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THE MAGAZINE OF  
CHESTER & NORTH WALES CTC  
CAER A GOGLEDD CYMRU

In this edition.....

Read about:

Riding with a Zebra! By Dave Williams

Sue Booth's Trans Pennine Rough Ride

History of Walk Mill with David Collinson

Terry Davies' trip to the Himalayas

And so much more.....

Summer 2018



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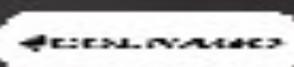
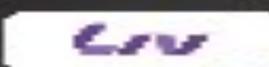
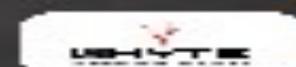
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Always makes for a good read!

*The views and opinions expressed in 'The Link' are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, Chester & North Wales CTC or the policies of Cycling UK National Office*

Front Cover Photo: John Ferguson



## A word from the Editor

What a start to the summer season! The fabulous May and June weather must have got everyone clocking up the miles. Long may it continue!

I love my new cycling top, my hat goes off to Glennys for a great design and to John Ferguson for all his work ordering and distributing them. Aside from enjoying seeing so many turn up in the tops for a club ride, it's lovely to see a familiar shirt cycling towards you when out and about. I was enjoying the sunshine whilst on a ride along the North Wales coast and having a cuppa at the café in Pensarn, when a guy went past wearing the new shirt, he stopped as soon as he saw me sporting mine, something I know he wouldn't have done but for the shirt. We ended up chatting for a good twenty minutes or more. It really was only because of the shirt that we met. Thanks Glennys and John for all your hard work. Well done!

Thanks again for all your stories, adventures and anecdotes, you certainly have been on some great rides over the last few months. I particularly enjoyed Sue's Trans Pennine Trail Adventure and may consider doing it if I ever buy a mountain bike!! Terry's trip to the Himalayas is in a class of it's own. I have never had the good fortune to take my cycling adventures abroad but by this time next year I hope I'm in the throws of planning a trip inspired by all your adventures. Please keep sending them in and let me know if there is anything else you would like to see in your magazine.

*Janet*

Safe cycling,

### So what's in store for you in this edition of 'The Link'?

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## A Message from your President.....

It's the numbers that count, yes really!

To be precise: Numbers 1, 10, 15, 35, 50, 80, 100, 148 and 250.

**Number 1.** Or perhaps I should say 1<sup>st</sup>. Cast your minds back to those chilly days of February for it was on the 14<sup>th</sup> (St. Valentine's Day for the romantic!) that a number gathered at Café Fresh near Dunham-on-the-Hill on the A56 for me to present our 'Café of the Year 2017' certificate to the manager. Café Fresh thus became our fifth Café of the Year – making our first, Tilly's at Bunbury, eligible to be considered again. (Not that I am canvassing!) Therefore, make sure that on your cycling travels over the coming months you consider suggestions for 2018.

**Number 10.** It was picnic time on 9<sup>th</sup> June (or so I am told - because for biological reasons I couldn't possibly have been invited). That was when



the Fab Ladies celebrated their 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. I am told a good time was had by all and founder Sue Booth was presented with a congratulatory framed certificate for her Fab ones. I am convinced that women-only groups like the Fab Ladies and

Bicycle Belles have done much to increase the number of women cyclists we see on the roads. I remember the delight of one of them, having ridden her first 100 miles in a day on last year's Cheshire Cycleway Rides.

**Number 15.** A disappointing number: on a lovely, warm sunny day, only 15 turned up to take part in our Treasure Hunt based on Manley Mere. O.K. it was more than last year but considering the efforts that Liz and Peter Conway put into organising it (no mean task, I assure you) with our large active membership, we could do better. Let us see you 'rally round' with your support in 2019 – although sunny weather cannot be guaranteed!

**Number 35.** You can read elsewhere something on the 35-year history of the Wednesday Riders. The occasion was marked by special Midsummer rides but, in March, on behalf of C&NW a £35 garden token was presented to the Friends of Hadlow Road Station (Wirral) where a memorial bench to founder Charles Allan and a memorial stone marking the life of another Wednesday stalwart, Laurie McCabe are to be found. (There was a special lunch, too.)

**Number 50.** The ever-popular Spring 50 took place on its 'traditional' date, the Sunday before Easter (or for the religiously knowledgeable, Palm Sunday). This hugely popular event always is a chance for riders to find out how flabby the muscles have become over the winter! And last winter was a pretty foul one, too. I remember now that this event was first staged in 1992 but, bearing in mind that on one occasion it had to be cancelled because of bad weather, then, let's say 2018 marked its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Congratulations to all those who have worked hard to make it a success over the years.

**Number 100.** Yes, the 'Vets 100'. By the time you read this, it will have happened. However, what concerns me is that the number of entrants this year is well down on previous ones. Once again, as with our Treasure Hunt, I hope that, with next year being a special year for C&NW (see below), the number of Old 'Uns riding in 2019 will be up – 2019 will also be, after all, a CUK's Triennial Vets year.

**Number 148.** At the last count, 148 is the number of new C&NW shirts sold. Thanks to Glennys Hammond

for her design work – giving us a pattern that will be difficult for motorists to miss seeing (I hope) when we are on the road. In any case, these brightly coloured shirts are guaranteed to cheer us up on the gloomiest of days. I couple this praise for the artistic efforts of Glennys with praise for ace salesman John Ferguson who has committed a lot of time and effort into liaising with the suppliers and making sure that we got what we wanted. The shirts should make a colourful sight when worn *en masse* at the next Birthday Rides. Thanks indeed.

**Number 250.** That was the number who entered for the Bob Clift Memorial Cheshire Cycleway Rides on 17<sup>th</sup> June. Was this a record? There was a good turnout of willing helpers for organiser Sue Booth. I felt that one of her biggest problems was to find sufficient car parking spaces in the Waverton area. (Strange, isn't it, that car parking becomes a problem for cycling events!) It was a long, long day – and not merely for the riders. At the 100-mile lunch stop in Bollington, the local volunteers who staffed the

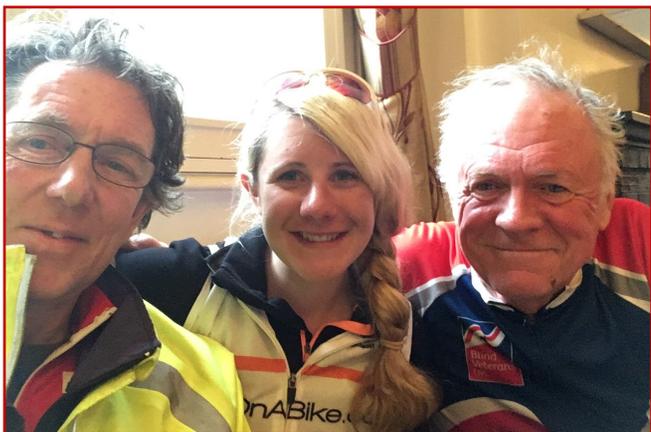


kitchen greeted us like long-lost friends – and fed us well, as I gather happened at other refreshment stops. Back at Waverton, there was the usual unlimited supply of tea and biscuits.

It is a pity that there were a couple of mishaps affecting riders – one of which was caused by an aggressive motorist and which Sue reported to the police. I hope those who were involved in these incidents were not too badly hurt and that they will sign up for this event next year.

**Number 80 – No, I didn't forget!** Next year, 2019, we shall be celebrating the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of Chester and North Wales CTC. Already some ideas are floating about, as ideas do, but let me know if you have any original suggestions – and if you haven't, make sure you try your hardest to support our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

**It's the numbers that count!**



her blog, "it's invisible". She is a petite, attractive, intelligent, articulate young lady. Reading Natalie's web page about her disability since childhood and her fight to achieve a first class honours degree in architecture can only fill the reader with admiration for her fight and determination. She went through times in her life when she couldn't eat without being sick. At times she was bedridden, couldn't feed, wash or toilet herself. She has had life threatening anaphylactic shock ending up with a spell in intensive care. She also suffers life threatening fits at times. All this is now kept under control with medication and more importantly the exercise she gets from cycling. She says cycling has saved her life. She refers to herself as a zebra hence her website [www.zebraonabike.uk](http://www.zebraonabike.uk). The reason for this is that her condition went undiagnosed for many years because it's so rare. She says doctors treated her symptoms but missed the cause. To put it in Natalie's own words, "they saw a



## My time cycling with a zebra.

In late March this year I had the immense privilege of cycling along side a remarkable disabled young lady. I regularly cycle with a group of retired gentlemen who meet once or twice a week on the prom in Colwyn Bay for social rides. Bob one of our group had an email from Roy Spilsbury telling us all about Natalie Wilson and her epic



unsupported 5000 mile cycle journey around the coast of the U.K. to raise awareness of her disability Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, EDS. Roy suggested we might like to ride along side Natalie to lend moral support. Having read her blog I jumped at the opportunity. A group of us set off from Conway cycling to Bangor to intercept Natalie and ride back to Conway with

her where she was intending to spend the night. This was day 32 of Natalie's journey and had begun that morning in Valley Anglesey and a soaking en-route in what she described as the worst rain storm she had ever experienced!

Natalie rode into sight to meet us on her recumbent ICE Trike (no electric assist, all the power is provided by Natalie.) loaded with two large bags of luggage and accompanied by two other cyclists that had accompanied her from Valley. Two more cyclists from Bala joined us, one of them another disabled rider on an electric assist trike. We all made our way to Bangor's cricket pavilion for lunch.



horse and treated a horse, but I'm not a horse I'm a zebra". Now that she has a definitive diagnosis her condition is under control and she is receiving first class treatment and support from her GP who Natalie describes as brilliant. Her GP is keeping in touch with her during her journey and following her blog.

Following lunch we said goodbye to the two cyclists that had accompanied Natalie from Valley and set off for Conwy. Apart from a couple of short steep hills the journey was easy as we had a tail wind. We arrived in Conwy in good time, parked the bikes and set off to the pub for refreshments where we chatted further with Natalie finding out more of her remarkable story.

Next morning, day 33, Natalie's destination tonight Greasby Wirral. We were riding with her as far as Prestatyn. We all met up in Conwy for a bright and early start at 07.30. After a few pictures on the quayside we set off for Llandudno.

We cycled through the early morning streets and made our way to marine drive which which traverses the Great Orme climbing steeply to the road summit at Halfway House Cafe, which was closed at this hour. A steep fast descent back into



The first thing that strikes you about Natalie is that she shows no outward signs of disability, as she says herself in

Llandudno left us all freezing cold! We made our way back through the streets to the sea front and along the prom past the new life boat station and climbed the hill to Penrhyn Bay, stopping for a comfort break at the Premier Inn. Shortly after I punctured! It started hail stoning while I repaired my tyre with numb fingers. (Well it wouldn't it!) by the time I'd repaired my puncture, I'd lost site of the group. I sent a text telling them not to wait as Natalie had a long journey and I didn't want to slow her down as rain was forecast latter and Natalie was hopping to reach journeys end before that.

I'll always remember the short time I spent cycling in the company of such a brave person as Natalie Wilson, the Zebra. Few people show as much tenacity and courage as her. She is hoping to raise awareness of her disability, EDS. I hope this article will help do that on her behalf.

If this story has stirred your emotions, you can read more, follow her ride and even donate to her charity on her web site [www.zebraonabike.uk](http://www.zebraonabike.uk). **Dave Williams**



Natalie is a remarkable woman on a remarkable journey around the coastline. She deserves every support.

This is a video of her day from Conwy to Gronant along the North Wales coast via Llandudno's Great Orme, Colwyn Bay, Rhyl and Prestatyn -

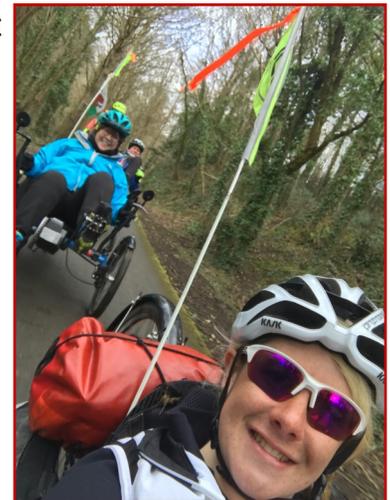
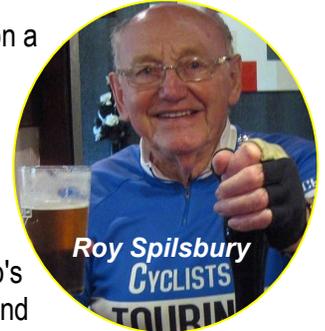
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7XryMW7bruY&feature=youtu.be>

I caught up with her later at her afternoon break on the Wirral.

She is seen in this pic leaving with her escort including CyclingUK Trustee Janet Atherton (in blue).

Natalie was spending the night at Greasby before heading over the River Mersey to Formby.

**Roy Spilsbury**



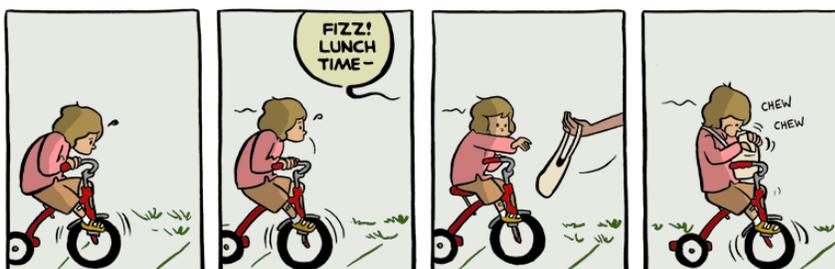
## Majorca Cycle Shuttles

Majorca is a great place for a cycling holiday, but a bit limited to circular tours if you stay at popular resorts such as Port de Pollenca or Alcudia.

On a recent holiday we used Mallorca cycle shuttle who will take you and your bike to Andratx or Valdemossa for the mountain roads or Portocolon some 80km to the southeast.

Trips vary by the day. Cost is approx. €23 and you can also buy 3 days rescue insurance for €10.

All highly recommended---book on the internet.





## Trans Pennine Trail – or how much rough stuff can two girls manage?

In the early '90's my friend Julie (from Hull) and myself (from Chester) thought it would be a good idea to do the Trans Pennine Trail, as a 'door to door' from my house to hers.

Twenty five years later the Chester CTC had a train assist ride to Southport, and upon seeing the Trans Pennine start it prompted me to suggest to Julie that we do this long planned route in 2016.

The Trans Pennine Trail was actually devised in 1989, but not opened until 2001; after millennium funding which you can see in the way-posts strung along the route. It starts in Southport, on the front and makes its way to Liverpool, along the Mersey, around the south west of Manchester, skirting a little bit of Derbyshire and into Yorkshire at the Woodhead Pass, where it then heads through South Yorkshire to pick up the Humber, ending in Hornsea, where you see the matching trail marker turning gently in the breeze. It must be 90% off road!



### Bridges

You certainly see a lot of the industrial north and its heritage on this route. As it is on railway lines, you pass under many bridges and over a fair few; but there are some sudden and very striking bridges that you come across. The first one of note must be the Widnes bridge, iconic in its way and can be seen from the Halkyns on a fine day. Pale green in colour, I think it is really pretty. We saw it obviously as we approached Widnes along the Mersey, but the most amazing view was down a short terraced street which led you to see the bridge very close and in all its glory. Imagine coming out of your front door and seeing that each day!



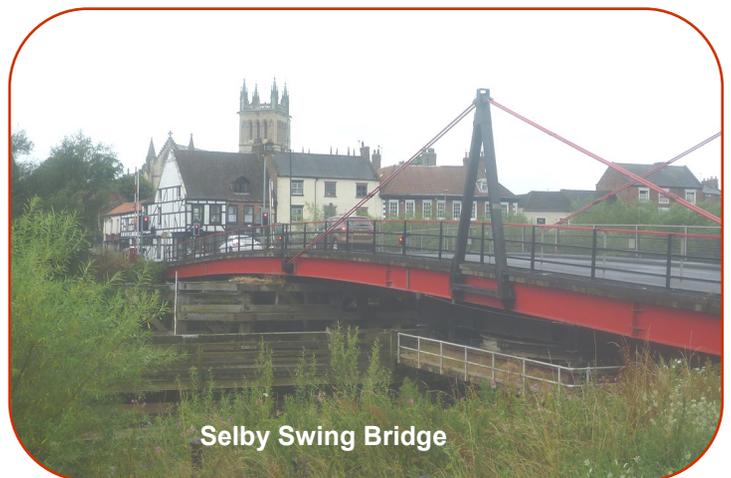
After Warrington and near to Grappenhall we passed under high viaducts, now

disused; smart bridges over the M6, and the Mersey (near Chorlton Water Park). It is quite exciting to pass under the high and again distinctive viaduct in Stockport, which I have usually seen from the M62 as I pass through. More viaducts as we came near to Doncaster, and an especially high one over the Don Valley. We had just had an hour or so (time meant nothing to me on these few days!) of rain, very wet and as the trail can be muddy I had had to stop to declog my mudguards in order for my back wheel to turn. We turned a corner, and had a magnificent view of the Conisbrough Viaduct.



Sue Booth

It is not all railway bridges though. We had some super bridges over rivers, our final day started in Selby and crossing the swing bridge. However, the most notable has to be the Humber Bridge. We were again experiencing a large amount of rain, so my photo looks a bit waterlogged, but you really feel you are nearly there when you see that superb view.



Selby Swing Bridge

### Terrain

The information board at the start claims that the Trans Pennine is 'the easiest way to cross the Pennines under your own steam'. I would agree, it is remarkably flat given where it goes. Certainly Southport to Liverpool, and Selby to Hornsea (apart from South Cave) have no contours at





all. Even when you cross over into Yorkshire, a short climb from the reservoirs to the Longdendale Trail gives a nice flat approach to the Woodhead tunnel, with views to the Woodhead pass lorries crawling up to the top. However, I mentioned rough stuff, the term I have always used for off road trail riding, and indeed we had every type of track – sandy, muddy, rocky, forest, tracks that went up, tracks that went down; alongside rivers, canals, railways; new housing estates, old halls and farms; narrow tracks with nettles biting at our knees, potholes and tree roots – and would you believe on a long distance cycle route – steps!

### Steps

Not what I was expecting. Our first in Liverpool took us from the canal to the road and were aptly named 'Wallys steps'. Near Widnes we crossed a tributary to the Mersey on a lovely bridge, and looked at the trail zig zagging up the headland – over 50 shallow steps with barriers. Not fun with laden bikes. Unbelievably, when we left the trail at the Woodhead Pass to climb up onto the moors, this also had steps!

### Cafes

Essential to any day ride, we did find some great food stops on route. My favourite was in Stockport, where we had a lite bite accompanied by a cold beer, in the sun, opposite a Trans Pennine way marker, and with large aeroplanes passing low every few minutes. Breakfast in Weatherspoons in Selby; continental breakfast in premiere inn in Hyde with flapjacks – brilliant for crossing the moors! A help yourself tea room in Blacktoft, which was a small village hall

with kitchen and an honesty box.

### Are we nearly there yet?

We planned the route to take four days, with rough guesstimates of distances. How wrong we were! The route is about 200 miles, so we thought, 'yeah, about 50 a day'. But of course, it is much more off road than we accounted for, which is much slower going (about 6mph average) not allowing for the frequent gates and barriers.

**Day one** was not a full day, so we thought we had planned 40 miles, which turned out to be nearly 50, and saw us battling a headwind to the Lymm motorway services for our first night, at about 7pm. Not to worry, tomorrow is a shorter day.

**Day two** was shorter as we were struggling to find an overnight, so had booked into a Premiere Inn at Hyde. We measured it as about 30 miles, arriving at lunchtime - or so we thought. In reality 42 miles, which again is not huge, but we had much off road railway lines with rough tracks, getting lost in Stockport as the TPT is *not* terribly well signposted, and a bit more up and down. But we did arrive at a reasonable time for our tea. For me, I felt we had not really gone anywhere, as Stockport and Hyde are



still technically Cheshire, and felt quite close. Two days riding we had not gone far, and Julie had her sights set on getting into Yorkshire – it will be alright then!

**Day three**, we were now in a bit of a panic as we thought it was 60 miles, and given our track record (literally) we were concerned about the distance. Again, a false start in Broadbottom and bit of confusion in Glossop didn't help. Then we had to climb over the Woodhead pass on the moors, dropping to Penistone. Many railpaths later saw us nearing Doncaster, but still nowhere near Selby and our hotel for the night. The rain stopped and we enjoyed the low sun on the Ouse, with swans. But low sun means it is setting, and we still had a way to go. At 8pm I phoned the hotel, and asked them to put aside two meals for us, yes, we are still coming! At 9pm the sun was now very low



and although I had some small lights Julie didn't; so we decided to skip the route at Snaith and head up the B road direct to Selby

(I have ridden Burn airfield in the past so don't count it as cheating). 9:45 we finally arrived at Selby, after a record breaking 80 miles!

**Day four**, now firmly in Yorkshire, we thought the final 18 miles should be fine, time for a nice lunch in Hull and then I could head home on the train. Writing this now, I am laughing out loud, for in reality it was 55 miles! It was mostly on roads, small lanes swinging around the flatlands alongside the Ouse, crossing the railway from time to time. Then it rained (big time) and after navigating Hull, the final 20 miles to Hornsea saw the blue sky in the distance – but tree roots along the majority of the route acted like speed bumps,



keeping the pace right down again. Julie's mam and dad (and dog) picked us up, and dropped me at Hull train station. I got home at about 12:30am!

### Photos

Those of you who know me, know how I love taking pictures. So does Julie. I will admit, this also ate into our travelling time a little, as we passed flower heads laden with raindrops, cornfields with poppies bobbing in the gold, views of the hills, rivers, canals, swans, trees and forests. I took over 250, and I am sure Julie took a similar amount. I have included a small selection, but the memories that they evoke for me bring back a wonderful four days; the pain and frustration forgotten. Would I ride it again? – if you asked me in August it was a resounding no, but I could now be persuaded if it was over 5-6 days, maybe earlier in the

## **Chester & N. Wales CTC/Audax Rides from “Old Ma’s” Café Tattenhall Saturday September 1st 2018**

**“Pistyll Packing Momma” 200k** heads out to Chirk and then visits Pistyll Rhaeadr waterfall (pictured above). Return is via Lake Vyrnwy and Bala, followed by the Shelf and Hope Mountain. A very scenic, tough day out, recently described as “the perfect 200k” by an experienced Audax rider. 3600m climbing.

**“Momma’s Mountain Views” 130k** visits Chirk before climbing over to Llangollen with superb views of the Berwyn Mountains. Return over the Panorama and the Old Horseshoe pass to join the 200k ride at Llanarmon-yn-Lal. 2000m climbing.

**“Momma’s Leafy Lanes” 50k** gives a pleasant, undulating ride through Cheshire lanes as an easy introduction to Audax events

**Lots of free parking at Old Ma’s Café. Great cafes en route.**

**Further details, Route sheet (please read), GPX, Entry (on line or postal) at [aukweb.net](http://aukweb.net).**



**There are three ways to pedal a bike. With the legs, with the lungs, or with the heart.**

*Mandible Jones*



## The Harbingers of a Spring Cycling Holiday

The return of swallows used to herald the end of winter. Then a street full of cats arrived and all the swallows disappeared. These days my harbingers of spring are glimpses of snowdrops, tulips, hyacinths and daffodils that bring with them longer daylight hours, warmer cycling weather and hurray, the freedom that accompanies retirement to take holidays where and whenever.

I love flowers and wanted to see the tulips of Amsterdam. When speaking to others I was told the tranquillity of flower adorned canals has been replaced by stag and hen parties, red light activities and cannabis cafés. No thank you, I don't want any of that nonsense.

Could Shrewsbury be a safer alternative? Its parks and gardens are spectacular and 3 days cycling would include a tour of beautiful Shropshire...but umm, having just endured 4 months of cold winter weather made worse by a real battering from storm Emma, 'Get me out of here' was firmly fixed in my mind.

Towards the end of March a regional television programme showed the dutch bulb fields. So some weeks later .....

The big day arrived!

My train arrived in Newcastle-upon-Tyne central station at 14:45 leaving a short and speedy 10 mile bicycle ride to the 5pm overnight DFDS ferry bound for Holland. With a 'pew, puff and pant' I arrived in plenty of time for boarding.



£260 brought a return ticket in cabin accommodation with evening meals

and breakfasts. The last time I used a DFDS ferry was between Newhaven and Dieppe back in 2012. The cost of that crossing was £25 so today's ticket was unexpectedly expensive. The ticket issued was a bar-coded boarding card that detailed my cabin number.

I was reminded to keep the card safe as it was needed to open my cabin door in a similar way to the plastic swipe cards that hotels use. The card would also be scanned to confirm my evening meal and breakfast was paid for.

Wheeling Bessie my bike into the car deck of 'Sailing Ship (SS) King Seaways' I wrapped a krypton cable around both wheels and frame, securing it with a gold standard 'D'lock that a thief would need a diamond tipped power tool to cut through....my job for tonight is to remember where the key is.

Shortly afterwards a couple from Glasgow arrived on a Cannondale tandem and a deck-hand strapped the bikes together. He explained this was standard working practice to prevent them being damaged in rough seas or causing damage on the car deck. I couldn't be more satisfied that my Bessie was both safe and secure.



then found my en-suite sea view cabin which I found to be clean, comfortable and warm with ample space for yours truly.



After unpacking my belongings I went on deck and watched as we gently cruised from the mouth of the river Tyne and into the North Sea. Throughout the crossing the sea was calm and the ship simply glided across the water.

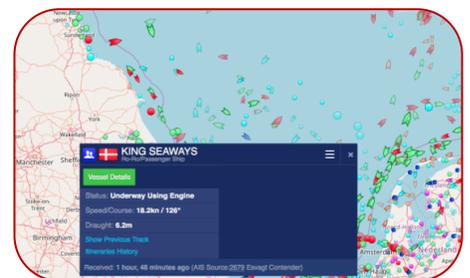


My evening meal was lovely and ended in time to visit the on-board cinema where the ticket kiosk was being manned by the deck-hand who had earlier secured my bicycle. There were three films being screened and I asked which one he thought was the best.

Smiling broadly at me I paid for a ticket to watch the 'Sinking of the Cruise Ship Oceanos'.

At the end of the film I plotted a route from my cabin to the nearest lifeboat then went to bed for sweet dreams? ..... not after that film – I woke up at 2:30am.

Giving DFDS £260 for a return ticket began to play on my mind. With nothing to see from the sea view window I made a cup of tea and used my smartphone to check how far we had sailed.



My screensaver image shows SS King Seaways (in blue) parallel to Manchester and two thirds of the way to Holland travelling at 18knots/20 mph.

20 mph multiplied by the 13 hours it takes to sail between Newcastle and Holland informed me that the travel distance is 260 miles. For the 2nd time today the number 260 had entered into my life – how's that for serendipity?

Dunking a ginger snap into my tea cup it dawned on me that £260 for a sea view cabin, evening and breakfast meals in each direction was only costing 50p a mile. 'Mustn't grumble' came to mind.

Suitably reassured the £260 return ticket was a bargain not a rip-off, I went back to bed with a happy head to contemplate why is Holland is referred to as the Netherlands and why the good people of Holland are 'Dutch'.

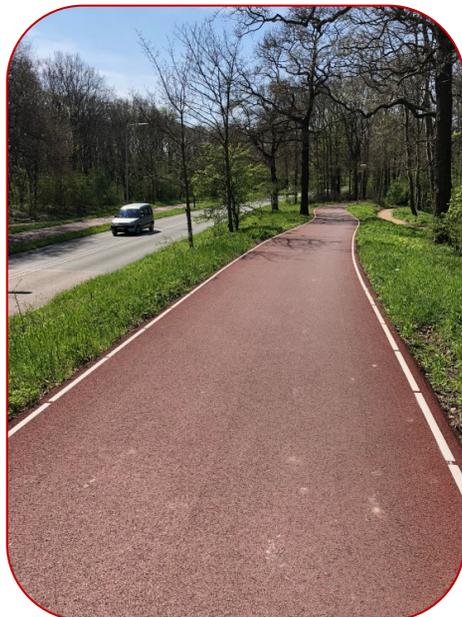
I assume Holland is an area of the Netherlands in the same way as Wales is an area of Britain, but why their people are Dutch and not Hollandish or Netherlanders remained a puzzle as I fell asleep.....

### Safely ashore

I woke at 7am, showered then went to the buffet restaurant for a hearty breakfast and filled my thermos flask with coffee that I took away with a ham & cheese role for lunch.

When the public address system announced we were docking at IJmuiden (pronounced as 'E-moy-den') I made my way down to the car deck, freed my bicycle and disembarked safely ashore.

The weather was warm and sunny with no winds. My route took me to and through the town of Haarlem for an effortlessly enjoyable bicycle ride along the 'Bollenstreek' (flower route) on dedicated cycle paths to the next town, Leiden.



The flower route lived up to its name. I haven't seen such a crop of flowers since my school day Saturday job in the fields of 'Pasture Croft Nursery'

near Henley-in-Arden, Warwickshire.

In those days flowers held a characteristic scent. We now have odourless blooms that are chemically treated to last longer.....umm, perhaps I should put some of those chemicals into my coffee.

Today I was able to enjoy a kaleidoscope of different coloured and varieties of tulips, hyacinths and daffodils. This was aromatherapy at its very best; an experience that could not be shared with the passengers of passing tourist coaches.



We don't grow tulips at home as the bulbs could poison our dogs, so it was great to see so many of them here. I had thought the tulip came from Holland until a chap I met told me the bulbs originated in Turkey where the tulip is its national flower in the same way as the daffodil is associated with Wales.

He went on to explain the tulip originated from China and was spread by birds, bees and wind to the mountains of Iraq, Iran and Syria before making its way to Turkey where it was cultivated. Fancy that, you learn something new every day.

I stopped for lunch alongside the flower strewn banks of the Oude Rijn (the old Rhine) at Leiden. Before the days of photography artists such as Monet (*Water lillies*) & Van Gough (*Sunflowers*) painted pictures of flowers.

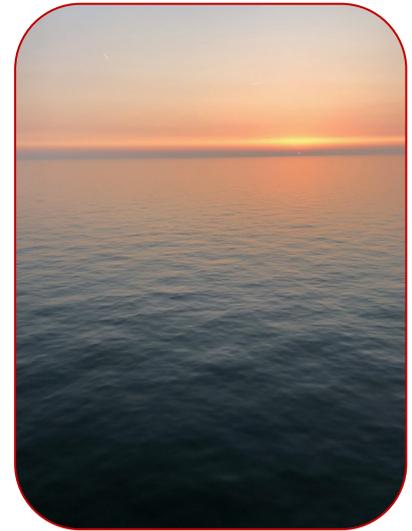


Another famous artist, Rembrandt van Rijn, was born here in Leiden. The surname Van Rijn means 'Of the Rhine' and despite Rembrandt being born in the centre of flowerpot land

his fame came from painting portraits of people. I have seen one of his masterpieces at Penrhyn Castle in Bangor.

### The journey home

Arriving back at the DFDS port in IJmuiden for my journey home the return sea crossing was as calm as a mill-pond. After my evening meal and a spot of duty free shopping I went on deck to watch the sun settling on a marvellous day out.



Arriving back at the Port of Tyne for a more leisurely cycle ride back to Newcastle 'Network rail' delayed the departure of my train by 15 minutes

Whilst 15 minutes seems inconsequential the delay resulted in me missing a connecting train from Manchester to Shrewsbury and a further connection home, groan.



Despite this 'sting in the tail' I really enjoyed my little adventure and recommend the Bollenstreek route to all cyclists seeking a flower powered holiday.

**Joe Patten**

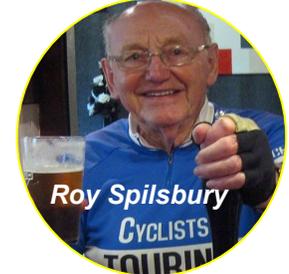


**One way or another my every day swivels around cycling.....**

It's either chattering or writing via the internet, or actually riding. People sometimes ask me how far I've pedalled and how long it takes. My reply - I haven't the faintest idea. I work my day out in gossip minutes, often with strangers unlikely to be encountered again. I'm like a Dyson

strapped to his back. I've got several shots of him in my bulging photo album.

On one of my recent wanderings around Caernarfon I encountered Phillip in the same spot. He was sitting at a table working intently on tiny paintings and offering business cards inviting a visit to the nearby Etsy shop where all manner of artistic curiosities were to be purchased. I was compelled to stop when I espied his parked bike. He responded readily when I asked to take his photo, the important component being the juxtaposition between him and his bike. It was while I was checking photo angles that I examined the bike closer. A Dawes Super Galaxy



seconds behind offered the attended a tenner but was told it had just gone to Phillip.

Phillip knows little of bikes but shared with me the wonder of the bike and its possible history. He said the source was known to the lady in the shop and he would enquire. For my part I'm curious about who it might have been, and what adventures the bike had shared with its proud owner. It



vacuum cleaner. I suck up whatever information is around.. The sight of a stranger with a bike is often an invitation – just like dog owners gathering to gossip I suppose. I'm not usually interested in the technical attributes of bikes as such, just the setting of the bike and rider, particularly if it's out of the ordinary. I have a pal in Caernarfon who I encounter plucking the strings on his guitar with his bike parked at the side next to the old market place. Ex local authority highways department. He does it as a hobby to entertain. He has been known to ride 20 mile with it

no less. It displayed superficial signs of storage , but still showing evidence of a cycling enthusiast. Drilled chain set for weight saving. A bottom bracket dynamo.....possibly a Union model. The more I studied; the carriers, the 531 tubing, the upright handlebars and the generous saddle for use in later life perhaps. The more I wondered about its departed owner. Where did you get it? I asked Phillip. The day before in a charity shop around the corner. A ladies bike from the same source went earlier. The price of his bike? Ten pounds. Wow!!! Apparently another customer

could easily have been a CTC member. House clearance of someone departed? In my mind's eye I could see the bike with its lady companion chuckling down the Rhine Valley. Or perhaps whistling around the Swiss peaks. Most certainly the Outer Hebrides, or somewhere like the Yorkshire Moors. Anyone any ideas? Could have belonged to an in-comer to Caernarfon, or perhaps a retiree from distant pastures.

Someone please satisfy my curiosity.

**Roy Spilsbury**



**Ready for the next club ride!**



## Letters.....

The following letter was sent to Cycling UK National Office.....

Dear Sir

*I suspect that I am writing to you in vain but I do not know who else to contact regarding a cycling club that came through Bunbury in Cheshire this afternoon. I and a local committee run our village hall for the benefit of local residents and it was hired out today for an exhibition. Apparently in the middle of the afternoon a group of cyclists appeared and without so much as an apology came into the hall, just because it was open, and used our toilets which are for the sole use of people hiring the building. The people running the exhibition could do nothing to stop them and they left the gents in a disgusting condition to the extent that we have had to get our cleaner in to clean it up. Unfortunately the hirers did not take the name of the club and as we have dozens of clubs coming through the village, most of which are very polite, we cannot identify them but it is*

*incidents such as this that do the reputation of your sport no good at all. I am writing in the hope that you can get a message out to the Cheshire clubs asking who was involved in this incident but I very much doubt that anyone will have the honesty to own up. In the past we have allowed clubs to use our hall by prior arrangement for a rest stop but this will not happen again and I will be asking our booking club to refuse all future requests from cycling organisations. Your help would be appreciated even if it is just to provide me with a local Cheshire contact so that I can convey my disgust to him/her. If they had the common courtesy to ask if they could use our facilities the hirers would probably have agreed. I look forward to hearing from you.*

### **A response from Roy Spilsbury.....**

I think we should have a standard response for letters such as this that do not identify culprits or what cycling club is involved. We should certainly express sympathy, but we should ask for supportive evidence of the nature of the complaint whilst stressing that it is most unlikely we were responsible given the membership profile of our organisation. Just as the AA and RAC cannot be held responsible for what some motorists do, and would be justified in quickly point this out to a complainant; a shared interest does mean we all roost in the same loft. We should be more questioning of complaints, rare tho' they are. Trivial matters can grow out of all proportion where cyclists are concerned.

Place the onus on the complaint to provide more detail. This should not be difficult where clubs jerseys are worn – they are as obvious as a car number plate.

Hope this helps

All regards

Roy

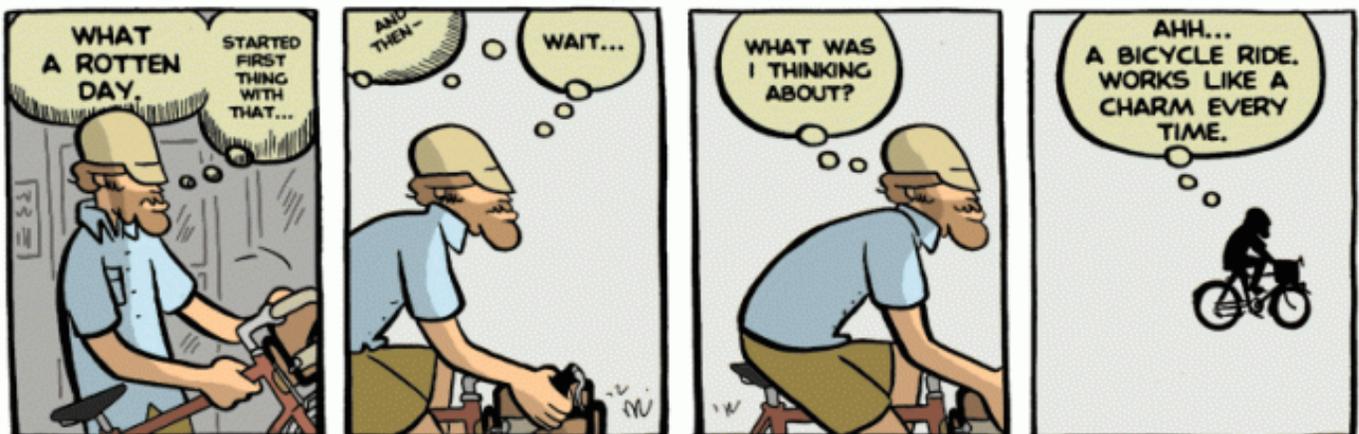
### **Facebook response from Chris Smith.....**

I think it's an odd idea that you can judge people's behaviour by their mode of transport. The suggestion that because some people who travel by bike behaved badly is some sort of predictor of behaviour of other people who cycle has no logic that I can see. Nor even that CTC members need to be reminded of the need to behave themselves because some people on bikes don't. We don't apply this logic to car drivers, or walkers, or any other group I can think of.

### **Facebook response from Mark Jones....**

They are trying to identify the bad mannered cyclists and have written to Cycling UK (and probably British Cycling to). There is no accusation that the cyclists involved were either C&NW CTC members or members of CUK. Evidently the people who hire the hall have taken a dim view of cyclists following this episode. Unfortunately a bad mannered few have spoiled the reputation for the majority.

**Visit Chester and North Wales facebook page to see more responses to this letter.**



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David Collinson

Before I write about Walk Mill I must tell you a little about the River Gowy without which there would be no power for the Mill.

Its source is close to Peckforton Moss which it drains as it passes through, and near to where its big sister the River Weaver also rises. From its source to Stanlow is about sixteen miles as the crow flies, but you can add another nine miles to this owing to its wanderings, a lot of the worst bends were straightened out by Italian POW's during and after the last war. It is called a River but is not much more than a ditch or stream as it proceeds to join the River Mersey, having been siphoned under the Manchester ship canal. At one time it may have been navigable, as there are jetties at the mouth, and Viking coins were found close to Walk Mill where there is a site of a 12<sup>th</sup> Century wooden fort, which was once surrounded by a moat.

Small it may be but the Gowy and its tributaries at one time powered 25 mills, for milling flour or for fulling, part of the process of cloth production, many have long since gone mainly owing to the explosive nature of flour dust and the fires it caused. There is much more history about the Gowy but that would be an article on its own.

So to WALK MILL, which is a new building built on the site and the building outline of the old mill that dates back to



1200. The old mill was demolished in 1960, it had been occupied until 1959. Walk Mill is frequently visited by cyclists being a convenient stop for coffee and food; you may eat your own lunch on their tables outside, provided you buy a coffee! Which brings me to a cyclists joke: there were a great number of men waiting at the Pearly Gates, and St. Peter asked all the men who had been dominated by their wives to stand on the left, there was a long queue stretching over the horizon, on the Right side there was one man. Curious St. Peter asked "Why are you standing

here", the answer came "My WIFE TOLD ME TO". Walk Mill seems an odd name, the reason being that it was first used as a Fulling Mill. Fulling is part of the process used in the making of woollen cloth; it was also known as Tucking or Walking, hence the name of this Mill. In Wales it is known as a Pandy Fulling consists of cleaning and thickening the cloth, and it was and still is a very smelly business. In Roman times slaves, called "walkers" would stand ankles deep in tubs of urine and cloth, stamping their feet, walking round and round. The urine contained ammonium salts which cleaned the cloth and was so valuable that it was taxed. I would keep quiet about that.



Walk Mill is perhaps the only fully working mill in our area; it has an abundant supply of wheat from the fields that surround it. Transporting the wheat is environmentally friendly and much of the internal machinery used in the mill has been rescued from other mills in the country that have been converted to private houses, this includes the large gear wheels and the mill stones. The miller is very willing to show you round the workings of the mill and it is fascinating to watch the process, and to see him carefully control the gap between the mill stones and to see the flour produced all by a natural process powered by water only.

The flour they produce is used in their bakery to bake cakes and the most delicious bread, if anywhere near the area Alison my wife will always call to buy a few loaves if there are any available, they also sell their own flour in small bags. The principal Hotels in Chester, The Grosvenor and The Blossoms call on them for flour, but that can be a problem in the summer when there might be a shortage of water so small stocks are carried in larger bags.

This is a small family business run by the miller, his wife and daughter with a small staff at weekends. We have

always had a friendly welcome and enjoyed our visits and the home-made products. There is no entrance fee.

The Mill has on offer "Walk Sheets" giving details of walks in and around the mill, and of course you can walk to Hochenhull Platts, and the three bridges over the River Gowy. They are locally known as the Roman Bridges but that is not true, they were built in the middle ages and still retain their original rather slippery surface, difficult to cycle over.

They are three pack horses bridges on what was for a very long time the main road from Litchfield to Chester, before the new road A51 was built. These bridges are sometimes associated with the Headless Woman and the Pub at Dudden of the same name (now unfortunately demolished). The legend dates back to the Civil War times when Cromwell's squaddies tortured a servant girl named Grace Trigg who had been left in charge of the wealth of Hochenhull Hall when the owners who, supported the King, fled for their lives, she would not give up the details of where the wealth could be found, but somehow managed to escape, and was caught again by the three



bridges over the Hochenhull Platts, in the struggle that resulted she was somehow beheaded. On dark nights she is alleged to wonder across the bridges with her head tucked under her arm. Whether this is true or not you can judge for yourselves, but you will not catch me walking across the bridges on any night

There are other mills in the district, one is at Stretton managed by Cheshire West and Chester, it has an entrance fee of £2 and is only open in the afternoons during

the summer, it does not mill flour, I think there is another at Marford that does not produce flour either.

We have many interesting places to visit in our near area, Walk Mill, Cheshire Candle Factory, The Ice Cream Farm, The Old Chocolate Shop in Tarporley, Potters Bar at Sandbach, and Beeston Castle, etc.etc.

SO, get on your bikes, and enjoy the country side and places of interest in our beautiful County.

**David Collinson**



**Loving this storage solution, who needs one of these?**





## Eureka Audax/C&N.W CTC Rides Report April 21 2018

Good fine and warm weather at last after the long drawn out cold winter.

**Eureka Excursion 215km** - 40 (2 from C& N.W CTC) riders started out at 08:00 to enjoy the early morning sunshine and windless conditions. The entire ride passed without incident except for one rider who DNF due to a mechanical issue. Times varied from a rapid 9h 07m to 12h 45m.

**Tea in Prospect 135km** This ride proved very popular again this year

with 45 riders (10 from C&N.W CTC) braving the long hill to the Prospect Tea Rooms above Llangollen.

We had glorious weather up at the Tea Rooms and many riders stayed a while to enjoy the excellent fare and magnificent views over Cheshire. Many thanks to Linda and the staff who successfully manned the control here as well as supplying food and drink to the riders.

The route is designed so cyclists arrive at Tilly's in Bunbury in time for lunch, before a gentle ride back through the lanes to the Eureka Café. Times varied from 06h 35m to 11h 59m. There were 8 DNFs, no problems; just riders who decided not to take the final check in at Eureka Café.

Everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves on this excellent day out.

**Two Mills Twirl 68k** 12 riders (2 from C&N.W CTC) embarked on this short ride to Cleopatra's in Holt. There was one DNF due to a mechanical problem.

Let's hope that some of these riders enter one of the longer routes next as the purpose of these short rides is to

give confidence in moving on to greater things.

Many thanks to the people who helped to make this event such a success. Andy Whitgreave issuing Brevet Cards at Eureka Café and helping check in returning riders; Graham and Vicky Payne who marshalled the car parks before riding "Tea in Prospect" on their tandem; Linda and her staff at Prospect Tea Rooms and especially to Anne Peek and her staff at Eureka café for remaining ever cheerful and helpful through a 13 hour day.



David Matthews April 2018

### The Sandstone Ridge

In May, Mike Cross and Peter Williams (Right2Ride Officer) attended a meeting in Tattenhall organised by the Sandstone Ridge Trust ([www.sandstoneridge.org.uk](http://www.sandstoneridge.org.uk)). There was a detailed presentation by the Trust's representative, Ian Marshall, whom they had met earlier. He explained that the Trust wishes to move forward to have the Ridge's unique natural and cultural heritage preserved and enhanced, with perhaps one day it becoming designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Ian pointed out that for a relatively small area stretching from Frodsham and Helsby to Malpas, four million people are estimated to live within an hour's drive thus putting much pressure on the land and its resources. Amongst those present were representatives of local interests – not least those of estate owners. Peter was, and is, particularly concerned with cyclists' access to the track from Peckforton to Burwardsley which is under threat from the Peckforton Estate and which cyclists consider a right of way.

Mike and Peter have submitted their observations – especially concerning provision for cyclists – and await a follow-up meeting later in the year.





## India and the Himalayas here I come!

2016 was in its final few months when I seriously started thinking about 2017, in July I would be celebrating my 65<sup>th</sup> birthday and I wanted to do something special. I started searching the internet for inspiration, looking at various routes and rides. I've been lucky, I've travelled all over the world while serving with the Royal Navy but I've never been to Vienna so I started reading up about cycling, self-supported, along the Danube. For my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday I rode LEJOG with Paul Mills, again self-supported, I did consider doing it the opposite direction, JOGLE.

Then one morning I received my copy of Cycle which I placed in my bag to take to work. It was in one of my breaks while flicking through it that I spotted the advert 'Traverse the Himalayas from Manali to Leh.' It wasn't so much the advert but the picture. There were no details of the actual ride but a contact email address for the ride leader, Paul Rogers.



That afternoon time seemed to drag on, but at 2200 I flew out of work to cycle home, it's only 4½ miles from home but most of it is uphill and I normally plod along, depending on the traffic it takes about 25 – 30 minutes but I must have pulled out all the stops as I went through the back door at 2220 not great by pro standards but good enough for me. I usually have a shower when I reach home, instead I turned the laptop on, it took ages to boot up. I got into my email account and immediately sent my details to Paul Rogers.

Why is it when you are expecting a reply it takes twice as long to arrive. I checked my emails after breakfast. No reply. Checked again just before leaving for work. Still no reply. My shift in work felt like the longest one ever, the fingers on the clock didn't seem to move but eventually it was 2200 again. Quick ride home then once again I put my shower on hold until I'd checked my email. There it was

*"Hi Terry, thank you for showing interest in the ride, I have sent some attachments of various forms to be filled in and a rough itinerary of what the ride entails, if you require any more info do get in touch."*

I read the itinerary and was instantly sold on the rides, what better way to celebrate my 65<sup>th</sup>. Over the next few weeks various emails flowed between Paul and I. Eventually I received the one I had been waiting for. I had a place on the ride along with 12 other people. I then had to start sorting out all the inoculations I would require as all mine had either lapsed or I'd never had them before. Some I could get on the NHS, others I had to pay for,

some were 3 courses for the next couple of months. I felt like a pin cushion. Hepatitis A and B, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Rabies, Polio booster... It seemed never ending. I also had to replace my passport as that too had lapsed.



Terry Davies

I then received an email from Eric Wilkinson from Whitchurch who was also on the ride, Paul had sent him my email address about car sharing. Some of you will know him as Fast Eric. I don't own a car and I was wondering how I was going to get myself and my bike to Heathrow, so Eric provided the answer, he would give me a lift. We met up a few times over the next four months, cycling from home to Ellesmere and to the Welsh festival in Ruthin where we cycled to Vyrnwy and back. I had talked about the ride in the café and Lowri mentioned it to Andy, I received an email from him asking if I would be interested in buying a bike bag. No hesitation, "yes." I also bought a new bike for the ride (I now own 7!) It's a Cube Acid 27.5 with clipper plate size cassette on the back wheel. I bought it from Edge Cycle Works in Chester. Steve, the manager, who didn't know about my trip at the time said "These gears will get you over the Himalayas!"



In June, Paul said it was time to apply for an E-Visa for India and sent us information sheets on how to apply. The photo size is 2" not the normal 1½". Paul Mills, my ride buddy, was a great help as he is more computer savvy than me. I also had to organise insurance for the trip which had to cover heights over 500mtrs, Insure and Go were brilliant.

Dave Hill from the Café has done this ride and invited me round to his house to look at some slides on his laptop. I think I surprised him when I rolled up one morning to view them.

In July Paul sent us our E-boarding tickets and seating arrangements for the flight to India (Dehli). It was all coming together. On July the 20<sup>th</sup>, my birthday, Lowri laid on a cycling festival which helped pass the time! Time seemed to drag by until departure day. Eventually on August 18<sup>th</sup> at 0915 Eric arrived. Everything packed, we headed for Heathrow, our flight departure time was 2300, we were flying with Virgin Airlines.

We'd arranged to meet with the others at 1800, this initial meeting went well, everyone introduced themselves, this broke the ice and we decided to go for something to eat. We arranged to be at the departure gate for 2200. We were allowed 15kg luggage and a bike up to 25kg for free. In Leh we knew we would have to pay for the bikes to be taken back to Delhi which cost 500 Ruppees (about £5) a kilo which meant my bike would cost approx. £115.

At 2200 Paul mustered us all at the departure desk, where we had to have our luggage and bikes weighed, I breathed a sigh of relief when my time came and I was within my allowance. We boarded the plane, we were all grouped together so we could get to know each other a bit better, we were going to be together for the next 15 days.

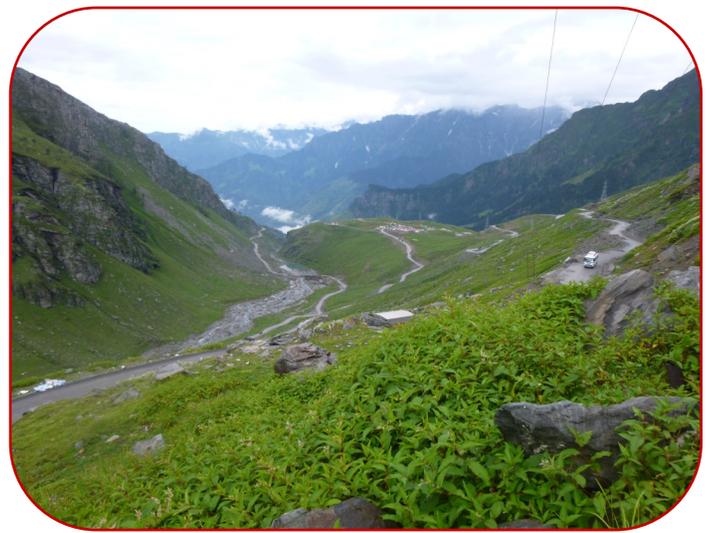


Next morning there was a buzz of excitement at breakfast. After we had eaten everyone was outside doing some last-minute fettling of bikes. It was then a Buddhist priest arrived to bless us and our bikes (a nice touch) and then we were off.

The hotel was 8km from Manali so, as we crossed the bridge into the town, Paul said it was time for a café stop and a look around. Nearly everyone caught a Tut-Tut into old Manali, we all seemed to meet at the same café, sitting outside on the balcony having an omelette and chai overlooking a fast flowing river (we would see a few of these over the next eight days). After a couple of hours, Paul said it was time to set off on the first part of our climb, it was only 40km to Marhi our first camp but climbing all the way to get us acclimatised to cycling at altitude so it was upwards and upwards to Marhi (3320 metres) as we were all cycling at various speeds everyone soon split up. We passed road works where they were building a tunnel through the mountain so that wagons do not have to climb over the Rohtang pass.

After a short delay we were off. The flight took approximately 8½ hours, we landed at New Dehli airport at roughly 1400 hours. Getting through immigration was a nightmare, 60 of us had to queue to be processed, they only had one desk open and it took about ten minutes to be processed, after handing over my passport 3 times, he typed something into his computer then did the same with the E-visa, when he was happy I had my fingers and thumb prints taken, these were all loaded onto the computer. A lot had trouble with this but the authorities were ready and had cleaner on the desk. I was lucky as I passed on the second attempt but others had to try 4-5 times. It was then someone from the immigration had a brainwave, he must have noticed how slow it was going so he opened 2 more desks. It was after 1600 before we were all in the foyer and could collect our luggage and board the coach that was taking us to Chandigarh. It was a 6 hour journey to our first hotel. Until we were clear of Delhi the roads were jam packed nose to tail. It was an eye opener. We reached our hotel tired but happy that our adventure was about to begin. After supper it was time for bed, breakfast was at 0600 and we had to be away by 0700. Our last road trip was by taxi to our hotel in Manali another 8 hour drive but what made this ride special was that we could see the mountains that we would be riding over.

On arriving at the hotel just outside Manali, our rooms were allocated, I was sharing with Eric. We then spent a couple of hours reassembling our bikes before the evening meal and bed.



The scenery was absolutely stunning a lot better than I expected. The roads are managed by the Indian Army and due to the weather and rock falls, are only open for 6 months of the year, normally only after October.

Because this was an organised tour we had a back up team who drove ahead to set up camp and a bus to carry our luggage. If anyone was struggling on the climbs, it would pick you up and drop you off about 1km from the top so you could cycle over the top, a couple of the male riders took advantage of this service. We had 5 ladies in the group and not one of them used the bus. The climbing continued nice and slow and steady in low gear. I found my mouth would get very dry so was drinking lots of water, I carried spare bottles. Eric Williams was in front of the group and Paul said if he wanted to carry on to the top he could. When I arrived at the campsite in Marhi, camp had been set up and I could smell the curry for supper. Rah who was in charge of the mess tent would approach you as you entered the camp either with a hot flannel or a cold one depending on weather conditions so you could wipe the dust off your face and arms. There was tea and coffee ready in the mess tent. Over the next hour people trickled in and only one rider had had a puncture, Phil, a retired teacher from Bristol, who three weeks after this ride was going over to Spain to ride End to End. Supper was 1930 and everyone was pleased to have reached camp. By 2130 everyone started to turn in.



**Marhi to Gondla – 41km**

It was a glorious morning when we set off for Gondla but first we had a 13km climb to the top of the Rohtang Pass (3950mtrs) I have to admit I really loved this climb and had to keep stopping to take photos. There were lots of wagons passing and loads of motorbikes, mostly Royal Enfields. Due to the lack of garages most of them had five



gallon plastic containers full of petrol strapped to either side, a bit scary considering the state of the roads. If anyone has cycled up the horseshoe pass on a hot sunny day and cursed the amount of motorcyclists flying past, go and climb the Rohtang! On reaching the top of the Rohtang there where a fair few tourists, mostly Indian, as this is one of their must go spots. I started talking to a group from Calcutta that were on holiday and they asked what I was doing? I explained that I was cycling from



Marhi to Leh and as a chorus they said “Why?” I told them it was a birthday present to myself and one said “How old are you?” “65” I said. I don’t think they believed me! One of them asked if he could have a go on my bike? For the next five minutes a few of them had a go. Even though it was sunny it was a cold wind at the top and I needed to start my decent and get through passport control. This was interesting, on one side of the road was a shed with an Indian soldier sitting outside holding the end of a piece of rope which he lowered to let you through once you had been cleared. Passport control was a porta cabin with a window cut in the side where I handed my passport over. After five minutes I was allowed to carry on again.

It was late afternoon when I entered the camp and Raj was there with his flannel and tea. Overall a good ride which everyone discussed over the evening meal before they turned in.

**Gondla to Patsio – 57km**

A patter started to emerge in the camp at 0630. Raj would come around to each tent, “tea or coffee sir?” Breakfast was at 0700 where people discussed the days ride and what to expect, everyone set off around 0800 and met halfway for a tea or coffee in a parachute dahba, a roadside café in the middle of nowhere constructed of old parachutes or India’s version of a welcome break! It started off overcast but within the hour the sun came out and I knew it was going to be another hot day. Over the whole trip the temperature ranged from 28°- 33° during the day and -5° at night. The ride today was superb. The gradients on the climbs were decent and again the scenery was stunning, once again a routine emerged. If a wagon came up behind you he would blow his horn and you just moved over to let him pass and they would give you a wave, the best ones were the buses, they would be jammed full with passengers and as the bus crawled past they would all be waving out of the windows and cheering. Today’s ride turned out to be the easiest, nice climb then fast decent. Along with Eric I reached camp mid afternoon so spent a couple of hours wiping the bike down and oiling the chain before tea.

**Patsio to Whisky Na La - 100km**

At breakfast Paul told us our campsite had changed due to a water shortage at our designated campsite at Brandy Bridge and we would be stopping at Whisky Na La. This ride again had some decent climbs which took me over the Baralachla pass (4800mtrs). The road surface on most of the ride was very good with the odd dodgy stretch.



I would pass gangs of men trying to repair the roads and attempting to remove rock fall which happens to be a common occurrence on these roads but I really enjoyed the climbs. Little did I know it was going to get even better the next day.

**Whisky Na La to Pang - 55km**

When I was in the café at Gwersyllt talking to Dave Hill about my trip, he mentioned the Gata Loops, this consisted of 21 hairpin bends climbing 1000mtrs to the summit of the Nakee La (4950mtrs) followed by a 6km descent then a climb to the summit of the Lachungla



(5090mtrs) then a fast descent through a gorge to our campsite at Pang.

Apart from my last climb of the trip this was a climb I absolutely loved and it was worth going to India just to do this climb. Once I arrived at the summit I was literally on a high. A couple of days earlier I had passed an Indian



couple cycling the same route and we talked for a few minutes. They were on their honeymoon and this trip was their way to celebrate their marriage, anyway it was on loop nine that I came across the same couple so I stopped for a natter. It was whilst I was talking to them that Eric Wilkinson arrived. This was very unusual as he was always ahead of everyone else and first back to the camp. He explained a wagon had knocked him off on one of the bends. Apparently he was climbing up when one was coming down and because the roads are narrow he moved over and knocked Eric into the mountain wall. Apart from a few cuts and bruises he said he was okay but angry. I think he took his anger out on the rest of the climb

as he shot off like a greyhound.

I said my goodbyes to the Honeymoon couple. I loved every bit of this climb and the memories of it will stay with me for the rest of my life. Reaching the top I felt like I had



achieved something great. The decent was a steady one to tonight's camp, which was just outside Pang. Raj was there to greet us once more with his trusty flannel.



**To be continued.....**

**Read the rest of Terry's Himalayan adventures in the Winter Issue of The Link.**

**WHEN THE SPIRITS ARE LOW, WHEN THE DAY APPEARS DARK, WHEN WORK BECOMES MONOTONOUS, WHEN HOPE HARDLY SEEMS WORTH HAVING, JUST MOUNT A BICYCLE AND GO OUT FOR A SPIN DOWN THE ROAD, WITHOUT THOUGHT BUT THE RIDE YOU ARE TAKING.**

**Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**



## The Ferguson Interview.....

After attempting to meet up with the very busy **Sue Booth** to arrange an interview I finally managed just a week before Janet's deadline. As well as having a full-time job as a nurse with the NHS, Sue is the driving force behind a number of cycling related activities including the Chester section of C&NW CTC. She has taken part in a number of long distance rides including LEJOG – you can read about her Trans Pennine adventure in this issue. In recognition of all her hard work she was nominated for CTC Volunteer of the year 2009, which she won for the North West Region, and Certificate of Merit for C&NW in 2017.

### Did you come from a cycling family?

No. My parents didn't ride, although my Dad used to ride, and we enjoyed a few short rides together.

### So how did you get the cycling bug?

I was given a bike when I was 15 (Raleigh Silhouette, 'ladies racer') and I took to it straight away. One evening when I was riding in the local lanes I was passed by and then I passed another cyclist (as he fixed his puncture); we then rode a short while together – he was in a club and that gave me the idea to join.

### So that was the CTC?

He was in a racing club, but I asked at the Tourist Information and they directed me to CTC – I joined the "Ledsham Family Section" (*This is the former name of the Two Mills section: John*)

In those days there were group of other teens riding out regularly, and a few of us rode every week (the rides were not weekly back then).

### Tell me about the Fabulous Ladies

In 2007/08 the CTC had an initiative called "5 miles to Fabulous" this was designed to get women into cycling. I had helped out with the Spring 50 in 2007 and noticed that very few of the riders were women so I advertised a 7-mile ride and on the first ride I had 5 people, myself, 2 helpers and 2 new riders.

### Very discouraging?

There were not many, but I decided to stick with it and at the end of 2008 we had about a dozen new riders, with 7 of us going to Walk Mill in December.

Since then it has grown with a record number of 39 on one ride, and we averaged 24 riders in 2017

We have designed our own top, and also a special one for this year, our tenth anniversary.

### You have had some weekends away?

The "Fab Ladies" had our first weekend away to Bridges YHA in 2010, this has become an annual event and we have been to the Peaks, Dales, Cumbria and others, we completed the Route 5 Holyhead to Chester in 2013. I always make sure that the hostel has a pub nearby!

### Have you ever been to the Birthday Rides?

Yes. I attended my first B.R. in 1986. It was held at Warwick University. When Chester hosted the event at



**Sue Booth**

Reaseheath in 1999 I led family rides with my eldest daughter Kate who (was three at the time) in a child seat on the back of the bike. They were real family affairs in those days with lots of children.

I haven't been for a number of years but from what I hear there are hardly any families attending these days. I feel that is a real shame as our family got a lot out of cycling weeks such as the French Semaine Federal, and New Forest Rides.

### And you have run the Bob Cliff 50/100 for three years?

I took part in the very first one in 1986 and took over the running of the event in 2016.

Each person that runs this event adds something to make it that bit better; I have introduced online entry and electronic tags to record the start and finish times, we also are part of the CUK Challenge series this year.

### Final Message.....

*"Never be afraid of hills, what goes up must come down!"*

## Who used to wear a yellow oilskin cape and Sou'wester hat when cycling in the rain?

As a lad I did.....

The capes had tabs inside so you could pop your thumbs through loops and keep the front of your body dry by hanging the cape over the handlebars - a simple idea that worked quite well. Rain water used to puddle between my arms.

The (Captain Birdseye) hats had massive rims to collect and funnel water behind you usually, but not always, on the outside of the cape!

Although the rainy weather outfit was not aerodynamic it did a fair job of keeping cyclists noticeable in poor visibility was quite warm and quite easily drip dried.

Joe Patten

## Report on C&NW CTC/Audax Rides Berwyns Rides May 19th 2018

The weather was glorious as we signed in for the event at Willington Hall Hotel and it remained sunny and warm all day.

### Tour of the Berwyns 210km; 3100m climbing

(Following a review of GPS data, the amount of climbing in this event is to be reclassified as 2650m; 2.75 AAA in future.)

There were approximately 50 entries for this event, which whittled down to 41 starters on the day. Additionally, Joe Hughes of Chester RC rode the event as a “permanent” starting at Chirk at 05:00 to join us at Willington Hall by 07:30. He successfully completed the ride at Chirk later that afternoon.

All riders returned safely, in times varying from 09:15 (chapeau! to Paul Buckley) to 13:28 (32 minutes inside time limit) by a team representing C&NW CTC who suffered in the unfamiliar heat. 4 riders were declared as members of C&NW CTC. One rider was clocked through Prospect Café and Corwen controls but then vanished without telling us---which means that the Organisers had to wait at Willington Hall for an extra half hour in case he returned. Very thoughtless!

There is now an increasing trend for riders to ride on GPS and thus miss the info controls. These controls are to be amended to make them as obvious as possible. This is not a treasure hunt; just a means of obtaining proof of passage.

On a more disturbing note, we discovered one person, who had not entered, riding with his mates. This rider was apprehended at Prospect Tea Rooms where the entry form was completed and a late entry fee extracted.

On a positive note, all riders said it was a cracking route and how much they enjoyed the ride and stunning scenery ---which is what really matters!

### Prospect Panorama 135km; 1000m of climbing

Following a flat ride through Farndon and Cross Lanes, this event takes the long climb from Johnstown up to the beautifully situated Prospect Tea Rooms above Llangollen, exactly as for the 200k, but then short cuts back from the Panorama via Sun Trevor to Chirk. We now have a relocated café stop here in the Castle Bistro following the demise of the nostalgic Milk Bar, haven on many rides over the last 20 years or more.



There were 36 entries for this event with 24 starters all of whom returned safely. Our secretary Lowri was the only declared as a member of C&NW CTC though your organiser, due to lack of time, did ride the hilly section from and to Bangor on Dee.

A very successful set of events in which all returning riders said how much they enjoyed the day out. It is intended provisionally to repeat these rides in 2019 on Saturday June 1st. Watch the web site for details.

Many thanks to John and Carol Pardoe of Seamons CC and for operating the start, the control at Prospect café and signing in the early finishers.

This was our first event to provide immediate validation of rides at the finish which saves a lot of hassle for the organiser and having to address 50+ envelopes for returned brevet cards. It is intended to operate in this way at all future Auk events organised by myself.

Also, thanks are due to Brandon Edgeley for his assistance all day whilst studying to become an accredited AUK organiser and especially to Willington Hall for hosting us throughout a long 15 hour day.

David Matthews May 2018

**Bicycling is a big part of the future. It has to be. There's something wrong with a society that drives a car to work out in the Gym.**

Bill Nye The Science Guy

# Celebrating our New club shirts



Photo by Ellen Jones



**Send a photo of yourself wearing the new club shirt in the most unusual place? Signposts like the Belfast one Mark Jones is stood by in the photo (top right) would be great, failing that a recognisable land mark. Please send your photos to [link@ctcchesterandwales](mailto:link@ctcchesterandwales) for inclusion in the Winter issue. One year (3 copies) free subscription to The Link to the winner!**





## THIRTY-FIVE YEARS YOUNG

This year marks the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Wednesday Riders – formerly known as the Wednesday Section - that is until some ten years ago when CTC in its wisdom expressed dislike of the word 'Section'. In its early years, the "Wednesday Whatever-They-Were-Calleds" did not even have the distinction of a title, never mind a committee or even a runs list. (Whoops, sorry, CTC even wanted that term censored!) Ahem! a rides list.

Instead, it consisted of a handful of mostly male cyclists who gathered at Eureka where, in early January 1983, its founder, the genial and popular Scottish gentleman cyclist (and Dunkirk veteran) Charles Allan, had posted a notice asking if anyone would care to join him for mid-week rides. The first response was from Angus McCulloch. Over the coming months, they were joined by more retirees, notably Laurie McCabe – along with Harry Delves, Cyril Austin and others of happy memory.

In those pre-helmet days, it was all very 'laid back'. The lunch destination existed only in the mind of Charles – and often was decided upon late in the morning when he felt hungry and a pub selling draught Guinness was

nearby. My late wife, Pam, who joined in the autumn of that year was a little puzzled to find that her first ride consisted of pottering around Wirral lanes, going nowhere in particular. It was only later that she realised that as she was a cycling 'unknown quantity' Charles was sussing out her capabilities.

One of the earliest rides she was taken on – in the 'bleak midwinter' - was to the site of Shotwick Castle. It involved 'rough stuff' – a common feature of many runs in those days. The gale blew, the sleet lashed, teeth chattered- and someone punctured! The unpunctured ones stood in glutinous mud, vainly trying to shelter in the lee of a hawthorn hedge while the tube was changed. The result for Pam was a nasty bout of shingles which put her out of action for some weeks. But she went back for more!

In those times, many companies were encouraging early redundancy with the result that a lot of workers in their late 50s found themselves retired and thus free to cycle on Wednesdays. A number had a racing background and so to ride with the CTC was a bit *infra dig*. They did their own thing but encouraged their wives to ride with Charles knowing that with his care plus the mechanical expertise of the likes of Laurie McCabe, there would be no problems. If there were, the cry of "Where's Laurie? He's got tools" was sometimes to be heard from the ranks of the women, (I always said that what Laurie didn't know about bikes wasn't worth knowing!)

The result was that, as more women joined in the 1980s, it became a more balanced group. There are too many names to mention except perhaps the late Jean Hills – who volunteered to be secretary when it was felt the

section needed to be more 'organised', The rides went farther afield – they were certainly not confined to Wirral –

and in the summer they often ended later than they do today. The Section even caught the attention of TV. In the spring of 1991, the BBC filmed us riding in Delamere Forest for a programme on BBC2 to show that people who had retired were capable of something more than going to Bingo. The film crew was surprised to discover we had ridden all the way there and not been car-assisted. (Extracts were later used in Open University TV lectures on ageing. Fame at last!)

There was a small group of riders who wanted to ride farther and faster but, except on a few defined Wednesdays, always met with the majority at lunch. As time went on and numbers grew, the demand was for a printed runs list - people wanted to plan in advance. (Internet? Who said anything about the internet!) The earliest Runs List in my possession is for 1995. The first run of that year was to the Golden Grove, Burton led by Harry Appleton. (Like Harry, the Golden Grove is no longer with us.) Six months later we picnicked at Stretton Mill, having, a week or two before, visited the Craft Fayre at Gresford Church. Christmas Dinner 1995 was held (as it was for many years) at the Robin Hood, Helsby, home territory of ever-genial Bill Hayes. Alas, Bill passed away years ago and as for the Robin Hood, it's another pub that no longer exists. There was drama too. Riding along the canal towpath in Chester, Mavis Jones fell in – fortunately to be rescued by Ada Lewis who went in after her. Mavis, glad to say, lived for many years after that soaking!

But enough of nostalgia! Times change. Bicycles may be lighter, faster, more reliable now – and Wednesday riders not be required to have mudguards and mud flaps. (Oh dear, the arguments mud flaps – or lack of them – caused!). What hasn't changed is the enthusiasm, the fellowship and the camaraderie of those who ride on Wednesdays. Long may its riders, present and future, enjoy their Wednesdays.



**Angus McCulloch & Charles Allan**



MFC



## When Coal was King

If you go back to the 1700s – 1800s and a big part of the 1900s coal was an important commodity. The country as a whole revolved around coal. Not only did it provide jobs for hundreds of thousands of men but the country practically ran on coal. Every household had a coal fire. The railways all ran on coal. Electric power stations used coal. Gas was produced from coal. Blast furnaces producing iron burned coal. Steel works with open-hearth furnaces were fired by coal. Every factory had a boiler producing steam to drive various machinery – burning coal!

Everyday life in the early 1900s used coal in some form, for instance steam rollers repairing the roads, steam traction engines on farms driving various machinery such as threshing machines, saw benches, pumps, also steam driven ploughing machines and many more all using....what else.....COAL!



We were fortunate to have millions of tons of coal under our feet, so to speak, and it was an important commodity during the two world wars. All of the above railways, steel, gas and electric relied on coal. So although the brave men who went to war to fight were heroes, many not coming home, the lowly miner going underground to produce the coal to keep the country going played their part. Our Merchant Navy were very busy bringing in food and oil to manufacture petrol, running the gauntlet of the German U-boats,

many of them not making it. If they had the added burden of importing all the coal we needed it would have been a disaster.

As for working down a coal mine, it was hard, dirty and very dangerous. I can't go into much detail here but there were quite a variety of jobs, some more dangerous or harder than others. The coal seams varied in thickness from three feet to six or seven feet. Working on the face of a six foot seam (main coal) it was usually very hot and we just wore a pair of shorts. In the low seams (Ruabon yard – 3 ft) we wore

### The winding houses at Plas Power



trousers, kneepads and leather gloves all for protection as it involved working on hands and knees.

The North Wales coal-field was quite large and there were literally hundreds of small shafts in the Wrexham area until the larger mines were sunk. Plas Power was an important pit in it's day and it pioneered the use of electricity underground, it also produced it's own electric as well as for two other coal mines. After Plas Power closed Gresford and Llay Main were the two largest mines in the Wrexham area and the biggest employers. Llay was the deepest coal mine in Europe at one thousand and ten yards deep.

There are still a few reminders of the mining industry scattered around the Wrexham area and a few years ago I led a Wrexham Reivers group around some of them. First we visited the site of Bersham Colliery where the winding gear complete with wheels is still in situ. This is the head gear at No.2 shaft, next to the winding engine house which is set to become a mining museum in the future.



Pit Cage Shaft at Bersham

We then visited the site of Hafod Colliery where there is not

much to see of the original Colliery. Just the spoil bank remains which has been made into a country park with a monument at the top. Also in the carpark is a plaque with reminders of the mining industries set into it.



Glynn Jones

Next we cycled through Ruabon to the remains of The Green Colliery which later became known as the Wynnstay Colliery after the near-by Wynnstay estate. The winding house still remains surrounded by caravans! Across the road opposite the winding house there is an interesting building which originally housed the Fan which provided ventilation for the coal mine.

I would like to point out at this stage, three mining artefacts.

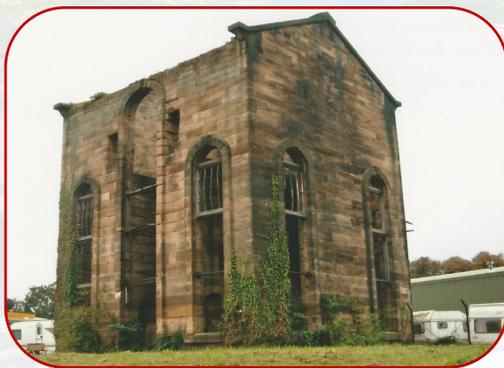
1. A wheel at Johnstown to commemorate the local mines
2. A half wheel just outside Ruabon by the roundabout (Ruabon Half-Wheelers?)



3. Another wheel at Black Park as a remembrance to the mines at Black Park and St Martin's.

We then cycled via Pen-y-cae and Rhosllanerchrugog to Bersham and New Broughton arriving at Southsea and the site of Plas Power Colliery. We had our lunch at the café in one of the old Colliery buildings. Both winding houses remain almost intact. In it's day it was the biggest mine in the area. One interesting fact about the Colliery is that the miners had to produce 21 hundred weight to the ton,





The Winding House Ruabon

getting paid for only 20!

From there we cycled to Llay where there is a wheel and coal tub outside the Miners Welfare. From Llay we pedalled to the site of the nearby Gresford Colliery where there is another wheel and a complete list of all the names of the 266 miners who died in the 1934 disaster.

Just to finish off the two shafts at Gresford were named The Martin and The Dennis. The Martin after Sir Theodore Martin from Llantsyllio Hall, Llangollen and The Dennis after Henry Dennis from Ruabon who owned Dennis Brick and Tileworks at Hafod.

I hope this gives you a brief insight into the importance that coal had years ago.

Glynn Jones

## Tourist Competition Report for 2017

The last ride of the 2017 Tourist Competition was at the end of October, draft results were sent out for checking in January 2018 and the final results appeared in mid-June (although the C&NW CTC trophies for the highest placed local riders were presented on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2018). Only the highest placed riders in the various categories are shown on the national results, and there is no indication of which group people ride with, so apologies if some C&NW CTC riders who were placed are missed from the report below.

The C&NW CTC team retained the Tourist Competition Trophy with an overall score of 369 points- this was a record breaking 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive win! The score is lower than in previous years as several of rides which had previously been registered were not in 2017, this made it almost impossible to complete the full range of events. The team was made up of the 4 highest scoring riders in C&NW CTC; Terry Davies in the team for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, Steve Larwood for his 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ifor Jones for his 7<sup>th</sup> (after a break of a few years) and Lowri Evans.

Terry Davies is to be congratulated on winning the overall competition with 103 points; a well-deserved win, he had been 2<sup>nd</sup> for the last 2 years. Terry managed to complete a good range of rides covering 5 out of the 6 categories. Terry was also first in the Veteran category. Steve Larwood made the C&NW CTC team for the second year running, and for the first time was 3<sup>rd</sup> overall (and second in the male veteran category) with his prowess in competitive events helping him towards his total of 89 points. Ifor Jones was 5<sup>th</sup> overall and third male veteran; his consistent participation in events enabled him to score 78 points even though he no longer attempts some of the longer events. Paul Mills (who was the previous year's winner) was 8<sup>th</sup> (and 4<sup>th</sup> male veteran) with a score of 68

points even though he had to miss many of the summer events.

Vicky Payne scored 44 points and was 6<sup>th</sup> in the Ladies category, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> lady veteran. Kath Morris was 3<sup>rd</sup> lady veteran and Jane Tomlison 5<sup>th</sup>. Emily Larwood was 2<sup>nd</sup> in female junior, however it is fair to say that her competitive efforts had been focused on her track and road racing rather than the Tourist Competition. Lowri Evans was 2<sup>nd</sup> overall in the competition with 99 points, 1<sup>st</sup> female rider & 1<sup>st</sup> lady veteran.

John Wilkie C&NW CTC riders completed an impressive array of Audax events, although only 5 of his events were part of the Tourist Competition. Mark Evans rode a significant number of events, but unfortunately omitted to check his score in January so some of his rides were not counted.

Hopefully all of the riders enjoyed the events they rode; most of the local C&NW CTC, CTC Cymru and Two Mills events are registered as part of the competition. Thanks must go to all of the event organisers (including the local organisers Dave Matthews, Sue Booth, Vicky & Graham Payne, Laurie Mason, Liz & Peter Conway) all of those who volunteer at the events.

## Registration for 2018

The rules have changed significantly for 2018. One of the main changes is that only riders who have registered for the Tourist Competition by midnight on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018 will have their score calculated. It is possible to register on line at <https://www.cyclinguk.org/webform/tourist-competition-registration>. This is partly to make the administration easier, but also to gauge the level of interest in the competition – if very few people register the competition is likely to be discontinued.



# Tech Tips



## Saddle Setback

When setting up a bike for the first time, the three most important measurements are seat height (from lowest pedal position), saddle set back (measured from the saddle nose to an imaginary line vertically through the centre of the bottom bracket) and handlebar reach. The set up must always be done in this order--- although there might need to be a little juggling of seat height to retain it whilst you establish set back. Saddles should always be set level to the ground, using a spirit level.

There are many formulae for setting optimum saddle height, but the simplest, and fairly accurate way, is to support the bike, sit on it wearing flat heeled shoes and pedal slowly backwards using your heels on the pedals. You should just be able to pedal at full stretch, but without rocking on the saddle, to establish correct saddle height.

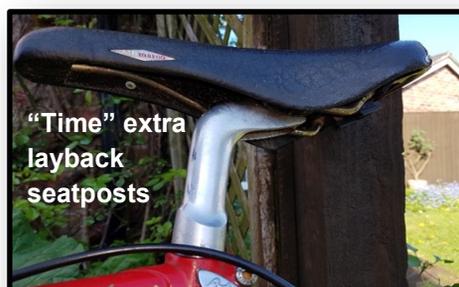
**Note** that with these key saddle measurements, once they are set you should never change them more than 3mm at a time---otherwise severe muscle and/or tendon damage can result.

Saddle set back is achieved by moving the saddle forwards/backwards along the saddle rails until the correct position is obtained. This distance is usually in the region of 5 to 6cm and can be achieved using standard or limited setback (up to 2cm) seatposts.



A standard Campag seatpost from a classic era

However taller, older riders and those with dodgy knees may require a set back of up to 9cm to enjoy comfortable, injury free riding. This can be difficult to achieve using readily obtainable seatposts---so here are tech tips to help you out.



These seatposts, "a thing of beauty" were available 15 years ago. They can easily give 9cm layback in the most elegant way---if you can still find one!



Slightly cumbersome but with a huge range of movement, these seatposts can be obtained from St John Street Cycles. 9cm to 10cm movement can be obtained easily and as your backside and legs will cover up the evidence---not too ugly when riding the bike. Available in 27.2 cm



Slider block on seatpost

diameter only which leads us on to the "when all else fails" solution below.

The block can be fitted onto a single bolt seatpost---so virtually any diameter can be accommodated. (the post in the picture is 26.8cm diameter). The block mounts on the post and then the saddle mounts on the block in 2 grooves which allow considerable rear movement. As long as you can accommodate the additional height of the block above your frame, then virtually any saddle set back can be achieved using this system. Ugly but effective.

Now buy your handlebar stem after establishing saddle set back, as the stem length is non-adjustable and reach to handlebars dependent on the setback.

So that's tech tips for this issue. Unless anyone requests a special feature, my next, non controversial? article is to be "In praise of triple chainsets and taper axle bottom brackets".

## David Mathews



Perfect solution to the hot weather we are having lately! You may need a little more padding on your saddle though!



## Tour of Ireland 2018

### “Who Ate All The Cake Tour” 6<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018

This rip germinated quite a long time ago; and I'm talking a year! I guess it must have been 2015 when Steve (the Gas) Davies and I were chatting on a club ride and the idea of a tour of Ireland was suggested. “We are both 60 in 2018” Steve said, “we should do it then, are you up for it?” Of course I agreed, knowing Steve, I was confident that we would be doing it in the summer of 2018. Eventually we decided on May and then definitely starting on 6<sup>th</sup> May as we could both free up enough time. There were 6 of us going in the end – Caroline who I'd ridden LEJoG with in 2016, Alun who rode NC500 with me in May 2017 and lots of club rides, Jo who had ridden with us in Altea Spain in 2015, Steve who'd ridden many club events with me and his friend Edwin – a Paris – Brest – Paris and London – Edinburgh London veteran and a 300 mile a week rider!

We'd agreed to meet up in Cork. Steve was leaving earlier on 5<sup>th</sup> May and Edwin was adding more mile to his tour and riding 3 days prior to the tour. My pre-tour build up was the 85-mile Tour of Wrexham which took place on 5<sup>th</sup> May and includes the 'little' Church Hill from Glyn Ceriog; a good leg stretch for the tour of Ireland.

So, early on 6<sup>th</sup> May my wife Paula took Alun and I to Holyhead port ready for our crossing to Dublin. There was bright sunshine as we left Wrexham but this changed to sea mist in Holyhead and that meant putting on a jacket to go aboard the ferry. Our bikes were taken aboard by the stevedores while we went aboard by bus.

Once aboard Alun and I met up with Caroline and Jo and settled into the journey and prepared for the short ride across Dublin to Heuston Station, a couple of miles along the Liffey

River. We rode across Dublin in glorious sunshine, passing hen nights, stag do's runners, swimmers and lots of traffic, most of which was polite and gave us room.

Once we'd collected our tickets from the ticket machine (we'd pre-booked) we took our bikes to find the correct platform and get our bikes onto the train to Cork. We were pretty disappointed with the bike storage – no tie up point and no straps to secure our bikes – fortunately we had enough bungees and straps of our own. The train journey was easy – a direct trip to Cork – it was a clean tidy modern train, just a shame about the bike storage.

At Cork we followed the one-way system round past the harbour to our hostel for the night. The Bru Bar and hostel. It was occupied mainly by a young crowd in Cork for the Ed Sheeran concert – so cork was pretty busy but we soon found a decent fish and chip shop for our evening meal, a couple of pints of Guinness and off to bed ready for our first day of proper riding.

**Distance ridden: 10km. Elevation gain 56m**

#### 7<sup>th</sup> May – Cork to Skibbereen

After a quick meeting at breakfast we decided to take quiet roads out towards Bandon. Once we'd got started Steve was starting to regret the amount of luggage he'd packed. Two large panniers, a rear carrier and stuff on top – all on top of a steel bike!! Once we got to a few inclines he regretted it even more! Mind you Edwin seemed to absolutely enjoy being laden with a similar load and flew up the hills, showing his pedigree of long distance riding. Passing through Halfway lead to a chorus of Bon Jovi's 'Living on a Prayer' (“whooha! We're Halfway there...”) but very little to report other than quiet roads and careful drivers. At our first coffee shop we came



across a group of local cyclists who we chatted with about our route and decided to change to head more towards the coast. Our first main point of interest was Timoleague – an old ruined Abbey on the shore of the estuary.... and a public toilet. Then on to Clonakilty for lunch – for what would become a lunchtime favourite - homemade soup and soda bread. Yummy.

After lunch we started to see regular signs for the Wild Atlantic Way; a road journey up the west side of Ireland staying very close to the coastline and views of beautiful bays, pretty anchorages, coves, headlands. The route Edwin had devised took us through Rosscarbery. Drombeg, Glandore, Union Hall and on to Skibbereen. After Glandore I rode with Steve at the rear of the group while the others made progress towards Skibbereen and Edwin put in some additional mileage by going to Castletownshend.

Our hostel for the next two nights was the Russagh Mill Hostel, 1.5 km from Skibbereen.

After a shower and a sort out, the faster group had picked up supplies for our evening meal, which included wine and a 'glass' of Poitin from our host, who had a wide selection of vinyl records to choose from. Early night after a hilly day.

**Distance ridden: 93km, elevation gain: 1124m**

#### 8<sup>th</sup> May – Skibbereen to Mizen Head to Skibbereen

A day with no luggage! A ride out the southern tip of Ireland and into a strong headwind. The wind in Ireland blows from the Atlantic usually from the south-west. We were heading south-west! Our first port of call was Ballydehob and some reminiscing by Alun and Steve who had been out to Ireland previously with the CTC/ Cafehoppers riders some year ago. On to Schull for tea and cakes before finding beautiful coastlines to Toormore, Barleycove and eventually Mizen Head for lunch. Alun and Edwin decided to take a hillier, more



'interesting' route back. Edwin has an odd definition of what consists of a road. I tend to like at least some tarmac on mine but Edwin will cycle off-road if necessary! Steve and I turned around and came back the same way at a slower pace than Caroline and Jo but still whipping along with the wind now blowing us back to base. A tea stop at Ballydehob before getting back to base, getting a couple of panniers and heading off to Aldi for another evening meal cooked at the hostel  
**Distance ridden: 105km, elevation gain; 971m**

### 9<sup>th</sup> May – Skibbereen to Kilarney

After breakfast and a look over the maps we set off in slight drizzle. We said farewell to our hosts at Russagh Mill and set off through the town and out towards Caheragh. The drizzle changed to rain as we rode on towards Bantry. Just before we arrived at Gantry the rain changed to a downpour. We stopped for coffee and to warm up, steaming up the windows in the cafe and trying to keep as dry as possible, but eventually we had to come out and start again on to Glenlivet when it absolutely tipped down, the roads were awash and we were totally soaked through as we started to climb up the Caha Pass. It's a stiff climb up, especially with luggage but worth it for the decent – fabulous surface, virtually no traffic and the rain was stopping on the way down. We regrouped at an old



cottage and rode on to our lunch stop at Kenmore. After lunch it was another climb up to Moll's Gap, the weather improved and we were drying out.

Edwin left us again and headed for the Gap of Dunlap while the rest of us headed down past a lake with some fantastic view towards Lough Leane. We took a route through a country park alongside the Lough and into our hostel – the Black Sheep Hostel - for the night in the city centre of Kilarney. The boys decided to eat out (nothing spicy for Steve!) and head back to our hostel.

The drying room was packed out with cycling gear and we discovered the hostel did laundry so we got a wash together – as well as discovering that it was a mixed dormitory! Steve was in the process of getting changed and showed his assets to a young lady!

**Distance ridden: 110km, elevation gained: 1003m**



**Views over Kilarney**

### 10<sup>th</sup> May – Kilarney to Limerick

After breakfast – lots of cereal and toast. We headed out of town and were soon into Irish farmland countryside. We headed to Ballydesmond then Newmarket for tea and cake and on to Charleville for lunch. No massive hills in this section but undulations add up!

The ride to Limerick was fairly uneventful and consisted of more farmland and small villages until we arrived in the busy city of Limerick to stay at the Boutique Hotel. Steve had asked for cycle storage on all our bookings and the Boutique thought it would be OK to store our bikes in the NCP car park next to the hotel – with no 24 hour staff. The bikes ended up being taken into our rooms.

**Distance ridden: 117km, elevation gained: 1112m**

### 11<sup>th</sup> May – Limerick to Galway

A weird breakfast. No early option and no scrambled egg – but you could have fried egg. Hmm. Anyway, by the time we were ready to set off the rain had set in for the morning. We set off and within minutes were soaked. Things didn't get any better as we rode alongside the N18 – almost a motorway, so the spray of the HGVs was washing us into the gutter as we rode along wishing for the turnoff to Sixmilebridge. We are now riding up the west side of Ireland following the same direction as the N18 but staying well clear of it. An easier day in respect of elevation – just one rise at the Maghera Mountain Bogs before we left County Clare and entered County Galway, again the weather brightened and we dried out in the latter part of the ride, particularly after Oranmore where we turned west and into a strong headwind once again.

Our hotel was The Nest - a quite trendy but friendly hostel and our meal for the evening was in a local gastropub, which everyone seemed to be eating at!

**Distance ridden: 100km, elevation gained: 608m**

### 12<sup>th</sup> May – Galway to Leitrim Village

Wind assisted ride out of Galway following the same roads as we came in by yesterday. We missed a turn to take us north and went far too far to the east. We ended up 21km off route but at least it was dry and the roads were quiet.

Once we kicked north we passed through Athenry and Moniva. The ladies were taking a different route to Malin Head and staying further north than us so decided they needed to kick on, Edwin went with them to pace them and Steve, Alun and I made our way to Menlough where we ate lunch outside a local shop!

We continued to Glenamaddy and Ballymoe, Tulsk and Elphin.

Another navigation error took us south towards Strokestown but we recalculated and headed to Hillstreet and into a beautiful river village of Drumsna – lots of boats and bridges, before some steep climbs on narrow roads into Leitrim and a much-needed shower and evening meal once we were reunited with Edwin, while the locals were watching Leinster win the European Champions Cup in rugby union.

**Distance ridden: 157km, elevation gained: 963m**

**13<sup>th</sup> May – Leitrim to Omagh**

Sunday morning, no breakfast in the hotel so we eat in the Leitrim Marina Hotel, we were the only 4 in the restaurant!

Once we were underway we made good time to Drumshanbo and alongside Lough Allen. At the north end of the Lough we passed through the village of Ballingleragh where a local lad waved eagerly at us. As we headed for Dowra towards the Northern Ireland border the same fella waved us down from his house to offer us a cuppa and a slice of cake! It turned out he was an ex-pat from Liverpool who lived in Ireland but did most of his work in Northern Ireland. He loved the lifestyle, the slower pace of things and appreciated that cyclists like a cuppa and a piece of cake. What a lovely gesture, which was very much appreciated.

As we crossed the border at Belcoo the only think noticeable was the change from km to miles and British road signs; there's nothing else to identify you've moved into Northern Ireland apart from the signs protesting against hard borders should Brexit lead to that. Lets hope not.



The one thing that was noticeable, drivers were passing closer and the roads were in poor condition. We were soon in Enniskillen and the rain came tumbling down as we ate lunch.

We cycled through Fintona and into a rather large hotel in Omagh. Although we looked completely out of place the staff were very friendly and we had good bike storage too. We ate well in the hotel restaurant and turned in for the night.

**Distance ridden: 109km, elevation gained: 816m**

**14<sup>th</sup> May – Omagh to Malin Head to Carndonagh**

Good breakfast and an early start for what we knew would be a long day. The first section was a long flatish stage above but parallel to the main



A5 road meeting it at Newtonstewart and Strabane and eventually to the city of Londonderry.

Londonderry or Derry depending on your heritage is a walled city with lots of ancient and modern history. We didn't really have a good look round as Alun had to find a bike shop for some brake pads and I'd agreed to take our dirty clothing to a laundry to lighten the load and to freshen up as we'd be back in Derry the next day to collect our washing.

We all agreed to meet up at the chosen cafe. When I arrived back Steve had already ploughed through two soups. Edwin had decided to set off and get more miles in. I needed to eat and Alun was having difficulties in finding a shop with the right parts. It was a pretty late lunch and still a long way to go.

Shortly after setting off north we crossed the border again back into the Republic at Muff and along the flattish R238 to Quigley's Point – queue some play on 'Apocalypse Now' quotes – "Sir, that's Quigley's Point" – "Quigley Don't SURF" !!

There's a shop at Quigley's Point before the road kicks up. Steve grabbed a can of rice pudding and some cake and was soon stuffing his face. Through a flurry of pastry he said "I bet we see the girls soon" and almost on cue, down the road came Caroline and Jo to join us for an impromptu, al fresco refueling. Once we'd said our second lot of goodbyes we continued up the hill and the girls headed for Londonderry to catch a train.

A 7km climb after an already long day was a real grind but we soon found ourselves passing through Carndonagh and finding our B&B – a fine country house just to the north of the town. After dropping off our

luggage and another cuppa and slice of cake we were off to bag the most northern point of Ireland.

A sharp steep climb after Carndonagh was easier without luggage and then it was on to the bluff but beautiful Donegal coastline and a climb up to Malin Head weather station and a final very steep kick up to the finish of MizMal – Mizen Head to Malin Head, Irelands End to End.... and what a view; a flat calm sea, views as far as Islay and the Scottish mainland and stunning scenery whichever way you looked. Edwin was there to clap us in and we got one of the few people there to take a photo. A lot less commercial than Mizen Head... and all the better for it.



We turned around to cover the same road back to find the only place open was a chip shop cafe. So we ate, put our lights on, for the first time and headed back to the B&B for a well earned sleep.

**Distance ridden: 134km, elevation gained: 1300m**

**15<sup>th</sup> May – Carndonagh to Londonderry to Portrush to Giant's Causeway**

An easy day was planned anyway but we found out that the ferry we were going to take across Lough Foyle didn't open fully until June and on weekends in May. It wasn't a weekend and we didn't fancy tacking the traffic from Londonderry to Portrush – plus we found out it was the North West 200 motorcycle race - one of the few close public road

motorcycle races in the UK. The road that was closed was the one we were planning to ride to get to Portrush! So, once we got to Londonderry we collected our laundry and headed for the station to catch the train to Portrush. We ate in one of the seaside cafes and dropped our luggage at the Portrush Hostel before heading off to see the Giant's Causeway. Years ago I studied 'A' Level Geology and the rock formations something I wanted to see and I'd sailed to the other end of the causeway at the island of Staffa, with Fingal's Cave – so it was high time I saw the main structure. I have to say I was disappointed – not by the rock formation but by the commercialisation of the whole



experience. The site is owned by the National Trust and it felt all very regulated, not at all like Staffa. Although the viewing of the rocks is free the monolithic visitors centre is and eye-watering £11.50 to get in. We didn't go in!

We returned to Portrush to find that all the bars, restaurants and cafes had filled up with motorcyclist but we did manage to find a decent place to eat and drink before retiring for the evening.

**Distance ridden: 66km, elevation gain: 528m**

**16th May – Portrush to Larne**

I'd heard a lot about the Antrim Coast road and we did experience a bit of it on our short trip out to Giant's

Causeway yesterday but today the sun was shining, so a chance to retake those photos from the view point we'd used yesterday. From Portrush we passed through Bushmills (famous for its whiskey) and on to Ballintoy and the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge which was a sort of Victorian via feratta! It's down a very steep hill and down and even steeper road to the car park – where you find out it cost £8 for the pleasure of seeing a rope ridge. I'd seen plenty of very spectacular rope bridges in Nepal so I gave it a miss but Alun (who had a NT card) decided to visit.



We arranged to meet in Ballycastle. Steve and I found food at the local bakery and met up with Alun and Edwin, who had been on one of his mile eating jaunts. We combined elevenses and lunch as the food was excellent and very reasonably priced. After lunch we had a 12km climb. Not too steep but steadily we climbed and climbed but then came the view, spectacular – and the decent – exhilarating – we swept down a series of sweeping bends with fantastic

views at every turn until the road was squeezed between the mountains and the seas; we really were following the coast now. If you're at the seaside you need an ice cream, Waterfoot, at the foot of the decent had just the ice cream shop we needed.

We were now on a flat road, with the wind at our back, the sun was shining and we were flying along the A2. Absolutely fantastic. Do this ride if you ever get the chance.

We flew through Carnlough, Glenarm, Ballygalley and into Larne for the evening. Our B&B was a beautiful old Victorian town house and the landlady gave us a brilliant tip of where to find our evening meal. After a fabulous meal we made our way to bed.

**Distance ridden: 99km, elevation gained: 839m**

**17th May – Larne to Belfast**

The sun was out again. The first 15km of the A2 were flat but then came a climb at Whitehead but a fantastic view of Belfast Lough, followed by a fast decent into Carrickfergus. Shortly after we followed the National Cycle Network





route into Belfast. Edwin had realised we were only going to ride about 60km so set off to get some more miles in!

We soon arrived in Belfast and followed the NCN route right to the Big Fish – the Salmon of Knowledge. It's said if you kiss the giant salmon you will increase your intelligence – as the man said, anyone who kissed a giant stone fish cant be too clever in the first place!

Alun and I did the open bus top tour of Belfast – highly recommended if your ever there in good weather. We all met up again for our final meal in a pub recommended by another cyclist – The Morning Star – a fantastic pub with super staff and if you like beef, this is the place to eat.

We then headed for the ferry back home. We'd booked a cabin for the overnight crossing so we'd be rested for our final ride.

It was a calm crossing and although very cozy the cabin definitely served its purpose.

**Distance ridden: 57km, elevation gained: 275m**

**18<sup>th</sup> May Birkenhead to Wrexham**

An early start – 7am – but we thought we'd beat the traffic on the A41. How wrong we were. Edwin left to catch the train at Birkenhead as he had to get to a concert, but three of us decided to ride. We used cycle paths where possible but it was back to

normal with traffic almost clipping our elbows. The worst bit was the A550 towards Queensferry. Lorries squeezing past meant we needed to get off the road for our own safety.

Once we turned off to Capenhurst things improved but there were still a few people using the quieter roads like a race track. We worked our way along the NCNN cycle paths to Hawarden Bridge then along the traffic free paths back to Saltney Ferry for breakfast at Kim Kabin Cafe, always good food and good value.

The roads are now very familiar passing through Lache, Dodleston, Pulford. Steve left us at Lavister to head back to Wem and Alun and I continued our journey back to Wrexham to complete a wonderful trip.

**Distance ridden: 60km, elevation gained: 334m**



**Overall distance ridden: 1322km**

**Almost 10,000m elevation gain.**

**MALIN HEAD VIEW**



**Specialized Ruby 2015 Women's Road Bike**

Ruby is a quick and efficient FACT carbon bikewith Zertz vibration dampers in the frame and fork, designed to cover long distances with maximum control and comfort. High-quality Shimano Sora drivetrain keeps weight down and performance up while AXIS 1.0 Disc wheelset provides fave and controlled stopping power.

- Frame:** Specialized FACT 9r Carbon, FACT construction, Women's Endurance Geometry and layup Zertz, Threaded BB.
- Fork:** Specialized FACT carbon w/Zertz, full monocoque
- Front and Rear Derailleur:** Shimano Sora
- Number of Gears:** 18
- Shifters and Chainset:** Shimano Sora
- Chainrings:** 50/34T
- Bottom Bracket:** BB30
- Cassette:** Shimano HG-50, 9 speed
- Chain:** KMC X9, 9 speed, loose-ball reusable missing link
- Pedals:** Nylon flat test ride, loose ball w/ reflectors.
- Brakeset:** AZIS 1.0

**Excellent condition, hardly used**



**£750 O.N.O**

**Call Jo - 07584286282**

**Handlebars:** Specialized Women's Expert Shallow drop, alloy 123mm drip 75mm reach.

**Stem:** Specialized pro SL, alloy, 4 bolt  
**Headset:** 1-1/8 stainless steel cartridge bearings. 20mm carbon cone spacer with 20mm of carbon spacers.

**Grips:** S-Tape

**Wheelset:** AXIS 1.0

**Front and Back Tyre:** Specialized Espoir Elite, 60 TPI, folding bead, double BlackBelt protection 700x25

**Saddle:** Body Geometry Women's Ruby Expert, hollow T1 rails 143mm

**Seatpost:** Specialized CG-R, FACT carbon, single bold 27.2mm

## Cycling Recipes.....



### Win's Picnic Fritattas

#### Ingredients

4 Eggs  
 Bacon or cooked ham  
 New potato, old potato, or sweet potato (leave out if you want a no carb lunch)  
 Small onion, sliced  
 Mushrooms, sliced  
 Sweet peppers, sliced or diced  
 Cheese, sliced, crumbled or grated  
 Broccoli florets, cut small and cooked  
 Green beans, sliced small  
 A little oil or butter for frying  
 1 tablespoon of milk  
 Salt and pepper

#### Method

1. Whisk up the eggs, milk and seasoning and add the cheese.
2. Heat the oil/butter in a frying pan and add the bacon, cook for a while then add the onion, peppers, mushrooms, add slices of potatoes. Add the rest of the veg and cook until they are all softened.
3. Divide the mixture between four oiled miniature quiche dishes (or one larger dish) and pour the egg mixture over it until about half an inch from the top.
4. Cook in a hot oven for about 15 minutes and when done allow to cool then turn out onto kitchen roll to cool and for any moisture to be absorbed.
5. Wrap in kitchen roll and foil to transport in the back pocket of a cycling jacket.

**Enjoy!**



Win Jones

Where is the best place to learn about eggs?  
 In the hen-cyclopedia



## Congratulations Doreen



we are **cycling** UK

Cycling UK's 100 Women in Cycling is an annual list celebrating inspirational women who are encouraging others to take part in this wonderful and life-enhancing activity.

**Well Deserved**



## Reflections on the Caernarfon BP Inquiry by

Biographical note: John Mather MICE is a retired civil servant and is currently the Chairman of the North Wales Branch of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

The Welsh Assembly Government are expected to start work shortly on a £91m (at Q4 2014 prices) bypass of Caernarfon and Bontnewydd. This is an 'environmental' bypass, that is to say it is being built to allow longer-distance or 'through' traffic to avoid built-up areas and this should be of benefit to drivers and local residents. The removal of through traffic from our towns and cities generally brings road safety and environmental benefits (less noise, less vibration and better air quality).

The planning and preparation process for major road projects is a time-consuming and expensive business. It generally starts with studies designed to identify the nature of the problem and these are followed by the definition of the project's objectives. Consultants are generally employed to identify and compare alternative solutions (the technical appraisal of options) and, following public consultation, a preferred route and the standard of the road (single or dual carriageway) are announced. Preliminary design work leads to the publication of draft orders which, if confirmed, allow the Minister to acquire the land and to stop up, alter or provide local roads and private means of access. People (companies and individuals) may of course object to these draft orders and, in these circumstances, a local public inquiry is generally held.

I first became aware of what was proposed at Caernarfon shortly before the draft orders were published and, along with others who have walking and cycling interests, objected to the draft side roads order which, if confirmed, would interfere with the delightful Lon Eifion traffic-free trail which leads from Caernarfon to Bryncir, a distance of circa 12 miles. Our merry band of campaigners recognised from the outset that we would be able to make a stronger and more persuasive case if we were to focus on the shortcomings of what

was proposed and if we were to work together and avoid any attempts that might be made by the project team to 'divide and conquer'.

Now being an objector at a local public inquiry is rather like David taking on Goliath. It's not an even contest and whilst the Inspector, who presides over the inquiry, may be expected to allow you an opportunity to present your case and to question the project team's expert witnesses you will need to prepare your case thoroughly and to be questioned (cross-examined) by counsel acting for the Minister. This can be 'challenging' and you will need to be able to show that you are a reliable and credible witness. It's all about persuasion. You will need to persuade the inspector that you have a good case and that what you are proposing is better than what the project team has on offer. This can be rather difficult when you are faced with a professional team comprising 10 expert witnesses (who may have worked on the project for several years) and who are represented by legal counsel. If you stumble and 'fall' your case may be lost but the project team will have an opportunity to recover lost ground if and when they are re-examined by their own counsel. You need to be prepared to be faced with a weighty rebuttal of your argument/case which may be presented at the last possible moment giving you little or no opportunity to respond.

Now this is not a reason for giving up on our campaign for more and better facilities for walking and cycling. Far from it; the benefits of active travel are increasingly being recognised. We were, though our efforts at the Caernarfon inquiry, able to draw attention to the importance and the significance of the Active Travel (Wales) Act and to secure better facilities for the NMU (non-motorised user) crossings at the Goat roundabout. The inquiry process also provided us with a valuable opportunity to work with others notably with Sustrans, Beicio Bangor, the British Horse Society, the Local Access Forum and with the Ramblers Association.



**John Mather**



**Some of the Campaigners, predominantly CyclingUK members meeting at the café at the Inigo Jones slate works at Groeslon**

**John Mather, Member of Cycling UK**



# Kit Review

## Topeak QR Beam Rack - RX with Side Frame & Topeak RX Trunk Bag DXP with Side Panniers



My better half and I decided we would like to give touring a go. I needed to turn my carbon road bike into a tourer to give myself a taste of it without spending a fortune on a new bike only to realise it wasn't our thing. Therefore I've bought the Topeak QR Beam Rack and Bag which I believed would do the job. Even though they are sold separately I will review them together as one is fairly pointless without the other!

Firstly it has to be said, the bag is small! It was described as 'Compact bag, ideal for travelling fairly light or commuting' which, to be fair is a very accurate description. I wouldn't recommend it for a week away! It's a very well made piece of kit. Once I'd worked out which piece of rubber to use between the



seatpost and the hinged seatpost clamp it sat snug and never moved once, even on our potholed roads, during my couple of weeks testing it out on club rides. The bag fixes to the frame with a very simple clip system which is easily released. I have read reviews that said others had had them 'jump off the clip' but I didn't have a problem.

The side panniers, which fold down when needed, are deep enough to hold a pair of trainers (my size 7's anyway) I did have to put one in each side but there was room to add a rolled up t-shirt and shorts too. The bungee cords on top are strong and would hold a reasonable size jacket or small bag. With the addition of the rain cover, I anticipate it will be excellent for winter rides when I need to take those extra 'just in case' layers and waterproofs out.



- Light (Bag 755g Rack 390g)
- Very well made, tough material.
- Gusset for extra capacity
- Easy to fit
- Shoulder strap
- Bag easy released from the rack
- Rain cover available as an extra
- Reflective strips



- Only available in black
- My light doesn't fit easily to the bag!
- Fairly expensive: £34.99 - rack and £39.99 - bag (current wiggle price)



Have you purchased a new piece of kit? Please share what you thought of it and I will feature it in a future edition of The Link

[link@ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk](mailto:link@ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk)

**Love is when she waits for you  
at the top of the hill.**





## CTC Cymru Welsh Festival of Cycling Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018

The CTC Cymru Welsh Festival of Cycling will be returning to Ruthin again this year. The Festival base will be at Ruthin Rugby Club with the club house acting as event HQ (with tea & coffee available before & after rides).

Those camping at the event are asked to send in a booking form in advance; they will be able to arrive and sign in from 4pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July. Routes sheets etc will be set out so that people can select their rides and events. The registration fee for the festival is £15 per adult, £2 per child under 16 years (no unaccompanied children); there are additional costs for camping. There will be a range of routes available, from short family rides to longer more arduous routes as well as some off road routes. There may be ride leaders for some of the rides. The rides will give an opportunity to explore the lovely surrounding hills and will mainly be on quiet lanes.

If local C&NW CTC riders only want to attend for a day or two then they will just need to complete an event entry form (which will be available at the Festival) and pay for the day. Any riders doing this are asked to arrive in good time so that the paper work can be completed before the ride. Ride are suggested for particular days (depending on the weather, availability of cafes) and groups set off for the longer rides at 9am, mid distance rides at 9.30 and shorter rides at 10am. Those who want to ride on there own are free to set off at any time, however the club house will be locked during the day when all the volunteers are out riding.

### Draft timetable (subject to change):

Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	4.00pm onwards	Registration, select routes,	
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> July	9.00am -10.00am	Road rides – longer rides start at 9am mid distance 9.30, shorter 10am	
	9.30am	Friday off road	TC
	6.00pm	Ride out to Hill Climb	TC
	After Hill Climb	Freewheeling Competition	TC
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> July	9.00am -10.00am	Road rides – longer rides start at 9am mid distance 9.30, shorter 10am	
	9.30-10.00am	Treasure Hunt (can be ridden as individuals or in pairs – only individuals count for the Tourist Competition)	TC
	1.00pm	Map Reading Competition	TC
	6.30pm ish	Evening meal at Rugby Club (needs to be booked in advance)	
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July	9.00am -10.00am	Road rides – longer rides start at 9am mid distance 9.30, shorter 10am	
	9.30am	Sunday off road	TC
	6.30pm ish	Evening meal at Rugby Club (needs to be booked in advance)	
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July	9.00am -10.00am	Road rides – longer rides start at 9am mid distance 9.30, shorter 10am	
	10.00am	Women's Festival of Cycling ride 10-20 miles depending on weather & what people want	
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> July		Camp site to be cleared by mid-morning	

Information and booking forms can be found at <http://www.ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk/events2018.html>

Or contact the organiser Emrys Jones 01952 257522 [demrys2jones@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:demrys2jones@hotmail.co.uk) or Lowri Evans 01824 705709 [secretary@ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk)

Any who are able to volunteer to help at the event please contact Lowri or Emrys.



## Welshpool - Pont Llogel - Welshpool

**Start:** Welshpool car park by the Tourist Information Centre.

**Start Map Ref:** OS Landranger Sheet 126- SJ 225 075.

**OS Maps:** Landranger 125 & 126.

**Distance:** 37 miles

**Grade:** Moderately hard

**Ascent:** 3872 ft

**Suitable for:** Reasonably fit riders

### General Description

This ride starts from a Pay and Display car park by the Tourist Information Centre close to the centre of Welshpool, a bustling market town on the border with England. The beautiful terrain is hilly, with one or two severe climbs, and a lot of smallish ones. So long as you don't get lost, you shouldn't see much traffic of any sort for most of the time, even on the short stretches of A roads you encounter. Finding somewhere to eat on the way is problematic, so you would be advised to take a picnic, or at least some energy bars and plenty to drink.

### The Route

00.0 L out of car park

00.7 R at TL, and follow the signs for Dolgellau on the A 458.

*On your way out of the town you will negotiate a roundabout, next to which is Raven Square, the station for the start of the Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway. This 2ft 6" gauge track was opened in 1903 to assist local businesses with the transport of their supplies and products to and from Welshpool and the main line trains there. From the beginning it was built on nothing but faith, hope and charity, and never had a cat in hell's chance of being commercially viable. Surprisingly, it lasted until 1956 when the line was finally closed by British Railways.*

*At this time there were already moves afoot to restore the line to steam working, and in 1959 after tortuous negotiations with BR, work began. Since then the line has gone from strength to strength, doing something that its predecessor never did-make a profit, though most of the work is done for free by an army of volunteers.*

*More information about timetables, ticket prices and a history of the line can be found by typing "Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway" into Google's search box. Alternatively ring 01938 810 441. If you want to cut out some of the hills on this ride, you can take your bike on the train to Llanfair Caereinion, but **check first** to be sure there is room.*

02.4 L into Cwm Lane, soon crossing narrow gauge railway. No SP.

04.3 R onto B4385.

04.7 Re-cross railway.

05.1 L @ T on B4385 to Llanfair Caereinion.

08.6 L @ T uphill by a Church in Llanfair Caereinion. (Effectively SO as the TJ is on a bend).

10.5 Imm before a TJ with the A458, turn R and in 20 yards, **SO the A458**.

13.1 R @ T onto A458 and pass through Llangadfan.

16.7 R onto B4395 through Pont Llogel. SP Llanfyllin.

20.5 Pont Logel. This crosses the River Vyrnwy.

*There is a car park and picnic site on the right hand side immediately after crossing the bridge.*

21.5 R. No SP.

23.6 R @ T to Dolanog.

27.9 **SO @ X**, SP Welshpool.

28.9 R @ X, SP Welshpool.

29.3 L @ T with A458 SP Welshpool.

31.1 L into Gelli Lane. No SP.

*In about another mile you will pass Moydog Fawr, and it was in this area that the following battle took place, the details of which are taken from Wikipedia.*

*The **Battle of Maes Moydog** was a battle that took place at the field of Moydog (Welsh: Maidog, also Meidiog) on 5 March 1295 during the revolt of Madog ap Llywelyn and others against English rule, near the modern-day town of Llanfair Caereinion in Powys, Wales. Madog's opponent was the Earl of Warwick who, on hearing that Madog's army were camped in a valley close to his base at Welshpool, made a night march on 4 March and surrounded Madog's army. Madog had his spearmen formed into a square, and repelled an English cavalry charge, killing around 10 men at arms. However, Warwick's innovative deployment of archers and crossbows gave the English the upper hand. Surrounded, Madog's men fought their way out of the encirclement and killed a further 90 English men, then retreated across the swollen river Banwy, in which many drowned. A second, smaller engagement near a place that the English records call 'Thesseweit' - the location of which remains uncertain - resulted in the loss of Madog's supply train. English losses totalled around one hundred dead; Welsh losses were placed at seven hundred. The battle was a crucial step in breaking Welsh resistance in the revolt; Madog went to ground and was captured in late July and spent the rest of his life in the Tower of London.*

36.2 R @ T. No SP.

36.7 **SO @** rbt into town centre.

37.5 L @ TL.

37.6 R into car park.

### Legend.

R = Right. L = Left.

R/LHS = Right/Left hand Side.

T = T-junction.

Imm = Immediately.

X = Cross roads.

RBT = Roundabout.

SO = Straight on.

SP = Signposted.

Y = Y-junction.

TL = Traffic lights.

**RED = A more than usual dangerous hazard.**

CW = Cycleway.

C = Café.

PH = Public house.



Obituary

## Michael Thomas Knox

15<sup>th</sup> Sep 1951 –

27<sup>th</sup> Feb 2018



We lost Mike through that deadly disease Motor Neurone way too young at 67. For everyone that knew Mike he is remembered as a most friendly and helpful person. He shared throughout his life a passion for Football, Running, Long distance walking, and Cycling. He made life-long friends in all these activities. I think of all the places he walked the Lake district was his and Dianne's favourite place, often they would stay in Patterdale.

His daughter Stacey paying tribute to her Dad said "My Dad has been taken from us all too soon by a cruel disease that stripped him of all the activities he loved so much. We could be sad, we could be angry or we could be like my Dad, Strong, brave, and know it was time for his journey to end, and be grateful for all the times we got to share. My Dad was brave to the end and will forever be an inspiration to me. I gave him the greatest gift I could in return, his best mate, his Granddaughter Leah. Stacey said "one day I was about six and I said the most hurtful thing I could ever say to my Dad I'm going to support Liverpool F.C. Then we went into the garden to play footy L.F.C. v MAN UNTD I'm sure you can guess who won".

Leah said "my Granddad always said he knew everything", needless to say I never believed him but I never told him that, until his last moments when we were sat at his bedside and we thought he was asleep. I said "he does know everything after all", he opened his eyes and raised his hand giving the thumbs up, It made us smile even through the heartbreak.

Mike and Dianne are the only couple I know who share the same birthday and also got married on that day.

Wednesday, April 18, 2018

www.ellesmereportstand

# £1.7m boost will improve pathways

By Stephen Topping  
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BOROUGH chiefs are expected to receive a £1.7 million boost to help Ellesmere Port residents leave the car at home.

The Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has set aside funding to develop the A5117 cycle route, Sutton Way boulevard and to improve a stretch of the Shropshire Union Canal's towpath.

In a report issued by the LEP's local transport body, Roy Newton, transport director, said the funding would go towards 'essential transport infrastructure designed to overcome walking and cycling barriers to key economic destinations'.

He added: "The package aims to deliver high outputs against a relatively low level of investment – most significantly in terms of improved access to employment, housing, training and education and provides health, congestion and environmental benefits."

The money comes from a



■ The Shropshire Union Canal towpath is to be improved.

£5 million pot awarded to the LEP by the Government's local growth fund.

Cheshire West and Chester Council will use £680,000 to improve a 2.2km stretch of the canal towpath between the A41, Ellesmere Port and Chester – along with a significant access improvement to the canal towpath in Chester.

A further £640,000 will be spent building the Sutton Way boulevard, in Ellesmere Port, which will link 2,000 new homes in Ledsham Road to Cheshire

College South and West, the University Church of England Academy and the town centre.

That cycleway will connect to the Stanney Lane boulevard, which links to Ellesmere Port Sports Village, Cheshire Oaks and the Enterprise Zone.

And £380,000 will go towards the A5117 cycle route – a 4.5km route connecting Ellesmere Port and Chester with the Thornton Science Park campus, Essar Stanlow oil refinery, Encirc and the Portus cluster employment site.



## Where have the horseshoes gone?

Remember the horseshoes sculpture at Hoof Field Old Smithy?

Answers on a post card please!



Well after an appeal on facebook I still didn't have a volunteer to do the Chris Quiz which gave me the perfect opportunity to have a go myself. So here goes.....



Janet Jones

1. How long have you been cycling? ..... Since 2009
2. The best ride you have done? ..... Through Glencoe day 8 of LEJOG
3. Best holiday you have had?..... Not a cycling one but 3 weeks in East America
4. Your two favourite songs/music?..... I can't choose! I love so much music, I couldn't live without it!
5. Two best books?..... The Kite Flyer and The Reader
6. Who would you best like to meet present or past? ..... David Attenborough
7. What would you liked to have achieved / learnt?..... To speak several languages
8. What makes you happiest?.....Time cycling or sat in the sun with friends and family
9. Favourite film? ..... Cheesy I know but it has to be Love Actually
10. Do you enjoy poetry, If so what's your favourite? Anything that tells a story and rhymes
11. Would you consider riding an E-bike?..... Yes
12. What single thing would make life better? ..... A winning lottery ticket!
13. What's been your longest ride?.....114 miles from Pwllheli to Wrexham
14. Do you think there is life on other planets? .....No
15. Which person throughout history or today do you most admire? ..... David Attenborough
16. What trait do you most admire in people? .....Patience and understanding
17. What do you think are your best attributes?.....Never giving up
18. If you could ride one tour which one would it be, Tour de France, Giro, Vuelta?..The Tour
19. Have you a favourite building? ..... Home
20. Have you a favourite piece of Art/Picture/sculpture?.....Violin and Grapes-Pablo Picasso



John Ferguson sotted this very unusual but very effective bike rack at the RSPB reserve Pentre Brew on Anglesey.

Send in photos of the most unusual bike rack you've used to:

[link@ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk](mailto:link@ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk)

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