

CYCLE CHAT

Winter 2018

The quarterly magazine of the Leicestershire and Rutland
Cyclist's Touring Club county group of CYCLING UK
the UK cyclist's organisation



Editor's Thoughts

I've been away on holiday so much this year that I think my neighbours sometimes don't recognise me. In fact I have probably been away more than at home since the New Year. Holidays, always with the bike, in Spain, India, Australia, USA and Canada, plus others in the UK, including the Isle of Man have occupied my time and helped spend some of my life savings!

The time away continues, and I am in fact, writing this in my small caravan in Hawes, in the Yorkshire Dales, on a day when rain presents a distinctly unappealing vista amongst the surrounding hills.

I understand that here you have had a good summer, weather wise, and will just have to take that on trust, because I was here so little! Some of those holidays were taken with other CTC / Cycling UK members on tours organised by volunteers under the auspices of CTC Cycling Holidays. They offer the most comprehensive range of cycling holidays, both UK and worldwide, available in the UK and every tour has its own unique personality because their Tour Managers are highly experienced, volunteer enthusiasts. They design and plan a trip because they really, really want to go. And you, as a CTC member, are invited to go with them.

If you've never been on a CTC Tour, I thoroughly recommend one. I must have been on probably 12 -15 over the years, and all were enjoyable. However, if you want a "2 weeks in Benidorm" experience, they're not for you, but I doubt you're that sort of person, anyway.

December is looming up very fast, and that means the Mince Pie Meet at Belton Village hall on Sunday December 23rd. See you there?

Oh ! I nearly forgot :- **Merry Christmas**

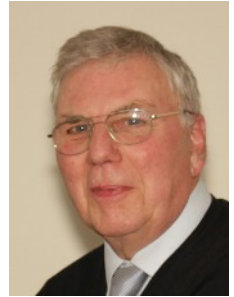
Dave Binks

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From The President and Secretary

Ray Clay



What a fine summer we've had to enjoy cycle rides. Not me unfortunately. My age and dodgy knees have precluded me from participating. However, hope is in sight. I do plan to purchase an eBike in the not too distant future. I did try one out a few weeks ago and I was smitten. Thanks to eBay, my tandem, trailer and two bike have been sold. Watch this space.

I was very sorry to miss Phil Allen's memorial ride. He was an inspiration in the local cycling world. I understand the event was very successful, thanks in a great part to Ian Hill and Keith Lakin who organised the route. I would have loved to have been a part of the celebration of Phil's contribution over many, many years. However, I was in Dublin that weekend celebrating my granddaughters christening.

I also missed the Over 60s lunch organised by Eileen Johnson. I have been in previous years and it is a great social occasion. I had booked but, at the last minute, a problem cropped up and I had to cancel. However, Eileen pulled out the stops and managed to give me a refund.

At the time of writing, our AGM will be held shortly this year at the Soar Bridge Inn, Barrow upon Soar, complete with free hot food. Hopefully, this will entice more people to attend. (I'm also planning to step down as secretary after 22 years in the job). Hopefully, there will be a good response to the photo competition and thanks to Keith for arranging the display and judging.

A reminder that our carol service will be held at **Wanlip** church on Sunday 9th December at 1.15pm. The church hall has been booked 12 noon -3pm for refreshments before and after the service.

Then there is the Mince Pie Run at Belton Village Hall on Sunday 23rd December. Although this is now an East Midlands CTC event, Leicestershire

and Rutland CTC members play a large part, notably John Catt who arranges the catering. The Mince Pie Run has come along way since the early days when cheese cobs were made by members in the kitchen. We are now high tech and have food ordered on line!

I have to say how grateful I am to have had the support of fellow members, notably my mentor, John Allen and minute taker, Jean Deacon and not forgetting Keith and Jean Lakin who seem to be around helping at every event.

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Technical Topics

by Peter Witting

Once-a-day Sunscreen

It's been a good summer for sunscreen sales! 3 years ago I mentioned Reimann P20 for cycling, but 200ml can now cost £25 at Sainsbury's (much cheaper online). I've since been recommended Calypso Once-a-Day. It's only £6 for the same 200ml size from Aldi and Wilco. Both sunscreens allow you to ride all day without further application. The Reimann does tend to leave a yellow stain on white jerseys etc. so the Calypso wins both on price and staining. It does have a more "chemical" odour on application, but that goes when dry.



Short Shorts – again!

Being 5'8" tall I find most cycling shorts far too long. You can't easily shorten Lycra shorts, so I've been researching.

Dave Binks, our esteemed editor, had suggested Decathlon's B'twin shorts. Their £45 C900 bibs left only 4" below the shorts and the centre of my knee-cap. They were OK but loose fitting on the thigh; good value to wear under tights in colder weather.

Endura Pro SL bibshorts regularly get top reviews in magazines, but cost nearly three times the Decathlon shorts. Significantly they offer two leg lengths - regular and long, so I tried the "regular". Even that was too long for me leaving only 3.5" to the kneecap.



Have you tried these, Peter?

(Editor)

In desperation I tried the Assos T.Cento S7. That replaces my old favourite Assos F1 Mille, now discontinued. At last I got a satisfactory 5.25" of tanning between shorts and knee! They are outstandingly comfortable, and in a league of their own, without going into too much detail! But I'd only recommend them for a lottery winner, given their Factory Outlet discounted price of £165! Yes, I could have saved a lot of money by simply using fake tan above the knees!

Ferienhaus Blekes

(Accommodation in Germany)

A fabulous base for touring and mountain biking in the Vulkaneifel region of Rheinland Pfalz, Germany 3 bedrooms, sleeps 5, self catering. From around €19 pp per night. -10 hrs by car / HHN airport 40 mls.



Contact Martin Ayling (tel 07956 827649) email ayling.martin@gmail.com for exclusive LR CTC reader link to Flickr pictures.

<http://vulkan.bike/touren-planer/>

<http://www.gesundland-vulkaneifel.de/en/region/towns-resorts/daun.html>

"It's all downhill from here"

**The deadline for the Spring issue of
Cycle Chat is 1st February 2019**
That edition will cover March, April & May 2019

How to park your bike safely - part II

Martin Ayling writes -

Further to the item re safely parking a bike in the last Cycle Chat, and for want of a destination, I went out to get further “parking solutions” to add.



The 'pedal trapped post'.

Forward motion is prevented by the crook of the saddle, rearward by the pedal. This is made extra secure if a cable lock is passed through the front wheel and round the post, so the steering can't swing in a gust of wind and the bike thus pirouette around the post.

The 'bench end'.

Handy to sit beside & serve yourself a buffet from your bag.



The 'drop bar hook'.

A hurricane wouldn't upset it, but flat bar users would be, as they can't do it.

The 'saddle hang'.

This is where the nose of the saddle is hung over a horizontal pole or similar, thus lifting the rear wheel off the ground.

Not often available but is slick, compact, and secure. Sometimes used at triathlons.



MY RIDE

Following on from Lyn's report (Charnwood Section Report Summer issue) I felt it necessary to write of the mitigating facts for the ride led by myself.

The route from Blandford Forum to Compton Abbas Air field was an unclassified road. It was unfortunate that it was a busy route for the locals to Cranbourne Chase and Shaftesbury. The day being sunny and warm and a Bank holiday Sunday to boot!

It was a steady climb but we enjoyed the return by the same road. This being a lot quieter at the time of our return.

The route back via the Ox Drove was rough for a section but it did have it's advantages.

- 1) It further tested Keith's saddle to failure enabling him time to get it fixed prior to his Welsh tour. (Sorry Keith)
- 2) It enabled us to avoid the A345 back to Blandford Forum.
- 3) It enabled us to enjoy the 6 mile return down hill as previously mentioned from Compton Abbas Airfield.

I would also mention it looked a great option on 'Google Earth'!!!

As regards Lyn's comment that the ride was little overlong with the terrain: -
Guilty as Charged!

I would like to thank the group for indulging me and incorporating the BCQ locations in the weeks rides. They enabled me to visit 4 locations in an area I had not previously covered.

Jim Gerrard

Charnwood Generals' Report

by Martin Bulmer who also sent the photo

Firstly let me thank Lyn & Pete for organising our Spring break. The May holiday in Dorset started a little chilly, but by the end of the week it was clear that the summer had started and intended to continue and we had enjoyed the hilly countryside around our base at Winterborne Stickland. To quote Wikipedia, "Winterborne Stickland is sited in a winterbourne valley in the Dorset Downs, which gives rise to the first part of its name. The second part "Stickland" is derived from sticol, Old English for 'steep'." I should have looked that up before going. We had some great rides & social occasions as Lyn reported in the last edition.

The subsequent summer has been declared joint hottest with 1976, 2003 and 2006, but the heat didn't feel as oppressive as some other summers. I suppose there was less humidity. We didn't get a hosepipe ban either, although anyone who took part in the Phil Allen Memorial Rides will know how low Staunton Harold reservoir was by the beginning of October. The sailing club's jetty didn't look to be long enough!

Our first outing after the May holiday, Jim's ride took us to Burbage Common for elevenses, where we discovered that it was the annual Open Day, with craft stalls and events throughout the day. Fortunately, the cafe coped admirably.

June saw my first visit to The Salt Box at Hatton for many years. After a great breakfast we rode through the lanes and up the hills to Kirk Ireton, returning via Duffield and the Cloud Trail.

In July, on our way to Branston we called in at "Nice Pie" cafe near Old Dalby for our breakfast, the first time we have tried it. I can recommend it as a stopping



Evidence of the low rainfall this summer can be seen in the low water level at Staunton Harold Reservoir

place, but I must say I found the ride through to the cafe rather tedious. I can say that, because I was leading, I'll have to find a more interesting route another time! Another new cafe for me was the Orangery at Markeaton Park, and very pleasant it was too. While I'm on the subject of new stopping points, we visited the Anchor Inn at Hurley Common, which used to be a regular stop when I started riding with Charnwood, but dropped off the list for some reason many years ago, so was new to everyone else on the ride. We were made very welcome and there are many lanes to explore in that area south of Tamworth and Atherstone, so I look forward to returning next year.

In September we made it to Shearsby via Broughton Astley and to Barton Green via Fradley Junction amongst other rides.

We have continued to offer a car assisted ride once a month through the summer, but not all of these went ahead. Surprisingly for such a good year weather-wise, a number of our rides have been curtailed or called off due to bad weather!

Atmospheric conditions have not favoured Sundays despite it being the joint hottest summer in my lifetime. A couple of impromptu midweek runs went ahead at the drop of a chat - a Messenger chat group, in fact, which keeps us in touch.

October saw the first Phil Allen Memorial rides set off from Beth's Kitchen at Breedon.

These rides were mostly off road and took us on trails we were previously unaware of in some cases, such as those through Calke Abbey Park, introduced by the fascinating instruction to leave the driveway after the twelfth oak. It's surprising how difficult it is to count up to twelve when you're pedalling slowly uphill with a queue of cars behind you! It was "Apple Day" at Calke, and the cars were nose to tail up that driveway. I think I got off the road prematurely at oak number 11, but I was soon back on track. Thanks go to John Allen, Keith & Jean Lakin for organising, and to Ian Hill for the routes.

Then summer went away. Finally on October 28th I donned my "longs" for the ride to Newton Solney via Swarkestone, and the next morning had to scrape ice off the car windscreen.

Here comes winter, let's hope it's a kind one!

WANTED - YOUR PHOTOS

We constantly need pictures for Cycle Chat.

If you have some cycling related shots (not views) that would be suitable for publication and you would like to share, email them to davebinks@ntlworld.com.

We always try to credit the photographer, so let me know who took it, where and when, plus any other info you think is relevant.

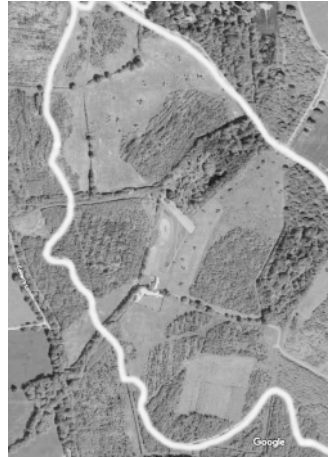
Phil Allen Memorial Offroad Ride

The ride started at Breedon on the Hill. I'd hoped for a quick coffee before the start, but Beth's Kitchen had yet to open. So Phil's brother John suggested I chased after the early starters to avoid getting cold on the first chilly morning of autumn.

I soon saw the Shepshed group disappearing on the path alongside the A42. An unshipped chain delayed two riders, and I got chatting with the third, missing the exit! My smartphone told me where I was, so I navigated through King's Newton to pick up the route in Melbourne

The road past the Staunton Harold Sailing Club was new to me, and I soon reached Ticknall, and the traffic visiting Calke Abbey on "Apple Day"! After the "12th tree" I picked up the track that bypassed the busy narrow one-way entry road, and I continued towards Heath End.

The track then ran inside the hedge next to the road before turning right and through a tunnel which was part of an old mineral line – again new to me. I was disconcerted to meet Alan Hartshorne coming the other way, just after I'd seen the Shepshed group doing the same! But I seemed to be following the instructions OK. Thanks to Ian Hill for planning the route on behalf of John Allen. Soon I was back on the earlier route, turning to pass Calke



The "Face"

NEW MEMBERS



Peter Witting reports:-

Regular readers will know that we welcome new members and list them by their location. However, due to "Data Protection Issues"(!) National Office are unable to supply any info. for this edition. However we still welcome them to the Group and hope they will join in our local activities.

By virtue of your CTC/Cycling UK Club Membership, there are no additional fees or subscriptions to pay for riding with your local group, so why not go along and try one of our group rides? Contact the ride organiser first so that he/she can welcome you on the day. You won't regret it.

Abbey and following the road to the Ferrers Centre. My OS Explorer National Forest map revealed the next track had been used in a previous offroad ride. I hadn't realised the reason for the serpentine twisting-turning route to reach Alistair's Wood. But the satellite view on Google Maps showed it was the profile of a face – was it Alistair's? I also learnt that it had been the site of the opencast Dog Lount Mine.

The final tracks, which touched the Ashby Bypass to reach Smisby, were also familiar from a previous Offroad Ride. Then back to Breedon to meet up with those who had finished after the shorter 17 mile ride. A very enjoyable ride on my trusty Mercian tourer and 700x28s. You missed a good day!

Peter Witting.

Charnwood, North West Leicestershire. Annual Report 2017/2018

Keith Lakin reports

A pleasant and comfortable start to our 66th year with all rides being held during September and November, however poor weather was soon to play its part the latter part of December, rides were cancelled because of heavy snow which closed many roads, it was also the reason our Counties Annual Carol Service at Norton – Juxta – Twycross did not take place.

Into the New Year with our Annual New Year Dinner held at the Charnwood Arms at Bardon, over 24 members and friends attended.

Our Winter Madness ride to the Peak District did not take place due to the dire weather forecast, as the nights drew out and became warmer, mileage increased. In March Keith and Jean organised the Prize Presentation evening with a Skittle night at Barrow – on – Soar, a few weeks later we had our own Clubs Dinner at The Ferrers Arms at Lount.

As summer arrived Keith and Jean had several ailments and were unable to attend Club and County events for a few months, we were however able to go to the Meriden Service, but on our return home how pleasing it was to see a few of our members on B. B. C. Midlands Television in their Red and White Tops.

In the very warm summer, holidays came, two members named Pearl and Brenda had two weeks visiting the Orkneys, a few weeks later it was to visit the Waveney area in Norfolk/Suffolk, also it is noticeable how much pleasure has been had by having car assisted rides.

As this has been a difficult year for both of us, we offer our grateful and sincere thanks to all.

40 Years of Mince Pies!

By Peter Hopkins



It's strange to think that it all began so informally towards the end of the CTC's Centenary Year. Christmas Eve 1978 proved to be a very wet Sunday for Loughborough Section's run. As we splashed our way homewards, Jessie and Ian Hay kindly invited the half dozen bedraggled cyclists to their Long Whatton home, where we enjoyed hot mince pies and coffee. Then their son Nigel turned up with some equally sodden Loughborough RC members - and the idea for the Mince Pie Run was born!

The following year, Howard Naylor presented the section with some handsome trophies for competition, so we decided to hire Long Whatton School hall, lay on tea, coffee and goodies, and ask local cyclists to come along for our first prize presentation. We sent out invitations to all Leicestershire sections, neighbouring DAs, and clubs listed in the RTTC and BCF handbooks. And they certainly came – from all points of the compass, too: from Derbyshire, from Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire! It was an immediate popular success.

By 1982, it was no longer necessary to send out invitations. The Loughborough Mince Pie Run had become an institution. It was a fixture in clubs' runs lists. All East Midlands cyclists knew it was THE place to be on the last Sunday before Christmas - and there was a good chance of meeting to exchange good wishes with people you hadn't seen for months.

Of course, over the years there have inevitably been some changes. After that first Christmas, Long Whatton school hall was no longer available, so John Williams found us Belton village hall for 1980. We've been there ever since, and over the years it has featured a charity raffle and served as checkpoint and refreshment break for a midwinter Audax ride. For some years in the late 1980s, a prize was awarded for the best-decorated Christmas Bike – which prompted much ingenuity in the use of tinsel, silver paper and Santa hats (in those pre-helmet days!)

Sadly, Jessie and Ian are no longer with us, but years before they died they had seen their hospitable get-together for a few friends on that Christmas Eve way back in 1978 develop into a major event on the Midlands cycling scene.

'In 1981 we featured on Radio Leicester, after a reporter turned up to interview organisers and visiting club riders.'

It is now so well established that the Mince Pie Run appears in the calendar with national events like the Meriden Service and York Rally. Jessie and Ian would be proud to see it reach its 40th Anniversary this year.

This year's meeting is on Sunday 23rd December in Belton VH.

The “New Cyclists” of the 21st Century

Peter Hopkins continues his thoughts about the “New Cyclists” appearing on the cycling scene.

(Continued from the Autumn edition)

After all that success – enter the “New Cyclist”! He’s not a tourist because the only kind of cycling he has ever witnessed is track riders in velodromes and *coureurs* in road races. For obvious practical reasons, a “New Cyclist” can’t pose as a track rider. But he can easily dress up as a professional road *coureur*, just as he can buy and wear the strip of his favoured football club. He also needs the high quality bike, of course, which is why there aren’t many teenagers amongst the “New Cyclists”. And the bike has to be a stripped-down racing lightweight, even though he doesn’t really need that kind of bike, because – as I keep saying – he certainly won’t actually race. To be fair, he does at least get out on it, usually aiming at various times and speeds – and that’s a plus for him and for the nation’s health, so long as he doesn’t behave like Robert Garbutt’s cowboys. But the “New Cyclist”



does tend to become miles-and-time-obsessed, usually online via Strava (*“Via WHAT?” some of you may cry!*) So, whilst not actually ‘training’ like a racing cyclist, he usually tends to be in a hurry, because he’s probably chasing a personal target.

So the more leisurely side of our activity is either completely unknown to the “New Cyclist” or is viewed rather scornfully. Self-image is likely to be very important, so he wouldn’t be seen dead riding a bike with mudguards and saddlebag, even though he never races. (Strange to recall that, after finishing early Sunday morning time trials, we used to *re-fit* our mudguards and saddlebags to join that day’s club run at the lunch or tea venue. We kept mudguards on even during training bashes; they were removed only for an actual race;)

Audax-style *Sportives* are nowadays very popular. These are, in effect, high-tech versions of events like the CTC’s 50 in 4 and 100 in 8. In other

words, the object is not to *compete*, but to *qualify*. They are not races (the CTC used to insist on mudguards and bag). However, instead of just producing a list of successful riders, as the CTC does, many *Sportive* organisers insist on misleadingly publishing ‘results’ with individual times listed in descending speed order – exactly like time trial result sheets, giving a false impression of competition. This means that some riders boast – wrongly – of “winning” or “coming 4th” in a *sportive*. It also means that the atmosphere of such events is much less relaxed and recreational than that of a typical Sunday club run.

So, is our kind of leisure cycling in decline? Well, it certainly isn’t growing at the same phenomenal rate as what might be termed the ‘fitness cycling’ of *sportives*. What is the statistical evidence? On the plus side, CTC membership – which had sunk to as low as 18,000 by the late 1960s – is now something like 67,000+, and that’s good news: we’re not far off four times as big as we were 50 years ago. However, British Cycling (the former BCF), which had only 15,000 members as recently as 2005, had mushroomed to 125,000+ by 2016: that’s an increase of well over *eight* times, double the CTC’s expansion – and in just a decade, not in half a century, like the CTC! Very significantly, 75,000 of BC’s now massive membership – far more than the CTC’s entire total – joined *after 2012* (London’s Olympic year). That incredibly rapid growth can’t be dismissed as an inexplicable blip.

Consider support for our traditional touring events. Some years ago the once-popular BCTC (British Cycle Touring Competition) seemed to disappear, presumably because of declining interest. Its emphasis was on such varied skills as map-reading, rough stuff (off-road), courtesy and safety, bike control, pace-judging, observation, technical maintenance and countryside knowledge. The Leics. heat alone used to attract dozens (48 entrants in 1983, for example). Every summer, the DA also used to run its

own Map-Reading Competition (50 entries in 1983, but only 5 by 2001). That, too, no longer seems to be listed.

And, finally, what about traditional cycle touring in the UK? By this I mean going off for a weekend, a week, a fortnight or more, carrying





saddlebag, panniers, etc., and moving on each day, usually staying at youth hostels or B&Bs. It's still done, of course, but its relative decline is demonstrated by the almost universal closure of those widely-spread hostels once used mainly by cycle tourists and by that extinct species, the hitch-hiker. These YHs were not only located in popular holiday areas, but were more widely spaced to provide 'stepping

stones' which enabled tourists to travel conveniently up and down the country. Typical examples used to be Greens Norton, Badby, Leamington, Inglesham, King's Cliffe, Lichfield, Southwell, Loddington, Copt Oak, Grantham, Lincoln, Bawtry, Selby, Dacre Banks, Chester, Overton I've used ALL of these, often with groups of boys on school tours, but every single one is now closed. Such hostels used to enable, say, a London cyclist to get himself up to the Yorkshire Dales in a couple of days, as well as being handy for local club weekends. A modern YHA map shows that hostels are all now bunched in popular holiday areas like the Lakes, North Wales and the Peak District. Eastern England is nowadays particularly barren, except for the odd hostel on the coast to attract seaside visitors. Closed YHs where we used to stay on tours east of Loughborough include Lincoln, Woody's Top, Kings Lynn, Norwich, Ely, Peterborough, Finningham, Brandon, Castle Hedingham, Nedging Tye, Houghton Mill, Saffron Walden, Alpheton, Yarmouth. Our regular school tour into East Anglia would nowadays be impossible, as only Thurlby is still open.

Because they are aware only of "the world of big cycle races", I think the hordes of "New Cyclists" miss out on the sheer *variety* which used to be part of cycling club life, embracing tourists and racing men and many who did a bit of both. All the bigger clubs to which I have belonged over the years certainly used to promote races: they ran open time trials, road races and cyclo-cross. But they also had activities like summer tours, treasure hunts, YH weekends, hobo runs, all-night breakfast runs and tramp suppers. Locally, Coalville Wheelers' Fancy Dress 10 on Boxing Day was a good example of this kind of event.

Naturally, I'm glad that so many people have turned to cycling in recent years, and I hope it's not just a transient fashion. But I sometimes regret that touring and the lighter, more relaxed side of our activity seem to have

been left behind. Cycling is FUN! Every run doesn't have to be a 100 in 7. Probably because of the Classic races, many of the non-racing (but target-chasing) "New Cyclists" seem to take it all a bit too *seriously*.

Dave Binks adds a little story here.

Continuing the same theme re new cyclists knowing nothing about the sport. I recently marshalled my club's Road race. There were well over 60 riders, some from traditional clubs, but many from "Teams" of which I had never heard. Whilst waiting the arrival of the bunch on another of their 6 laps, a rider, one of those in the race, walked past and asked how far it was to the HQ. He had punctured and carried no spare tube or pump et. This is probably understandable and not that unusual in a race, where you try to save every ounce. He was advised it was about 1.5 miles, and set off walking again. But, being a nice guy, I called him back and said I couldn't give him my spare tube, as it was my only one, but he could use my puncture outfit and pump to repair the puncture and ride back. He thought the flat may have been due to the valve, so we tried pumping it up again, but it wouldn't even start to inflate.

So I took the little tool kit off my bike and handed it to him. I said I assumed he knew what to do, and he confirmed he did. However, after watching him as he struggled to get the tyre off (which was so badly worn the canvas was visible in half a dozen places!) I was starting to doubt it.

It soon became obvious he wasn't used to fixing punctures, either at the roadside, or anywhere else for that matter. I asked how quickly the tyre had gone down (very quickly) and had he just hit a pothole ("Yes") I realised that it was an impact puncture, with the telltale "snake bite" double slits, and pointed these out to him. He had never seen that before. He then peeled the backing foil off the patch, carelessly touching the sticky side with his finger (thus putting finger grease on the sticky surface!) and attempted to put the patch straight onto the tyre without abrading the tube to give the glue a "key", OR EVEN APPLYING ANY

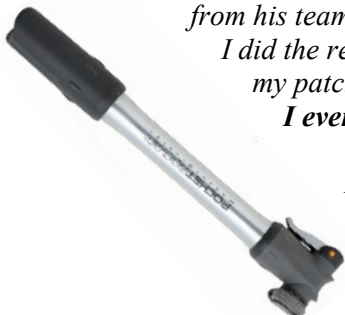
GLUE!

Remember, this was a senior rider, in a serious race, and riding for a race team of some sort! It was obvious he had never learnt this from his team mates, who, if truth be told, didn't know either!

I did the repair for him, because I had visions of him using all my patches and glue and still getting nowhere.

I even had to show him how to use a hand pump!

And some say "Why join a traditional club, what do those old fogeys know?"



SEE YOUR PHOTOS IN PRINT !

Your pictures needed for Cycle Chat.

Any reasonable shots illustrating an article are accepted.

However, if you want to increase your chances of a cover shot, bear in mind that a group of people actually riding is much more interesting than a row of static people. Faces should be visible, bums disappearing up the road are not very attractive!

In order to go on the front or rear cover, they also need to be in vertical (portrait) format, so that it is the correct way round, or at least able to be cropped so that the interest is within a vertical A5 or 4 border. I can do the cropping, don't worry about that.

I show some examples of good and bad shots that could be used on the covers.

In order to save anyone's embarrassment, all the shots below are by the Editor.

Possible cover shots; vertical, people actually cycling.



Not really suitable as a cover shot; horizontal, not actually cycling.



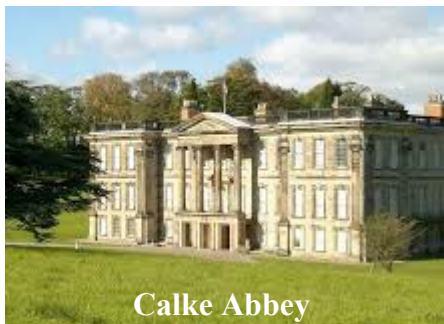
The Phil Allen Memorial Rides, Sunday October 7th

John Allen gives us the events of the day

Our off road rides returned to the programme this year under this above title.

17 riders enjoyed the routes of 27, 17 and 10 miles using part of the Cloud Trail for which my brother Phil worked tirelessly to help bring about.

Other favourite locations of Phil's visited included Melbourne, Staunton Harold Reservoir, Ticknall and its tramway, Calke Park and Staunton Harold Hall and Woodlands.



Calke Abbey

Event HQ was Beth's Kitchen at Breedon Priory, Breedon-on-the-Hill where we were made so welcome. Thanks to Ian Hill, secretary of CTC Derby and Burton for offering to plan the routes, using some tracks that even the locals were not aware of, to give everyone a great day awheel.

Thanks to my family and also Jean and Keith Lakin.

The event was the last counter for County CTC medals and I estimate there are four medal winners this year, all from South Leicester!



Melbourne hall

Oldest gent rider was 82 year old Dave Smith of Leicester Easy riders CTC and oldest lady was Pearl Thompson of Charnwood CTC.

Thank you all - you made my day too.

Leicestershire & Rutland CTC Events 2018

- 9 Dec Carol Service. 1.15pm St Nicholas and Our Lady, Church Rd, Wanlip, Leicester LE7 4PJ
- 23* Dec Mince Pie Meet*, Belton VH, Leics from 10.30am
*(E Mids CTC event)

Picos de Europa and French Alps 2017

Dave Binks tells of his early summer holiday

All photos by Dave Binks

Dave continues with his story of his trip. He is in Argeles Gazost in the French Pyrenees and has just had a day climbing the Port d'Espagne where he got soaked on the descent. He is camping, with his tent and bike in the back of the car.

Monday 26 June

More rain in the night, although not heavy. It was still raining when I woke, but then eased and stopped, although it didn't look promising. By the time I had breakfasted and done some chores and read a bit, it had improved enough to tempt me out on the bike. When I was here last year with a group, I rode up the Luz Ardiden climb because I had never done it before, whilst everyone else did the Col du Soulor and Col d'Aubisque, a climb I had done before. However, it was 16 yrs ago, so I thought today would be a good day to do it again. The climb starts within a few hundred metres of the campsite, so stiff legs were in evidence until I punctured the rear tyre after only a mile or two. At first I thought it was the same problem as Friday, but no, it was a fresh flint. I had never ridden up from this direction, so didn't know what to expect.

Although it was hard in places, it wasn't too bad, but the rain came on again with a few miles still to go before I got to the top of the Soulor. So I "caped up" for a while then took it off, only to have to put it on again before the top. A cafe at the top of the Soulor provided hot drinks, and a warm waffle plastered with chocolate spread, together with a seat in the warm.



A welcome cafe stop on the Soulor

From the Soulor (1474 m) there is a short descent, then a climb up to the top of the Col d'Aubisque at 1709 m, but as the weather still wasn't settled, I wasn't sure whether to carry on, it was another 5 mls, plus the weather, but I thought I would have a go. Then another puncture, same tyre, but a fresh flint, put paid to that idea. Having already used my spare tube, I had no choice than to patch one of the tubes, using the repair kit I always carry. That persuaded me not to push my luck and I turned and retraced back down to Argeles, by which time the sun was out it was warm and sunny again!

Having now punctured 3 times in only a few days, I changed the tyre for a new one, and later also changed the front tyre. A short ride up the relatively easy valley and then a hot shower at the campsite toilet block called to me.

The campsite was a bit more expensive than the others on this trip, but WiFi was included, plus I found out they had a terrific water play area with tube slides and

flowing rivers and other fun things. I had never experienced a tube slide before and this one had 3 ! I have to admit they were great fun, but the one where it was totally black inside was a little scary. They were very high, I counted 64 steps to reach the top, but well worth it. Another feature was the rabbits running around the site. They certainly weren't the usual wild, grey, ones seen in the fields, and they seemed not bothered by humans.

A stroll into town for a good meal finished the day for me.

46 mls, 1411 m climbed from a base of 414 m, max height 1476 m

Tuesday 27 June

Quite a warm night without rain, but overcast at first, so I was in no rush to get up. But the day did brighten and I set out on a 45 mls ride with a short Col over the Croix Blanche (White Cross). This was one of the organised rides from the previous year and I still had the route on my Garmin satnav, so it was easy to navigate. The route went



Croix Blanche

down the valley on an old rail track which has been converted into a “Voie Verte” (green way) and is beautifully surfaced and popular with cyclists and walkers travelling between Lourdes, at the foot of the valley, and the upper part of the valley in which Argeles Gazost is located. After a few miles of gentle descending my route turned sharply right and immediately the climbing started, easy at first, but then as we left the valley and got up higher, became harder and harder. Some sharp hairpins told me I was getting there, but they lied, there was more, but going across the side of the hill until I recognised the shape of the final few hundred metres to the white cross that marked the top, at the modest for this region, height of 830m. There was an orientation table nearby, with pointers to nearby locations and heights of mountains, but the air was still a bit misty, and anything more than about 5 miles away just couldn't be seen. I'm sure that on a clear day, the view would be very good, but not today. A fast descent back down to lower heights and a right turn onto a main road and I was soon entering the town of Bagnères de Bigorre, one of the many Spa Towns in this area of the Pyrenees. A stop at a baker's for a few bits to eat, then I was in the main square, sitting under the shade of the trees kindly planted, for just that purpose, by the town council. After a drink in a cafe to wash my snack down, I had a little poke around and admired the turn of the (20th) Century architecture, of which this town has much. I stuck my head in the main doors of the very grand “Thermes” building, where one goes to take the Spa waters, and saw the staff going about their duties in nurse like uniforms, and clients with white robes wandering around the marbled halls. The smell of the minerals in the water was very strong and so I didn't join in.

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Voie Verte, past Argeles Gazost

My return route was much easier as it dropped slowly downhill to the outskirts of Lourdes, before coming back on the Voie Verte (a disused rail line, now tarmaced over and used by cyclists and walkers) to Argeles Gazost. It was in Lourdes that I realised miracles do happen because I actually found the route out of this large town, quite easily! Shortly after getting back to my tent, a storm hit the valley and after much bashing and crashing, there was a heavy downpour for a

short while. I thought that was it, but it turned out to be just a flexing of Thor's muscles, because within a short period of time, the storm really started. Bright flashes of lighting and enormous rolls of very loud thunder and torrential rain meant only the desperate or stupid ventured out for the next hour and a half. I was just sitting in my tent praying that the tent designers and manufacturers of Decathlon's tents knew their business. I consoled myself with the knowledge that if either had failed, I would be the first to know!

Eventually it all calmed down, and whilst the sun didn't actually come out on me, there were blue patches in the sky again and the tent door could be unzipped whilst I cooked my evening meal.

I thought that really was the end of it, but it was just the end of the violent part of the storm. The rain came down nearly all night, but without the thunder, although the noise on the tent was quite loud at times. When the rain stopped, the water dripping off the tree under which I had pitched my tent, in an attempt to get some shade, carried on its cacophony until it was time to get up next day.

45 mls, max height 830m

Wednesday 28 June

Even before yesterday's storm and rain I had decided to move on today, so packed the, still wet, tent away and bade farewell to Argeles for another year. By the time I left, it was a beautiful day - typical!

Having used my two spare tyres, I stopped at the large Decathlon multi-sport store in Tarbes and bought some more. They don't go off and will get used at some point.

My destination today wasn't really clear in my mind, it just had to be somewhere east, so that my final journey to Nice wouldn't be too far, although I knew I would want to do it in two bites. I eventually chose a site in Montech, just south of the ancient "Bastide" town of Montauban on the River Tarn, although Montech is actually on a section of large canal running parallel to the nearby River Garonne. A "Bastide" town is one of the many that were fought over, and changed hands, many times in the wars between the English and French kings over control of

these lands. They are historic and often very well preserved, retaining much of their fortifications and layout.

My drive there was actually quite pleasant, because I avoid the major motorways and toll roads unless it makes too much sense to use them. I stopped for a salad lunch in Such, and intended to go through the centre just to see, but somehow missed it.

Although I had gone over some hills on the way, the area around Montauban was pretty flat, quite a contrast to my last base in the Pyrenees. Montech itself is not much to go out of your way to see, but the campsite, run by the local community is fine. After setting up, I rode the wiggly route in the lanes to Montauban's historic centre, which gets a mention in the Lonely Planet guide.

Once I had found the Place Nationale which is the very heart of the City, I was surprised to see all the large colonnaded houses that surround this large open square were made of small red bricks! In France, these major edifices are, almost without exception, in stone or half timbered, yet this was doing its own thing, and doing it well. The square was virtually full of tables and chairs laid out by the surrounding cafes and restaurants, but because of the threatening colour of the sky, places had not been laid. I added to the wealth of the city's merchants by buying a Coke in one of the colonnaded cafes, and was relieved of €3.50 for the pleasure. This was nearly twice what I had paid in many other cafes, but they were not in the heart of Montauban. Walking away from the square I passed a group of young ballet dancers having a lesson - in the street! Their teacher was there, they were dressed in what I would assume was the correct attire for practice, and oblivious to anyone passing by, including an old English bloke pushing a bike (me). I must point out that the street was pedestrianised, so no cars, but it was still a strange sight to my eyes.

The rain came on again as I was cooking my evening meal....

22 mls

Thursday 29 June

Not a very good day really. The rain was on and off all night, although other than the noise, it wasn't a problem, but the temperature had dropped overnight to the point where it felt quite "fresh". The sun was out,



An expensive Coca Cola in Montauban's Place Nationale

but there was little warmth to be had from it, so it didn't make much difference sitting in or out. I had decided to go out for a ride to see a couple of small towns and the local scenery, so planned a circular route through Castelsarrasin and Moissac, both on the River Garonne, and then swinging back on a southerly loop. A long sleeve top and base layer were donned, together with a waterproof jacket in the saddle pack. I also put some mudguards on, because the forecast was showers. The headwind made itself known all the way to Moissac, but a brief wander round the street market in Castelsarrasin gave a rest from it. After being surprised at the red brickwork in Montauban yesterday, I started looking around and realised that this was the local building material, hence it being used so much. The bricks were, compared to the ones we see in the UK, longer and thinner, and laid in different patterns to ours, but quite attractive nevertheless. One thing that did take my eye in Castelsarrasin was the very ornate clock on top of the Marie (Town Hall). There was barely a rise in the roads until Moissac. This was because I was following the Garonne and a man made canal running beside it. At this point in its journey, the Garonne is not far away from its destination with the coastal waters at Bordeaux, and is getting quite wide and fast flowing, hence the canal being built beside it. The countryside was flat, and if you looked carefully, signs of flooding in the past could be seen by marks on walls and bridges etc. I rode on a pleasant canal path for some miles, on a well surfaced road that was only open to cycles and pedestrians. Moissac was more interesting, with its ancient Abbey, built of brick with a few stone bits added on, and evidence of the old fortified walls. The interior was, by Catholic standards, not very ornate, but a real feature was the inside walls which were covered in painted patterns, all of which were hundreds of years old. Another short, heavy shower saw me sheltering beside the Abbey for a few minutes before leaving for my return via the southerly loop. Whereas the morning ride had been flat, the afternoon one was the total opposite, and I was soon struggling up some steep hills.



Castelsarrasin's ornate clock on the Marie.



Moissac's ancient Abbey

The day had become warmer and the sun stayed out for longer, but I had become weaker, and I soon started asking myself if I should change to an easier way back. But by the time I had made the decision to cut short, there was no point, so I struggled on. By this time the fields and hills had a distinctly English look about them with fields of patchwork quilts of different colours and crops and rolling hills. I did manage to shave a few miles off, by riding straight up the main road into Montech. But that wasn't as bad as it sounds, because for most of the way, motorised vehicles had been diverted onto other roads because of roadworks. I ignored the signs, thinking that by 6 pm they will have stopped work and if push came to shove, I would just get off and walk past, in a field of necessary. I was correct, they had all finished for the day, but the surface was down and finished, just waiting for the white paint, so I just rode through. That saved me 3 or so miles which I was glad of, for by then I was getting hungry and tired.

Unfortunately, my day got worse when I got back to the tent to find the door had been slashed with a knife and the contents inside the tent strewn everywhere inside it. No cooking or food stuff was disturbed, just the clothes bags. They were obviously looking for valuables, but other than an empty wallet with just a few store and library cards and my UK bus



My patched tent

pass, none of which would be any use in France, nothing else had gone. My valuables; passport, cash, credit cards, car keys etc had all been taken with me. The site security man helped me patch the door, but I didn't understand why the thief had slashed it, it would have been just as quick to unzip it. Now I had to buy another tent, quickly. The security man looked around and found the outer

“security” fence surrounding the site had been cut near my pitch, so they had been able come into the site without having to pass the gatehouse. In reality this “security fence” was little more than chicken wire, so not much of a hindrance to someone with a pair of wire cutters. I felt really annoyed, so for my evening meal I treated myself to a pizza in a nearby restaurant to lift my spirits a bit.



69 mls,

To be continued

The “Security Fence” after it had been repaired



We need YOUR contribution

Cycle Chat is written and edited by volunteers, not paid correspondents. Your 75p per copy hardly even covers the cost of printing and posting, it certainly doesn't leave enough to pay anyone.

Without sufficient input from our members and readers (you), Cycle Chat will just fade away. Don't just leave it to others all the time.

We need items from you, yes **YOU!**

Anything with a loose connection to cycling is welcome. Your best/worst ride; your best/worst route/cycling holiday; your favourite or worst bit of kit; a recipe that would be particularly appealing to other cyclists; tips; things to avoid; photos with a cycling content (not just views); reminiscences of bygone days; letters of praise, or complaint; requests for info; etc, etc; or anything else that springs to mind.

Don't worry about your spelling or grammar; that is easily corrected by the editor who will also do the layout and make it look really good on the printed page.

With most having access to a computer, writing a story is easy, you don't have to do it all in one go. A good technique is to write down the bare bones, then go back and gradually fill in the details over the space of a week or two, thus letting your subconscious work away in the background.

Yes, we ARE interested in what you have to say.

Please send whatever you have to the Editor. Address etc inside front cover.

Cycle Chat is the quarterly magazine of the Leicestershire & Rutland Cyclists' Touring Club

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All contributions are welcome, send them to The Editor who reserves the right to amend copy for legal or production reasons.

Contributions should be in "MS Word" or similar, or neatly handwritten. Typed copy, CDs or flash drives are also welcome (CDs and drives will be returned). Please ensure Excel tables and PDF files are legible on an A5 page size. Photos, in .jpg format, with the photographer's name and permission are welcome.

All contributions should be accompanied by the writer's name, address, telephone number or e-mail. If not stated, the photos are by the article's author. We try to acknowledge photo copyright whenever possible. If there is a problem, we apologise and ask you to contact us immediately.

Views expressed in letters, articles or editorial are not necessarily those of the Leicestershire & Rutland CTC.

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A Tour of Scotland

(with a Few Taxi, Train and Ferry Trips)

By Neil Dixon and Judy Dawson

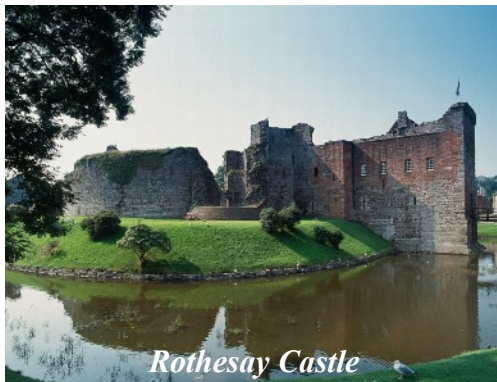
We planned the tour in February with a number of train journeys to add variety and restful scenic joy. It was also a great way of moving north in stages avoiding busy bits of road. Leicester to Inverness or Fort William on the train, starts to get a bit boring if you do it all in one go!

Day 1 Leicester to Rothesay on The Isle of Bute by taxi, train and ferry

We took a pre booked taxi from home to Birmingham International and then a train to Glasgow, had coffee, changed platforms, and took another train to Wemyss Bay and then a ferry to Rothesay. It is possible to take a train from Leicester to Birmingham but at rush hour we decided that the hassle factor of trying to get two loaded bikes onto the tiny trains that they use on the Leicester to Birmingham train line just wasn't worth it. The taxi driver was a bit bemused that anyone would be going on holiday with two bikes but he loaded the bikes into the boot of a small minibus with no problem. We have used the Virgin train route before from Coventry, and, with no early start it gets us to our first night's stop at a relaxed pace in time for dinner in Rothesay. The ferry crossing from Wemyss Bay to Rothesay is a lovely start to the holiday. Rothesay has a castle, some Victorian toilets, lots of practical shops and a choice of eating places. Next time we must stay on the Isle of Bute for longer because it has some delightful scenery. Mount Stewart is apparently well worth seeing as the jewel in the crown of the National Trust for Scotland. The roads on the Isle of Bute are quiet in a way that we didn't find on Islay or Skye.

Day 2 Rothesay to Strachur by bike and ferry (34 miles, 1594ft ascent)

All tours have to be planned with not only bed and breakfast available, but also an evening meal destination within walking distance and it was a challenge to find anything in the right area that wasn't too expensive, in or near Strachur. We were keen to explore Glendaruel which is famous for its carved stones in the churchyard at Kil-



moden. We left the Isle of Bute using the ferry at Colintraive and headed north. The quiet B-road that runs parallel to the A886 is a lovely road, clinging in places to the lochside. Cars are a rare phenomena but the tarmac isn't great. We soon joined the A886 and then branched off left into Glendaruel. The road serves as the route for the long distance walking trail 'The Cowal Way'. I was glad we were cycling. It is a wonderful road with terrible tarmac but would be a bit of a plod to walk. Halfway up the glen we

came to The Watermill which is a bed and breakfast stop on the Cowal Way where the owner has placed a self service tea and coffee making facility and honesty box in an open outbuilding. If the owner is home then excellent soup, toast and light snacks are available. A short sharp shower told us it was an excellent point to stop. At the point the road leaves Glendaruel the climb begins and it is a steady pull on the A886 and then a long descent to Strachur on Loch Fyne. Strachur has a shop, petrol station, bed and breakfast and a hotel that does food.

Day 3 .Strachur to Arrochar by bike then Arrochar and Tarbet station to Fort William by train (22 miles, 1916ft ascent)

We wanted to explore bits of Scotland that we had not seen before but also wanted to avoid a very long train journey on day one of the holiday so this was a way of mixing cycling with some lovely train trips and having a restful afternoon looking at the scenery. The train would get us further north and avoid some busy roads. The train service isn't frequent and we had to coordinate our riding with the train timetable.

We rode from Strachur along the shore of Loch Fyne on the A815. There wasn't a lot of traffic but what there was, was travelling very fast. The road has a good surface. A fair bit of the traffic seems to be "Lochs and Glens" coach trips. We avoided the traffic by turning off onto the B839. The map tells us it is called Hell's Glen. Neil did give me the choice of the main road or Hell's Glen and I was glad I picked the latter. The road was tough, steep, narrow but had some fantastic scenery. Apart from meeting one of the holiday coaches on a particularly steep narrow section, and a jammed chain, it was incident free. Eventually we emerged at "Rest and be Thankful" on the A83 with only a descent down the well graded main road to do before lunch by Loch Long at Arrochar. It is a short ride from Arrochar to the train station which is located halfway between Arrochar and Tarbet.

We took the train from here to Fort William. It is a wonderful train ride up the side of



Loch Lomond and then over Rannoch Moor and we were in Fort William for tea time. Fort William is full of people completing the West Highland Way but there is plenty of choice of places to eat and we soon found our bed and breakfast.

Day 4. Fort William to Mallaig by ferry

and bike (44.5miles, 2257ft ascent).

A passenger ferry service runs from the town centre across Loch Linnhe to the A861. We caught the 10am ferry. The ferry caters for cyclists and walkers and straps what seemed like an endless number of bikes to the roof of the ferry. The A861 carries no traffic, has an excellent road surface and avoids the busier



A830. It is a lovely ride with views of the steam train running along the opposite shore of Loch Eil. Eventually we joined the A830 and headed for coffee at the Glenfinnan Visitor Centre. There aren't many cafe opportunities on the road and the monument at the head of Loch Shiel and the viaduct are worth a look. Think Harry Potter and you get the idea. We were expecting the road to be busy with coaches doing "The Road to the Isles" but it was ok. The main road tries to cater for cyclists in places with tarmac surface cycle lanes on one side of the carriageway. These are useful on the tight uphill bends. The road has been vastly improved, some sections as late as 2009. Don't miss the section of single track road, the B8008, into Arisaig which follows the coast in a series of ups and downs. There is a ferry service from here out to some of the Isles and an excellent coffee shop at the harbour. There are wonderful views out to the Isles, white sandy beaches and lots of camping opportunities. The road follows the railway line but it isn't flat. We arrived in Mallaig in time for an evening meal.

Day 5. Mallaig to Glenelg via Skye (30 miles, 1877ft ascent).

The ferry service from Mallaig to Skye is a short crossing and it is full of tourists from Spain, France and Germany. It seems as if everyone who comes to Scotland wants to go over the sea to Skye. The A851 from Armadale to Broadford is a wide highway these days and far removed from the single track road with passing places that I remember. We waited for all the traffic to leave the ferry and then had a fairly easy ride north to Broadford thanks to a good tailwind. We stopped off at the community shop and cafe (An Crùbh) at Isle Ormsay on the way because it was raining. Don't miss it, it has wonderful views. Broadford and Breaknish are a sprawling line of crofts and after lunch in Broadford we headed towards the ferry point at Kylerhea. The single track road that takes traffic from the A851 isn't a long ride but it has a serious climb and a serious descent and beware bad weather because the ferry doesn't run if it's very rough on the Sound of Sleat. The ferry takes only 12 passengers and 6 vehicles. The vehicles are balanced carefully on a turntable. It is a lovely crossing with the opportunity to spot otters and sea eagles. The Sound of Sleat experiences very strong currents and it is a work of art to bring the ferry safely to rest at Glenelg. We had booked an Airbnb with a crofter



in Glenelg for two nights. It is a short ride from the ferry point into Glenelg village. On our host's advice, we had booked a table in the local hotel for evening meal well in advance, as otherwise it's impossible to get one.

Day 6. Rest Day in Glenelg

Glenelg is a lovely spot with an avenue of mature trees, 3 brochs, a community cafe, community hall, pub, beaches and shop. There is a nice ride to Corran and Arnisdale past Sandaig bay which is famous as the place that Gavin Maxwell lived with his otters. You can play on the beach, watch the ferry go in and out, visit the brochs, watch for sea eagles and otters, walk along the coast towards Dornie or just chill in the pub or cafe.

Day 7. Glenelg to Lochcarron via Kyle of Lochalsh by bike and train (33 miles, 2001ft ascent)

There are two ways in and out of Glenelg, one was the route we had taken into the village on day 5, the other route climbs over Mam Ratagan and leads to Shiel Bridge. The route follows the river east out of Glenelg, climbing on a well graded single track road to the viewpoint with stunning views over Loch Duich. The climb was ok but the descent was dreadful. It is very steep and the tarmac is full of holes. It was a relief to meet the A87 and we headed west to coffee at Eilean Donan Castle. It is a very pretty castle and every tourist on the west coast mills around having their photograph taken beside a man in a kilt. Yuck. Last time I passed there was a bit of a lay by. Now it's a massive car park and the tills are ringing. The road follows the shore of Loch Alsh and we were in Kyle of Lochalsh for lunch. With a forecast of rain we decided to follow the minor road that hugs the coastline and the railway line with the plan that we would get on the train to Strathcarron if the rain came down heavily. The minor road is a delight to ride and we made it as far as Duirnish before it started to rain. We had timed our departure from Kyle of Lochalsh to fit in with the train timetable and I was pleased to let the train take the strain. It is a short cycle from Strathcarron to Lochcarron and our bed and breakfast. The Lochcarron Hotel does excellent food. Locals advised that the A890 from Stromeferry to Strathcarron is dangerous because it widens and narrows without warning and carries lots of traffic as a route north from the A87. It also has three arrows.

Day 8 Lochcarron to Kinlochewe (34.5 miles, 1808ft ascent)

Our plan had been to cycle from Lochcarron to Applecross where we had booked places in the hostel. The route would have taken us a fairly short distance but climbing Britain's highest pass, the Bealach na Ba, was not to be underestimated so we had planned to ride only a short distance and then enjoy the unique character of Applecross. We were also unsure if we would have to walk the steepest section. The forecast was for

rain all day. After breakfast we headed off in a brief window of no rain. We followed a large group of cyclists clad in shorts. We were soon wearing all our clothes including winter longs, the rain got worse and we were glad that we had gloves as well as track mitts. At the bottom of the Bealach road there's a cafe but beware it is closed on Mondays. It was 4 degrees C at the bottom, which implied sub-zero temperatures at the top, so we decided to change plans and ride the easier A896 to Shieldaig. In a strong head wind and heavy rain it was grim. The excellent cafe in Shieldaig was packed. We tried to find bed and breakfast in Shieldaig but failed so with some reluctance we ploughed on in the rain to Torridon. Another cafe and another failed search for bed and breakfast. It is a fantastic ride with wonderful scenery on every side but it was wet and we could see from booking.com that there were no vacancies within miles. We dried out again at the cafe in Kinlochewe and eventually found the last two bunks in the bunkhouse attached to the Kinlochewe Hotel. The food was good and the bunkhouse adequate if not great.

Day 9. Kinlochewe to Contin (341 miles, 1250ft ascent).

It was a relief to see a dry day and knowing the A832 east from Kinlochewe is tough we set out, glad that we weren't doing it in the rain. There are no rest stops except the Ledgowan Lodge Hotel at Achnasheen until you get to Garve. Ledgowan Lodge is a weird place and on principle we cycled past. Achnasheen is a dying community in the middle of nowhere. We had stayed at the bunkhouse at Ledgowan Lodge on our first Scotland tour and never again! A head wind and a long straight road and next time we will take the train from Achnasheen to Garve. We recovered in the hotel at Garve and rode on to Contin where we had booked a B&B.

Day 10. Contin to Tore on the Black Isle (27.5 miles, 1440ft ascent).

We cycled from Contin to Beaulay for coffee, bought a picnic and then cycled onto the Black Isle to stop for lunch at a lovely monument at Culbokie. Sir Henry Archibald MacDonald's mates erected a tower in his memory. It has fantastic views. The riding on the Black Isle was quiet, full of little lanes massed with wildflowers, challenging climbs and had superb views of the Cromarty Firth. Our planned route had just been sprayed with wet tar and the new gravel was deep and dusty so a quick replan was required. We had booked beds in the Black Isle Berries Bunkhouse at Tore where we packed our bikes into plastic bags ready for the flight home from Inverness airport. We booked a taxi to take us from Tore to the airport the following morning.

Day 11 Tore to Inverness airport by taxi. Inverness to Birmingham by plane then taxi home to Leicester

Flybe operate a service at a sensible time of day from Inverness to Birmingham and our booked taxi took us home from Birmingham airport to Leicester. We left the bunkhouse at Tore at 10am and we were home for 3.30pm. It avoided a twelve hour train journey. The only problem with Flybe is that they don't guarantee that your bike will fly with you, but we had no problem.

Neil Dixon & Judy Dawson

Leicestershire and Rutland CTC

CAROL SERVICE

St Nicholas and Our Lady, Church
Rd, Wanlip, Leicester LE7 4PJ

Starting at 1.15pm

The service will be conducted by the Rev.
Vince Jupp.

Light refreshments available in the
adjacent village hall before and after the
service courtesy of the WI.

The hall is booked from 12 noon to 3pm.

There is parking in front of the church hall
(which is also used as a community centre) for
about 12 cars.



Charity Ride and 50th Wedding Anniversary



Some of the many riders who recently took part in Colin & Rosy Gray's combined 50th wedding anniversary and Charity ride in aid of Wolfram Syndrome. The ride was based at Normanton Village hall, where many enjoyed a meal after the ride. Colin & Rosy thank everyone who contributed and are pleased to report that £3,936.25 was raised.

Leicester Easy Riders

Contact Dave Smith 0116 2417908

Date	Start	Meet	Destination	Leader
Dec 2	10.00	SMBS	Rothley Station	D. Smith
Dec 9			D.A. Carol Service	
Dec16			Xmas Lunch	
Jan			No Runs	
Feb 3	10.00	SMBS	Goscote Nurseries	R. Bilston
Feb10			No Run	
Feb17	10.00	S.O.	Tur Langton	A. Tokeley
Feb24			No Run	

40th Annual Mince Pie Meet 2018

**Sunday December 23rd (last Sunday before Christmas) at Belton Village Hall,
4 miles west of Hathern, Leics.**

This annual gathering of hundreds of cyclists from all over the East Midlands area is once again being held and you are invited. As the name implies, it's a chance to meet those cycling friends you haven't seen for a while and exchange Christmas Cards etc and eat Mince Pies and other refreshments (charges for refreshments are made). There is no charge for entry, but tickets for a tombola in aid of Rainbows Children's Hospice will be on sale, and it is hoped you will support this. Last year over £500 was raised. A tombola is a form of raffle in which prizes are pre-assigned to winning tickets. You pick the ticket from a closed barrel and will know instantly if you are a winner, and won't have to wait around for any draw.

It's a really popular event, and you make your own way to and from the venue, although most meet elsewhere and ride together for the occasion.

There is limited car parking for those unable to cycle.

The meet is organised on a voluntary basis by East Midlands CTC



NUNEATON					
		Rides Secretary Chris Taylor			
		https://www.facebook.com/nuneaton.cycleclub			
		www.nuneatoncycleclub.co.uk			
CYCLE CLUB					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Distance</u>		
22nd Nov	Thurs	St Marys Hinckley	Half day	Angie Fisher	0782 4808788
24th Nov	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Les Proctor	02476 395079
29th Nov	Thurs	Makins	Half day	Brian Griffiths	07748 262809
29th Nov	Thurs	Makins	Half day	Brian Griffiths	07748 262809
1st Dec	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Anne Taylor	02476 741276
6th Dec	Thurs	Hill Top Garden Centre	Half day	Mike Paterson	0755 1805957
8th Dec	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Mick Cooper	02476 371409
13th Dec	Thurs	Upton Barn	Xmas Lunch	Morgan Reynolds	01455 844883
15th Dec	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Ann Jenkins	01455 212565
20th Dec	Thurs	Heritage Café	Half day	Terry Pittam	02476 328748
22nd Dec	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Chris Steiner	01455 213927
27th Dec	Thurs	Astley Book Farm	Half day	Mick Cooper	02476 371409
29th Dec	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride		
3rd Jan	Thurs	Ansty Golf Course	Half day	Brian Griffiths	0774 8262809
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5th Jan	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride		
10th Jan	Thurs	Morrisons	Half day	Mike Paterson	0755 1805957
12th Jan	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride		
17th Jan	Thurs	Dobbies	Half day	Chris Taylor	02476 741276
19th Jan	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Ann Jenkins	01455 212565
24th Jan	Thurs	St Marys Hinckley	Half day	Eric Rowland	02476 371687
26th Jan	Sat	Nuneaton Library	Short ride	Bob Percival	0792 1258927
31st Jan	Thurs	Makins	Half day	Roger Payne	0775 7103139

Thursday rides meet at 10.30am. Saturdays 10am.

South Leics Runs Nov 2018 - end March 2019

Contact is Neil Dixon 01455 209700 or 0789 985449

DATE	TIME START	ELEVENSES	DESTINATION	COMMENTS
11-Nov	09:15	Crick	Stretton on Dunsmore	
18-Nov	09:15	Brandon Marsh	Long Itchington	
25-Nov	09:15	Thornby	Foxton Locks	
02-Dec	09:15	Market Harborough	Welford	
09-Dec	09:15	TBC	Wanlip (Carol Service)	Carol Service
16-Dec	09:15	Naseby	Shearsby	
23-Dec	09:15	Welford (Mini Meadows)	Lillbourne	BYO Lunch
06-Jan	09:15	Great Glen	Market Harborough	
13-Jan	09:15	Thornby	Welford	
20-Jan	09:15	Tur Langton	Foxton	
27-Jan	09:00	Husbands Bosworth	Welland Valley CC Reliability Ride	Start village hall. Various distances and routes available. (details TBC)
03-Feb	09:15	Hallaton	Shearsby	
10-Feb	09:15	Brandon Marsh	Stretton-on-Dunsmore	
17-Feb	09:15	Crick	Welton	
24-Feb	09:15	Draycote Visitor Centre	Grandborough	
03-Mar	09:00	Lutterworth	David Sulley Memorial Rides (100/70/50 Km)	Starting from Masonic Hall, Lutterworth
10-Mar	09:15	Brandon Marsh	Long Itchington	
17-Mar	09:15	Naseby	Lillebourne	
24-Mar	09:15	Snaresstone	Church End Brewery	Bring your own lunch
31-Mar	09:15	Great Glen	Foxton	Mothers Day
BA = Broughton Astley				

CHARNWOOD RUNS LIST

Date	Start	Eleven's	Lunch	Leader
02 Dec	9.30 H	Bosworth Battlefield Centre	Newbold Verdon	Nick
09 Dec	9.30 W	Cossington GC	Carol Service Wanlip	Jim
16 Dec	9.30 S	Stenson Bubble	Hartshorne	Martin
23 Dec	9.30 A	Belton Village Hall	Peggs Green	Lyn
30 Dec	9.30 B	Ruddington	East Leake	Pete
06 Jan	9.30 Car Assist Bakewell Station	Monyash	Monsall Trail	Keith
12 Jan	9.30 H	Atherstone	Carlton	Martin
20 Jan	9.30 W	Burbage Common	Croft	Nick
27Jan	9.30 S	Swarkestone	Newton Solney	Jim
03 Feb	9.30 A	Repton	Burton upon Trent	Lyn
10 Feb	9.30 B	Rothley Station	Markfield	Keith
17 Feb	9.30 M	Alrewas	Elford	Martin
24 Feb	9.30 H	Sutton Wharf	Orton on the Hill	Nick
03 Mar	9.30 W	Burbage Common	Market Bosworth	Jim
10 Mar	9.30 S	Swarkestone	Newton Solney	Pete
17 Mar	9.30 A	Fradley	Lullington	Keith
24 Mar	9.30 B	Redhill Marina	Gotham	Martin
31 Mar	9.30 M	Arboretum	Barton Green	Nick

A – Ashby HSBC

H – Heather Church

S – Lount X Roads

B – Belton Church

M – DFS Measham

W – Bagworth Village Hall

Secretary: Keith Lakin, 12 Thornborough Road, Coalville, LE67 3TH 0153 451573

Runs contact: Lyn Gale 07779 794317

For a ride of a gentler nature, between 20 and 30 miles, please contact Pearl on 07980 755226 or Brenda on 07837 562487