at the joint LCS/LCGB rally in New Galloway on 14/9/07 as part of the overall ride around the coast of Grande Britannia. This being done 'tag-team' fashion with each scooter club riding the 'D' through their 'patch' – the phrase is apt when you consider how 'patchy' the territory of clubs in Scotland is and some creative thinking was needed, as well as volunteers to take on the tricky bits, but we got there – well kind-of!

Before the scooter even got to the border, the Berwick Bulldogs had a fund-raiser going and did rather well out of a well organised 'wee do' but whether it was wise to do this the night before riding it up to Tranent, through Edinburgh and on to Cupar is debatable. Over to Mick Elliot...

Left Berwick at 10.15 Friday morning after meeting up wi John Manns at the border, 5 lammys and the D. Had to 'A1' it as far as Dunbar then took the B roads swapping drivers as we went. Passed through North Berwick to Haddington then on to Tranent to meet the East Lothian boys where Shep had the haggis rolls waiting. Even though we said we would be there for 12 and it was now well passed 1. The haggis went doon well after the do the

night before, but John prefers the short haired type for the next time Shep.

There were a few worse for wear and they decided to head back to Berwick but wi the Tranent boys, John and me + Woody there were still 7 lammys giving it an escort to the Forth Road Bridge. Keeping to the coas, we went through Mussleburgh, Portobello, then through Edinburgh where, as Shep said, we had a break down - FECKING mine - not wanting to hold things up I waved the main party past.



Fuel tank Woody pulled over to see what was wrong wi the words ye dinny want to stop here its rough as... !!! I thought Edinburgh was posh! Anyhow quick spark plug change it

started 1st kick so we were back on the road meeting up with the boys a mile further up the road. At the bridge Nidge left us and Woody, as he only had £40 left and he had 60 mile to do to get back to Berwick and, as his bike only does 15mile to the gallon doon hill, he thought he better had too. So there were 3lammys left me, john, Vespa Wullie and Shep on the d.

Over the bridge into Fife, up to the A92 not quite the coast but if ye stood up on the bike you could see the sea. Past Cowdenbeth, Kirkcaldy, Glenrothes to Cupar where we passed the d onto Robin (R B Scooters) at about 4.45 .The d went like a dream all the way and seemed to get better and better; at the end Shep was getting 55 out her! Quick coffee and a smoke, and another smoke we set of back doon the road at 6 getting back to Berwick at 9, twos up on the S2. Fantastic day, great company, loved it and could o followed it up to Billy but after taking 2 sickies to get this far thought I'd better not [was going to put pics in the local paper but so many took a sickie I thought better of it].

Thanks to everyone who made the day such a laugh and took part, Shep for dj-ing the wee do, everyone who came to the do and raised over £300 to go to the appeal. Wee note for big Chris from the committee of the Rowing Club, they said THANKS FOR DOUBLING THERE NORMAL WEEKLY TAKINS IN 3 HOURS - top job son.

Mick fa Berwick.

And Shep, in his usual succinct manner had this to say...

Relieved the Berwick bulldogs of the model D Friday afternoon, had haggis rolls [wild haggis] at my hoose. I rode the D from Tranent all the way to Cupar [Fife] escorted by John Manns, the Berwick boy's, 'n' my own club East Lothian scooter club, who were all too hung over to ride the D.

One lammie broke down in Muirhoose [trainspotting, the movie territory] apart from that close shave it was all a hoot. 52 miles, 2 hours 15 mins.

Shep, Lambretta club o Scotland

From Cupar Robin Bell, John McMillan and Roy McEwan took the reigns with John Manns still in tow; Roy sums it up thus...

Just to continue the trip. I met Robin and the Loansharks in Dundee. A brow day for a scooter run.

Robin took the d up to Arbroath where we where met by Jim Mowatt Arbroath and half his family on scooters. We had our pics taken at the Arbroath abbey by the local paper's dude. So there may be photos in the local papers about the appeal. After reciting the Declaration of



Arbroath I took the wee scooter up tae Montrose and we were escorted by the Arbroath contingent who left us there then I carried on to Stonehaven where I left Robin and John to

continue tae Peterheid. That was braw fun and the d was no problem at all. All the best for the rest of the journey, hope ye get good weather.

Roy; Perth

John McMillan, your long-suffering treasurer chipped in with this summation...

The Scoot was dropped off on Friday at Robin Bell's (RB Scooters) John Manns crashed the night at Robins. I arrived Saturday morning and we got organised to go & finally left a gloriously sunny Cupar around 10:40. Robin did the first stint (first lambretta trip for a couple of years) with John on his TV and Keith on the GP. I was in the van following with Gill in the car.

Robin rode up to Arbroath were photos were taken at the abbey. Where the quote came out, "For So long as there is petrol in the tank we shall never give up the ride...." Whether it becomes as famous as the one from 1320 I will never know!!

Anyway rider 2, Roy fae Perth took over and ran all the way to Stonehaven were we had lunch. Big Jim followed on his vespre to Montrose.

I took over from Stonehaven and had the fun (?) of Aberdeen and its roundabouts. The chaos we were causing on the roads was great fun and the tailbacks, lengthy!

Robin wished to finish the ride, so ten miles short of Peterhead we stopped to swap over and let the 45 cars or so pass. We met up with Martin Penny in Peterhead had a quick coffee (thanks) and headed down the road.

What a great day lots of fun & sun. Thanks to the riders and outriders, Gill, Louise & Martin for driving.

Good luck to all the other riders.

Well-done Billy & Gilly.

Best Regards John - See ya in New Galloway

Men of few words but worthy deeds are Peterhead SC and, not only did they put John Manns up in a local hotel but donated £170 to the fund too. It was my pleasure to saunter out the A96 a few miles and pick up the entourage as they headed for Inverness. I'm not going to elaborate too much here but summed it up thus....



Thanks to the Peterhead SC and Martin Penny in particular for putting on a great show and escorting the D with eight members all the way from Peterhead to Inverness, where they did much messing around (mainly due to me) before having a jar in my local – The Smithton Hotel - (who had an impromptu and unsolicited whip round and raised thirty-odd quid, which aint bad for a Sunday afternoon) and heading back home in the rain after handing John a cheque for £170.

Gillie arrived with the back-up van later that evening and we got to work servicing the D then having a few sherbets and getting to bed much too late, considering what lay ahead the following morning.

A good breakfast by Sharon set us up for an 8:30 start and off we went with me taking the first leg of around sixty miles. By one o'clock we had reached John O'Groats (120 miles) where the official photographs were taken and

we were given sandwiches and tea by the John O'Groats Inn – all sponsored by Premier Attractions. We set off around two in the direction of Durness to see how far we could get, which could have been cut short had I not managed to keep the bike upright after being hit

by a stupid cow in a SCHOOL minibus who was trying to overtake me on a single lane road. Anyway, some seriously jaw-dropping scenery later, we managed to get to Ullapool just before dusk (eight-thirty) having covered some 284 miles. John Manns went on the blag and got us in to the local youth hostel at junior rates. We hit the hay a wee bit earlier but John's snoring ruined a good sleep (LOL)! Gillie broke my record of 60mph of earlier that day by topping out at 65mph – the swine!

We had a quick look round the D in the morning and left Ullapool around nine-thirty with me taking the first leg once more. No one thought it possible, but the scenery actually got even more impressive as we headed south via Gairloch to Fort William and perhaps even Oban – dare we hope?

A stop off for an expensive but plentiful lunch and some photos in Dornie took an hour and a bit out the journey before heading off again – Oban was beginning to look feasible!

In the end we pressed on and got to Oban around seven, having covered some 223 miles, and headed for the youth hostel where we got ripped off to balance the bargain in



Ullapool. A carb strip and rebuild and some fun with the gearbox meant we could have arrived at six.

A good nights sleep (we were all bugged) and Gillie and I left John on his lonesome to await the Clyde Panthers tomorrow as we had finished a day ahead of schedule. We set off in Gillie's van and he dropped me in Perth, where I got the train home.

We thoroughly enjoyed the ride,

despite the gruelling schedule but would we do it again.... OF COURSE WE BLOODY WOULD!!!!

Good luck to the Clyde Panthers and all the riders to come but especially good luck to young Robert.

See you all Friday

Billy

I'll take the opportunity at this juncture to apologise to the Clyde Panthers and Co. for lumbering them with, not one but two roached scooters! To be fair though, we did warn them ahead of time as we knew fine we were humping the life out the 'D' especially and had neither the time or means, in the North-west Highlands, to affect the necessary repairs. Here's Codge's take on the affair...

The riders from Oban to Gourock were Codge McKay LCS / Clyde panthers, Johnny McMillan LCS / Clyde panthers, John Cambell LCS, Brian Davidson LCGB, Jim Bowman, Animals.

We picked up the D at Oban around 2.00pm. John Manns had cadged a free night in the hotel and was busy sending e-mails as we arrived. After trying out the local chip shop, we got the scooters loaded with John's gear as his back rack had snapped on the TV. The

spare wheel carrier on the D had also snapped. A quick phone call to Port Glasgow and the required welding was organised for the following day.

I was first up on the D and was surprised how well it handled. The hills outside Oban did prove tricky but the stunning scenery made it well worthwhile. The run through Lochgilphead and around Loch Fyne was excellent and the D performed superbly well. Despite Michaels Fish's successors forecasting monsoon conditions all day, the rain stayed away until just before we reached Hunters Quay at Dunoon. Jim Bowman had managed to make a call earlier in the day and bagged us tickets for all bikes and riders for the Western ferries crossing. The weather really did take a turn for the worse as we left the ferry and the "D" decided it didn't like it very much and cut out on the busy main road. A bit of tinkering soon had it going again and Johnny drove it to its resting place for the night in his garage.

We stripped the broken parts off to Brian Davidson who was getting them welded in the morning.

The following day (Friday) the plan was to leave around 11.00am to head to New Galloway down the Ayrshire coast. The guy who was doing the welding unfortunately got called to an urgent job and Brian had to run around and find someone else. He managed to persuade the guy to do it free of charge. The TV also needed some welding to the cylinder head cowling. The exhaust stud also came free and we then had to Helicoil the cylinder at the exhaust stud.



After putting the welded parts back on both bikes and getting them back together, somewhat later than planned, we headed off to the offices of the Greenock Telegraph who were running a feature on the trip.

The late set off was probably a blessing in disguise as we left Gourrock in glorious sunshine and headed off down the coast to New Galloway. This leg had the same group minus Jim Bowman who had to work. All riders once again had a shot of the D and we reached New Galloway with only having to change the plug on the way down.

Cheers, Codge

The story almost ends there but for the New Galloway to Gretna leg which was supposed to be done by Tony Notman of 'Rallyscooterspares.com'. Unfortunately Tony took ill on the Saturday at the rally and was in no fit state to ride the 'D'. You can always find a positive if you look hard enough though and Barty from the LCGB was bemoaning the fact that he'd missed out on his promised part of the North-east England leg, so he was made-up to be offered the New Galloway - Gretna leg – despite the horrendous conditions and his, eh, 'fragile' condition! The scooter was handed over with due ceremony at Gretna to the Orgasm Addicts but the LCS involvement didn't end there as at least two LCS members had a go in deepest, darkest England-shire. Martin Kane (Blackpool Lambretta Owner's Club) had this to say...

After seeing the d at New Galloway it was now nearly our turn to get our hands on the little d but first of all she had to be ridden all the way through the Scottish lowlands into Cumbria then Lancashire. One major obstacle was the weather so well done to all those

who rode on the Sunday especially the Orgasm Addicts SC/ Trojan SC. Young Scott (Trojan S.C.) dropped the d off with me at 8.30 pm having ridden in darkness from Cumbria in to Lancashire on in to Morecambe then Lancaster.

LANCASTER 8.30 AM

Monday 17th September 2007

Left Lancaster at 8.30, with Martin Hyland (just lambretta.com) riding in fine weather along the north Fylde coast on to Shard Bridge, where Eddie Wareing BLOC was waiting, on to Fleetwood and then straight down the prom to north pier where the Blackpool Lambretta owners club were awaiting a quick photo for the local paper (gazette) and off again towards Lytham-Preston. The little d was running fine until Paul Livesy had a problem at some lights and she went in to reverse! On meeting other LCGB riders from Lancashire on the A59 we progressed down through Southport this time the d being piloted by Midge from Chorley. It's just his size but that coast road was bumpy - nearly lost Midge a couple of times.

Then just outside Formby disaster, the gearbox was pissing out oil through the kick start housing and she was going in reverse again but not to fear Bondy from Wigan had brought a couple of model d experts with him, Neil Powell and Colin Fearnuygh, the d was then shipped over to Neil's house for surgery, where a new kick starter housing and kick start was transplanted from another model d. Well done Neil, Bondy and Colin. The d was then ridden back to Liverpool to meet up with Ernie and the Liverpool boys for the ride through Wales on Tuesday.

RIDERS ESCORT

Martin Kane, Martin Dean, Martin Hyland, Eddie Wareing, Paul Livsey, Tony Greenall all Blackpool Lambretta Owners Club, Lancashire LCGB members

RIDERS and REPAIRERS

Bondy, Midge, Neil Powell, Colin Fearnuygh – final mileage 17326

Martin Kane, BLOC/LCS

The last report from an LCS member, my old pal Barry Turner (Scooter Warehouse) ran thus...

Just thought you might be interested in the progress of the D on its monster journey. Ernie from Liverpool S.C. was supposed to collect it yesterday, Monday after its run down from Cumbria and Blackpool. I was then heading out of work on my Vespa 200 to meet them and share riding, but at the last minute we were told that it had serious problems and some emergency repairs were being carried out. As a result Tuesday was the new day for us.

Got my phone call from Ernie at 10am so left work and rode to meet Ernie and Steve Foulkes with the back-up car at Eastham on the Wirral. Ernie seemed quite relieved to have got the little bike safely through the Mersey Tunnel as it was still running very rough. It didn't take a lot of persuasion for Ernie to jump on mine and for me to do my bit on the D. Of all the scooters I have ever ridden this was definitely the first one to go backwards in first gear! Every time it did this you had to stall it, restart and hope it would then go forwards. It seemed happy in top gear at 40mph but if you let the revs drop it had to be coaxed along.

30 miles later we were in the middle of Rhyl, North Wales, the sun was shining but unfortunately I had to say goodbye and jump on my Vespa and back to work leaving Ernie and Steve to nurse it on to Caernarfon. I really hope it makes the rest of the journey but it is a poorly little scooter.

All in all great fun and I am so happy I have done my little bit for this epic journey. Lets hope thousands of pounds will be raised and this young man gets the treatment he needs Well done to you all north of the Border and you may like to know that the sprig of heather is still sitting proudly in place. So far a job well done.60 to 65mph Lucky B*st*rds!!!

Cheers

Barry Turner

So that was that, well kind of. The 'd' did indeed make it to Land's End - and that's a miracle in itself - finishing on day 36 and having covered an incredible 3239 miles, almost a third of which was round Scotland! It's too early for estimates yet, as money is still coming in but, with individual donations, local club's efforts and the LCS 'general fund' we raised well over a grand north of the border but the biggest achievement was surely getting the wee buggar round the coast and out of our sight (LOL).

I'd have loved to have named each and every rider and support rider in Scotland, and had asked the regional organisers to list them but I'm still waiting so, if you've been missed out, I do apologise but I'd take it up with them. No, seriously though, John Manns has asked me to pass on his sincerest gratitude to everyone of you on four distinct points, the hospitality we showed him personally, the fund-raising, the running repairs and, of course, the actual riding – even though we did our best to break it!

I am due a debt of gratitude to all of you as well as, if anyone of you had broke that chain, I'd have looked a right mug! If that doesn't tell you how important a piece every single supporter was in the jigsaw then you're too sensitive – or don't know me very well! That said, and I do mean everyone of you, I couldn't finish (and I could go on for another couple of pages here) without mentioning the special effort made by Margaret Shepherd in hand-painting a complete replica model of the 'D' and auctioning it on Ebay and, of course, the anonymous highest bidder who put another £110 into the kitty (well done Mick Elliot... whoops!). Good luck Robert!

