

## The Tap, Eastham - 7th January 2015

Despite a wet start to the day, a dozen hardy souls turned up to the Eureka. Brian L had a route in mind starting the long way round to The Tap in Eastham. The group welcomed back Tina after a long absence through illness and who is well on the road to full fitness.



We set off down to the marshes after splitting into two groups of six; there would have been fourteen but Martin and Sarah got too cosy in the Eureka and moused out. We also had another deserter in the shape of Alan O, who on reaching the Greenway went west to Northop. Brian took us off the Greenway at Saughall and through the farm without any hold ups from cows crossing our path to be milked. This section is usually the last part of a ride but we turned sharp right after the A5117 towards the end of Capenhurst Lane to the Cheshire Yeoman pub and down Ledsham lane. Just before the A41 we cut through to Berwick Road crossing the A41 to School Lane and Rivacre Road.

We passed the church of St. Mary's in Eastham Village (mentioned in the Domesday Book) on our way down Ferry Road to The Tap pub in Eastham. Although we have had many a lunch in The Ferry pub not many of us had been in The Tap before, and as John F remarked *"it's the first pub that is shared with a café, it's a great location as you can watch ships entering and leaving the Manchester canal, and planes in and out of John Lennon airport"*.

Eastham woods with its many attractions saw thousands of visitors arriving on paddle steamers from Liverpool many years ago. Once again it was great to see Noel and Hazel, also a seldom seen lady Esme Mold who had ridden from Bromborough; she was sitting next to another senior cyclist Barry Davis (motorist today). Bob and Jill, who were already there, were doing the river to river and back in a day and I heard Dee did it.

Brian suggested various rides of different mileages back to the Eureka. Brian S and I headed off to our favourite watering hole The Wheatsheaf, calling on the way to Burlydam to get his wife a birthday card. As we were leaving, George and Ada arrived, George was still recovering from a dose of flu (he will wear shorts in winter!).

Lunch time conversations included the devastating news of Richard's fatal heart attack on Boxing Day; all our thoughts go to Marie at this very difficult time - he will be greatly missed.

At the end of this enjoyable day we all came home to the terrible news from France. Mike Cross has said on many occasions how privileged we are every time we get on our bikes, so let's not complain about the weather or punctures.

On reflection, January has not been a good month for our club of late; it's two years to the day we lost Pam, and a year almost since Dorothy left us on Burns night.

I want to finish with an excerpt from one of Robbies poems.

*"Wha kens, before his life may end,  
What his share may be o' care, man?  
Then catch the moments as they fly,  
And use them as ye ought, man:  
Believe me, happiness is shy  
And comes not aye when sought, man"*

**Chris Byrne**