

KILTS ACROSS AMERICA
TWO MEN, TWO BIKES, TWO KILTS
to raise awareness of rare syndrome on a journey Across America

On June 28th, two intrepid Scots will mount up outside of St. Andrews Restaurant New York 120 West 44th Street in New York City and set out across America.

The fearless bikers will leave St. Andrew's pub to the sound of pipes and the roar of hundreds of motorcycles as they head across the river and into the wilderness. There will be a silent auction from 2 to 4:00 P.M. on Saturday to send the boys off in style.

Why would anyone in their right mind decide to embark on a journey across the U. S. in kilts and on motorcycles to boot, and in the middle of summer? Why, because one of those men, Colin Read, is the father of a child with the very rare Moebius Syndrome. People keep asking me why my son is so sad," says Colin, organizer of this journey of discovery and hope. "My son, George is a very happy little boy, but he suffers from Moebius Syndrome which means he will never be able to smile, he can't blink, and he has very little no facial expression.

Colin and his wife, Dionne are the founders of the Moebius Trust, a Scottish charity. Their goal is to create awareness of this tragic condition in a most unusual way.

"Two guys in kilts on motorcycles will be quite a sight, especially if the wind blows," smiles Colin Read. Colin, his friend Iain Whyte and little George have all been outfitted by celebrity kilt maker Howie Nicholsby of 21st Century Kilts in Edinburgh. Nicholsby has outfitted such guys as Sean Connery, Vin Diesel, James Bond star; Robert Davi, Alan Cummings and Ozzie Osbourne, in all manner of fabrics and colors. But for the first time, Nicholsby has taken into consideration the aerodynamics and challenges in riding a bike at 70 miles per hour. He has designed a special kilt that, ahem, protects a man's modesty. Hence his new design will be a first for motorcycle riding, kilt wearing men. "People often ask what's worn under and kilt and in this case the answer is courage," says Nicholsby

"If you are going to do an event that is going to have an impact on the way many people live their lives worldwide then you need to make it big," says Colin. "So where else should we do this ride than the largest and friendliest country on earth, the United States? "We are looking for the biggest possible send off from our Celtic cousins across the pond and I know that they won't let us down."

So get ready America! Here come the Scots in their leather kilts doing what no Scot has ever done before. "As we ride across the U.S. in our kilts, we know that we will make many friends." Both Colin and Iain feel that along their journey they will encounter many who have never heard of the condition. They might offer to help in the cutting-edge research taking place around the world from the United States to Scotland, looking for the cause of Moebius Syndrome.

We want to raise a minimum of \$400,000 dollars, which works out to be about \$150.00 per mile. If we can get people to [RIDE FOR A SMILE](#) on this once in a life time adventure and donate dollars for miles I know we can raise the money that will help ultimately to lead to the cause of Moebius Syndrome ” Says Iain Whyte.

Colin and Iain will be stopping at Harley-Davidson dealerships in each city they visit, to catch up with them just check www.kiltscrossamerica.co.uk and register.

“If you blink when you see us, if you smile as we go past-think of those who can’t.” concludes Colin

About George

When George Read was born in 2002 he was diagnosed with Moebius Syndrome. His parents, Colin and Dionne have never seen him smile, blink, frown or move his eyes laterally.

Muscles in George’s face are paralysed which means that although he wants to smile, the corners of his mouth can’t go up at the sides. George can’t move his eyes from side to side and must move his head to look around. Because he can’t blink his eyes, they water constantly and are very sensitive to light. He has to wear dark glasses when outside.

Colin and Dionne co-founded the Moebius Research Trust with two other parents in 2006 in the hope that one day they will see their son smile.

In the meantime they are determined that George (5), leads as normal a life as possible.

About [MOEBIUS SYNDROME](#): Moebius Syndrome was discovered in the 1880s by a German doctor, Paul Julius Moebius. [Moebius Syndrome](#) is a rare neurological disorder that is present at birth. It primarily affects the 6th and 7th cranial nerves in the brain, leaving those with the condition unable to move their faces (they can’t smile, frown, suck, grimace or blink their eyes) and unable to move their eyes laterally (from side to side).

Moebius Syndrome is often misdiagnosed so it is difficult to give accurate figures on the number of people with the disorder. However it is estimated that between 200 and 500 people in the UK suffer from Moebius Syndrome and around 200,000 in the USA. Those who suffer from Moebius Syndrome do seem to get on with their lives, but their lives are hard. “Facial expression is an international language and understood by the youngest person. Not to have that language is to live one’s life differently than anyone else.” Says Iain Whyte. The Moebius Syndrome Foundation of America is joining in the fight to alert people to the life long effects on the lives of those who have Moebius Syndrome.

About the [Moebius Syndrome Foundation](#) and [Moebius Research Trust](#)

The Moebius Syndrome Foundation, is a world wide information and research organization devoted to providing information to individuals with Moebius Syndrome and their families, promote greater awareness and understanding of the syndrome, and to advocate for scientific research to advance the diagnosis and treatment of Moebius Syndrome and its associated conditions.

The Moebius Research Trust was formed in 2006 by two families from opposite ends of the UK who met at a conference organized by a Moebius support group.

Following a chance meeting with Dr Wayne Lam, a geneticist at the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh, it became clear that if enough people with Moebius Syndrome came forward for Micro Deletion testing (a form of genetic DNA testing) the answer to the cause of Moebius Syndrome is possible.

The testing requires £250,000 to fund. Currently the Moebius Research Trust has raised £35,000.

Colin and Iain will be starting their Harley engines at St. Andrew's Restaurant at 4 P.M. Then they are off Leesburg, VA to pick up family, an R.V. snake bite kit and weather radio. :

TO FOLLOW THE JOURNEY:

28th June	-	New York to Leesburg (Virginia)	257miles
29th June	-	Stay in Leesburg	
30th June	-	Leesburg to Columbus (Ohio)	395 miles
1st July	-	Stay in Columbus	
2nd July	-	Columbus to St Lois (Missouri)	418 miles
3rd July	-	Stay in St Lois	
4th July	-	St Lois to Kansas City (Missouri)	250 miles
5th July	-	Kansas City to Oakley KA	349 miles
6th July	-	Oakley to Denver	253 miles
7th July	-	Stay in Denver	
8th July	-	Denver to Grand Junction	243 miles
9th July	-	Grand Junction to Grand Canyon	440 miles
10th July	-	Stay in Grand Canyon	
11th July	-	Grand Canyon to Las Vegas	276 miles
12th July	-	Stay in Las Vegas	
13th July	-	Las Vegas to Los Angeles	270 miles
14th July	-	Stay in LA	
15th July	-	COME HOME TO BONNIE SCOTLAND	

You can follow their journey and join them anywhere along their trip by going to www.kiltscrossamerica.co.uk

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES:

Colin Read and Iain Whyte will be available for interviews the week of June 22nd.in New York City. Please contact Anne Macpherson. They will have their designer kilts and their accents.

JUNE 28TH: KICK OFF ACROSS AMERICA:

A special kick off event will be held at St. Andrews Restaurant on West 44th between Broadway and 7th Ave

PHOTO OPP: PIPE BANDS, MOTORCYCLES AND MORE WILL ESCORT THE SCOTS OUT OF NEW YORK CITY FROM ST. ANDREWS

JUNE 30TH: INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE WITH DIONNE, GEORGE (THE BOY WHO CAN'T SMILE) AND THE REST OF THE FAMILY IN THE WASHINGTON D.C. AREA DETAILS TBA

PHOTO OPP: COLIN READ AND SON GEORGE ON BIKES READY TO GO!

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