



'the Link' 'y Cyswllt'

THE MAGAZINE OF CHESTER & NORTH WALES CTC – CAER A GOGLEDD

IN THIS EDITION:

All the usual features including:

Reader's favourite rides & tours

Technical tips

Brain Teaser etc etc

PLUS

John's build up to the Paris Brest Paris

'The Ferguson Interview'

Glynn Jones reminiscing

And so much more!



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Chester & North Wales CTC Caer a Gogledd Cymru

www.ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk

Contact details for Club Officials:

President:
Mike Cross
1, Mealor's Courtyard
Neston Road
Ness, Neston
CH64 4GA
president@ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk

Secretary:
Lowri Evans
86 Bro Deg
Rhuthun
LL15 1XY
secretary@ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk

Treasurer:
Colin Bell
2 Howells Avenue
Great Sutton
Ellesmere Port
CH66 2SZ
treasurer@ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk

The Link Editor:
Martin Brooks
54 Alyn Drive
Rossett
Wrexham
LL12 0HQ
link@ctcchesterandnwales.org.uk

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Front Cover Photograph

The photo shows why Chester and North Wales is so, so 'cycling country'!

Gavin Woolgar near the summit of Bwlch Y Groes looking east on a beautiful September day

Photo courtesy of Joe Jord
www.JoeJord.co.uk
www.facebook.com/JoeJordphotography



The Editor

It's that time of the year again when the euphoria of the summer, the warmth and our stunning Welsh & Cheshire scenery are all rapidly disappearing into the memory of oblivion!

Not to worry because amongst the rain, cold and wet weather gear we can always bring a ray of sunshine into our lives with a bit of planning for next year! We are already doing the planning for our next 'jaunt'; looking at ferries, campsites and maps in readiness to fill in another four months of seeing new sights and meeting new people

Need to do a bit of prep on the bikes though. As always we try to minimise mechanical issues while out on the road (like who's going to find a bike shop in the mountains of Romania on a Sunday afternoon?) we give our trusty Thorns a thorough service before we go – check out bottom brackets, brake shoes, cables, chains, tyres, mechs, steering, looking for frame cracks etc etc. Seems to have worked as over the last 10,000kms we've had only been stopped once and that was only a 'snakebite' puncture on Sarah's bike caused by running over a sharp rock – not bad eh?



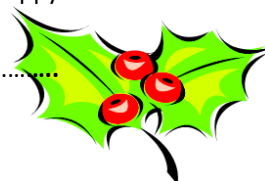
Wednesday Riders route into the Wirral on the road to Thornton Hough – still don't think we should try to stop the farmers leaving our roads in such a state?

Remember my crusade about us cyclists having to negotiate all the farmer's rubbish they leave in the road? Who's with me to try to do something about it?

But it's also the season for 'good cheer' so let me wish you all a happy Christmas and good, safe New Year.

See you on the road

Martin



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So far, so good?

Read on

----- ooOoo -----



A Message from your President

Autumn, that 'season of mists and mellow fruitfulness' has, as I write this, been well and truly blown and washed away. However, I did manage to get myself away for some 'mellow' cycling in fine autumn weather amongst the 'fruitful' cider orchards of the lovely county of Herefordshire -although I have to admit that I did spend rather a lot of time (and money!) in the Ludlow Food Centre.

Glorious Food

Food was of course the attraction at the President's Lunch where (again blessed with excellent weather) we feasted on the spread laid out for us by the ladies of Neuadd Owen village hall at Cefn, near St Asaph. Sadly, our guest of honour, 99 year-old John Pegum was not well enough to attend and thus was not able to be presented with the President's Trophy there, as had been the intention. However, as you will see elsewhere, I was finally able to present it to him a few weeks later at his home in Neston in the presence of his two proud sons and their wives.

It was good to welcome our C&NW CTC prize winners to the lunch and re-present them with their awards. The original presentations back in the summer before the CTC AGM was low

key – in fact, disappointingly and unrewardingly low key. So it was fitting that CTC National Volunteer of the Year for 2014, David Ackerley; Doreen Lindsey 2014 Welsh Volunteer and, of course, Hon. Sec. Lowri Evans should receive the plaudits of their local cycling companions who really know what efforts they put in for all of us.

Any Old Iron?

I took for display at the lunch the recently restored CTC Repairer's sign. This is a rarity being only one of twelve of its type known to exist in the country. (Its origin is a complete mystery.) As many of you know, it has been expertly restored by Reg Waud – a true labour of love – and we were pleased that Reg was at the lunch and able to take a congratulatory bow. I had had to take it there in the boot of my car. The sign being of solid cast iron and of weight to match was obviously too big to fit into even my largest saddle bag let alone be carried on my bike! At the moment, it can be viewed at Alf Jones Cycles, Gresford. Hurry, hurry, if you haven't seen it!

More Honours

There was another pleasant surprise in store for Lowri some five weeks later when, at our AGM in Pulford, I had the pleasure of presenting her with a CTC Certificate of Merit. It had been in the planning for much of the year because your Awards Committee, in its wisdom, decided that it would be fitting to have

the citation translated into Welsh. (Was this a first for CTC National Office, I wonder?) However, in order to preserve secrecy, I arranged to have it translated by a non-cycling Welsh-speaking friend of mine who hails from Holyhead. He collaborated with his sister who still lives on Anglesey in order to get it right. There was a fair bit of 'to-ing and fro-ing, with the citation being returned to National Office for minor corrections. Fortunately for me, I'm glad to say, there was an English translation – so Lowri got two citations, as they say, for the price of one! (Don't know what the Welsh is for that!)

The result of all these presentations and other honours from the past is now recorded in a handsome volume prepared over the past few months by our Archivist, Arthur Miller. This 'Rolls of Honours' volume includes not only past officials and office holders but our two dozen recipients of the CTC Certificate of Merit dating back to 1941; recipients of our 70th Anniversary Certificates of Meritorious Conduct; awards made to mark our 75th Anniversary; winners of the CTC Tourist Trophies and even Cafes of the Year.

And finally, as they say, may I wish all of you, and your nearest and dearest, Christmas and New Year greetings. May we all have a good, trouble free and safe cycling year in 2016. Hope to see you on the road. **Mike Cross**

----- ooOoo -----



Tech Tip No. 1



So when you lube YOUR chain and you're dropping oil onto the chain as you rotate it how do you know when you have arrived at the start point?

To prevent 'double dosing' all you need to do is fit a connecting link of a different colour so you have a datum point to start and finish – saves oil and also the floor/back wheel from 'over-exuberant' lubrication!

I generally use silver/grey chains so when I order 'Quick links' I tick the 'Gold' box!

----- ooOoo -----



- Bifocals are God's way of saying, "Keep your chin up".
- Surely every car is a people carrier?

- They scoffed when I told them I'd one day learn the secret of invisibility. If they could only see me now!
- My dad's like a laptop, if you don't touch him for 10 minutes he will go to sleep.

----- ooOoo -----

Letters to the Editor



A regular topic for 'the Link', so now is your opportunity to tell us what you REALLY think!

We have 1700+ members in our area all with their own opinion on matters, so tell everyone what you think, what irritates you, your good ideas, etc, etc.

Chris & Jane's article on 'The Big Ride' caused some controversy both vocally and in print – read on.....



Politics in cycling?

Reference the article on 'The Big Ride': on the basic issue of including an article in 'The Link' that is in effect a political statement regarding World events that happens to involve a bike ride---I don't believe that we should be publishing such articles and I don't think they have any place in a magazine such as ours.

I can understand Martin's difficulties in getting people to write and I do appreciate all his hard work in getting the magazine together and publishing it---many thanks for that--- but I believe we must avoid political statements of the aforementioned nature.

Regards to all

David Matthews

Two sides to the story?

I received what I believe was my second copy of 'The Link' today. I subscribed as a CTC member in your area (just on the border of Denbighshire and Gwynedd) with a real interest in cycling. I've been a member of the CTC almost continually for some 35 years. I've met many CTC folk in that time and even served for a while on Council. It takes all sorts, as they say, and generally the common bond of cycling covers most things.

What does sadden me is the use of the CTC for politics: I refer of course to the article The Big Ride: Capital to Capital. There are two sides to the Israel/Palestinian issue but this biased and openly partisan article made no mention of that at all. An account of the ride and perhaps a line or two

saying what folk were collecting for would be no problem at all, but links to a Jon Snow report etc. are more than this particular flesh and blood can stand! By all means let's have reports of all kinds of rides, but let's leave the politics somewhere else.

Graham Hind

The World is as it is?

Re the controversy regarding the inclusion of the GAZA charity ride article:

Seems to me there are two salient points that jump out at me:

1. Surely the editor's decision as to what he accepts for inclusion is the deciding factor? The editor and the editor alone should decide what he includes and what he declines; it should not be open to censorship just because it may upset someone else's delicate sensibilities.
2. You cannot divorce the context and purpose of Jane and Chris's ride from the rest of the article; the world is as it is, not how some would like it to be. You can bury your head in the sand and close your eyes to what is happening outside the world of leisure cycling but these two chose to undertake a lengthy charity ride because they had passion and belief in the cause for which they were raising money and many of us who cycle with them supported them financially and were interested in their post ride account of their progress. I can think of no more appropriate forum than 'The Link' for that account. You were right to print it as written without alteration.

Brian Joyce



Keep up the good work?

As a recently departed member of the Chester and North Wales parent group committee, I thought I would share some thoughts about the running of this committee.

CTC members within the geographical frontiers of this group, [probably the largest area in England and Wales] have the benefit of a dedicated number of unpaid individuals on this committee, namely the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and in this context the Link Editor, who endeavour to co-ordinate cycling activities, the activities of the composite groups within the whole, ensure fiscal probity, feed through members ideas and comments, and generally make cycling a satisfying and rewarding pastime.

We are very lucky in this association that, notwithstanding some representatives having strong views, they nevertheless endeavour to make sure that all group views are respected, all group activities are well organised, and that all the whole group's finances are organised in such a way that we are financially viable year on year.

Although the committee welcome new initiatives, new personnel to organise, they are always mindful of trying to ensure that whoever wishes to run and organise any aspect of the organisation has the wherewithal to do this.

In conclusion, I feel that members should be very grateful for the devotion to duty of their officers, and employ due diligence in allowing members of unknown provenance, and untested qualities to take over any of the important posts of our organisation. Long may they keep working on our behalf.

Alan Oldfield

----- ooOoo -----

Cafe Fresh, Dunham on the Hill - 25th Oct 2015

The weather was cloudy but dry and cold, as the group assembled at Eureka (derived from the ancient Greek), there were nineteen riders so it was decided to divide into two



groups, one being led by Janet and the other by Andy and so we departed in separate ways to suit each leader, we zigzagged to add the miles and then dropped down from Backford over the Shropshire canal bridge, and then up the lump by the Zoo to Upton, (loved by some and not by



others!). Thence by the Cheshire lanes and the A56 to the layby, Andy's group had taken a short cut to Café Fresh, so we were asked who wanted to go the longer route

and uphill and who want to go shorter without much of a hill, one member only opted for the shorter route and had a personal escort to the Café Fresh! The Café may not look much from the outside but the service is prompt and quick, it was noticed that the café had 5 stars for hygiene and cleanliness, so top marks to them.

After lunch we dropped down through the lanes, passing another closed pub, and on to Oil Sites Road, some of us may remember being able to take a short cut through here in our cars, closed to the public now, but that may have been before the M56 was built. The Beluga paid us a flying visit on her way to collect some more wings from Hawarden and we

enjoyed the peaceful traffic free ride for some 3½ miles even if through some of Wirral's Industry, it makes an interesting change from the Cheshire lanes, We may refer to 'Shell's Stanlow' but of course it is now owned by Essar - another big Indian Company with its headquarters in Mumbai and interests in steel and many other industries. We can only hope that this important refinery to our area is not closed down like our steel



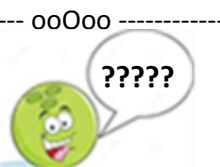
industry; and so on we rode to Ellesmere Port and the Boat Museum and to view an Industry of old Ellesmere Port Boat Museum How they make this Museum pay is a mystery, but it seems to go on and give pleasure to many - and we always enjoy a visit, ashamed to say, when we don't have to pay!

Our leader knew a way through the Museum and along paths and byways beside the M53 and back through the Wirral to the Eureka via the "missing link". We arrived in good time which gave an opportunity to catch up while having a drink. With many thanks to our leaders Janet and Andy, for an enjoyable ride and a good day on the bikes. **David Collinson**

Caption Competition



Photo: courtesy of Jane Marshall



Alan normally uses the 'Servant's Entrance' but he doesn't want anyone on the ride to know that!

Anyone else with suitable comments?

See later on in the mag for some cracking 'witticisms' from Brian Lowe on the last editions Caption Competition!



Friday is my second favorite F word.

- *The only thing I hate more than having a dirty house is cleaning.*
- *The reason why I hate mornings so much is that they start while I'm still sleeping.*

2015 President's Trophy for John Pegum



Photo: courtesy of Glennys Hammond

Chester and North Wales founder member, 99 year-old D Day veteran John Pegum being presented with the President's Trophy for 2015 by President Mike Cross. John played a prominent part in the activities of Chester and North Wales CTC in post-War years and was a regular contributor of articles to the forerunners of this magazine. He is a belated but very worthy recipient of this award.

(This handsome trophy was donated by Mrs Iris Mills in memory of her son Graham who died suddenly in 2007. It was first awarded in 2009.)

..... and the response from John

I can still propel myself on level ground such as coastal promenades. My form of cycling consists of pushing my trolley with four wheels. I get great pleasure as I see younger generations cycling along the rural lanes.

I am a lucky man with a family who love outdoor activities. I have bought a ticket in the CTC Lottery so may be luckier still! I was unable to attend the gathering at St Asaph on Sunday September 27th. I wish to thank you for the kind invitation and especially I appreciate the card wishing me well which is signed by so many cycling friends. **John Pegum**

----- ooOoo -----

Sartorial Issues!

Before I took a 'deal' and sailed off into early retirement, thus allowing me to become a Wednesday Rider, I was an



Advisory Teacher for the Visually Impaired for Liverpool Children's Services. As such, my day involved getting round a variety of schools, nurseries, and even the front rooms of

Mums and Dads, along with a sprinkling of more formal meetings and office-based time.

When I first started going to work on the bike 2 or 3 days a week I rather naïvely just wore cycling gear. With four or five visits a day it simply wasn't an option to be your usual commuter, lycra-clad for the trip to the office, then a quick shower and into a business suit. Alright, there were the odd few 'humorous' remarks but by and large people just seemed to take it in their stride.

One day however my (female) line manager asked me in a rather flustered way if she could 'have a word'. After lots of assurances that Liverpool City Council fully supported my cycling to work, that nobody was trying to put a dampener on me flying the flag for our brave little planet and the council's 'fitness and sustainability goals', she finally got round to telling me there had been a complaint from the head teacher of a girl's high school about my dress code. Blushing furiously by now, she explained that there was nothing wrong with the *top* half of my outfit ...

if she saw what I was getting at! I was half tempted to act daft and say that no, I *couldn't* see what she meant at all, but I could see I was on shaky ground taking that route if I wanted to continue to be paid for breezing round Liverpool on my fixie. The Evans website was quickly raided for a pair of decorously baggy cycling trousers and I enjoyed a cycling work/life balance until I left.

My wife is convinced that this would make an ideal pitch to a TV company for one of those schmaltzy 'Sunday at 7 o'clock' type series – 'Blind Teacher on a Bike' perhaps? We might have to lose Liverpool and transpose it to the Yorkshire Dales, in the 1960's probably. Maybe Martin Clunes playing me? She's particularly taken by the image of an affecting scene where the winsome blind child included in his local village school cups his hand to his ear and says "I can hear him coming Miss. I'd know those Schwalbe Marathon Plus's anywhere"! **Steve Guinness**

(Ed: I don't know, All that fuss over such a little thing!)

----- ooOoo -----



- What happens to a frog's car when it breaks down?
It gets toad away.

- Policeman: "Madam, swimming is prohibited in this lake."
Lady: "Why didn't you tell me when I was removing my clothes?"
Policeman: "Well, that's not prohibited."

The Perils of Punctures



The last '*Link*' mentions the problem of mounting piles of unrepaired inner tubes reminds me of a story from the 1950s. Having completed my two years national service to the new Queen and Country in the Army at Nottingham, within days of my demob I had joined the Liverpool YHA area club with its core of cyclists young and not so young. In

fact it's where I met Joyce, who as a member of the Liverpool CTC DA rode with its Family Section.

Amongst my newly acquired gang was a Freddie Hardwick who had lost an arm but somehow managed to get around on both a bike and motor bike. The story goes that some of the gang dropped in to see Freddie in his flat one weekday evening to finalise plans for the following weekend. Freddie was squatting in the middle of the floor surrounded by a multitude of un-repaired inners. In those days one of the tricks of the economically minded, borne of years of farthing pinching, was to save on puncture patches by cutting squares out of old tubes and sticking

those over the puncture. Freddie was thus engaged when our pals arrived to distract his attention with plans to meet up at one of the hostels deep in the heart of Wales no doubt.

Up to that point Freddie had been making good progress surrounded by shredded tubes when having cut out one more square, he turned to his original repair to discover he couldn't find it. Yep. To his horror he found he had cut a great square out of the one he was aiming to repair. History does not record any expletives, but given the innocence of civilian discourse in those days of yore, I doubt it was much stronger than 'goodness gracious me!'

Roy Spilsbury



Café of the Year 2015

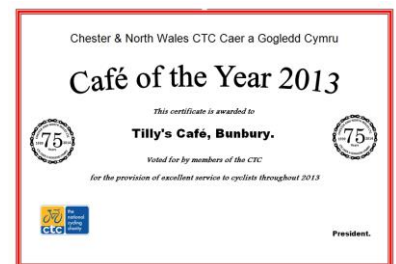
Now, this is a topic that is always a 'bone of contention' for us cyclists! Is the food cheap enough? Are there free refills? Will the bikes be safe and so on

Now is our chance to support our favourite cycling café so just have a quick read of the rules for entry below and drop David Ackerley a line or give him a call with your favourite café nomination. The cafés concerned are really grateful for our support so let's show them our support!

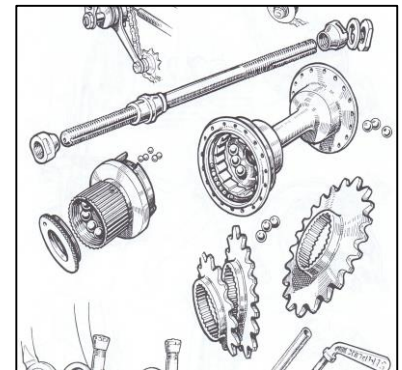
Tilley's and Walk Mill have already won this accolade so unfortunately aren't eligible for this year's competition.

The rules are as follows:

- Only votes from individual members will be counted; block votes from groups are invalid.
- A member may vote for the café of his/her choice once only in a calendar year.
- The café that secures most votes will get a Certificate from C&NW CTC.
- The winning café in any year will not be eligible for entry in the competition until 5 years have passed since its last win.
- Please send your nomination to the Link Editor to register your vote.



Can anyone help Mike Roberts?

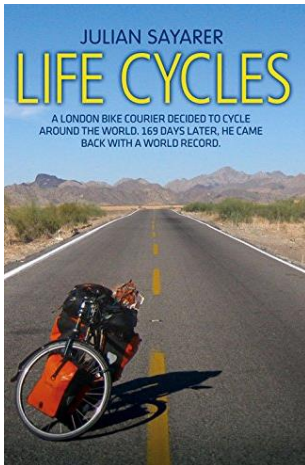


Martin,

This is the Bayliss Willey hub that I was telling you about, one of the extras I was given with the trike. The illustration seems to be of the "new improved?" Just the post was variant.

As far as we can make out the pictured one is pre-war, would be interesting if anyone might have further knowledge. From the illustration, nothing is new! Old ideas come back again. Regards Mike

Remember Julian Sayarer's Life Cycles?



Remember Julian's article in the Christmas 2014 edition of *'The Link'*? In it he described his world record 'round the World' circumnavigation. We also had the opportunity to listen to his interesting presentation at the Eureka café one evening.

Well, just received an email announcing his next book

"A quick email to round-up a year that, for the last six months, has been dominated

by finishing my second book, *Messengers*. The book is the story of a year as a bicycle messenger in London, and if *Life Cycles* was a look at the globalised world by bicycle, *Messengers* shows the globalised city, from the vantage

point of the saddle and stuck in a low pay job.

The book is available to pre-order from all usual online suspects, of which I recommend Hive because they work together with independent [book shops](#). Best of all is if you order *Messengers* from those shops themselves - they're invariably great businesses who could always use the support of their communities.

The cover design is not yet finalised, but you can get a glimpse of how it should look on the [event page for the January 14 launch](#).

As with *Life Cycles*, we'll be returning to Old Street's 'Look Mum No Hands', London. My publisher has confirmed a few hundred quid to put behind the bar and I'm emailing now, as much as anything, to say - once again - [you're all welcome](#).

The support I continue to receive for *Life Cycles* has been humbling and flattering in equal proportions, and it'll be great to share another book with you all." **Julian Sayarer**

----- ooOoo -----

My Autumn Bike Ride



With a favourable weather forecast, an autumnal bicycle ride along memory lane could not have been more perfectly timed. And this adventure would follow the coast of north-west England from Merseyside into the Southern Lake District to places that I remember either being told or read about and have never visited.

Day 1: Sunday September 6th



Looking at one hundred naked men standing on a beach sounds like the shameful behaviour of a peeping Tom. Yet these are men of iron who were sculpted by a chap called Antony Gormley who is responsible for the 'Angel of the North' which I intend to visit next year.

It is said that the sculptures harness the ebb and flow of the sea in a way that explores man's relationship with nature.... ummmm.

For now, this adventure leads from Crosby promenade along a 22 mile route that is virtually traffic free to reach Southport. It is known as the 'Sefton Coastal Path'. In places the path has been tarmaced for the sole use of walkers and cyclists. Other parts follow quiet residential streets. Tonight was a lovely evening for cycling - an un-crowded easy, flat surface to travel along to my overnight stay at Southport.

Day 2: Monday 7th September

Today's journey would have followed a short and simple 50 mile route to my next overnight stay in Morecambe. A navigational error extended the journey to 60 miles! Safer cycling in Southport is helped by a designated space on the main A565 road out of town. 15miles later the A565 arrives at a junction with the A59 where the turning to Preston is taken. So why-oh-why did I go in the wrong direction? The error was realised on the brow of a hill 5 miles later where a road sign for Preston pointed back towards Southport - silly me. Pausing for a calming coffee from my Stanley thermos flask I turned back. The A59 took me to the recently created 'Preston Guild Wheel Cycle Path'. A neighbour told me about this and it was an absolute joy to cycle on. I cycled around the wheel in an

anti-clockwise direction and then followed the National Cycle Route 6 (NCR 6) signage that took me towards Lancaster. NCR 69 then provided a further traffic free route across the river Lune to my destination for the day at Morecambe.

The Eric Morecambe memorial was the reason I wanted to visit Morecambe. It



is set against the backdrop of Morecambe Bay and tomorrow's destination, the Lake District. The sculpture of his trade mark skip and dance pose was the way that Eric and Ernie turned their backs to the audience and bounded off stage at the end of their television programme.

A large circular tribute has been laid in front of the statue:



My Autumn Bike Ride cont'd

- The outer ring lists the names of those who made a financial donation to this memorial.
- Written in the next ring are the names of guests who had appeared in their television shows. I made a note of the most memorable: Kenny Ball, Shirley Bassey, The Beatles, Ian Carmichael, Cilla, Peter Cushing, David Frost, Glenda Jackson, Penelope Keith, Sir Lawrence Olivier, Lulu, Sir John Mills, Vanessa Redgrave and Angela Rippon. So many well known guests appeared on their show that the tribute has needed three rows to name them all.
- Written in the inner ring are Eric's catchphrases, including my favourite: 'Tea urn?'

Eric's statue shows him with a pair of binoculars. He enjoyed bird watching and sculpted birds have been positioned in the flower beds and wrought iron railings that lead to and surround his memorial.

Day 3: Tuesday 8th September

This was my first visit to Morecambe and I have been very impressed with its character. Today started with a visit to the tourist information (TI) office for guidance on the safest cycling route into the Southern Lake District. The TI office is located in the former 'Morecambe Pavilion Railway Station' that was initially built to receive holiday makers arriving to the area. Although the station has moved it seemed very apt for the tourist information office to be based in a building that was always intended to serve commuters and visitors. The TI people were really helpful and suggested following the traffic free 'Morecambe Bay Cycle Way' and then cross the main road to cycle along the Lancaster canal towpath. They also suggested that I looked inside the Midland Hotel that is situated across the road from the TI building and gosh, it is impressive; Neptune and Triton have been painted on the lobby ceiling and the building has a distinctive art-deco style. Gosh, I wished my overnight stay in Morecambe had been spent there.

The 'Morecambe Bay Cycle Way' starts next to the Midland Hotel and marked the beginning of a 60 mile ride to my next overnight stay in picturesque Ulverston. Signage that marked the starting point of today's route coincides with the starting point of the aptly named 'Way of the Roses' cycle way which goes from Morecambe in Lancashire to Bridlington in Yorkshire.

I was so pleased that the Morecambe TI team suggested cycling alongside the Lancaster canal. What a stunning route. Every pedal stroke opened Pandora's box for the finest views of canal side properties, decorative narrow boats, sea views to the left and countryside to the right. From the Lancaster canal I followed NCR 700 before taking the Arnside train across an estuary to Grange-over Sands. From here I followed NCR 70 uphill to cross the Ulverston Channel by Greenodd with a steeper climb to the hamlets of Penny Bridge and Mansrigg followed by a welcome descent to my destination. When I arrived at Ulverston 'Laurel and Hardy' were leaning against a lamp post outside Coronation Hall.



Ulverston is the place where Stan Laurel was born and the reason why I wanted to visit. After checking into a B&B the remainder of the afternoon was spent in the Laurel and Hardy museum set inside the Roxy cinema.

My sides ached from the laughter of watching their short slap-stick films. I hadn't laughed so much for years.

Day 4: Wednesday 9th September

A feature of today's ride were quiet B roads, short sharp hills, rolling countryside and ideal weather conditions for touring on a bicycle. It was cool and dry with no headwind.

Some years ago I read 'Swallows and Amazons' by Arthur Ransome - the 'Swallow' and 'Amazon' were names given to boats and Peel island was the known in the book as Wild Cat Island,




with its secret landing stage for those boats. My reason for cycling alongside Coniston water was to capture this view of Peel Island.

The tree line is Amazonian. I wonder if this why one of the boats was named Amazon.

The other reason for wanting to visit Coniston was to see where Donald Campbell made his speed record attempt. So I made my way into Coniston itself and went to the Ruskin museum that houses some of his memorabilia.

After resting in Coniston and enjoying a coffee from my Stanley thermos flask a steep climb lay ahead. I am so pleased my Rohloff gearing has a mountain bike ratio - the hill, Hawkshead Hill, was a toughie. Especially as it had recently been coated with loose chippings. At the top I decided to visit nearby Hawkshead with its connections to William Wordsworth and Beatrix Potter. I brought a copy of Beatrix Potters 'Treasured Tales'. Her stories and the illustrations are as wonderful and colourful as the names of her well known characters: Tabitha Twitchit, Jemima Puddle-Duck, Peter Rabbit, Mrs Tiggy-Winkle & Squirrel Nutkin to name but a few.

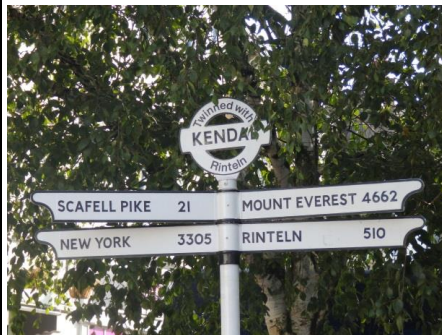
From Hawkshead I thought it would be a good idea to take in a cruise on Lake Windermere. A tourist information leaflet explained that a ferry trip around Lake Windermere could be made from nearby Lakeside. My arrival at the Lakeside ferry coincided with the arrival of a steam train full of tourists. Within a few minutes the once empty ferry was filled with people that had got off the

My Autumn Bike Ride cont'd 
train leaving no room for me....such is life!

Day 5: Thursday 10th September
Today followed the scenic east bank of Lake Windermere. On the outskirts of town my route headed inland to climb past Windermere golf club to travel along the even quieter B5284 all the way to Kendal.

A delight of riding a bicycle is that the absence of engine noise avoids disturbing nature. This morning it felt as though my bicycle ride had taken the form of a nature safari with a surprising, wonderful sighting of a red kite and separately a red squirrel.

My reason for visiting Kendal was to buy and for the first time taste some Kendal mint cake. Here I spotted this



unusual signpost and wondered why it included the mileage to Mount Everest;

I then brought some Kendal mint cake. The reverse of the wrapper states: *"Romneys Kendal Mint Cake was the first mint cake to be successfully carried to the top of Mount Everest on 29th May 1953, this being the first successful expedition to the summit"* Although the mint cake wrapper had solved the riddle of the reason for a signpost from Kendal town centre to Mount Everest, it left me with a puzzle. Why carry the mint cake to the summit without eating it?Later that night I appreciated the reason why! **Joe Patton from Harlech:** www.harlechjoe.wordpress.com

----- ooOoo -----



8 THE BICYCLE: February 4, 1942

BUSTER K. BULL and his Bicycle

By S. G. SPOONER



- Mike Cross found this in an early cycling mag – Nothing changes!

----- ooOoo -----

My Blue Bridge to P-B-P (Paris-Brest-Paris)



This is a 2-part story about how our own John Wilkie overcame all odds to ride the 'signature' event in the long distance calendar – Paris Brest Paris. In this instalment he writes about the initial trials and tribulations before he rode that classic event; that'll be in the next edition

Ride the Chester Millennium Greenway, towards Wales, from my home it's 6 km to 'My Blue Bridge'.

It was my target & challenge to get there, on my new 'mountain' bike, on my first ride; as I changed to the lowest of gears, sweating, puffing and straining on the gradient to climb



My Blue Bridge to P-B-P ... cont'd (Paris-Brest-Paris)



its summit, flashes of vehicles below on the A494 Welsh Road, all oblivious to my pain and euphoria. As I hung over the handle bars, taking gulps of air, getting a polite nod from a passing cyclist, I realised, it was only halfway, I had to get back! About twelve months later, I was in Brest, France, thinking just the same!



Five years earlier I had been in a car crash, I had been active and fit, not to previous and younger Army levels but enough to walk the hills, play rugby or hold my own in the gym with friends or with my teenagers. The shoulder and back injuries over this time, had taken away my physical ability and stature, I couldn't walk more than a short distance, worse, leaving me with mental disabilities, as I was diagnosed with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). So with the challenge and journey to get home on my bike, it was the voice in my head, "Go-Go-Go" not the stern, aggressive fighting voice of old, but for the squeals of delight from my granddaughter learning to walk. 'Another' voice shouted "taxi", but the giggles won and have done ever since. After a day's rest & recuperation, I rode to the Blue Bridge & back, again and then again, a day on and a day off, going further, getting stronger and even faster. I knew I was eating better, sleeping more and actually happy.

The physical and health benefits are measured and recorded, the mental benefits not so easily, although Combat Stress do try. I know the peace, relaxation, space and environment my head gets, when cycling helps, sometimes only pure exertion, pain and exhaustion works, to quell the anger and turmoil in my head, better times are with those quiet, country lanes, wildlife and scenery, where time is lost and peace is found, even if only for a while. It could be called mad to thank a bicycle; I do talk to my bikes! Giving a big thank you, every time I clean and oil them after



Talking with Mike Cross

'The Ferguson Interview'

First bike?

That was a second-hand, 18inch frame BSA with 'roller coaster' brakes. My father had to put wooden blocks on the pedals so I could reach them. It cost £3.00 and was a present for my 8th birthday.

First long ride?

Within a few months of getting this bike, on the spur of the moment, I rode alone from Oxford to Dorchester-on-Thames (about a 15 mile round trip). I took no pump or map but knew where to go as I had been taken there on the bus. I looked around the historic Abbey; bought a penny postcard and a stamp for a halfpenny wrote a message and posted it home to prove I had been there. After my father died, nearly 60 years later, I came across it amongst his mementoes.

First new bike?

When I was 13 my parents bought me a Raleigh 'Super Sports'. It had '531' tubing, a (shoddy!) 4 speed Sturmey Archer wide ratio hub and a front hub dynamo. It was unusual in that it was bright orange when at the time almost all bikes were black. My pride and joy weighed 35 lbs!

Punctures!!

At the age of 14 I rode alone from Oxford to Market Harborough (about 60 miles). My bike had Firestone tyres which were made with very poor post-War rubber. I got six punctures in 17 miles on the way home as the front tyre slowly split.

CTC?

In 1949, to join the CTC meant that a would-be member had to have their name displayed for a month on the notice board at the then CTC head office at 3 Craven Hill, Paddington. As no one objected to me, I was accepted.

Courtship?

Aged 15 I met Pam, my future wife. Walking her home from an amateur production of a long forgotten play called (prophetically as it turned out!) 'The Cure for Love' I discovered that she owned a Rudge bike, wanted to cycle but none of her friends would go cycling with her. The following Sunday we went out for a ride together in the Oxfordshire countryside. This eventually led to over 60 years of cycling together and 54 years of marriage.

Biggest cycling problem?

Two years after meeting Pam we set off for a two-week youth hostel tour in the Peak District. By then I had bought a Claude Butler. Post-War shortages meant its wheels had to be Italian - of notorious poor quality. The second day into the tour, the rear wheel collapsed. We had to pay for a van to the station and return to Oxford for a replacement (not easy) and then pick up our route some days later.



'The Ferguson Interview'

Talking with
Mike Cross

Funniest Cycling Memory?

In 1994 about a dozen Ledsham Section riders, led by Colin and Ann Taylor, rode to Le Mans to spend three nights staying with a group of French cyclists. We were to perform Scottish country dances for our hosts at a social evening. My funniest memory of the trip is all of us silently practising our dancing routine, without music, on a picnic site en route - watched by bemused French picnickers.

Most cultured ride?

After I retired in 1991, Pam and I went on a trip to the Nile staying in Luxor. One day we hired bikes, crossed the Nile on the local vehicle ferry and (much to the disgust of the local taxi drivers!) rode up to the Valley of the Kings; returning through villages which were 'off the beaten track' for most tourists. This was a great way to experience some of the wonders of Egypt.

Most dangerous ride?

While visiting Canada in 2003, we hired bikes in Banff. We rode out of town crossing the protective grid and wire fencing - a defence against grizzly bears - and into the surrounding forest. On our return we were told that where we had been riding that day, a 'bear alarm' had been raised as a rogue bear had been prowling the area that we had just innocently visited.

Best ride?

In 2000 Pam said that she wanted to ride the End to End. Although I wasn't that keen I agreed. Pam loved planning routes and spent weeks working out the easiest and most scenic way to travel. We decided to make it a charity ride in memory of our younger daughter who had died of breast cancer the previous year. We took three weeks to complete the trip. Our ride through Scotland is one of many wonderful cycling memories.

Like all the best rides, although it is the scenery that stands out, it is the companion(s) that you ride with that make any ride special.

I spent two very enjoyable hours talking to Mike about his cycling memories and have had to leave out lots of trips and funny stories. Next time you see him ask about the trip to see the Tour de France, the training camp in Majorca or any of his other many cycle touring trips.

Who will feature in the next edition?

John Ferguson

My Blue Bridge to P-B-P ... cont'd (Paris-Brest-Paris)

my ride, although now a cliché, cycling has saved my life, although fellow cyclists have fulfilled it. It is the people, called cyclists, who have helped change my life, I just rode along.

From the manager Chris, & his 'crew' at Halfords, Chester, who as I progressed, supplied & serviced three bikes, replacing under warranty, worn and broken parts, 'above & beyond' plus encouraged and supported me as much as my first club, Chester & North Wales CTC. Its groups varied, all enthusiastic, each took me in, accepted me, as a cyclist and person. I still remember thinking, as I drove with my bike in the car and meet at the Eureka café for the first time, how am I going to do 50-60k at 15-20kph? Cyclists, like Glennys, Brian(s), John F. to name a few, say "we never leave anyone behind" which was akin to my Army philosophy, " & we stop for lunch" a benefit I would cherish. The continuous outpouring of stories, adventures, touring holidays with crucial cycling information, patiently repeated and led by example, has kept me safe, educated, encouraged and motivated, to be not only a better cyclist, but to aspire to be a better person, helping me, living with PTSD, enjoying cycling.



Great human beings, like Harry Watson (The Legend) every ride with him, teaches something new about cycling and amazes you about the person. He was pulling up to a junction, chatting about one of his epic tours of Scotland, I changed down the cogs on the rear sprocket, on my new Boardman road bike, casually, mid-sentence his advice "just change the front chain ring John, it saves time & wear, plus gets you away safe" As always, I accepted his advice and knowledge. It wasn't until later, I read in a cycling magazine, that 70% of all accidents happen at junctions, did I realise how important just that one, of many, casually passed tips was to my cycling, to my safety.

Discuss safety, organisation and real world cyclists, you must think of and thank, Lowri Evans, our dedicated and hard working CTC secretary, who had enough faith in me, to allow me to be trained as a ride leader, as a member of, the

group she leads, the Wrexham Reivers & (CafeHoppers) who are an exceptional and large mix of cyclists, they split into comfortable, relaxed, easy-going groups, headed by an exceptional individual, who I am so fortunate to know and ride with, groups that make each ride a pleasure and adventure. Depending on which group, there is a surprising and/or testing pace,

My Blue Bridge to P-B-P ... cont'd (Paris-Brest-Paris)



from some who are ten & twenty years plus my age, especially up those Welsh hills. The size of the turnout, diversity of people and cycles in the split of groups, is testimony to its organisation, any other club would envy.

I continued to seek out what I wanted from cycling, my competitive streak always prominent, yet I knew I would never compete, too late, unfit and old now for serious competition. So it always became a race and challenge against me. Riding to be the best I could be, doing the best I could, so I rode to ride meetings and rode the long way home. One of the many tips, from my guru or 'go to guy', who used to compete, was cadence, heart rate and speed. These are the primary displays on my

Garmin, always in view, measuring, my aim to go faster with a lower heart rate, maintaining a steady cadence. This was the main reason for my improvement and the enjoyment of cycling, due to developing, I now am able to average 80-90RPM at 120-130 BPM and I do 25+ KPH all day and all night.

As speed and distance increased with CTC groups, my own

training rides and Audax events, I met through Harry, his Tuesday super group of riders, who amazed and inspired me to a new level, as several had had heart attacks and cycled! It put my injuries and speeding recovery into perspective.



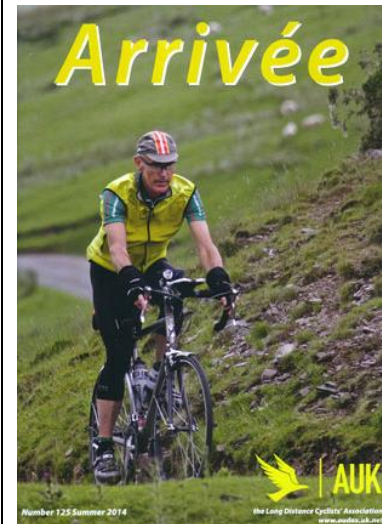
An offshoot was meeting and joining Chester Easy Riders, although they split the rides into two groups, they are one group of wonderful people and cyclists, who's founder Bryan Wade, had a vision of a CTC affiliated club and it really works, from nine meeting points in and around Chester, to an excellent blog and gpx file posted, from every ride, be that the brisk or moderate group.



My first rides were a test, 'boys will be boys', how I hung on to Ivan, Clive, Colin, Tom and Ray I don't know, the pace was a test and distance a challenge. If they weren't such great blokes, I might not of cared and never returned, which would have been as much a loss to my cycling abilities, as to my new rekindled social skills, as before I went cycling, due to PTSD, I used to go out rarely and only on occasion with family to a café or pub.

I don't know when or who first mentioned Audax, I do remember it sounded nuts and extreme, but maybe? Then I learned of AAA, long distance and big hills, ouch! My first Audax was David Mathew's, (who I now call a friend) 50k.

Momma's Leafy Lanes.10/08/14.(4hr.24m) On the day, five people showed due to the effects of hurricanes to the weather forecast, Glennys was one of the special 'volunte ers' who make these rides possible, I was so nervous, I rode the route the week before.



Each day I rode, I had the next ride to look forward to, to prepare for, each week a plethora of statistics, to analyse and criticise, articles in magazines and on the web, to discuss and question with my experienced riders. Starting from scratch, physically as well as mentally, learning and improving day by day from all my cycling buddies input. Yet I was always aware of those who had or were doing more, I needed to have my own targets and dreams. Doing Audax's was my test, my measurement of improvement, always pushing my breaking point.

John Wilkieto be continued

Group Riding more thoughts!

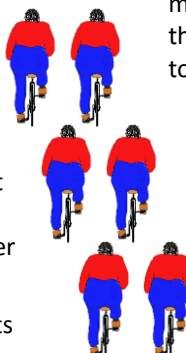


Remember Brian Lowe's article on Group Riding in last winter's edition? Well, here's a couple of extra points that have been 'mooted' whilst riding with various groups:

- Riding two abreast
- Pointing out potholes

When riding two abreast, trust the rider in front instead of riding to the side to get a better view ahead.

To a following driver it presents a vision of 4+ abreast!



Don't point out a pothole and then swerve to miss it – the rider behind won't be able to do that. It'll come as a surprise and they'll be sure to clip it. Look ahead and be 'smooth'.



Cycling Recipes

Apple Custard Cake



This cake has proved to be very popular at recent C&NW CTC AGMs and there have been several requests for the recipe. **Lowri Evans**

Ingredients

For the roasted apples

2 apples

2 dessert spoons of lemon juice (approx.)

For the Cake mix

7oz marg or butter

7oz caster sugar

1teaspoon vanilla extract

3 medium eggs

7 oz. SR flour

½ teaspoon baking powder

2 dessert spoons of custard powder

For the icing (optional)

Lemon juice and icing sugar amount depends on the amount of icing required.

Preheat the oven to 150°C for fan oven.

Wash the apples. Core and slice. Put the apples in an oven proof dish and add the lemon juice. Cook for about 15 mins whilst mixing the cake.



Mix butter with caster sugar and vanilla essence.

Add the eggs one at a time and add approx. $\frac{1}{3}$ of the flour, baking powder & custard powder with each egg.

Grease a loose bottomed cake 8" tin.

Pour half of the mix into the cake tin then spread half the apple on top.

Spoon on the rest of the mix and arrange the rest of the apple on top of the cake.

Bake for about 50 minutes. The top of the cake may need to be covered to prevent it going too brown. Check it is cooked (knife should come out clean) then remove from the oven and leave to cool.

If required mix some icing sugar with lemon juice then drizzle the icing over the cake.

Note: the oven temperature and cooking time may vary between cookers



Mount Ventoux x 3



It's early May 2014 and I'm in the car park of a small village in France. The significance of this is the village is Bedoin, which is the start of one of the

routes to the top of Mt Ventoux. Since my first ride up the mountain back in 2009, I've had this thought in the back of my mind of riding up it three times in a day from each of the villages at the bottom, Bedoin, Malaucene and Sault but weather conditions, my determination or fitness have so far not aligned to make it feasible. Today I think they have.

I get the bike out of the car, my DS for the day (my wife Lynne, who's agreed to be the support team) helps me get drinks, bars, and gels sorted. I give the tyres a quick feel, spin the wheels and I'm away. It's 8.25 a.m. and already the temperature is around 17deg C, with no sign of a breeze.

I spin easily up the first couple of kilometres out of the village, the initial apprehension disappearing as the physical effort increases. I know what's coming. I ride through the hamlet of St Esteve, there are people having breakfast outside the restaurant I get the first shouts of "Allez, allez".

The gradient so far has been easy averaging about 4%, but as I turn the hairpin a bit further on - wham! The gradient kicks in and I know I'm in for 9 kms, where the average gradient rarely drops below 9% with a few steps of 12% thrown in for good measure. I get into a rhythm and try to keep my heart rate below 160bpm, but it's also getting warmer as the temperature increases in parallel with the effort.

The road winds away in the distance up through the forest, providing shade that prevents me getting too hot. I get passed by a couple of other riders but I massage my ego by telling it I'm taking it easy as it's going to be a long day.

After what seems an age I pop out of the trees, on a short level stretch, and in front of me is Chalet Reynard. I look to my left and get the first clear view of the summit since the start. There's hardly a cloud in sight and the red and white telecoms tower at the top stands out sharply against the azure blue of the sky. The road looks steeper than it actually is as I realise I'm only 6 kms from the top. I ride straight past the



Mount Ventoux x 3 cont'd

restaurant and onto the slope again, I'm feeling really good so I put a bit more effort into it. I'm into the almost lunar landscape illustrated by most of the photographs taken of the mountain, where the mistral wind can make riding up here almost impossible. Today though conditions are just about perfect with hardly a breeze blowing.

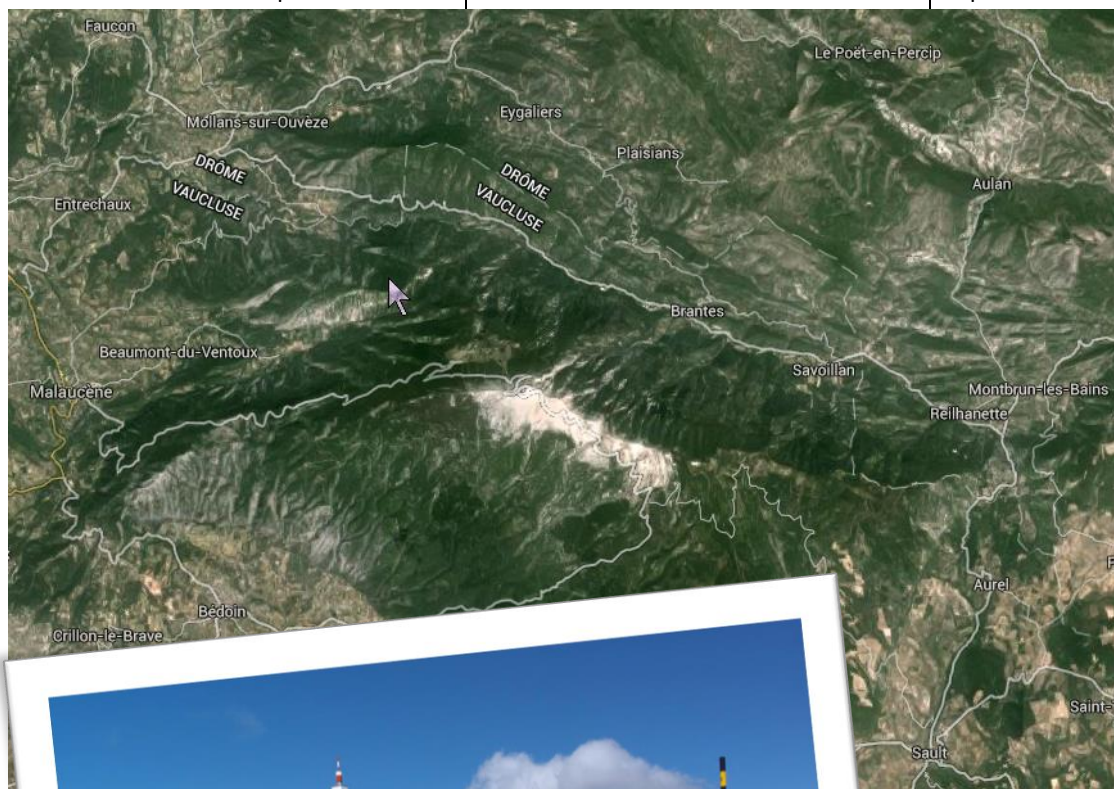
About 3kms from the top there's a

begins to straighten and I begin to pick up some serious speed. I hit 73km/hr having decided to take it a bit steadier since the last time I came down this side where I passed a car at just under 85km/hr.

I enjoy the descent, which needs a gilet to keep the wind chill at bay but as I lose height the temperature increases and it becomes warm again. I ride down into Malaucene but it's

far despite the best efforts of other cyclists and maniac motorcycle riders. After 30 minutes or so I start off again.

The ride from Malaucene is supposed not to be as difficult as the one from Bedoin but from the re-start I find it hard going. The temperature has increased but it's only in the mid 20's and shouldn't be having too much effect. I ride on. The road is more exposed on this side of the mountain



with only occasional stretches of trees for shade. I get to the 10km marker and know that if what I've just done feels tough the next 3km are going to be a battle for survival. Over this stretch the road averages 10% and I slow almost to walking pace. I initially think the Garmin is broken as it's not showing any gradient but I'm going too slowly for it to register a reading. I eventually get a mental lift as I pass a rider on a mountain bike spinning a smaller gear than me and

hardly moving forward at all! I manage to talk myself out of stopping 'just for a gel' and eventually reach the top. I know now that I can do this.

I sit down at the top on the wall next to the summit sign and get talking to a Dutch guy called Henk. He looks elated and tells me he's just ridden Mt Ventoux for the first time. He asks me what I've done – I tell him and that my next objective is to ride down to Sault and back up again. He asks to take my picture.

After a quick drink and a gel I head down to Chalet Reynard. It's a blast and the memory of the ascent from Malaucene disappears as I focus on avoiding the traffic heading upwards, which has increased significantly. At Chalet Reynard the road goes off left down to Sault. The road has been re-surfaced since I was last here in 2013



photographer – I get out of the saddle and think I look almost cool as he snaps away and then hurriedly passes me his card. I ride on and before I know it I'm out of the saddle again pulling up the last ramp where Froome won the Stage and effectively the 2013 Tour de France. My DS is waiting, we take a few quick snaps before I get on my way down to Malaucene.

The descent at the start is steep with a couple of sharp hairpins but the road

Wednesday Market Day and a Public Holiday and the place is packed so I decide to start the ride back to the top. After about 3kms there's a small rest area where I decide to take my first stop. I've told myself this isn't a race or Sportive so there's no rush to gulp down food or drink. My support car is there and the DS gets out the cheese and jam sandwiches and a flask of coffee. We have a brief chat, the car is going OK, Lynne's 'happyish' with driving having managed no incidents so

Mount Ventoux x 3 cont'd

and it's another brilliant descent at a relatively easy gradient to the outskirts of the town. The road rises up a hill to get into Sault and just as I start to climb I get a really severe cramp in my leg. I eventually manage to get going again and meet up with Lynne in the town car park.

My request for a massage of my leg is politely refused but after more sandwiches and energy drinks I feel a lot better. I get back on the bike and head off back up to Chalet Reynard. Whether it's the knowledge that this is



the last leg (excuse pun) of the ride or the fact that the gradient is easier the kilometres seem to go by quite quickly and I'm back at Chalet Reynard. It's almost over, only 6kms to the top.

I think back to, what seems an age ago, riding up this section so I start off confidently again. After 4kms I'm hardly moving forward, my legs seem to have lost any semblance of power and I realise I might have under estimated this last bit. I pass the Tom Simpson memorial and somewhere in the recesses of my brain I remember this is only a kilometre from the top. It turns out to be the longest kilometre I've ever done. I eventually pull around the last bend and ride to the top. I give the DS a kiss and hug and we get someone to take a photograph.

I head off to the 21km ride down to Bedoin. It's 6.41p.m. as I arrive back into the carpark. I've ridden 137.9km with a height gain of 4419m.

Since doing this ride in 2014 I've ridden

Mount Ventoux a further two times in 2015. This makes a total 12 times (5 Bedoin, 4 Malaucene and 3 Sault) since



2009. As to why - I'd like to refer you to the last paragraph in Simon Warren's book, 100 Greatest Climbs of the Tour de France where he writes:

"The final journey to the summit, across the desolate peak, is without doubt the most unique and wonderful experience you can have on two wheels, which, together with the satisfaction of reaching the top, makes Ventoux THE greatest cycling climb in France."

Mike Frith

(Ed: Wow Chapeau!)

Barmouth 'Day of Action'

After an email from Lowri informing everyone about the possible bridge



closure across to Barmouth we went to the day of action on Saturday 31st October. Driving to the car park in Dolgellau and then taking the Mawddach trail to Barmouth. Took the bike out of the car to find a flat back tyre, small pumps are good to carry but not to use, a borrowed pump got it inflated. John Wilkie also arrived doing the same ride, against doctor's advice following his last fall

and also another 200k Audax to add to his 12 month quest; that is dedication! The three of us Paul Mills, Terry Davies and John Wilkie from Wrexham Reivers set off down the trail and found Doreen's group in the car park we

should have gone to. The trail itself is similar in surface to the Wirral way, excellent views of the estuary and the bridge in the distance, which when crossed was rougher than the trail. After exiting the uphill finish directly on to a busy road I can understand why there is a campaign to get a different access point built.

The meet by the old Lifeboat Station first had a talk about the campaigns progress, suggesting although there was a small possibility of the walkway closing everybody was working hard to reach a solution. The local MP also gave her support and explained the talks she had with the various bodies involved, a replacement crossing was in the planning stages and suggestions were the old crossing should still be kept until this replacement was built, mooted to be in about 3 years time.

The cyclists then set off first to ride back across the bridge led by Glyn the area manager with Sustrans and about 35 fellow cyclists, with pedestrians clapping and waving along the way and ride back to the George hotel where we left the ride.

Getting back to the car I had left a pack of sandwiches, a banana and my glasses all on the bonnet of the car, untouched even after 3 hours away! A morally satisfying end to the short ride. **Paul Mills**

Smile – you're on camera!

'Snippets' from the Helmet Cam



Obviously the road not wide enough in Gresford for some!



Bumper 'crop' in this edition! All happened in the last 6 weeks!

Sorry – was I in your way?



Van just had to overtake despite on the brow of the bridge amongst lots of horn blowing



Driver only left room for me after I 'tapped' on the side of her car!



But it's not just about drivers!

Rider on left avoiding muddy road – bet he was glad I was on my bike and not in a van or



The car behind was getting somewhat irate as he couldn't pass!



When you carry a 'rear facing' camera be aware, be very aware, of what goes on behind you!

----- ooOoo -----

'Artist on a Bike'



On becoming "artist on a bike"...

Four and a half year ago, I was asked if I wanted a challenge and that was to cycle The Manchester 100 Sportive – a bonkers thing for me at the time because all I had was a rusty old hybrid bike that I wasn't even sure could make it around the park let alone 100 miles. And as for me, I'd never ridden further than the park anyway.

Saying yes was one of my better decisions in life. And off I went, clocking up the miles, and upgrading the bikes along the way. I was loving it but sadly, doing the training miles meant I wasn't getting into my studio, so I made a commitment to my artistic self that I would do a sketchbook drawing after each ride, to record how far, how fast, how long? This was before I'd even heard of the word Garmin, let alone had one.

On my rides and bike tours (with CTC groups and/or friends) I see what appeals to my eyes and then in my studio at home in Chester I develop these drawings from my cycling diary into work for sale. I didn't set out to sell work this way, I just found myself doing what I loved, and increasing interest has come from those that have seen my work and heard/read my story. Now in my developing collection of bike related art I make and sell screen prints, cards, bone china mugs, coasters and bike map pieces. I sell my work online, at bike events and art shows through the country. I take the original sketchbooks to show folk, and I love how it inspires them either to ride, or to draw. I think this is the part of what I do that makes me the happiest. And of course, I love to hear the stories folk have to tell of their own adventures of their bikes and what inspires them to ride.

If I could have a wish come true...it would be to be commissioned to ride a long, long trip and record it for others to see. If I had another wish come true (why stop at one?), it would be to see my drawings make it into commercial print in the form of a book.



A group of us rode up on the Argyll coast in August this year, doing a version of the Five Ferries route. Here are my drawings from each of the three days...



This is how we did the trip.

Day One:

Transport from Chester with Bike Bus Adventures

Ferry from Ardrossan to Broddick on Arran and riding to Lochranza via String Road. 30 miles. 500m climbing

Day Two:

Ferry from Lochranza to Claonaig. Rode to Tarbert via Kilberry and Inverneill on scenic single track B8024 50 miles 1600m climbing.

Day Three:

Ferry from Tarbet to Portavadie, and from Colintrave to Rothesay on (Isle of Bute) after riding via Tighnabruaich 40 miles. 1200m climbing.

Day Four:

Ferry from Rothesay to Wemyss Bay on the mainland, and transport back to



Chester with Bike Bus Adventures (recommend them

<http://www.bikebusadventures.com>).

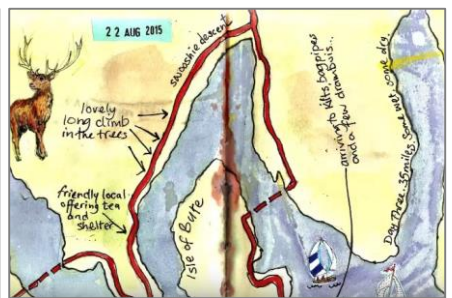
On my trips I also take photos of what catches my eye and then I make a little film to capture my memories when



I get back home. A film of this Five Ferries trip can be watched on my website or here...

<https://youtu.be/a3bmW948KWY>.

You can see more about me and the work at www.artistonabike.co.uk and find out where I will next be showing



my work, though you are always welcome to come to my Chester studio, drink tea, talk bikes, and look at my work there.

Christine Evans - **Artist on a bike!**



Contact details

www.artistonabike.co.uk

facebook: Christine Evans - Artist on a bike

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Tech Tip No. 2

None Standard Gearing

One of the most common discussions on the CTC forum is how to make gears do things they weren't designed for i.e. exceeding the recommended range of ratios or mixing Shimano and Campag gearing.

The CTC forum describes lots of different ways of changing your gearing but I'm limiting this article to gear setups that I have personally used and therefore know they work.

Lowering your gears

Most people don't go racing, but most bikes are delivered with gearing high enough to race. You have to decide how often you are going to use 50x11 or whether you would prefer to have most gears available at the speeds you normally ride at, as once I'm above 30mph I'm quite happy to freewheel.

There are 3 ways of lowering your gearing:

1. Fit a triple chainset. This is the most expensive option as you'll probably need new shifters, chainset, bottom-bracket, front-derailleurs and possible rear-derailleurs. It can be argued that a compact chainset with a 34x30 would give you a similar low gear, but the 11-30 cassette you would need to achieve this has large jumps in the ratios.
Assuming a 10-speed bike, the 19-tooth range on an 11-30 cassette is averaging 1.9 teeth per gear-change with a bottom gear of 30 inches.
A 48-38-28 triple can achieve the 30 inch bottom gear with a 12-25 cassette and only averages 1.3 teeth per gear-change. This means the triple has lots of ratios grouped around the middle of the range, where you do most of your cycling, and makes it much easier to find a comfortable cadence to cycle at
2. Fit a cassette with larger sprockets. This is the cheapest option and will lower the gears, but as I highlighted above it will be at the expense of the ratios in the middle of the range. Also, if you want really low gears, road derailleurs struggle to operate MTB cassettes with more than 30 teeth and road shifters can't always operate MTB derailleurs
3. Fit smaller chainrings. This is a middle-cost option but bike manufacturers tend to fit a complete groupset and the front derailleur will be designed to work with a particular configuration of chainrings, once you diverge from this shifting can suffer.
As long as you don't do anything extreme, i.e. going from 50 teeth to 42 teeth, you can usually make most combinations work but the main side-effect of doing this is that the chain may rub the front derailleur more often and need regular trimming. Shimano shifters have a trimming position but Campag shifters do it better, which now leads us to the next section....

Mixing Shimano and Campag

Most new bikes are equipped with Shimano transmissions but the 1 or 2 trimming positions offered by Shimano shifters

aren't always enough to stop the chain rubbing when you start changing the setup. Campag Ultrashift or Campag pre-2008 shifters have multiple trimming positions and are therefore ideal for use with these none standard setups.

The issue now becomes how do you make Campag shifters work with a Shimano transmission (e.g. Cassette, front derailleur and rear derailleur)?

1. There are 2 combinations that work without any modification.
 - a. Campag 10 speed shifters are indexed the same as Shimano 8 speed. You'll have 2 unused "clicks" on the shifter, but otherwise it works perfectly and I find the gear change is actually smoother than an all Shimano setup.
 - b. Campag 11 speed shifters are indexed the same as Shimano 9 speed with 2 unused clicks. I haven't tried this combination myself, but I do know people who are using it with no issues
2. A minor adjustment that works is called the Hubbub method, named



after a bike-shop in America that discovered it. Again it relies on Campag 10 speed shifters but by clamping the cable on the rear derailleur at 90-degrees to the direction you would normally clamp it you can operate a Shimano 9 speed transmission.

- On 2 of the bikes I've tried this it has worked perfectly, but for 1 bike it wouldn't shift smoothly in the higher gears. This may have been an external issue, such as a misaligned dropout, so I gave up trying to make it work on that bike but it is working fine on the 2 other bikes after 1000's miles of cycling
3. Buy a Jtek Shiftmate. The Shiftmate is a pulley that you fit into the back of the derailleur and it alters the cable-pull so that different combinations of gears can be made to work. There are different models to do different things, so you need to buy the right model, but they'll do everything from making Campag work with Shimano (and vice versa) or make a shifter designed for a certain number of gears work with a cassette from a groupset with different number of gears. They'll even make SRAM gears work with other manufacturers gearing.



They are expensive for what they are, but can save money in the longer term. I had lots of Shimano rear wheels and only 1 Campag rear wheel, when the Campag



Tech Tip No. 2 ... cont'd

wheel wore out I got a Shiftmate that lets me use a 9 speed Campag shifter and rear derailleur with a 9 speed Shimano cassette. This was a lot cheaper than buying a new wheel



and meant I could swap my Shimano wheels between bikes whenever I wanted to. The bad news is that Jtek are no longer trading, the good news is that Saint John Street Cycles (SJS) have bought the stock and manufacturing rights so the Shiftmate is now easy to obtain

from the SJS website.

4. Another option, that is unlikely to be popular, is to use down-tube or bar-end shifters. The front shifter isn't indexed so you can use most front derailleur and chainrings but lose the convenience of having the shifters at your fingertips

Caveat Emptor

There are some things you need to be aware of before spending lots of money on a none-standard setup

1. Over the last 10 years Shimano have gradually increased the strength of the spring in their road front derailleurs, to make the gearshift quicker. This means a Campag shifter can struggle to hold a modern Shimano road front derailleur on the big-ring. To overcome this make sure you use the oldest front derailleur you can find or use a Campag front derailleur or, in some situations, a Shimano MTB front derailleur as they still have a weaker spring.



- As Campag Ultrashift shifters don't have an indexed front shifter they're not too fussy as to what front derailleur you use, as you can always trim it away from the chain
2. The best Campag shifters for mixing with Shimano transmissions are the "old shape" pre-2008 shifters. If you use "modern" Campag shifters make sure they are Ultrashift and not Powershift as Powershift is Campag's attempt to make an indexed front shifter like Shimano and therefore doesn't have the multiple trimming positions
3. Campag's bottom of the range Xenon shifters are made different to all the other shifters and probably don't work with anything other than Campag components
4. I believe that in 2015 Campag, yet again, changed how their shifters work. I don't know whether the combinations mentioned in this article work with 2015 Campag shifters but there are plenty of pre-2015 components still available
5. Up to 9 speed Shimano road and MTB rear derailleurs are interchangeable, but the 9 speed MTB front derailleurs are designed for a different chain line and cable pull than road front derailleurs so they mightn't work due to the lack of trimming positions.
6. If you're using a Campag shifter with a Shimano MTB front derailleur then sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't as the shifter can struggle to get the chain onto the smallest chainring. It's dependent on bike geometry and bottom-bracket length, so you won't know if it's going to work until you try it
7. I've omitted SRAM from this article as their shifting is so different it is almost impossible to make their gearing work with another manufacturer's components, but I believe SRAM road and MTB components can be interchanged so it is possible to lower their gearing by going down that route. I haven't tried this so I can't confirm whether it works

In summary, if you've got lots of old bike parts lying around and you've got the time then why not experiment, as you may find a use for all those parts you never thought you needed anymore. **Steve Jones**

Ed: Interesting article this. I also had the same decisions to be made when I decided to build a bike specifically for riding mountains in the summer time. It had to be light and had to have a really versatile spread of gears. As it was a new build, I went for Steve's Option 1 – the low geared triple as our experiences when touring with this setup are good.

This is what I did – 26 usable gears out of the 3 x 10 (with only 4 x duplications) with a 26-36-48 XT chainset, 9-speed XT long cage rear mech & an 11-32 cassette. The 9 speed rear mech really does work better than using a 10 speed with these big cogs!

You'll also notice it has double sided pedals so I can clip back in after stopping on a hill.

Steve Jones' 'Tour of Britain 2015'

As a long-term cycle tourist I'm always interested when a potential tour is mentioned. Therefore when a group of friends from Merseyside DA suggested a "Tour of Britain (TOB) tour" which would follow the TOB around the stages in the North-West I immediately put my name down.

Initially I was considering also watching the first stage in Wrexham with the Reivers and then riding out from Merseyside to the stage 2 start at Clitheroe early on the Monday morning, but I realised that I already had a hard week of riding ahead of me without adding the extra hassle of getting to Wrexham and back and then rushing to Clitheroe the next day. Therefore common-sense prevailed and I rode out to the first overnight destination, Slaidburn YHA, on the day of the Wrexham stage.

Day 1 – September 6th, 2015

Merseyside to Slaidburn is a well-trodden journey for local cyclists as it is the nearest country hostel, being 50-70 miles away depending on the route taken, and so many tours start or finish there.

There are 2 ways to Slaidburn; a flat route through Preston using the various cycle-lanes that are scattered around the town or avoid Preston entirely and head into the Lancashire hills. I opted for a later start and set-off in the afternoon taking the direct route through Preston whereas the rest of the group decided to have a full day ride and headed for the hills at 9:00am.

Differences in riding speed, packing strategy (I travel light) and a flatter route meant I arrived at the hostel at 4:00pm having covered 50 miles whereas the rest of the group arrived at 6:00pm riding a hilly 70 miles in the process.

Day 2 – September 7th, 2015



This would be our first day viewing the TOB and as the stage was following an "out and back" route from Clitheroe to Colne there was the opportunity to view the stage multiple times. After some discussion it was decided that 3 of us would attempt to watch the stage 3 times, the majority of the group would view it twice and 2 people would simply stay in Slaidburn, as the TOB was passing through the village.

The reason why there wasn't much demand to see the stage 3 times was due to the fact that between Slaidburn and Clitheroe is Waddington Fell and its associated ridge. Waddington Fell is similar in size and character to Milltir Gerrig, so we knew we were in for a hard ride if we were going to climb the Fell 4 times in a day.



The ride out to Clitheroe was pleasant, with the morning mist lying in the valleys below us, and we arrived at the start of the stage with plenty of time to spare and mingled with the crowds as the riders signed-on at the start-line. The race was waved-off by Brian Cookson, the president of the UCI, and I was surprised to learn that he lived nearby in Whalley rather than Geneva!

Having viewed the start we then had 2 hours to ride the 8 miles back over the Fell to Slaidburn and we arrived with time to have lunch and then select our viewing positions before the peloton arrived.

It was here that we were re-united with the rest of the group and after the TOB had passed through we had 1½ hours to ride the 8 miles to Chatburn to view the race as it came out



of the hills and passed through Clitheroe again. It quickly became apparent that hundreds of other cyclists had also studied the route and noticed the same opportunity to view these 2 sections which lead to a massive burn-up back over the Fell. This was fun but tiring and not the sort of thing you're meant to do when trying to conserve energy on a multi-day tour.

After watching the afternoon section we sedately returned back over the Fell to the hostel at Slaidburn, having ridden

Steve Jones' 'Tour of Britain 2015' ... cont'd
35 miles but with 1300 metres of ascent. I imagine a Grimpeur Audax could be created around this day's riding.

Day 3 – September 8th, 2015

This was our first moving-on day and our destination was Hawes YHA. There is multiple way of getting to Hawes from Slaidburn but as we would be passing through the Yorkshire Dales each potential route varied from hilly to extremely hilly. Eventually we settled on a “middling-hilly” route and set off into the morning mist.

The first 6 miles were up-hill passing over Tatham Fell and we were enveloped in a thick, but warm, mist for the entire climb which meant I had to switch my lights on to make sure I was visible. Unfortunately the group became separated in the mist and split into 4 smaller groups, with some riders missing the left turn on the subsequent long descent.

Knowing the area fairly well, and carrying less luggage than everyone else, meant that I had ridden off the front of the group and so I waited at a café at Wray for the others, with Group 2 finding me 30 minutes later. We never saw Groups 3 or 4 until we arrived at Hawes as they had then decided to take alternative shorter routes once they realised they had gone the wrong way.

After a relaxing lunch in Kirkby Lonsdale the rest of the day was spent cycling in the sun and passing through the 2 quietest and most picturesque Dales; Barbondale and Dentdale.

There is a stiff climb out of Dentdale and then a 4 mile descent to Hawes but the weather decided to throw-in a random element in that Wensleydale and the surrounding area had been cold and misty all day, much colder than it had been in the morning, which meant I went from wearing a short-sleeve cycling top to having to put-on multiple layers of clothing to stay warm on the final descent. All the various groups were re-united at Hawes, with my group having ridden 50 miles.

Day 4 – September 9th, 2015

Today's destination was Dufton YHA in the Eden Valley and the rest of the group wanted to ride the short (34 miles), but extremely hilly route, over Butter Tubs and Tan Hill. I've ridden both of these climbs before and as the hills were still covered in the cold mist of yesterday I said I'd do a longer low-level ride and see everyone at Dufton.

I had attended the CTC Birthday Rides at Penrith only 2 weeks earlier and the routes they had devised made extensive use of the quiet cycling lanes of the Eden Valley, as these routes were still fresh in my memory (and stored on my phone) I spent the day merging various Birthday Rides routes as I circumnavigated the Eden Valley.

The Eden Valley has some of the best cycling lanes in the UK but sometimes, when you're riding by yourself under grey skies, lanes can be too quiet and I was starting to nod-off by the time I arrived at my lunch stop in Morland having not seen anyone for hours. The café was busy and sold strong coffee so after an excellent meal I was awake and ready to ride again.



One highlight of this ride was that I managed to find the Strickland Arms whose claim to fame is that Team Sky stopped there for an evening meal during the 2012 TOB and since then the pub has been an “unofficial” sponsor of Bradley Wiggins.

Eventually, having plagiarised a number of the Birthday Ride's routes, I arrived at Dufton with 54 miles covered.

Day 5 – September 10th, 2015

This was the day which the entire tour had been based around, the “Queen Stage” of the TOB finishing on top of Hartside, which at 1900 feet is the highest pass in England and Wales (not to be confused with the highest road, which is the dead-end Great Dun Fell at 2782 feet and on the same ridge as Hartside).

This stage could also be viewed multiple times and the weather was warm and sunny so a good day's riding was ahead, but after the exertions of Monday's stage I was the only person willing to go for the multiple viewings option and so it was going to be another day of riding by myself.



The first viewpoint was the rider's feed-zone above Lazonby and so I took a leisurely route out which included a tea-stop at the café in Langwathby. The level of excitement in the area was noticeably higher than it had been on stage 2; the schools had been given the day-off, the villages were full of people and there was a continual stream of cyclists heading up Hartside, even though the race wasn't due there for another 5 hours.

As the riders weren't due at the feed-zone until lunch-time I was struggling to kill the time and was initially reluctant to drop into the village of Lazonby as it would mean a climb

Steve Jones' 'Tour of Britain 2015' ... cont'd

back up the hill to the feed-zone, but boredom won out and I dropped into the village. This turned out to be a good move as the local church was doing tea, biscuits and sandwiches if you made a contribution to the church funds, so I spent an hour there talking to other cyclists and then climbed back up the hill.

The feeding of the riders turned out to be incident free and there was remarkably little crowd-control, which meant I was literally standing between the An-Post and Movistar helpers as they handed out their musettes.



I now had to undertake the most difficult part of the day, which was a 6 mile ride to get a suitable spot on Hartside. There had been a rumour that the road might now be closed so I took a cross-country route which meant ascending the side of Hartside up a minor lane which is much steeper than the main climb and was also very warm in the afternoon sun. Once on the main climb I realised that the road was still open to cyclists, as it was only closed to cars, and I hadn't needed to do the steeper climb.



I didn't want to be at the finish line, as there was 1000's of people up there, but during the Birthday Rides I had climbed Hartside with Lowri and noticed that there was a couple of switchback bends one mile from the summit that would provide a good vantage point. On reaching the switchbacks I was surprised to find that only a handful of people were at this viewpoint and so I settled down and waited for the race to arrive in relative quiet.

Eventually the TV helicopter came into sight signalling the arrival of the race and with my uninterrupted view I got some good photos of the race leaders plus various other groups including Cavendish leading the auto-bus, which was 20 minutes behind the leaders.

As soon as the broom-wagon had passed I jumped onto my bike and descended which means I must be one of the few cyclists who has had a closed-road descent of Hartside, as they were about to re-open the road when I arrived at the bottom in Melmerby. I then followed quiet lanes for the 8 miles back to the hostel, made difficult due to a strong head wind, and finished the day having ridden 45 hilly miles.

Day 6 – September 11th, 2015

For most of the group this was the last day of the tour, with people departing by train or getting a lift home from those who had driven up for the Hartside Stage.

The exception to this was 4 riders who were riding home, but were breaking the journey by spending a night at Arnside Hostel, and myself who was riding directly to Merseyside.

I've ridden to Dufton from Merseyside in one day before but



never done the reverse journey. This turned out to be a tactical error as when you ride-out at the start of a tour your legs are fresh, whereas riding home at the end of a hilly tour your legs are already heavy. This makes the first few hills psychologically interesting as you try to block out of your mind the fact that you've still got 100 miles to go. The situation wasn't helped by a strong wind which, whilst not a direct head wind, was still at an angle that made you aware of it.

The journey was mainly a blur as I knew the lanes and so I simply got my head down and rode, passing through Tebay, Kirkby Lonsdale Caton, Garstang and Preston.

I had a lunch stop at Kirkby Lonsdale but when I got to Garstang the warm south-easterly wind was making me dehydrated so I stopped at a petrol station to consume some snacks and liquids and re-filled my water-bottles.

I rode through Preston again, although there is a lot less cycle lanes on the north of the town than the south, and I my journey coincided with the schools coming out which led to a lot of traffic but eventually I was in the quiet lanes of West Lancashire and on the homeward leg.

Steve Jones' 'Tour of Britain 2015' ... cont'd



As I left Eccleston (which is where Bradley Wiggins lives) I did some mental arithmetic and realised that I may finish the day with 99 miles. As all cyclists know it's against the "cycling law" to finish a ride with 99 miles so I diverted down a longer lane and this pre-emptive move turned out to be the correct decision as I arrived home with 101 miles.

This was a good tour with fine weather, as it isn't very often you manage a week of riding in Britain without any rain. Following the Tour of Britain provided a theme to the tour which made it more interesting as it introduced a set of locations you had to go to, like an extreme version of Audax Information Controls, and if next year's Tour of Britain follows a similar format I may try it again. **Steve Jones**



Camping Kit!

So what camping equipment do you take when on your long cycle tours? Now this is a question that's often asked because people have noticed just how big & heavy our touring bikes are, coming in at around 50kgs each bike when loaded! Seems heavy but in fact are comparatively easy and comfortable to ride – just bear in mind that with the low gears and all the time in the world there's no rushing about. If the mountains get too steep or too long then there's always a need to stop and share a photograph opportunity!

Anyway, this means that we carry what is required for a four month tour which is somewhat different to a weekend away, two weeks away or even 'credit card' touring.

If you are just camping for a few days or even a couple of weeks then a small tent and sitting cross-legged on the ground will be just fine. You won't need to worry about cooking and even washing clothes will be 'marginal'. However, four months is different, very different, especially if like me, the old bones are starting to creak and being cramped up starts to become an issue.

Then there's the topic of meals. On a short holiday then meals out in cafés or restaurants is par for the course but when you're away for 100+ days then the costs can become an issue, hence 'cook your own'.

So most camping 'stuff' is pretty standard what with sleeping bags, liners, first aid, washing and toiletries stuff and so on but there are a few important things that should be considered, the tent being the major one:



We need a tent that's big enough to sleep two comfortably but can also be bearable if we're confined to it during bad weather and with enough space for all the bags and with insect protection – the mosquitoes are pretty aggressive in warmer climes. We went for the Nigor Oriole 2 which although is 4.65mtrs long x 1.65mtrs across weighs less than 3kgs. The tent has a large sealed sleeping area with the outside storage area big enough to store the kit and also to 'live' in. You'll also need a fairly substantial groundsheet to prevent water ingress but also for protection against the rocky ground – the knees aren't what they used to be.

We also carry a 'tarp' – a large light waterproof sheet fitted with guy ropes to provide protection not only against the hot sun when stretched over the top of the tent but also as a rain porch.



A thing to consider when touring in hot countries is that the ground can be really very hard and you won't stand a chance getting standard tent pegs into the ground – we use straight titanium pegs so we can hammer them in. They have loops on so we can pull them back out! Don't do as we did on one site, banged them into a tree root and had a mammoth job getting them out.

The next major item is the cooking equipment. Don't think you can easily get gas canisters abroad, you can't. Here in the UK we tend to use re-sealable gas canisters while abroad they use the 'puncture' disposable type when you can get them.



On previous trips we have had real issues finding camping shops let alone those with the right cylinders and trying to find these shops also detracts from your tour. So, we 'bit the bullet' and now use a Primus Multi-fuel running on petrol; one euro of petrol, available everywhere, lasts for a week – job done, hot dinner every night and a brew at morning breakfast!

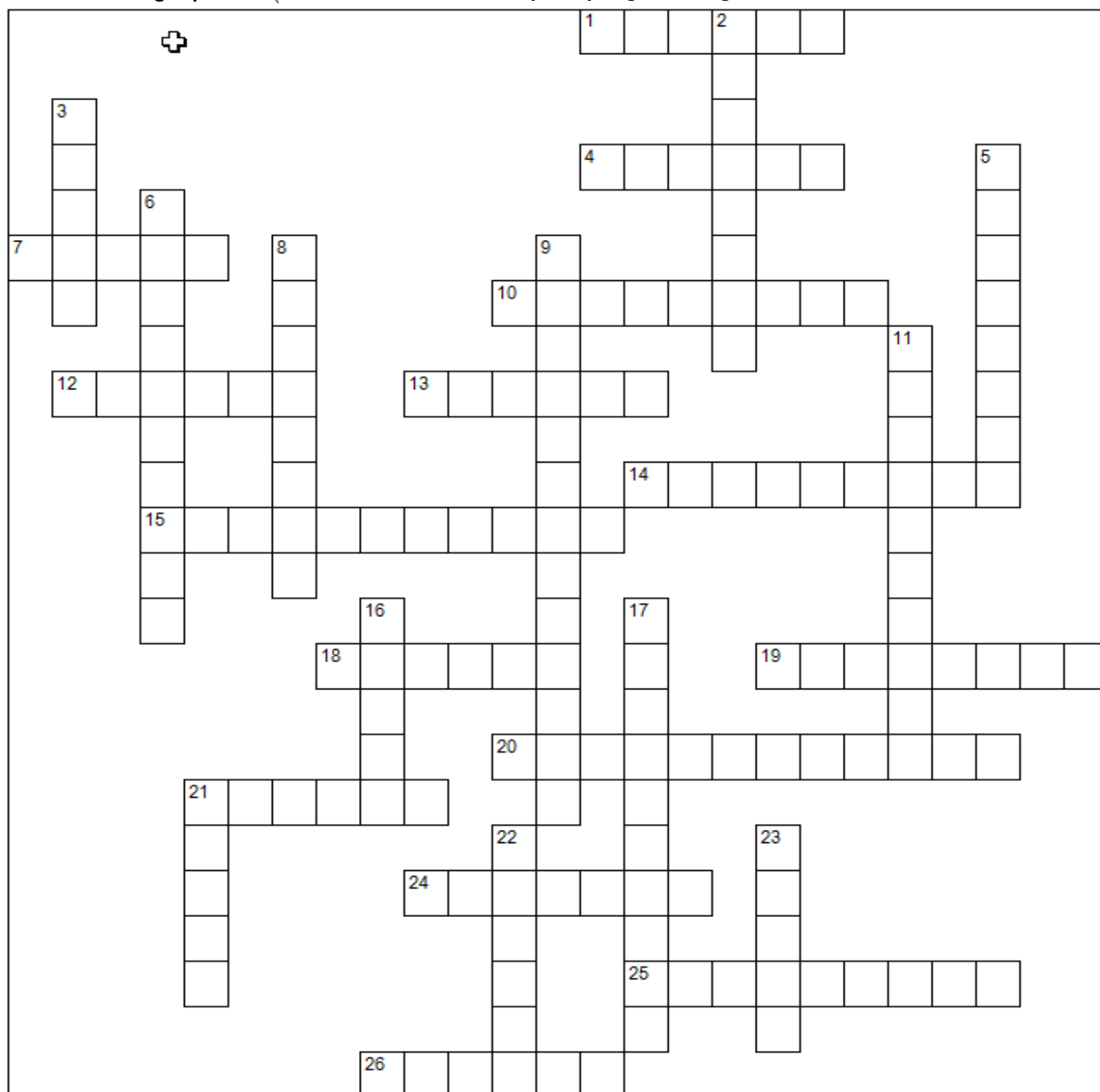


The only other 'must have' item is a substantial chair to sit in – how else can you enjoy your cold beer? We use the Helinox folding chair which stores in the pannier side pocket and only weighs 900grms or so. **Martin Brooks** For the definitive list see www.sarahandmartin.vpweb.co.uk



Got Your Thinking Caps on?

Steve Larwood tests your cycling knowledge!



Across

- 1 Makes the "Edge" series of bike computers (6)
- 4 On-line bike shop, started in 1999 (6)
- 7 No gears on this machine (5)
- 10 The chain passes around this (9)
- 12 Lightweight but very strong (6)
- 13 Mark Cavendish specialises in the ____ (6)
- 14 An oval cycling venue (9)
- 15 The "Flying Scotsman" (6,5)
- 18 Big debate. Should you wear one of these? (6)
- 19 The 14 in Glasgow is named after him (5,3)
- 20 One of the Grand Tours (4,2,6)
- 21 BMX riders never seem to use them (6)
- 24 Just below Dura Ace in the Shimano groupset hierarchy (7)
- 25 Inflation device you wouldn't carry on the bike (5,4)
- 26 Capital of Kazakhstan (6)

Down

- 2 Stops your rear from getting wet (8)
- 3 They made the "Really Round" wheels for the GB team (5)
- 5 Lost a wheel? (8)
- 6 Road race world title holder (5,5)
- 8 Not a tubular tyre (8)
- 9 Shop named after a series of consecutive events (5,8)
- 11 Series of popular track events held at 14 (10)
- 16 SPD, Look, Clipless, Flat (5)
- 17 Dominated omnium in the UCI track cycling world cup to win a gold (5,5)
- 21 Reynolds frames are made of this (5)
- 22 Upload your 1 data to this for sharing (6)
- 23 Needed for a puncture (5)

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December's History Lesson! Winnie's Well at Woolston



It was on the Vets' 100 many years ago that longstanding C&NW member Jean Ashton, who was leading our group on the afternoon return ride to tea at Overton, stopped unexpectedly by a farm gateway in the parish of West Felton. Leaving our cycles, Jean led we mystified followers through the farmyard and along a path to the right, where stands a



small half-timbered building thought to date from the early 17th century. In front of it were some stone basins filled with spring water adorned with watercress and wild flowers. It was, Jean told us, St. Winifred's Well. I must confess that, although I had heard of St. Winifred, I knew nothing about this well.

I found out later that apparently the waters had legendary curative powers – particularly for those suffering from cuts and bruises and even broken bones. A small spring adjacent to it was also thought to ease eye afflictions. These waters had been bathed in since pre-Christian times and it is surmised that this quiet dingle had long been some sort of holy place. Later this *Physick Well* with its *treacle* (i.e. healing water) was dedicated to St. Winifred. Now St. Winifred (*Gwenfrewi*) has many connections with our area. Apart from churches and religious centres dedicated to her and schools named after her, there is the



connection with the holy well at Holywell (Treffynon) in Flintshire; a place of pilgrimage, especially for the sick.

Legend has it that Winifred was born there in the 7th Century and, at an early age, was sworn to a life of chastity. Caradog however, the son of a neighbouring prince attempted to seduce the virginal Winifred and even hoped to marry her but was rejected. To escape his evil advances, she fled to a church but he had her captured and brought to him and, enraged at being rejected, chopped off her head. Where her head hit the ground, we are told, a holy well was created.

However, the wicked Caradog reckoned without the mystical and saintly powers of Winifred's uncle, St Beuno. Beuno not only brought his niece back to life but, even more impressively, replaced her head. (In such dire circumstances, it is always useful to have a saint for an uncle, I suppose.)



Now,

according to which legend you believe, Winifred either became the Abbess of a nunnery at Holywell or lived out her days as a nun at Gwytherin. (Sorry, but I have no idea of what became of the hapless, frustrated Caradog.)

So, you may ask, what is the connection between these two holy wells? Well, during the hundreds of years after her death, there arose a religious cult dedicated to Winifred. It was particularly strong in the Welsh Marches and North Wales but also attracted followers over a far wider area. After she achieved sainthood in the early 15th Century, pilgrims visited both Holywell and Shrewsbury where hundreds of years earlier, in 1138, her bones had been re-interred. It was, we are told, that on the night before her remains reached Shrewsbury, when the funeral cortege stopped overnight at Woolston that the healing waters of the spring gushed forth again.

Henry V (who was deeply religious and not merely a warrior king) in 1416 – the year after Agincourt - made the pilgrimage on foot to Holywell from Shrewsbury and must therefore have stopped where we bunch of cyclists were gathered. Even Dr. Johnson visited in 1774 – we were indeed amongst the least illustrious amongst a long list of distinguished visitors, it would seem.

In the 17th and 18th Centuries, the religious connections faded. We are told, the whole site became a place of feasting and revelry during the summer months. The several, temporary, alehouses set up around it each summer led to such debauched and un-holy behaviour that in 1775 the authorities put a stop to it. (St. Winifred must have turned in her grave at such goings-on.) In modern times, the timber framed cottage has become an attractive holiday



December's History Lesson! cont'd

cottage but not before it being used in the 19th Century as a courthouse and later a dwelling - when the Well, now increased in size, became a cold bath for, of all people, the squire of the neighbourhood (not a pretty sight, I would guess), and later a bath for less exclusive public use.

However, no bathing for us, for we veteran cyclists were models of decorum and so we re-mounted our cycles and headed off for tea – glad of the rest we had had. I cannot recall whether anyone eased their aching muscles with the waters of the well, though, perhaps the prospect of a 'cuppa' at Overton was a greater incentive to ride. **Mike Cross**

Interesting Concept!



Alan & Marina Johnston have sent in this most interesting project that he's currently working on and is something I thought that could be of real interest for some of us 'less' fit cyclists who just need that little bit of extra help when out for a ride.

It shows how simple an electric bike can be. Basically a front wheel and a battery on a road bike.

It is lighter, neater and cheaper than a conventional elec. bike.

The range is 60km, but whether that is on the plains of Cheshire or in the mountains of Almeria where Alan & Marina live, is unclear!




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Caption Competition Response!

Wow, Brian Lowe has come up with a great response to the last edition's Caption Competition!

Brian writes *Individuality Vs Conformity*

Re: the caption competition; here are a few suggested captions illustrating that in the opinion of some, conformity is not always the "be all and end all" of personality traits.



People, unlike sunflowers can make their own decisions. The crowd can have difficulty in seeing where the sun is really shining.
Brian Lowe

The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the tribe. If you try it you will be lonely often and sometimes frightened but no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself.
Friedrich Nietzsche

When you are surrounded by sheep, it is easy to become one yourself
Stephen Richards

Conformity is the jailer of freedom and the enemy of growth.
John F Kennedy

Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect.
Mark Twain

Pin your faith to no-ones sleeves. You have two eyes of your own.
Thomas Carlyle

One of the surest roads to mediocrity is to be overly concerned with pleasing others. It is in the long run a vain pursuit. Be yourself.
Terry Crouson

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Cycling 'Round the Clock'



While looking through some papers from over 60 years ago, I came across a certificate for completing the Coronation Tourist Trial in June, 1953. This 24-hour trial totalled 230 miles from Birkenhead to Aberystwyth, and back again -not very far by today's standards!

Four of us 18-year-olds entered together, Ron Williams, Dave Parry, Chris Jones and myself. We were all from Wrexham and were CTC members. The trial started at 6pm on Saturday, June 27th, and was to finish by 6pm the following day.

On the Saturday morning, I had done my usual shift at Bersham Colliery and, after a shower in the pit-head baths and a quick dinner, I met up with the others to cycle via Chester to Birkenhead. This was a journey of about 27 miles to the start.

The first group of 12 riders started off at 6pm, followed by successive groups at five minute intervals. We were the tenth group and had to start by retracing our route back to Wrexham. We journeyed through Ruabon and then to Chirk where we received a ticking-off at a checkpoint for overtaking three groups in front of us! What it was to be a young, fit 18-year old!

We proceeded to Oswestry and Welshpool, by which time it was getting dark and we needed lights. Remember the lamp bracket on the front fork, and the lamps with the twin cell batteries, and the rear light that you had to turn a screw to switch on?

After Newtown, the route turned into the mountains to Llanidloes and Llangurig and then on to the run down the Plynlimon Pass in the dark, that proved a bit hairy. By this time, we had passed all the other groups except for two riders on 'fixed wheels'. We had a battle with these two but, as we were all equipped with gears, we dropped them going down the Plynlimon. They caught us up again around Ponterwyd and the six of us arrived at Aberystwyth together in the early hours of Sunday morning to receive a severe telling-off because we had passed all the other groups and arrived first. On arrival, we put on our rain capes for warmth and slept for a couple of hours on the grass. We awoke to the aroma of frying bacon coming from a mobile snack bar and, after a welcome cup of tea and a door-step bacon butty, we began the return leg.

Once the stiff climb out of Aberystwyth was over, we made our way to the climb up the Plynlimon Pass -



where I hit the wall! The effects of getting up at 5am the previous morning to do a shift down the pit was taking its toll. But we found a café that opened early for cyclists and I had a much-welcomed breakfast.

Afterwards, I felt slightly better but, after passing through Newtown and Welshpool, I was gradually dropped by the other three and carried on at my own pace. At Oswestry, I caught up with Chris. Dave and Ron were somewhere ahead. By this time, I had recovered and was feeling stronger. Cycling through Wrexham together and resisting the temptation to pack it in and go home, we came upon Ron sitting on the grass waiting for us. He informed us that Dave had gone home for his Sunday dinner!

At the Gresford checkpoint, the three of us walked into the café to have a drink when Chris suddenly passed out and collapsed on the floor. The heat and excitement was too much for him - but he felt much better after a rest. By this time, we had been joined by Dave, refreshed after his Sunday dinner, and the four of us continued for the remainder of the journey to Birkenhead. We arrived with an hour or so to spare.

Cycling 'Round the Clock' cont'd



Chris Glynn and Cliff Johnson
"Ruthin Road Race" - 1954
Bike - "Holdsforth" with South of France H/Bars.
Double chain-set changer on seat tube - simplex and Simplex rear mech - 5 speed
Wrexham Premier racing jerseys + wooler racing shorts

When we checked in at Birkenhead, we were met by the 'Liver Birds', Audrey, Barbara, Agnes and Norma, four girls from Liverpool whom we had befriended

in Southport. We would meet up with them at weekends and cycle around the Wirral, Cheshire and North Wales.

After chatting with the girls and having a cuppa, we cycled back home to Wrexham and to bed ready for another shift at Bersham Colliery the next morning!

I can remember the bikes we rode: Dave rode a red Coventry Eagle with three Cyclo Benelux gears; Chris was on his yellow Dawes, equipped with Simplex gears; Ron had a Phillips Vox Populi in blue, again with Simplex gears and I rode an Armstrong, purple and chrome and fitted with Simplex gears. We all had bottle cages on our handlebars holding aluminium bottles with corks and straws sticking out of the top. We had large saddle bags held up with chrome Brooks saddlebag supports with our capes strapped across the top.

Chris and I are still in Wrexham and we regularly cycle together.

Perhaps some other CTC members may remember the Coronation 24-hour trial? **Glynn Jones**

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Corwen Autumn Audax



It's Daniel Craig's fourth outing as Bond and he says he is enjoying the role more than ever. It's my fourth time organising these rides and I can say the same. I think I have finally relaxed into the role which is just as well as I've taken on another set for next year! This year everything did seem to go very smoothly: most of leaves were still on the trees and not lying in sodden heaps on the roads waiting to unseat riders and even the weather played ball for once. It stayed dry and the wind was kind especially for the riders returning from Pensarn. All too often they arrive at the pub completely spent but this year they were all quite lively and able to enjoy the convivial company of the local lads and lasses.

The details of each ride are as follows:-

Clwydian

Twenty started, which is a big improvement on previous years when between 12 and 14 have started. For the first time there were ladies taking part: one of whom was a stoker on a tandem so a girl after my own heart! Eighteen finished all well within the time limit with two getting lost around Henllan (missing the turn into the secret valley). There were two Chester and North Wales CTC members on the ride and riders came from as far afield

as Herefordshire, West Yorkshire and even Hampshire. The following extract from a review posted on yacf.com epitomises the experience of many of the riders:

"long steady climbs over rolling hills before the final long, long 4- 8% climb up onto Denbigh Moors / Llyn Brenig-- but by jove it was worth it with a setting sun behind the mountains of Snowdonia, blood red, a silver crescent moon reflecting in Llyn Brenig---late evening riding can't get much better."

Such unsolicited testimony is what makes it all worthwhile for me and makes up for the countless hours spent on the computer when I could be out of my bike, the route and control checking, the fielding of all sorts of queries in the last two weeks when I'm starting to get nervous and the odd skirmish with irrational riders who have bonked at the end of an event. No it is not easy organising an Audax event but all told it's generally spiritually rewarding.



Corwen Autumn Audax ... cont'd Clwyd Gate

Part of this ride had featured in this year's Tour of Britain. OK, the pros were travelling in the opposite direction! Don't know if this was the reason we had a field of 50 starters, although numbers were slightly down on last year. Has the cycling boom peaked? Or was it the fact Wales were playing in the Rugby World Cup? Anyhow there were seven Chester and North Wales CTC members taking part together with riders hailing from



Somerset, Worcestershire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Herefordshire. There was just one DNF and even he enjoyed his ride.

Bala Mini Bash

This ride is always well supported by local riders many of whom ride from home. There was a field of 34, eight of whom were Chester and North Wales CTC members but again entrants were drawn from a wide area: Lancashire, Derbyshire and the West Midlands. Again everyone finished in good spirits.

Many thanks to everyone who took part and all those at the various controls especially the new café in Ruthin whose owner was very nervous about being a control but who enjoyed it so much that she has agreed to do it again next year. Thanks are also due to my husband who puts up with the monster I become as the event approaches!! And my daughters who manned the control at Pensarn after the cafe closed.

Next year's events will be on Saturday the 15th October. **Vicky Payne**

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Llysfas Hill Climb & Freewheel Comp October 3rd 2015



Once again riders gathered in Llysfas car park to register for the event. It was a mild autumn day so people tried to enjoy the sunshine as they become increasingly nervous about what lay ahead.



There was a good turnout for both events, and as usual there were more takers for the downhill event than for the ride up the hill. At 11.30 the 22 riders who had entered the hill climb, and the various supporters and volunteers move to the hill climb course. Glennys Hammond showed a previously unsuspected malicious streak by gleefully setting up to take photos of riders suffering on the steepest section of the climb; this did result in some good action shots. (Apparently her presence also inspired a few riders to stay on the bike as they didn't want to be photographed on foot).

The winner of the event was Ben Hughes in an extremely fast time of 6 minutes 30 seconds; the fastest time for several years. Ben was a member of the newly formed Ruthin CC as well as Rhyl CC and is now considering joining CTC. The first CTC member was Steve Jones in 7 min 25 sec on his steel framed bike; something of a contrast to Ben's machine. Third place, and first veteran went to last year's winner Steve

Larwood (7.49); he was closely followed by Sarah Hamill (7.50) who was the first Lady as well as 1st Lady vet. Aled Williams came in 14th in his first event (10.17) and was the first Junior, followed by the first super vet – Dave Statham (10.51).

As is traditional there was gentle (and not so gentle) coughing for the rest of the day. Some people attributed it to the weather and a theory that this lead to a high level of airborne pollution; others thought it was probably the result of people riding harder uphill than they had done all year.

After an enjoyable downhill ride to Graigfechan, (and a short



interlude to ensure lunch orders where in hand) the freewheel competition began. There were 26 solo riders taking part as well a tandem; a very good turnout! Unusually there quite a few additional (and somewhat bemused) spectators who were waiting near the pub for the next bus as it was a Route 67 Real Ale Weekend. As always, the higher places were closely fought with Roy

Llysfas Hill Climb & Freewheel Comp ... cont'd

Bunnell being delighted to return to winning form. Dave Statham was second, with Martin Brooks third and the



C&NW CTC Chairman David Matthews fourth. Sarah Hamill was the first lady (in 16th place), and Aled Williams was the first junior. The 1st tandem was Peter & Irene Dilworth.



Once the events were over people went to the Three Pigeons to have lunch; as the weather was so good they were able to eat outside and enjoy the views over the Vale of Clwyd. The results were calculated then the prizes were presented by Arthur Miller.

Thanks are due to all of the volunteers who helped with the event, and to all who took part with good humour whatever their results. **Lowri Evans**

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More Reflections from that man Glynn Jones!

Is there anything that can hold this man back? Another great article from Glynn!



This is my toolkit from 1950/51

The two steel tyre levers are stamped 'Dunlop' and cost 6d (2½p nowadays) each from Bill Hughes bike shop in Wrexham.

The spoke key I picked up at an engineering exhibition in Birmingham – a free gift on one of the stalls – we were taken there by the firm I worked for at the time.

You needed spanners in those days – wheel nuts, no quick release. Everything was nuts and bolts, no allen keys. Two of the spanners fitted the headset bearings and the C-spanner was for the bottom bracket locking ring.

Add to that a small screwdriver, pliers and a puncture outfit



and you were ready for anything, well, almost – see the photo below!

This was taken during an Audax at the 'Welsh Festival' at Llandoverly.

The bike belonged to 'Ivor from Anglesey'. He had a split in the top tube, just where the internal brake cable went through.



My Bike – Member Machines

Mike's 'Italian Stallion'!

Owner: Mike Callaghan



History of the Ciocc bike

I bought the Ciocc in December 1992 from Cambrian Cycles who at that time had a unit on the Mold Industrial Estate.

Cost £ 550 and fitted with a 105 groupset and Campag wheelset.

Cambrian imported top end frames from Italy, Tommasini, De Rosa and Colnago and in fact I bought two Tommasini frames at a later date from the same dealer.

The name Ciocc is a slang term meaning 'Poker Face' in Italian. The frame builder, a man called Pelizzoli, was a card player and never gave anything away playing cards so the name 'Poker Face' stuck.



His logo on the headset of the early frames was an Ace, Club, Diamond and a Heart - very similar to Colnago.

Chrome detailing on the frames was first class, but it was the multi-layering of different paint colours which was his speciality as was common in the 70s & 80s in Italy.

Pelizzoli started the company 'Ciocc' in 1969 and sold it in 1980 but continued to build frames under the Ciocc name.

There is one importer in Yorkshire who sells complete Ciocc bikes, mostly carbon which do not have the same class or style as the early frames.

Pelizzoli still builds steel frames but now under his own name.

Now, Mike's bike looks really swish and I wish I had one just like it but hold on there, YOUR bike is also just as special as Mike's. It doesn't need to be an historical 'thoroughbred', just your bike and why it's special to you! Let's hear from you!



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