



The Hogtown Lowdown



Chapter 0675
March/April 2003



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Director's Column

Hey guys and gals,

Could someone please tell me again about global warming? As cold as it's been, I'm beginning to wonder about that theory. Lately, when a ride has been planned, it's rainy or bitter cold. That's OK, after 4 years of drought; the rain is a welcome site. However, the year is young and we hope to have many beautiful days to ride.

If you haven't done so, please renew your Gainesville HOG membership. If you haven't renewed, this could be your last newsletter. If you need an application, you can pick one up at Gainesville Harley Davidson, or give me a call @ 352 495 3109 and I'll put one in the mail to you. The annual dues are \$15.00 per member.

As always, we are looking for new ideas for the chapter. If you have any special place you like to ride or restaurants you think the group would enjoy, please come to the HOG meetings and share these ideas with the other members.

We had to make an adjustment to our meeting dates. Since we meet at Gainesville Harley Davidson, and they changed the store hours for the winter months, we did not meet in January.

The meeting will be every other month, the fourth Thursday, starting in February. Hope this didn't mess anyone up.

We are getting a list of members who are interested in the Advanced Riding Course. We hope the more people to attend, the better price we will get. If you're interested, please call me or e-mail me at lizzie@gru.net. We'll keep you posted on the time, amount and place.

If you're heading over to Daytona for Bike-Week, please share your photos and some good stories with the group. The information can be placed on the Gainesville HOG website or in our next newsletter.

Ride safe, Joan



Ladies of Harley News



Wake up ladies! It's time to come out of hibernation! Let's look forward to a wonderful year of motorcycling this year. I'd like to remind you of the 2003 LOH Motorcycling Memories Contest. There are three categories for this contest requiring no more than one page of typed story telling about your adventure. These categories are: Most Memorable, Most Adventurous, and Best Tour. The deadline to submit is December 15, 2003. Mail entries to the main HOG office. Come on ladies! I'm sure you have a story to tell!

Also, if anyone is interested in doing The ABC's of Touring this year; please let me know. Maybe we can plan some rides to knock off a few requirements for this fun activity.

If anyone has suggestions for LOH activities please let me know or drop your suggestions off at the Harley shop. It's your club, so let's make this a great year for motorcycling!

Dianne



Events and Rides, Past and Future

by Susan Thrall

Our February 16th HOG ride was rained out, but as it said in our last newsletter, if it rains, HOG will meet at Sandy's Place. Eleven HOG members met for lunch at Sandy's Place which is a northwest Gainesville Sports Bar and Restaurant featuring great Greek food (and American also) at great prices. Before we arrived at Sandy's it started spitting rain and then became a real downpour. One hardy HOG member, Glen Lincoln from Archer, rode anyway. We all had a great time at lunch, enjoying the company and the food.

Daytona Bike Week: There may be an impromptu ride for those interested in riding as a group to Daytona for Bike Week. Please leave messages on the HOG Forum to contact other riders. HOG Forum in on our web site at www.gfhog.cjb.net

Ray's Ride to St. Petersburg on April 5th and 6th: Ride will leave the dealership after it closes on Saturday and return on Sunday. Riders can visit the 'Mystic of the Motorcycle' exhibit in St. Petersburg. Riders can return on their own on Saturday or stay overnight at a motel of their choice and then join the group for the ride back Sunday. Contact the dealership for more information.

Advanced Motorcycle Operator safety Training Class:

Plans are still being developed for an advanced motorcycle riding class. Please contact Grant Thrall at thrall@afn.org or 372-6440 or Joan Brewer at lizzie @gru.net or 495-3109 if you are interested in participating in the class.

Last Minute Updates

Thinking a ride might be cancelled due to weather? Want to make sure of time or place? Get on our email list for last minutes updates and cancellations. Check out our website at www.gfhog.cjb.net or call the dealership. Any last minute changes or cancellations will be available on our web site and at the dealership. Director Joan Brewer also emails out any last minute changes. If you are not getting emails from Joan, you are not on our email list. Send your email address to Joan at lizzie@gru.net

Also, our web site has a HOG forum. Want to leave messages for other HOG members? Place it on the HOG Forum where all online HOG members can see it and respond.

Stay informed – get on the net!

Got Hearing?

by Grant Thrall, GF HOG Webmaster and Road Captain

Got hearing? I do, and I want to keep my hearing, and keep riding. So what does keeping hearing and keeping riding have in common? Riding is noisy. I want quality sound, not just loud sound. It's easy to get good sound when riding.

No, I am not talking about mounting a boom box radio on your Springer Softtail. And I am not talking about

reinstalling those stock mufflers either, you remember, the ones that you took off your bike within five minutes of getting your bike home from the dealership. No, I talking about earplugs. Earplugs! Boring? Not at all. Read on.

Did you see the Nighthtrain hop-up on Speed Vision? I posted on our HOG webpage the summary comparison of the

muffler performance shoot out. You know what lost in the shootout? Hearing.

Your personal internal audio system begins to suffer damage at 80 db. None of the mufflers installed on the Nighthtrain had less than 90 db at 3500 RPM. Add to that the noise from wind rushing by and you have the makings for permanent hearing deterioration, and loss. But wait, there is an easy fix. Earplugs. Really, earplugs are not boring, though they are the Rodney Dangerfield of motorcycle equipment.

Like with my home stereo, and my car stereo, I don't want noise. I want quality sound. Sound without the noise. Earplugs can bring you sound without the interfering noise, and you get to keep your hearing and those new 16 Gauge Screaming Eagle exhausts.

I always ride with earplugs, but not just any earplugs. The ones I like have a noise reduction rating of 31. All earplugs have noise reduction ratings. The lower the rating, the less noise suppression. The plugs I use were bought at Walgreen's in a jar of 40 pair, for less than \$10. They are called "Super 31 Earplugs", and look like flesh colored sponges. They cut out the high pitches, and leave the mid and low range. They

clean up the noise, and leave the good sound. I prefer the sound of riding with these earplugs. My 16 Gauge Screaming Eagle exhausts sound just the way I want, and I don't have ringing ears when I finish my ride.

I am so convinced that riding with earplugs is right, that I tried to upgrade at Biketoberfest. I looked for the booth selling "plugs formed to your ear." You know, the booth that stuffs soft plastic in your ear that hardens to the shape of your ear canal. Because the EPA requires that noise reduction be posted on earplugs, the booth posted their noise reduction amount. Their value was 6. So I saved \$45 by sticking with the cheap disposable "Super 31 Earplugs."

Here are instructions on use of cheap, disposable squishy earplugs. Roll the tip of the plug in your fingers; the plug will reduce in diameter by 75%. Grab tip of left ear with right hand, and pull up. With left hand, insert plug into left ear. Repeat process for right ear. To clean reusable earplugs, place earplugs into pocket of a shirt and launder as usual.

If you got hearing, and want to keep it, and you want quality sounds of riding and not just noise, then give them a try!

Kiwi Adventure

No I am not talking about the fruit...)

by HOG member Wayne Wallace

(Editor's note: This is the second in a two part series on Wayne Wallace's motorcycle trip through New Zealand.)

Watching the weather forecast, we made a critical decision to divert our route and make a direct run to the Milford Sound area for the second day, since the best

weather on the southwest side of the island was to last only a couple more days. Milford Sound is THE destination as a world – class fiord within the famous Fiordland National Park, home of the “Lord of Rings Two Towers” movie shoot. There is only one way in and out, and it is usually rainy, windy and can be icy and dangerous. The local MC folks turn around and head for other terrain when it’s bad. The route heading further south was a continuation of roaring river valley riding, clinging to mountainsides with twisty and at times quite slow switchbacks. Colorful flowers of every description abound, as does slippery material on the asphalt as those sheep use the same roads to transition fields. There was some gravel roadwork here and there, which is always exciting on a bike, though the overall road conditions were absolutely among the best you will experience with hardly a pothole to be seen. We stopped off for lunch in touristy Queenstown, not a group favorite but on a beautiful mountain ringed lake, and visited the gorge at the Kawarau Suspension Bridge and watched bungy jumpers plummet into a river 141 feet below, the first place where this was invented. We continued on along stunning lake side roads and rolling country side to the next night’s destination, Te Anau on Lake Te Anau, the jumping off point for the Sound the next morning. We got cottages by the lake and dined at the local Moose Lodge with outdoor café seating by the water.

The third day ride into Milford Sound is a complex one running along lakes and rivers, escalating into high mountain passes with stunning snow capped views and includes a passage through a one mile long tunnel, which is unlighted,

slopped, and for kicks, wet and potentially icy with loose gravel on the roadbed. Of course, I was selected to lead the group through. I had the best lights and had done this before, albeit in a car! We crawled along and finally popped out of the other side and continued on through thick canopies of forest lands, meadows and eventually to the inland base of the sound. It’s best to get here early, and charter a select boat for the grand tour on water, which we did. We decided to REMOVE our MC seats and store them in an office, since the kea parrots were known to be quite active and destructive in this area. The cruise was breath taking and we indeed had quite clear skies for the majority of the voyage. We made it out to the Tasman Sea and the cloud cover was already approaching, eventually to flood the entire sound and west coast in a thick sea fog and rain for the next several days. Our timing was right on the mark. This area gets rain almost daily and the majority of days are not visitor friendly. We took our time and doubled back out to return to Te Anau where we got an even better lakeside room.



Day four saw us backtracking the original agenda since we decided to get away from the westerly weather and head further east to Dunedin, which is a Scottish community and refuted to be

much like Edinburgh, Scotland, with beautifully constructed elegant cut stone buildings everywhere. It was fairly cold, in the mid 40's, as we cruised the rolling farmlands. Each day had presented us with new and different sights and this continued to be the case as we were heading through pristine country on gentle rolling roads through tiny dots of farm towns along the way. We found that NZ is also apparently the "World Capital of Trout Fishing" as it seemed that every fourth town claimed that title. Dunedin is at the base of a significant bay, which leads to the South Pacific and is home to the "Southern Most Harley Davidson Dealership in the World" which we dutifully visited. We settled into a massive "townhouse" room at a motel, and visited the famous Otago University, the Harvard of NZ. Tom dropped in on the Psychology Department for an impromptu visit, was directed to a professor randomly, who turned out to be a UF PhD graduate – small world indeed!

We decided to do a late afternoon ride out onto the Otago Peninsula, which is the most scenic area on the Dunedin waterfront, with a real Scottish castle on the mountaintop. The road out to the coast was VERY twisty, hugged the waterfront and kept taking us out farther than we had anticipated. We decided to take an inland route back, which led us to a fog shrouded castle we could not see, an indignant Scotsman complete with his ZZ Top beard, upon his majestic horse, with high altitude dense fog drifting in through thick twisted hedge row trees. It was quite surreal; the altitude, the views of the bay below, the picture book farms with neatly crafted crusty stone walls, the fog and now winds trying to blow us off of very

twisty, crowned and shoulder-less roads...not a bad way to end the day. As it turned out, it was the real highlight of the day's riding.

We had a decision to make for day five. The west coast looked bad and would be a very difficult technical ride along mountain edges, up against the Tasman Sea with high winds and heavy rains, or we could ride an east coast route back north, which was dry and followed the Pacific. We did the later, stopping off in multiple seaside towns, taking in the coastal sites and covering mileage to get us back to another new region. The temperatures were in the 90's and we were starting to feel at home!

Everywhere we went, people would come up to us to say hi, look at the bikes and guess our nationality, which was apparently pretty easy. These folks are very biker and American friendly, always asking how we were doing and how we liked NZ. That night was the most difficult one we had locating accommodations in Oxford. We just timed our arrival a bit late and had to move on to Rangiora, which is actually northwest of Christchurch. Almost every place we stayed had excellent accommodations, averaging around \$20 to \$25 US per person per shared room. All the food was great and good dinners with wine were around \$10 to \$15 US.

Day six saw us heading north along the east coast up through another mountain range to a seaside community, Kaikoura with black volcanic sand beaches hugging the snow capped mountains base. The coastal waters of the Pacific here looked VERY California to us, with seals and scenic cliffs everywhere, along with a multitude of tunnels, which you could actually see through. This was a great ride since the combination of

rolling land, curves, alpine forests and ocean scenery were among the best we had seen along the Pacific coast line, a good choice. We had decided that the special one-day ride on the west coast, was just not going to be possible. It was raining like the dickens there, thus a goal for another trip at another time. This allowed us an opportunity to take a scenic secondary road back inland, cutting through the twisties, high meadows loaded with sheep herds and glorious scenery that led us to a resort town, Hanmer Springs, known for their hot spring baths. The entire area was covered with brilliant yellow shrubs that coated the mountainsides and river valleys, which absolutely radiated in the sunlight. We thought that was just spectacular, but the locals quickly pointed out that these were “weeds” and not native to NZ.

Our final day of riding led us back to our start point of Christchurch where we transferred the clothing back to the hotel, returned the bikes and once again became quite pedestrian. We spent the rest of the day wandering about visiting the “Motorcycle Restorations” shop which is “world famous” since they do top end restorations on every brand for mostly non NZ customers abroad. They even had an Indian frame awaiting parts and graciously allowed us to meander around their back work and storage spaces. A great positive receptivity and hospitality were just everywhere. The city is blessed with massive parks, tree lined rivers, and an area known as Canterbury College, a collection of castle like buildings left behind by a college who had to move out for more space. Along with artsy shops, it is complete with art studios, Saturday festivals, theaters and museums, indoor

and outdoor cafes and is worth a good day in and of itself. Christchurch is also the home of the International Antarctic Center, which has a unique museum and information resource right next to the US Antarctic research base and jumping off point.

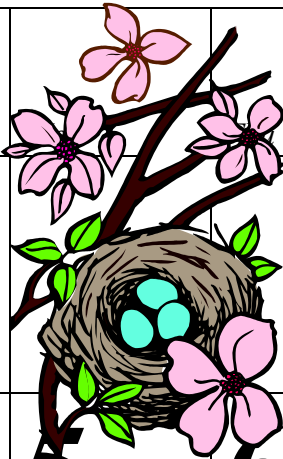
Each of us expressed an admiration for the country, the people and the whole experience, which I would recommend highly to you. The opportunity to engage in about any outdoor activity, in addition to MC touring, awaits you from trout fishing, kayaking, sailing (home of the America’s Cup), trekking, general sightseeing, bungee jumping to even counting sheep. Just about every type of geography awaits you; oceans, lakes, rivers, mountains, glaciers, fiords, rolling meadows, and deserts. Though all of this certainly exists within the 50 states of the US, in NZ it is all compacted within a land mass which is only twice the size of Florida, providing everything desired for a classic MC tour. The locals suggest that the best weather occurs right after Christmas, or mid summer for them.

If you want to know more, please feel free to contact me directly at waynewallace@crc.ufl.edu

HAPPY TOURING
Wayne Wallace



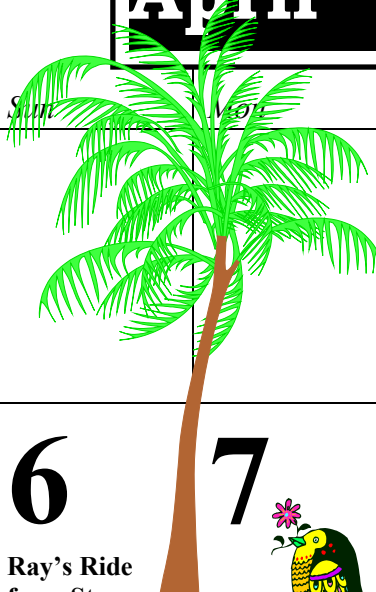

March



March						
Sun	Mon	Tue			Fri	Sat
						1
2 Bike Week in Daytona	3 All Harley Drag Party 4pm-8 pm Bike Week in Daytona	4 All Harley Drag Race Gainesville Racway; Bike Week in Daytona	5 All Harley Drag Race Gainesville Racway; Bike Week in Daytona	6 Bike Week in Daytona	7 Bike Week in Daytona	8 Construction OpenHouse Walk Throughs; Bike Week in Daytona
9 Construction OpenHouse Walk Throughs; Bike Week in Daytona	10	11	12	13 Tent Sale	14 Tent Sale	15 Tent Sale
16 Tent Sale	17 Tent Sale	18 Tent Sale	19 Tent Sale	20 Tent Sale	21 Tent Sale	22 3 rd Annual Wing Cookoff Tent Sale
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

2003

April

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
		1	2	3	4	5 Ray's Ride to St. Petersburg
6 Ray's Ride from St. Petersburg	7 	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Easter Dealership Closed	21	22	23	24 HOG meeting at dealership 6:30 pm	25	26 2 nd Annual H.O.G. Roast
27	28	29	30			

2003



Gainesville Harley Owners Group, Inc.

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