

"I've done numerous European bike trips including Sicily and Greece but nothing could quite prepare me for the excitement and exhilaration of the Annual Across Ireland motorcycle fun run to Galway. Arriving at the departure point in Dublin's Dawson street was a surreal experience with hundreds of parked up bikes taking up the length of the road. The atmosphere among participants was friendly and jovial. We left Dawson Street with the roar of revving engines and the din of a multitude of beeping horns. The cavalcade was escorted along the way by police motorcyclists and marshals who did a great job of keeping everybody moving. We stopped at the mid-way point of a garage off the main Athlone by-pass for fuel, snacks and a chat with fellow bikers. After about half an hour we remounted and continued on our journey to Galway. There was a night of entertainment planned for the Clybaun Hotel which included a band, dj and a charity auction. A few pints of the black stuff were drunk and further blathering with other bikers ensued.

For the return leg we arrived about an hour before the departure time, again at the Clybaun Hotel. This was a further opportunity to chat with other bikers and admire other machinery. The return leg was just as well policed by both Gardai and marshals again with a fuel and snacks stop along the way. At one point in the return journey I remember gazing ahead along the road as far as the eye could see and all that could be seen were motorcycles. A glance in the mirror revealed only a multitude of headlights going back towards the horizon. It certainly was a special sight and one to be remembered. As we neared the finishing point of a motorcycle shop in Swords there was a jostle by some riders to get to the front of the cavalcade and be first to arrive at the shop. On arrival at the shop we were plied with tea and sandwiches.

Overall it was an unforgettable experience to have ridden in so large a group of motorcyclists. I will never forget the thrill, excitement and camaraderie and hope to partake in the event in the coming years.

Daryl D'Art Jnr"