

Leigh Arms, Acton Bridge - 27th August 2014

After a late fitness test which he failed, **Brian Saxby** took up poll position on the grid to lead the ride to the **Leigh Arms in Acton Bridge**.



A good weather forecast encouraged 16 riders to the start, which was slightly delayed when **Glennys** had to return to the **Tudor Rose** pub where she had dropped her car keys and which had been handed to the pub by **Sue**. **Glennys** remained calm not a bit paniKEY



We set off turning into **Capenhurst Lane** and headed

towards **Rake Lane** then **Chester Zoo**. I think it was about here we did a head count and realised we had lost a few, or they had lost us. We only met up with them on arrival at the pub.



Lunch Stop

The pace was steady but there was a strong head wind and our first hill came just before **Delamere Forest**. It was fitness test for myself as I was diagnosed with gout in my right foot, but wearing trainers and on my mountain bike found it not that painful (the drugs do work). I did find though, that being the **Lantern Rouge** a little lonely.

Our super snapper **John** kept popping up and was trying to include the **Tigers Head** pub sign with the peloton going past. He's got to be the favourite for 'snapper of the year'.

It's always nice going through **Delamere**. It's easy to imagine what it must have been like when the aristocracy hunted wild boar and deer and watched out for wolves in the 14th century. **Delamere** means forest of the lakes. '**Acton**' the name, comes from the **Saxon** actune meaning oak place - an iron age axe was found in this area. Also in this area during the **Civil War 1644 Sir Thomas Aston** "*exercised all maner of outrages with intolerable taxes - he plundered **Weaverham** and the country about, he had old men taken from their houses, tyde them together, bound them to a cart, and rove them through the mire and water to a dungeon where they lie without fire or light, and through extremeties are so deseased they are ready to give up the ghost*".

That's how I feel on some climbs.

On arrival at the pub **Ruth and Julian** were already on their dessert, and right behind us the lost ones turned up.

Acton Bridge

After lunch most of us set off down the **River**



Weaver pathway, on a earlier ride this path was blocked by a herd of cattle.



Obstruction on the Riverside Path

This time we faced some dodgy looking travellers' horses, **Steve** was seen reaching for the tazer but we all went by safely. The main line from **Liverpool** to **London** crosses the river here and the bridge is a tribute to **Victorian builders**. **Brian** led us down some nice lanes and we emerged in **Crowton** by the **Hare and Hounds** pub.

A few more miles and we had a refreshment stop at the **Delamere Visitor Centre**.

We left the forest heading towards **Ashton Hayes**, then turned off through **Little Barrow** and **Great Barrow**. An absent-minded gardener crossed the road and we nearly crashed a wheelbarrow.

The last stages took us through **Stamford Bridge** - it's always a 'Battle' crossing the road - then on to the **Greenway** coming off at the **blue bridge**.

So thanks again **Brian** for a smashing ride. How many of us would desert their better halves to take a ride on their 48th Anniversary. (P.S. note to self check dates of lead rides next year.)



Text by Chris Byrne, Photos by John Ferguson

I must have been a bit doolally that day. Not only had I dropped my keys but I had also left the car window open. **Brian L, Roy and I** were at the end of the large group in the layby opposite the **Eureka**. The inevitable happened - we were left behind at a road crossing and the main group disappeared into the distance. We didn't see them again 'til we got to the pub. I suspect that our route varied in places to that of our mislaid compatriots but we still had to climb cover the miles and climb to **Norley**. The joy of the climb was the long downhill to the pub at

Acton Bridge. Just before leaving after lunch **Brian and Roy** had a go on the kids' swings and were labelled **'the oldest swingers in town'**.



We didn't fancy returning via the riverside so we went via **Weaverham** and

then climbed again to **Norley**. I really enjoyed the ride - great weather and two excellent companions. I hope they enjoyed it as much as I did.

Thank you **Brian and Roy** for staying with me - I probably wouldn't have covered the 51 miles in total without their encouragement and patience.

Glennys Hammond, Glennys's photo 'The Oldest Swingers in Town'