

The Holly Bush - 13th August 2014

The weather forecast was for showers 'till midday - then clearing up - and with many of our numbers away at the **Birthday Rides** it was good to see 10 riders at the line up. **Mike Knox** was to lead us to the **Holly Bush** in **Cefn-y-Bedd** which means (behind the grave) and nothing to do with **Snow White's** little friends sleeping arrangements.



The Holly Bush, Cefn-y-Bedd

It is a pity we didn't go to a pub up the road in **Caergwrle** then I could have told you about the **Castle** built by the last **Welsh** ruler before the loss of independence in 1283. A fire gutted it in 1299 and it was never rebuilt. A myth developed about a giant named **Gwrle** who lived in the

castle or (Caer) - he was buried in a **Neolithic** burial mound in **Cefn-y-Bedd** (behind the mound?). You couldn't be scared of a giant called **Gwrle** could you?

Caergwrle Castle



Workmen digging a drain near the castle in 1825 unearthed a remarkable find. It's a work of great art known as the **Caergwrle Bowl**, dates back to the middle bronze age and is in the British Museum.

Caergwrle Bowl

Mike explained that the route out had four climbs and was 25miles, but the return was flattish and about the same distance. The first climb was after Queensferry up Aston Hill to Buckley enjoying the descent to the Mold road.

After crossing the road we came to those huge white gates, where we all removed our rain jackets ready for the next climb up to Leeswood. A tail wind never felt better up to the top but a great downhill bit was short lived as the most difficult climb came right away from Leeswood. It proved to be a hill to far for some of us but our leader - true to his word - waited at the top. There were some excellent lanes before the long descent to Cefn. The road surface was a bit rough in places and unfortunately our only lady rider, Sue (missed the jelly babies), got two punctures close to the Holly Bush. Chris fixed one without a hand, the second one he fixed at the Bush, (one with his hand, was worth the two at the...).

The food was good and reasonable and it was great to see Noel and Hazel having their lunch, having arrived by train. We were only just saying that the last time we covered some of this route was under Noel's guidance. Two of our group had ridden to the pub from Mold. Shortly after leaving they peeled off and went their own way. We went back through LLay, Burton, Kinnerton, Saughall.

There was though, one steep nasty little climb that took everyone by surprise. If you couldn't get to your granny ring in under two seconds you were off - and most of us were. Worthy of a mention is the climb back to fitness of Brian S and Charlie - with rides like this one it won't take long.

Just to finish - today's ride took in some breathtaking scenery, but that's no good for asthmatics.

Thanks again Mike - a tough but very enjoyable day's ride.

PS. Why do the Welsh let someone with a bad stutter write their road signs FF. DD,YY. LL?

Chris Byrne