

The Wheatsheaf, Ellesmere Port - 25th November 2015

Today's ride was to the **Wheatsheaf** pub in **Ellesmere Port**, a change from the original venue the **Bunbury Arms** at **Stoak**. The forecast was for a dry start with rain in the afternoon. They could not have got it more wrong, it was the total reverse. Fourteen hardy cyclists made the effort to go to the start and were rewarded when the rain stopped as we set off.



After thanking my peloton for their loyalty and commitment, we set off to **Ledsham** and **Badgers Rake** leading

us to **Burton** and the **Marshes**. We had some shelter from a strong wind as we headed to **Neston**.

To keep a blog interesting you should not repeat yourself with items you have already covered previously, so I won't bore you with the story about the boy who was killed when he fell off a cradle being hoisted up from the coal face in the **Neston** colmine - and we all know the icy corner were **Brian L** did his hip in going through **Neston**. After crossing the **Chester/Hoylake Road** we had a banana stop in **Thornton Hough** (once the residence of the **Leverhulme family**), I think I may have mentioned before with regards to the father exploiting slavery in the **Belgian Congo** along with **King Leopold** to amass his wealth.

I always enjoy riding down **Benty Heath Lane** - usually traffic free and with beautiful colours on the trees. It's at moments like that you think about just what those fair weather wimps are missing, and oh! not having **Jelly Babies** to look forward to. **Eastham** came next, this 'mentioned in the *Domesday Book*' village was



also reported in despatches.

If by some incredible oversight you missed it, the **Stanley** family dominated the whole area for miles. Where the **Vauxhall factory** stands was their Stately Home and a racecourse. The Manchester Ship Canal prevented access to their yacht on the **River Mersey**. Then there was an airfield, there are still hangers on site.

We arrived at the **Wheatsheaf** at 12:20 and were met by our good friends **Bob, Jill, Brian L** and **Mike C**. I think everyone was pleased with the food and especially the cost. **Wetherspoons** has a different theme on its menu each day and on **Wednesdays**



it's chicken. A certain person left us after lunch to go home - he became known as the 'chicken' club rider (see **John F** for details). WE went via **Princes Road** past the **Gunners Pub**, named because **Joe Mercer**

came from **Ellesmere Port**, famous for playing for **Arsenal (The Gunners)** - also manager of **Man City** and **England**.

We did a short stretch along the canal coming off near the **Bunbury Arms** and followed the muddy lanes to get to the **Greenway**. It was a difficult finish against the wind but we had remained dry and had covered 40 miles. I am not one to make those not on the ride feel bad, but there was talk of today being one of, if not the top ride of the year. I thanked my comrades and close friends for their support and company.

P.S. Today's date has a sad significance for **Man United**, as all the following players and **Manager** had passed away.

2005 George Best 63-74

2012 Dave Sexton (manager) 77 -81

2013 Bill Foulkes 51 - 70

Chris Byrne

Photos by John Ferguson

