



# CREATURE'S 5th ANY SPARE CHANGE RALLY



**BY** 9:30pm on Friday evening, the site was already throbbing with people having a good time, and I was just in time to see an impressive set by The Mick Rutherford Band (Mick recently became the latest musician to be inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame, joining the ranks of such blues icons as John Lee Hooker, BB King and Eric Clapton). I was also delighted to see several real ales and ciders available in the marquee bar.

The venue for the Any Spare Change Rally is an area of land attached to a pub called The Plough at Farcet Fen, about eight miles from Peterborough. The pub is a nice little place offering decent food,

These days, I don't get along to as many of the smaller rallies as I used to, but one exception to that general rule is the Any Spare Change Rally. The event is organised by Mr Creature (biker, DJ, eccentric and all-round lovely bloke) as a fundraiser for the National Association for Bikers with a Disability (NABD). Over the five years of its existence, the rally, has, along with Creature's other activities, raised a huge amount of money – if I remember rightly, the figure quoted at this year's event was in excess of £20,000. In order to show rallygoers how that money has been spent, dotted around the main marquee this year were printed articles and news cuttings showing the adapted bikes and trikes that'd been paid for by such fund-raising work, along with personal stories of the disabled bikers themselves.

though seeing that beer and grub were both available in the rally's fully-lined and floor-boarded marquee, most of the 500-plus punters were happy to stay put and party under canvas. Despite the rally site apparently in the middle of nowhere, the environmental health stormtroopers had winked it out, insisting that the live music had to finish earlier than had been previously agreed on the licence (apparently, we were in grave danger of enjoying ourselves a little too much, something that's against council policy all over the UK...). However, the atmosphere at the rally was so good that I didn't hear a single complaint about the live

music drawing to a close at a wholly unreasonable 11pm, and people continued to party on into the wee hours. Saturday morning was a slow start as hangovers emerged from tents and the sun played hide and seek with us for a while. I found a comfy table in front of Blue's favourite stand, Davina's Tea & Cake stall and allowed my own gargantuan hangover to subside in its own time. The afternoon featured a fairly well-attended bike show outside of the marquee and a very well-frequented comedy show inside of it. Rick Hulse's Smacked Arse Comedy Show has been a massive hit with the audience over the last four years, and for the most recent couple of years has been sponsored by event regulars Freak and Kerry in the name of their business, TheGrassSeedStore.co.uk (and before you ask, the stuff

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they sell is for lawns...). This year's show featured Bethany Black (a goth lesbian), JT Taylor (a young guy doing a free ten-minute spot of one-liners), the Ruff Daddy puppet act with a new set this year and Paul B Edwards, the Rock 'n' Roll Poet, as the headline act, with the whole thing being compered by Rick himself. I can't think of a better way to spend a Saturday afternoon than laughing my head off at some top class stand-up comedy.

After a short interlude, the evening entertainment got underway with some magical songs from singer/songwriter Tracey Browne who is currently touring with Thea Gilmore, and then it was the turn of ASC Rally regular and NABD patron, Stevie Simpson, with his unique brand of brilliant songs. Toward the end of his set, Stevie was joined on stage by Tracey for a duet of Stevie's epic trilogy on the Spanish Civil War, 'The Volunteer', which had us all singing along.



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After that, there followed a short break for the bike show prizegiving and the presentation of a huge cheque to the NABD of over £5000 representing the proceeds from last year's ASC Rally, plus Creature's other collecting activities throughout 2010. Then it was time for the main band of the evening, Nottingham's Exhibit A's high energy rock and punk covers provided a great end to the evening.

There are few better ways to support Britain's only real biker charity than by raising money having an excellent time in great company. Creature's Any Spare Change Rally may not be the biggest event on the calendar compared with some, but what it lacks in size it more than makes up for in heart. Give it a try next year, and I'll guarantee that you won't be disappointed.

words: **MR TRIPPY**  
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**NB: Creature's Special Persons award was awarded to Freak and Kerry for their generous sponsorship of the Smacked Arse Comedy Club in 2010 and 2011.**

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