

Vale Royal Abbey Arms, Delamere - 8th October 2014

Alan Oldfield is our leader today to the **Abbey Arms** on the outskirts of **Delamere Forest**.



The forecast was for showers in the afternoon, but it didn't stop eighteen

riders prepared to get a bit wet. **Brian J** kept up his routine of returning to the car park before we set off - on this occasion it was to lock his car. **Roy** had closed the boot for him. We were going through **Capenhurst** before you could say 'ban the bomb', then we had to negotiate the gates on the route to **Backford**.



The day was bright although most of us were wearing our leggings. Our **Welsh** riders were the only ones still in shorts -



this could be the season's last short story.

Mike M had a long story to tell; it was six weeks since we had seen him due to him being on a three week cruise but when he was half way through relating his holiday we got caught up in traffic.

Next up we were passing **Chester Zoo** when I was reminded of a **Spike Milligan** ditty "The Lion":

"A lion is fierce

His teeth can pierce

The skin of a postman's knee

It serves him right

That, because of his bite

He gets no letters you see"



Spike's Ditty

Alan Leading



Passing Chester Zoo

Everyone was in good spirits - you could hear laughter throughout the group, and most of them didn't know **Spike's** rhyme.

Before we got to the lumpy bits we had two departures. **Jane** who needed to be home early, and **Sarah** who didn't feel very well. Going through the forest was spectacular as the trees were now in their autumn colours.



As we arrived at the **Abbey**, **George** and **Ada** were just pulling in - a later arrival was **Chris R** - our ex verger or is it sexton who had ridden the fourteen miles from home.

George, Ada, Noel and Hazel

Chris told me over lunch that next weekend he is off to **Normandy** with the **CTC** for four days, visiting **WW2** beach landings at **Omaha**, **Juno**, **Gold**, **Sword**, also **Bayeux** and **Pegasus Bridge** - with little training! I hope It's not a bridge too far, "*bon chance*" mate.

It was during lunch that **Glennys** arrived looking more like a cross country skier than a cyclist with a snood on her head. It transpired she had walked the five miles to the **Abbey**. After a brief consultation we agreed to allow her to stay, on the basis of the excellent contribution she makes to the club. The agreement was it would not



happen again, the rules are there to prevent walkers, golfers, netball players, etc. - they are not just guidelines (two legs bad - two wheels good).

The **Abbey** has been in existence for 200 years but **Chris** verger or Sexton (I must get to know his surname) reckons there has never been an **Abbey** there, but they do sell **Abbots Ale**. They also sell you a cup of tea for £2 mmmm!!



When we were leaving **John F** lined us all up at the top of a slope to take a pic riding towards him. **Roy** who reclaimed his crown for the best downhiller started at the back but overtook everyone, but he has a problem walking in Divers boots.

On the way home it started to rain as we went through **Cotebrook**, so it was coat-on, you probably won't believe this but the rain reminded me of another of **Spikes ditty's** called "**Rain**":

*"There are holes in the sky
Where the rain gets in
But they're ever so small
That's why rain is thin"*

I don't know about thin - it became b*****y heavy on the **Greenway**.



I couldn't make it to the **Eureka** on the 2nd October to listen to the cyclist who held the world record for riding around the world. It sounded like a very interesting evening.

Our thanks to **Alan O** for an enjoyable day's ride - hope you didn't get too wet going to **Northop, Alan**.

Chris Byrne

Photos by John Ferguson