

The Yew Tree Inn, Bunbury - 20th May 2015

Today's ride is to **Bunbury** and is led by yours truly so I will attempt to write it up in a modest style and not exaggerate how brilliant it probably will be. The weather forecast said there was a chance of a shower with very strong winds. As we lined up there were fourteen riders so we split into two groups of seven. The venue was **The Yew Tree Inn** - a change from the **Dysart Arms** and that other one that went up market.

I rode to the marshes because I have never stopped appreciating the fantastic views you get looking over to **Wales**, and **Burton** is a chocolate box village. After about six miles along the **Greenway** we came off at **Chester**, as we neared **The Bike Factory**. Peter wanted to check out the new **Evans Cycles**, but it was about a quarter of a mile up to the new **Waitrose** so the vote went against.

The tailwind was great but we were all mindful of how difficult the return would be. The wind blew us through **Saighton** and **Bruera**; we were thinking of a banana stop at the Ice Cream Farm (ICF). As we arrived **Julian** and **Ruth** were setting off for home, with the 'mousey' reason that it would be tough coming back (*is this the same couple in the cycle mag with panniers riding through the mountains?*).

Bananas peeled we set off for **Beeston Castle** - I did cover its history and amazing facts in last year's excellent blog so I won't risk repeating it again.

It's only a short leg to **Bunbury** from here, but for some strange reason **Alan O** seemed to think it was miles away. I had to calm everyone down and reassure them "*it's not that far!*". It was to be one of those days with **Alan**. He next got confused where **The Yew Tree** was in the village; he was trying to convince everyone there could be two and over lunch when discussing our travels, he swore blind that **Lochranza** was in the south of the **Isle of Arran**. What I find a bit scary - he may have taught geography in school. I take no satisfaction being SPOT ON because I think **AI** is great company on any ride.

Just a comment about the pub. When I informed them we were coming I said we would mostly want sandwiches, baguettes etc., but they only had fish finger and fish cake batches? - friendly staff but a bit limited - maybe try the **Nags Head** next time?.

Great to see Bob and **Jill** who had finished eating - both looking well - and are now proud Great Grandparents, so congrats to you both.

I think some of our crew had not been down the lanes coming back. We went through **Tilston** over the canal, and our only climb of the day being up to the very busy A49 - 500yards on the pavement took us to a nice lane into **Tarporley**.

Already the wind was slowing us up. We had a few stops but I think we were all missing **Sue** and her jelly babies (and **Chris**) - not really. We were still trying to maintain two groups but with my head down missed the turn for **Hargrave** and went to **Hoofield**; unfortunately about three off the back missed my error and went to **Hargrave**. I knew in an instant my chance of winning 'ride of the year' had gone. We went past the **Crocky Trail** into **Waverton** and on to **Guilden Sutton** and **Stoak**. Hearing that those left behind went for a coffee in the café at the end of the **Greenway** did nothing to lift my spirits.

I was reminded of the events that befell **Edward Whymper**, England's greatest mountain climber - the first up the **Matterhorn** etc. On the descent a rope snapped and **Queen Vic's** nephew was killed. This was his famous line "*Be thou chaste as ice, as pure as snow, I shall not escape calumny*". I now know what he felt. I am going out with a 'Whimper'. So as we didn't have our ace camera man John I thought I would finish with a **Spike M** ditty:

"This evening in the twilight's gloom

A butterfly flew into my room

Oh what beauty, Oh what grace

Who needs visitors from outer space"

We would all like to wish **Brian L** a speedy return and appreciate all he is still doing behind the scenes making everything run smoothly. Thanks **Brian** from all of us.

Chris Byrne