

Anderton, Stanley Arms and Boat Lift Cafe - 7th May 2014

Two groups set off again today to the **Anderton Boat Lift**. It was built in 1875, was in use for 100 years, but closed due to corrosion in 1983. After restoration it was re-opened in 2002. The Lift raises and lowers boats 50 feet between the **River Weaver** and the **Trent and Mersey Canal**. Nearby is **Marbury Hall Park** where once stood **Marbury Hall**. It was used as a military camp for a while during the war serving as a prisoner of war camp. **Bert Troutman**, a **German** paratrooper was held there. After the war he remained in **England** and played for **Manchester City**, famously playing on after he broke his neck in a collision during the F.A. cup final. (more history later).



Roy Bunnell left the **Eureka** at 9:30 with nine riders (all male) so in the words of **Delia Smith** when the supporters of her **Norwich** team were very quiet, grabbed a microphone and yelled "Where are you, Where are you, let's be having you" - too much sherry in the trifle. I am sure all you Ladies had good reasons for your absence but we all missed your company.

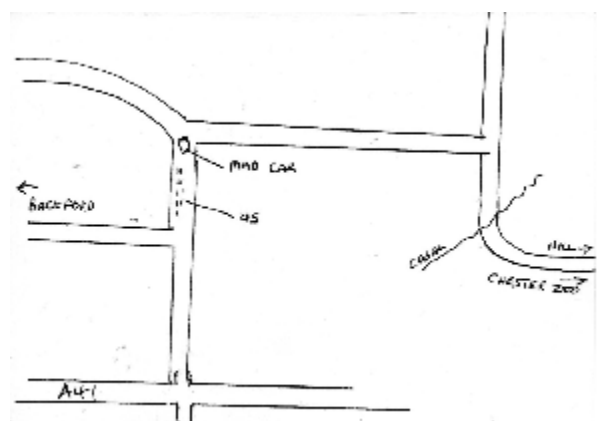
The other team of eight was led by **Big Peter**. The group of 7 met at **Delamere Visitor Centre** car park and started their ride at 10:30am. Peter's route followed the **Whitegate Way** and the **River Weaver** to **Northwich**.



The B Group at Delamere

The weather was bright and windy but it was behind us going out. **Roy** took us down **Capenhurst Lane** to the **A41** and then left at **Backford** towards the **Zoo**. What happened

next was one of the scariest incidents any of us have experienced on our rides. Most of you will know where it took place (see diagram). We were nearing the right turn towards the **Zoo** when we heard a screech of tyres, then a black car almost on two wheels zigzagged around the bend missing us by inches; he was struggling for control and somehow avoided us and the trees. Earlier, we had passed two



horses; if they had been on his side of the road it would have been horrific. He must have been doing at least 60mph. It put the wind up us and I think the wind out of us, (we got some funny looks passing the **Wind Surfers** place).

Our first climb was a repeat of last week's - up **Sugar lane**, round the hairpin bend and on to **Kingsley**. It was here that **Mike Knox** caught up with us; he had to attend hospital at 9:30 to have an injury to his hand checked.



**The A Group along the River
towards Acton Bridge**

Roy's knowledge of this area is great. He took us down some brilliant lanes and along a stretch of the river to **Acton Bridge**, but the curse of things falling off bikes was still with us as **yours truly** came to grief. I was slow to unclip and I hit a big 'sleeping policeman', incurring a nasty injury to my right elbow, the copper was o.k.! (I thought he was on drugs but said he was shattered after a long shift.)



Peter's group had to negotiate the new steps constructed because the **Whitegate Station Bridge** was closed for major strengthening works, and also a number of stiles along the river towards **Northwich**.

**Diversion at Whitegate Station
for the B group**

The first of several stiles along the River path for the B group



On arrival at the Boat Lift it started to rain so some of us had to find cover for our picnic, while the rest went to the Stanley Arms where they said the food was good and not a bad price.

Along with Dave we had a cup of tea in the cafe where we were joined by Peter's group which did include two Ladies Jill, and Glennys, They pulled two tables together and got a

glare from one of the staff. I don't know - you can lift a boat but not a table!



We were anticipating a hard slog into the wind on the return journey but it wasn't that bad, despite a few showers. Roy's route took us past the Tigers Head pub at Norley where Mike Max changed his tube because of a slow puncture in his front wheel. Then it was through Delamere, Mickle Trafford, and Picton.

I hope readers don't mind me including items unrelated to our rides, it could become a bit boring to just state where we have been. After all, most of the time you were there. With that in mind I thought it might be of interest to know of any events that happened on the same date as our

ride. It was on this date 99 years ago on 7th May 1915 that the Lusitania sank killing 1,198 of which 128 were Americans, changing the outcome of WW1. There are lots of other insignificant events for instance Everton won the league (sorry Mike, Dave and Mike, the pub landlord). Cheers again Roy and Peter - a very enjoyable day.

Chris Byrne