



The Big Monster Weekend 21 – 24 April 2017

PLEASE READ

Welcome to the Northern Ireland Rat Motorcycle Club and our 2017 trip to Scotland, based in the [Ben Nevis Hotel & Leisure Club, North Road, Fortwilliam, PH33 6TG. Tel. 01397 702331.](#)

Arrangements for Friday

Northern Ireland & R.O.I. members

We will depart on the 7.30 am Stena Line ferry from Belfast to Cairnryan. Check-in is required no later than 6.30 am owing to the large number of motorcycles to be tied down on the ferry. To assist you in recognising bikes from our group, we will provide you with a Rat Club number plate marker for your bike once we board the ferry.

We have again purchased bulk tickets for the Western Ferries crossing from McInroy's Point, Gourock to Hunter's Quay, Dunoon and these will be distributed on the Stena Line ferry that morning - **you must collect these tickets from William McAleese in the main restaurant area of the Stena ferry.**

For safety reasons, we will not ride as one large group from Cairnryan to Gourock. You should, therefore, break into your own smaller groups and proceed to Gourock to catch the ferry to Hunter's Quay. However, we will lead a smaller group to Fortwilliam for those less certain of the route or who wish to ride in the company of other bikes.

Anyone wishing to be led to Fortwilliam as part of this smaller group should stop in the first lay-by on the left, approximately 1.3 miles after you turn north on the A77 from Cairnryan port, to regroup and chat over the route we are taking. The route is enclosed including planned stops for fuel and a leg-stretch.

English, Scottish & French members

For those of you joining us from England, Scotland and France, we look forward to meeting you at the Ben Nevis Hotel on the Friday evening. To assist you in recognising bikes from our group, we will provide you with a Rat Club number plate marker for your bike - see William McAleese or Sam Adrain in the hotel on the Friday evening.

Bike washing

A hose and bike washing facility is available at the rear of the hotel. Jet wash facilities are available at both the BP Filling Station and the Gleaner Fuel Stop on the North Road, Fortwilliam (same road as the hotel is on).

Dining & Entertainment

Breakfast - 8.30 am.

Dinner - 7.30 pm.

The hotel asks that we sit down as a group at these times to enable service.

We will have a Highland Banquet and Ceidihl on the Saturday evening and musical entertainment will on Sunday evening.

We also have free use of the hotel leisure club and swimming pool.

Each person attending the weekend will receive a souvenir polo shirt and mug - please allow enough space in your luggage to transport these home.

We will again be collecting tips for the hotel staff on the Sunday evening after dinner, so please do not look gobsmacked when we ask you for money! If you are leaving on Sunday, don't worry, we will accost you on Saturday evening.

Stena Line

If you need to change your return sailing with Stena Line while you are in Scotland, you should be able to alter your booking online. However, the Group Travel office is open 9-5 Monday - Friday and 9-12.30 on Saturday on 08445 764 764, alternatively outside of these hours call the contact centre on 08447 70 70 70.

- Many rural Service Stations do not open on Sundays. Plan your fuel accordingly.
- Always carry a spare key for your bike - you never know when you will need it.
- If you have a bike alarm fitted, please ensure you know how to place it in ferry mode so as not to upset the ferry crew (and your fellow riders) as we have done previously!
- Check your mobile telephone for text messages from Stena Line on your return journey to the ferry in case of changes to the sailings

Suggested ride out routes

As in past years, there are no planned group ride outs over the weekend. Everyone is free to decide where they want to go, when they want to go, and who they want to go with. Here are a few suggested destinations for ride outs during our weekend. We suggest you bring a map and have a chat in the bar each evening as to the next day's ride outs, agree departure times for the morning, etc. If you are uncertain about where to go, or routes to take, have a chat with William McAleese or Sam Adrain who will be happy to advise as best possible. Sat Nav files for all of these routes are available at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1671117929767515/files/> and <http://ratclubni.com/index.php>

For those wishing to spend some time off the bikes, there are numerous attractions in the Fortwilliam & Ben Nevis area. Details will be available at the hotel or at <http://aboutfortwilliam.com/things-to-see/visitor-attractions>

Glen Nevis - 14 miles of single track twisty road into a very beautiful glen

Leave the hotel and travel towards Fortwilliam. At the first roundabout turn left, signed Glen Nevis, follow this road.

A861 / Corran - 40 mile loop from Fortwilliam.

Leave Fortwilliam on A830 signed Mallaig, and turn left after 11 miles (signed Strontian A861). Follow the single track road to Corran and take ferry. Return to Fortwilliam on A82.

A861 / Strontian & Ardnamurchan Distillery - 80 mile loop from Fortwilliam.

Leave Fortwilliam on A830 signed Mallaig, and turn left after 25 miles (signed Strontian & Glenuig A861). Follow the single track road to Strontian and on to Corran where you can take the ferry on to the A82 back to Fortwilliam. You could also add a further 20 miles to your trip by diverting to Ardnamurchan along the way.

Spean Bridge & Gairloch - 43m (Loch Arkaig - add. 36m return)

Leave Fortwilliam on the A82 signed Inverness and ride through Spean Bridge; turn left onto the B8804 at the top of the hill beside the Commando Monument, following the signs for Gairloch. Follow this road back into Fortwilliam. At Gairloch you could follow the dead end road off to the right to Loch Arkaig and add a return distance 36 miles through remote and beautiful Scottish wilderness to your trip. These are not fast roads and are only suitable for a leisurely pace.

Tomdoun & Kinlochourn - 100m

Leave Fortwilliam on the A82 signed Inverness and turn left onto the A87 at Invergarry. After a further 5 miles, turn left for Tomdoun and Kinlochourn and follow this dead end single track road into the wilds of the Scottish Highlands. Again, only suitable for riding at a leisurely pace.

Applecross & Plockton 213m

A good day out. Leave Fortwilliam on the A82 signed Inverness and turn left onto the A87 at Invergarry. Follow the A87 and signs for Kyle of Lochalsh until you reach Dornie, passing Eilean Donan castle on the way. This is reputed to be one of the best biking roads in the UK. Take the A890 sign posted Lochcarron, followed by the A896 sign posted Shialdaig. After a few more miles, take a left turn signed Applecross. Lunch in the Applecross Inn comes highly recommended. Afterwards, retrace your steps back to Fortwilliam. A diversion to Plockton on your return journey will take you to the fairy tale land of Hamish MacBeth.

Loch Ness circular 129m

Ride up one side of Loch Ness and back down the other. Leaving Fortwilliam, follow the signs for Inverness (A82).

Eilean Donan Castle - circular 141m / out & return 128m

This is the castle that appears on many Scottish souvenirs. It has a visitor centre and very popular tea room. It can be reached via the A82 followed by the A87 which is a spectacular biking road. Another route is to ride one leg of the journey via the Isle of Skye, using the ferry between Mallaig and Armadale. It is advisable to book this ferry in advance as bike spaces are limited. The A830 between Fortwilliam and Mallaig (also known as the Road to the Isles) is also a very good biking road.

Portree & Dunvegan Castle 232m

Ride out and back from Fortwilliam. Take the A82 to Invergarry, followed by the A87 all the way to Portree along one of the UK's greatest biking roads. If you want to enjoy more of Skye's great roads, continue to Dunvegan Castle, before returning to Fortwilliam either by retracing your southward journey or taking the ferry to Mallaig and the A830 to Fortwilliam.

Kinlochleven 46m

Follow the A82 south from Fortwilliam and follow the signs for Kinlochleven shortly after passing through Onich. This is one of the twistiest roads you will find in this part of the world. Be careful, oncoming traffic will cut across bends on blind corners! On reaching Kinlochleven, you can either turn back and do it all again in reverse order, or continue on through the village and into Glencoe.

Oban & Glencoe 140m

Leave Fortwilliam on the southwards A82 and at Glencoe follow the signs for A828 Oban. Oban is a relaxed ferry and fishing port with a promenade overlooking the bay. Return to Fortwilliam the way you came, or follow the signs for Glasgow until you reach Tyndrum and the Green Welly, and then follow the A82 over Rannoch Moor and through Glencoe back to Fortwilliam. You can also take in the wonderfully technical road through Kinlochleven on the way back through Glencoe village.

Campbeltown 280m

For those who really want to munch the miles, an out and back trip from Fortwilliam to Campbeltown and back via Inveraray and Tyndrum will clock up 280 miles on your steed.

Pitlochry & Braemar 233m

Leave Fortwilliam northwards on the A82. At Spean Bridge turn right onto the A86 and follow the signs for A889 & A9 to Dalwhinnie and Perth. Leave the A9 at Pitlochry and take the A924 towards Kirkmichael, followed by the B950 signed Braemar. Now follow the A93 through Glenshee and Braemar; then take the B976, followed by the A939, to Tomintoul and on to Grantown-on-Spey. Take the A95 to Aviemore, then the B9152 to Newtownmore (unless you really want to ride another section of the A9!) and the A86 back to Spean Bridge and Fortwilliam.

Pitlochry & Glencoe 180m

Leave Fortwilliam northwards on the A82 and at Spean Bridge turn right onto the A86 and follow the signs for A889 & A9 to Dalwhinnie and Perth. Leave the A9 onto the B8079 for Pitlochry. Rejoin the A9 south of Pitlochry and then take the A827 through Aberfeldy, Kenmore and Killin, followed by the A85 to Crianlarich where you rejoin the A82 over Rannoch Moor, through Glencoe and back to Fortwilliam.

10th anniversary tour 314m

A tour of all the places we have stayed in the ten years of the Big Monster Weekend.

Leave Fortwilliam northwards on the A82 and at Drumnadrochit take a left through Muir of Ord and Beauly to Strathpeffer. Continue to Dingwall and then to Inverness. Leave the A9 onto the scenic route on the B9006 followed by the A939 through Grantown-on-Spey to Nethy Bridge. Onwards to Ballater where you join the A93 through Braemar and Glenshee. Follow the signs for Pitlochry and then Crianlarich, taking you through Kenmare and Killin. Now follow the A82 through Tyndrum and over Rannoch Moor, past the Clachaig Inn off to the right and through Glencoe back to Fortwilliam.

Local motorcycle dealers & repairers

J F Motorcycles Ogilvies Yard Great North Road Muir of Ord IV6 7XR 01463 871990	Keil Engine Services Elderberry Oban PA37 1QS 01631 720380	Perth Motorcycles (Honda Dealership) 223 Rannoch Road Perth PH1 2DP 01738 448558
Mitchells Motorcycles Delmore Inverness IV3 8RG 01463 233478 & 01463 250411	North West Motorcycle Services Unit 9 Hazelbank Motors Mill Lane Oban PA34 4HA	Sandy Bloy Motorcycles 7 Whitefriars Street Perth PH1 1PP 01738 440444
Harry Fairbairn Inverness (BMW Dealership) 32 Longman Road Inverness IV1 1RY 01463 236566	Edinburgh Triumph - Two Wheels (Triumph Dealership) 36 Peffermill Road Edinburgh EH16 5LL 0131 668 4775	Drysdale Motorcycles (KTM Dealership) 1 St Leonards Bank Perth PH2 8EB 01738 451050
Shirlaw's Motorcycles (Triumph Dealership) 92 Crown Street Aberdeen AB11 6HJ 01224 584855		

Personal Behaviour

All members are reminded of, and expected to adhere to, paragraph 6 of the Northern Ireland Rat Motorcycle Club Constitution in particular:

4. All Members, and their guests, attending Club events, have a responsibility to conduct themselves so as to uphold the good reputation of The Rat Club and promote the goodwill of The Rat Club, and motorcycling in general, at all times.

All riders attending Club ride outs must ensure their motorcycles are taxed, insured and in a roadworthy condition, having a current Vehicle Test Certificate where required.

All riders must have a valid motorcycle licence to ride in the United Kingdom, or any other country to be visited on that ride.

Any member may be deemed to have left The Rat Club for any of the following reasons.....

3. They have brought, or through their behaviour are likely to bring, The Rat Club into disrepute, verbally or via social networks;

4. They use foul language or exhibit anti-social, insulting verbal or physical aggressive behaviour towards Members or the public when attending The Rat Club events;

5. They have endangered the life or property of another member, guest or other road user whilst on a Rat Club event.