



Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Harleys, leather and 1,600cc of power

Sun's lady of leather saddles up and takes a ride on the ETA Motorcycle Cruises tour

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Feature Writer

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The writer tries out a coveted 100th Anniversary Harley Davidson Heritage Softail 2003.

The big bikes came for the first time, Sunday, to King's Wharf, Dockyard aboard ETA Motorcycle Cruises group conquered the hearts of Bermudians, who wave their horns from the lines of stopped traffic as, aided by police, the bikes roared

Thirty-one overseas' bikes with engines up to 1,600cc, 60 Bermuda Long Rider cycles with up to 150cc of power and 100 other locals made up the boisterous c

I've been a motorcycle enthusiast from six-months when my parents first cradle seat', so I blissfully got a ride with Shawn Scraders. We drove his father's purple Davidson muffler and Harley-themed 'Live to Ride' engine case.

Cockpits, consoles and cushioned rear seats; screaming silver and chrome, or visitors. Big Harleys, Hondas, Yamahas and Suzukis were in evidence, as were Massachusetts.

The BLRMC men and women wore leather, lots of it. Harley jackets and scarve leather vests that offer no protection in a spill singled out the locals. Many of the overseas bikers wore short pants, to a sub-tropical island. Leather was noticeable, but not as much.

Rhode Island's 31-year-old Beth Moura rode a 1,450cc Harley Davidson Softail Deluxe 2006.

"I like the fact that we've got the other riders to show us around and make us a part of it," Ms Moura said.

"Amongst bikers, there's a camaraderie. Everybody's welcome. There's like an unspoken type of respect."

Jim Melia, also from Rhode Island, had a 2003 100th anniversary year Harley Heritage Softail on which he spends week polishing.

Knights of Fire

Fifteen riders represented the Knights of Fire, a 170 strong biker organization in New Jersey, of which 90 are volur making up the rest.

A pleasant cloud-shadowed sun hung over most of the ride from Dockyard to Hamilton, St. George to Gates' Bay, way of the South Shore beaches.

A stop for lunch at Fort St. Catherine's 'Beach It' proved popular. Most of the leather had gone by then as visitors a in the same Long Rider T-shirts.

Ron MacIntyre from Massachusetts was having a 'blast'.

"I don't know if I can take three more islands," he said. "My cheeks hurt from smiling too much."

Former BLRMC president, Kevin Watson noted, however: "When (ETA) go to other islands, they generally just have a motorcycle club to escort them."

Though the conjoined bikers stopped for a moment of silence in respect of late Long Riders vice president, Carsor group, including the brief shower in St. George, or storm shrouded sky as the ETA visitors headed back to their deej home. According to ETA founder/owner Steve Wallach, the motorcycle tours repeat in June, July and August.

"This has probably been the best first ride in five years," Mr. Wallach said.

He lauded Long Riders' organizer Kevin Watson, Customs' Dean Lema, Tourism's Shane Moura, TCD's Randy R. Simons.

"These people played a very intricate part in seeing this happen," he said. "And the Long Riders Motorcycle Group is a new family."

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