

Cleopatra's, Holt - 21st October 2015

Today is the last of this year's led rides and the honour goes to **Chris** and **Sue**, fresh from their hols in **Corfu**. But just when your thoughts turn to duty free Jelly Babies, poor **Sue** was in bed with **Corfu-Flu**; **Sue** was the first of our four casualties on the day.



Dee Path over Dee to Saltney

As forecast, the day started overcast with very fine rain but it did not deter fifteen riders from donning waterproofs as we set off for **Holt**. **Chris** led us down **Woodbank** to **Saughall** and the **Greenway**, we left it at **Blacon** heading for the cycle bridge over the **Dee** and into **Saltney**.

After a few Zigs and Zags we came to our biggest climb of the day, the **Warren**. It was here we saw the second of our casualties when **Jane M**, not feeling too good, headed for home alone, despite offers of company. The bonus for climbing the **Warren** is the exhilarating decent all the way down to **Kinnernton**.

For the third time during the last five rides we went through **Marford** and it was here we had our third unwelcome event. We were on a narrow lane going downhill when **Andy** braked on a bend, the bike skidded, and he collided with a car coming towards him, he was lucky not to be badly hurt, although his bike will need some attention.

The last event happened a little further on at the last T-Junction before Holt; **Sylvia** fell off when her bike slipped on the white painted road markings, banging her head on the kerb. I heard the clatter behind me and looking back was concerned when there was no movement, I thought she was unconscious. Thankfully she did start to get up slowly; the helmet had prevented a serious head injury although she had grazed the left side of her face.

Cleopatra's Cafe, Holt



Later a quote of **Oscar Wilde's** came to me "We are all in the gutter but some of us are looking at the stars". Poor **Sylvia** was in the gutter seeing stars. (she has a good sense of humour).

Lunch was in **Cleopatra's** or some had sandwiches in the square. The **Dee** here separates **England** from **Wales**, there have been battles fought here between them including the **Civil War**, but these days it is more on the rugby pitch.

I think we must have stood together on this date in 1805 when we fought the **French** and the **Spanish** at the **Battle of Trafalgar**. The **Parliamentarians** were victors on 9th November 1643 storming the then 'Draw Bridge', and they never sang the 'Nation Anthem'! **Holt castle** if you can find it was built in 1277 by **Edward 1st**.



Reconstruction of Holt Castle

There used to be a brickworks with six kilns that supplied tiles and pottery for the fort at **Deva**.

Chris returned the way we had arrived but only as far as **Rossett**; we then went to **Dodleston** and **Saltney**, crossing the **Dee**. **Saughall** and **Woodbank** finished our eventful day.



It had remained dry for most of the day and apart from the unwelcome happenings it was enjoyable so thanks **Chris** and get well soon, all our casualties.

Autumn Colours

Chris Byrne