

# B&B, Caravan and Camping Weekend 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> May 2010

## Day 1 Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May



From our B&B window, the day dawned cold but dry.

We - Glennys, Jill and I, were situated at the top of a very long steep hill, Bowden Hill, Lacock, and so chose to be “car-assisted” to join the rest of the camping party at the distant campsite. Here we were also joined by Terry & Bronwyn from Staffordshire, who had read of our planned holiday in Cycle magazine.



**The view from our B&B**



We soon picked up the well signed Route 403 down through Melksham to join the canal towpath at Outmarsh.



**Old Ford cars near the cafe**



Extensive 11ses were enjoyed at a café near Bradford-on-Avon before we left the canal in an attempt to follow the OS marked cycleway via a tricky route to Norton St Phillips - a markedly hilly little town.

**Café for 11ses on the Kennet and Avon Canal**



**Bob and Barbara**

Here, a cold wind forced us to seek the refuge of the church porch where we ate our sandwiches and used the toilet (after being given prior permission, of course!).



I will admit to feeling very guilty about not subscribing to the unlocked offertory box, for the use of these facilities, but others did, so that's alright isn't it?

**John**



**Bob**

A very hilly route took us through Freshford, down into the Avon river valley, across the canal, railway and river, up out of the valley and so down to Bradford. The marked cycle way followed a beautiful route back to Lacock. We only did about 40 miles. But they were tough!

## **Day 2 – Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May**

Yet another cold but dry day in prospect?



Some decided not to join us for the proposed 50-mile ride.

**Refreshment bike at Lacock Abbey**



**Great Chalfield Manor**

Glennys thought Great Chalfield Manor and Lacock Abbey a better idea. Yesterday was tough!



However, we set off following route 403 again but in the opposite direction, with the expressed intent of missing out our Bowden Hill. But what did we get? An even longer, steeper hill which finally brought us out at the top of guess where? Bowden Hill!

On then to visit an unusual Mosque type building we had noticed, shown only on the map as “Splatts House”. It was all very private and quiet, so we took our garish lycra elsewhere.

**Splatt's House**



Calne was the plan for 11ses - a reasonably large town with a café perhaps?



**11ses at the petrol station**

Regrettably, Calne is “closed on Sundays” apart from Sainsbury’s which does not boast a café. So we visited the local petrol station, and with the help the staff, overcame the technicalities of their hot drinks machine. The cheapest 11ses of the holiday!

There now being no obvious signs for route 403, a local man helped us to find a tortuous route, almost through people’s back gardens, along a farm track, which though well signed, degenerated into a footpath.

**One of several obstacles!**





Next, we negotiated a narrow footbridge over a sand conveyor belt, and finally before regaining tarmac, struggled through tenacious mud that required the removal of both wheels before forward movement was possible.



### **More problems!**

It was now obvious that the planned 50-mile ride was unattainable, but a change of course gave views of the White Horse and led to an interesting picnic spot for lunch.



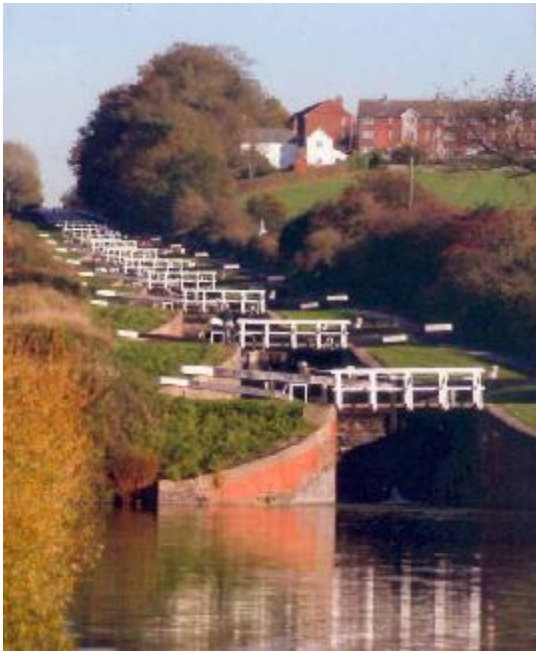
From here there were panoramic views and it was quite near to the Wessex Ridgeway and the **White Horse Trail**.

**No, not on a bike, please!**

Over the North Downs we rejoined the



Kennet and Avon Canal and the way marked tow path through Devizes, stopping at a café at the top of the dramatic **Caen Hill Locks**, 28 in all I believe.



Pausing at yet another tow path café at Outmarsh, we joined the other May Away campers who had also spent the day exploring the locks.



Route 403 took us back to Lacock. Mileage is no criterion is it? We all enjoyed the day, and we wanted to be back early anyway.



We needed to prepare for the group evening meal at **The George Inn at Lacock**, arranged for us by Mike and Pam.

Very nice, thank you.



## Day 3 Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May

A much better prospect weather-wise, and, as I didn't have to lead the ride, far less stress for me!

Today, Mike and Pam were to lead a "joint ride" i.e. all of us - campers, tenters, caravanners and those in B&Bs.



**Ada, George and Jill**

After the **obligatory group photo** call,



**11ses at Castle Combe**

we were led off through Corsham via a picturesque route to Castle Combe for a very expensive 11ses at the local pub. e.g. 2 teas & 2 small cakes £10.60 (and we haven't even had the new budget yet!).

There were "Free" things about.

The children are Free Range apparently.



We left Castle Combe up a “walking hill” and cycled on through Badminton village to an enjoyable, pre-arranged lunch at **The Royal Ship Inn in Luckington**.



Mike gave several “culture talks”, concerning rock strata, railways, buildings and Roman Roads.

A stretch of the Fosse Way followed by a very scenic ride through Grittleton, Yatton Keynell, and back to Lacock, completed the day.

Thank you, Mike & Pam.

## Bob Witton



**Mike**



**Lacock Abbey**

Photos by Bob Witton, Mike & Pam Cross and Glennys Hammond

## **Exhibition at Lacock Abbey**



### **Fox Talbot Museum**

The pioneering photographic achievements of William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-77), inventor of the negative/positive photographic process, are celebrated in the lower gallery of the museum. The upper gallery is devoted to two exciting exhibitions each year featuring the work of both 19th century and contemporary artists.