

## Picnic Ride – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2012

This ride is a popular one. So much so that as the numbers on the guest list crept over 45, **Keith** made the tough decision to decline latecomers. Sorry to those concerned!

The summer of 2012 hasn't been great on weather and today's forecast was for rain. Not ideal for a picnic. However, our organisers had thought of that one. It didn't seem to deter participants from turning out for the 10am start at Eureka Café.



**Andy** did the shouty bit at the beginning. Riders were divided into three groups led by **Peter**, **Janet** and, last to leave, **Andy** himself.



**At the Eureka**



It was designed deliberately to use quiet roads and traffic-free in parts. However, from the café there is a short stretch on the fast A540



**Setting off in three groups**



before that most difficult of manoeuvres; a right turn major to minor into the relative calm of Woodbank. We headed for the cycle path alongside River Dee which we followed all the way into Chester.

There was a quick stop in **The Groves** to use the public conveniences and then onwards and upwards to join the canal and all those Sunday strollers. It was there that we met the rain for the first time today. It was promised!

**At The Groves for a comfort stop**



Our riders stopped to cape-up before crossing into **Sandy Lane** where the **Two Mills flag** was flying, to guide us to the tea, coffee and biscuits served by **Graham and Margaret** and one or two impromptu helpers sheltering under a hastily erected tarp.



**Graham and Margaret  
Serving tea and coffee**



**Enjoying the break  
despite the rain**



**Chester Sailing and Canoeing Club** had kindly allowed use of their kitchen facilities.

Once everyone had been served, **Peter** was soon rounding up his group to leave for the next stage. That caused a mild panic amongst our catering people. Would they have enough time to clear away and get to the lunch venue to set-up before him? Well, they did have a car and we were cycling all the way up to **Saighton, Waverton** and **Christleton** through to **Guilden Sutton**. It took us a good hour. And then we had to find them in amongst the farm buildings. Follow that flag, again.

We found an excellent under cover arrangement, with hay bales, blankets and lots of camping chairs! Once riders had dispensed of their bikes, they were welcomed to this year's picnic lunch with a buck's fizz and nibbles.

### **Buck's Fizz and nibbles**



### **What a spread!**

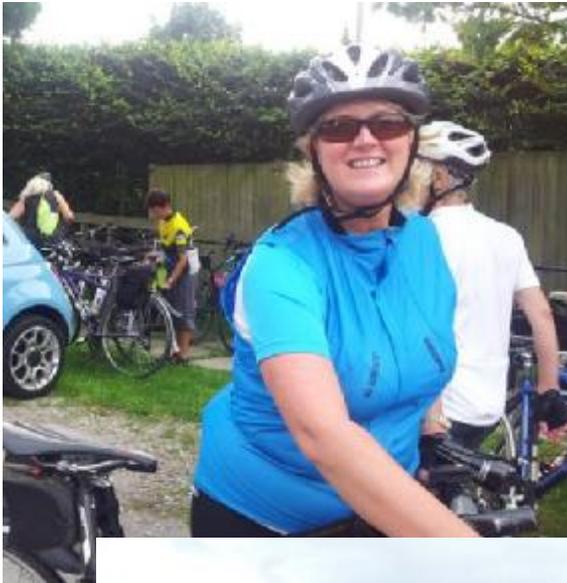
The buffet proper was served under the 'Pleasure Dome'. There was plenty of food for everyone. **Keith** had the stove going for a constant supply of hot drinks. Who noticed the rain?



### **Debbie and Keith**



It was great to see so many newcomers – Tuesday Evening Cyclists, Bicycle Belles, partners, friends and family. You are very welcome to join our regular Sunday rides. Good, too, to catch-up with familiar faces



### Some familiar faces?

Andy led a vote of thanks to Debbie, Keith, Graham and Margaret for organising the picnic. This is the fourth year they have catered for us and they really are stepping down. So if you enjoyed the picnic ride, how about helping us out next time? All applications gratefully received.

Lunch done, we formed an orderly queue for the one toilet ready for a straightforward ride along the Greenway all the way through to Sealand. Club tradition is to finish the day back at Eureka Café for a drink and a chat. It isn't to puncture tyres in the last few miles and call-up vehicular rescue. However, the rain had set-in by now so perhaps understandable decision for Gill and Chris.

Words by Janet Gregory, photos from Glennys Hammond, Tricia Seddon and Lance Robinson  
Our route can be viewed at <http://goo.gl/6Fnqx>.