

## Report on Kent Kanter and ensuing ride through France - Steve and Angela Pritchard



As a member of the International Federation of Rotarian Motorcyclists, accompanied by my wife I took part in a ride in Kent in July 1999. We enjoyed the company of about thirty other bikes, most of them 'two up' making 60 in all. We then travelled on alone to France for a two-week camping adventure. We had a marvellous time. The Kent event was arranged extremely well by Michael and Allison Studham, our only comment being upon their fondness for the shrill use of an ARP's whistle!

One of my fellow riders suggested that I might like to "put a few words together" for our magazine. Thank you, Rob, I spent much of my holiday hammering away on the keyboard of my Psion 5. I am sure neither he or I expected such a weighty tome to result but here you are I hope that it provides something of interest

### Tour Story

#### Day 1 Maltby to Ashford 9<sup>th</sup> July 1999.

Setting of in the nick of time we travelled from Maltby to Ollerton where we were to meet three other bikes and then go on to Stapleford in Kent. We met at 1045, Rob had had an aberration and left all his maps behind, still Richard knew the way. We had a great ride, only lost our way a few times. Enjoying Richard's unorthodox use of one-way streets, we stopped for lunch the ancient Market Square of Uppingham. Angela and I remarked on the beautiful sight the ancient town and market place made. Sue could not help but buy a hat, despite the fact that she had nowhere to store it.

Rob Richard and Sue could not believe that we had all our gear for a fortnight camping stored in two panniers a top box and tank bag. The truth came out when Angela's jacket fell open and two gold sandals fell out onto the pavement! OK so we lied - Two panniers, one top box, a tank bag AND Angela's jacket!

Time pressed so we finished the journey using M25 and M20. Arrived at 1800 in time to meet the Studham party rolling in followed shortly by Jean Paul and team from Belgium.

The evening meal was great Jeff's idea of all members announcing themselves worked very well, ice was soon broken, bottles were opened, and festivities began.

Mileage 220

DAY 2 Kent Tour 10 July 1999

Why did I have that extra glass of wine? The day dawned misty but with forecast that would make a South African run for the factor 15! Michael and Allison did a great job of mustering everyone, they had warned us the night before that the only way they could guarantee getting so many bikes on the go was with the use of a loud (understatement) whistle. Many comments were made about the whistle, but they were right it, did work

We had an excellent day, touring through back roads, A, and B roads, exposed to many panoramic vistas as we rode together. Thirty-three bikes most of them two-up! To me it seemed that we managed to make reasonable progress without obstructing most vehicles on the road. Hats off to Michael and Allison. We had a trip which included the Spitfire museum at Manston, the fruit farm at Brogdale (home to the biggest collection of fruit trees in the world) and then either the Painted House (an old Roman hotel) or Dover goal - most appropriate for some members of the party I'm sure!

That evening we dined in the same hotel, in an apparently ancient converted barn, an issue of some debate amongst the party. Some thought that it was a reconstruction. None the less the atmosphere was convivial, we had a relaxed presentation from Jeff our national president and from Jean Marie whom gave a sincere and generous offer to all of us whom may travel through his country.

Mileage 400



DAY 3 Kent to Boulogne 11 July 1999.

A very reasonable slow start to the day, about half of the riders left to take the long journey home including several of the rider's from Belgium and Holland. The Harley riders included, I must admit to breathing a sigh of relief at this point. Having witnessed handling that would have made the captain of the Torrey Canyon proud, and a power band which boasted all the magnificence of a BSA Bantam, I was pleased to look forward to making progress.

Rye was lovely with a good biker stop next to river. Weather lovely blue skies, moderate winds, we had tea in a famous cafe (figured in Cold Comfort Farm starring Stephen Fry).

We left the party at Lydd airport having just witnessed Bob Shilling fly with his own personal seat in the outside toilet of a Trilander!

It was strange to ride off on my own. No one at the next junction to show me the way! Bloody difficult navigating on your own. Of course, we got lost immediately.

Made the 1600 ferry and enjoyed a pleasant journey across to Calais.

We rode down to Boulogne on the motorway. Different to my last journey when I used all the back roads, the motorway is much quicker! and the scenery was just as nice. At Boulogne we had difficulty finding the Hotel Premier at first but turning back towards the motorway and found it right where we should have turned off. The facilities are quite basic, Angela thought that it rather felt like a rabbit hutch, but the price was good, £11 each for a room and continental breakfast. We dined at the adjacent Buffalo Grill and had a nice steak and chips meal with a good Californian Red and sweet for £27.

The en-suite room consisted of a plastic cupboard with toilet sink and shower in the space you would normally expect to occupy a double wardrobe, still it met our needs and we had the necessary comforts.

Total miles 470