

Cycle Chat

Leicestershire & Rutland CTC
Since 1897

75p

Winter 2021



we are
cycling
UK

www.ctclr.org.uk

Leicestershire & Rutland CTC Officials

This is an abbreviated list of Local Officials

Secretary

Neil Dixon, 3 Cox Close, Leicester, LE2 3NX. northneil@gmail.com
07889854459

Cycle Chat Editor email:- davebinks@ntlworld.com

Dave Binks, 92 Balmoral Road, Mountsorrel, LE12 7EN 0116 2296015

Cycle Chat Administration

Pete & Lyn Gale, 6 Bluebell Close, Donisthorpe, Swadlincote, Derbys
DE12 7RW tel 01530271665 email :- lyntian@hotmail.co.uk

Webmaster email :- webmaster@ctclr.org.uk



Editor's Thoughts

Another year has passed (almost) and whilst many social events and some organised rides have been lost, we are definitely getting through the worst of the Covid crisis. When we look back 12 months, we can see how far we've come, with the great majority of people being vaccinated at least once, and many with the full number. I was pleased to get my booster jab, but am still being cautious as to the places and events I go, and then wear a mask. But we must not forget that well over 100 people a day are still dying, and the total (so far) or 148,000 deaths is still going up.

In the light of that, East Midlands CTC has reluctantly decided that we must **cancel the Annual Mince Pie Meeting** (see notice inside).

Members have still managed to get away on holiday, albeit mostly in the UK, and some of their tours and rides are reproduced herein. I, together with seven other local members have committed to a fixed base cycling holiday in Spain in January next year. Hopefully this will go ahead without any last minute isolation scares. I see that, according to per capita rates of infection, Spanish folks are at greater risk from UK visitors than vice versa!

Your Secretary has raised a few thoughts about the future of local groups and the lack of incoming younger members (see his Secretary's Report). Let's have YOUR thoughts on the subject. I'll print any suitable letters I get on the subject.

INDEX

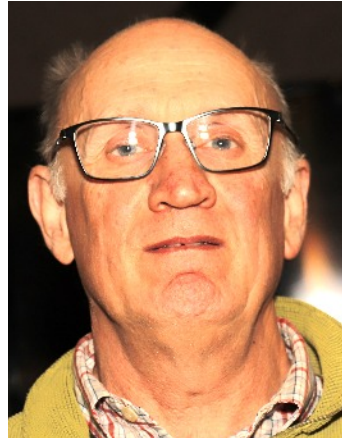
Secretary's Page	4
President's Notes	5
Obituary	5
Technical Topics	7
Photo Competition	9
Charnwood Summer	10
Concrete Lump	13
A Champion Ride	20
Summer Breakout	22
LEDs	26
What's On, etc from	32

Happy Christmas

Dave Binks

From the Secretary

Neil Dixon



The DA AGM will be held in May next year, and all members will receive full details of the date and venue, when they are finalised.

Attendance in recent years has been poor, mainly consisting of the committee members plus a few other committed souls. If this continues to be the case, then I think that it's time for the DA to start asking itself some existential questions:

- What is the purpose of the DA?
- Does the DA serve the needs of Cycling UK members in Leicestershire and Rutland, or is it, in its current form, an anachronistic throwback to a time when the majority of members were active participants in their local Section. Given that we are now reduced to only 2 sections for the entire county, and none in the biggest population centre, Leicester City, this seems unlikely. It's not like there's no interest in cycling generally, judging by the number of new ad-hoc clubs and groups out riding.
- Does the DA even need to exist? The stalwart's of the committee have continued for many years to try and maintain the DA, but we lack younger blood to come through and take over committee roles, as we age. Without younger blood, the DA will wither and die, and it might be a good idea to put it out of it's misery.

I realise that my asking these questions may provoke some of you, and I mean no offence, but hope to have a good debate on them at the AGM when it transpires. If you do feel strongly, please feel free to contact me, especially if you think you have any specific ideas on how to improve the current situation.

See the Group website for the latest information www.ctclr.org.uk

President's Notes

Jim Gerrard writes



With another year almost completed I think we've enjoyed a better year than the previous as far as cycling and events are concerned, and although some restrictions are still with us, and there are changes to normal, some of which could well become the new norm.

As far as events are concerned, we were unable to carry out many of the events scheduled for the early part of the year but after easing of restrictions many of us enjoyed a get together in September on my "Presidents and Charnwood Remembers" ride which followed the week after the Century anniversary of the Cyclist's Memorial Service at Meriden. Both were well supported and enjoyed in good weather. The Carol Service has also been confirmed for the 5th of December subject to any last-minute restrictions and all welcome (details elsewhere). There is however concern over the Mince pie meeting at Belton now organized by the East Midland region. This has always been a very popular event and concern that a crowded hall would not be conducive to any social distancing etc. please see ctclr.org.uk website for the latest update on this event.

We are hopeful that the David Sully Memorial ride will start our events next year and details for the rescheduled AGM and Presentation night are still in the pipeline.

Neil will be stepping down as Secretary at the AGM and my tenure as President will also end then after its 2-year term.

On a cycling note I did enjoy our group holiday in Northumberland in September and the new later date seems to have caught on as we



Lunch stop on the President's Ride

have already been booked in for next year in the Malvern area, thanks to Lyn and Pete, our “super organizers”. A fuller report on the Northumberland trip will, I’m sure, be mentioned in the Charnwood notes. December always seems to be a busy month with celebrations etc with our various groups and let’s hope that no further restrictions affect our meetings etc.

All that remains is for me to wish you all a Happy and Peaceful Christmas and hope to see many of you at the Carol service.

As usual please see the **ctclr.org.uk** website for all up to date information.

Janet Preston

Janet Preston, long time CTC member and stalwart of the Leicestershire Road Club, and a veritable “Human Dynamo”, died on Wed 27 Oct. She had been seriously ill for a month or two.

Janet started cycling in 1955, enjoying club rides and YHA weekends with both the CTC and the Leicestershire Road Club, and remained an active member of both until the end. As Miss Janet Garner, she met and married another cyclist, Brian Billings, by whom she had 3 children; Susan, Bill (who tragically died in his early 20s) and Amanda. She later married another well known local cyclist, Graham Preston. Anything cycling, and Jan was there, be it racing, club social functions, weekends and holidays, CTC Birthday Rides, etc, and was often found organising the Catering Team at many social and racing events.

Her funeral, which was very well attended, was held at Holy Trinity Church, Barrow upon Soar, the village she had lived in for many years. She leaves her two daughters, three grandchildren and a big hole in the local cycling scene.

Her smile, enthusiasm, and contribution to the local cycling scene, will be sorely missed.

Words & photo by Dave Binks





Technical Topics

By Peter Witting

Shake, Rattle & Roll!

There is something reassuring when your social media is targeted with ads for funeral plans, and you can still shake a bike to bits! Within about 10 days my touring Mercian, also used for off-road excursions, shed 3 bolts! First the bolt securing the front mudguard under the fork crown (it was a custom-built frame!). Then the cable clamp on the rear gear, and finally the bar-end plug with its expander clamp. I'm taking no chances in future by using thread locking, especially given the cost of Wolf Tooth bar-end plugs! (Yes, you can just use the free plugs supplied with the bar tape!).

Cycle Kit Lead Times

I hit a water-filled Northants pothole, leaving me with a damaged rim. The Mavic A719 rims they describe as “bomb-proof”, and so it seemed. The wheel stayed true and I bent the rim back to shape with pliers! Likewise, the equally bomb-proof Continental Top Contact tyre survived the impact that damaged the rim! However, the 1mm thickness of the braking surface meant I needed the wheels rebuilt. Neil Holman at my LBS, Geo Halls in Harborough, could not source new A719 rims from wholesalers 'til 2022. Luckily, I found some at an online retailer and now have newly built wheel thanks to Neil. I fear this shortage could last into 2023.



Rechargeable Battery Life

12 months ago, in Cycle Chat Dec. 2020, I reviewed the Cateye Amp1100 front lamp after using it for a year. After two years usage I noticed the battery taking longer to charge, and showing the low battery warning very early. I use the light as a daylight safety flasher giving 200 lumens flashing, or 1100/400 lumens in daytime “Hyperconstant” mode, recharging after each ride. As I normally ride 3 times a week, that's 150 recharges a year. But the life of the battery is limited to

300 such cycles. So, after 2 years the lamp needed replacing! (Anyone considering buying a battery-powered car?). The good news was that the lamp is now about half the original price of 2 years back!

Paris-Roubaix observations

If you were lucky enough to watch the postponed Paris-Roubaix race on TV on October 3rd, you will have seen the first wet and muddy race for nearly two decades, making it extra-exciting! Big changes in technology have taken place in those 20 years – so what did I take away from watching the race? Tubeless tyres still puncture and disc-brake pads can wear out before the end of the race!

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.

New Cycle Chat Administrators

Pete & Lyn Gale have jointly taken over the role of Cycle Chat Administrators. They will be handling all subscriptions and finances as well as actually posting your hard copies out to you.

Any queries re subscriptions, advertising etc, should be addressed to them.

Pete & Lyn's details are : -

Address: 6 Bluebell Close,
Donisthorpe, Swadlincote, Derbys DE12 7RW
Phone 01530 271665 email lyntian@hotmail.co.uk

This year's theme for the Photographic Competition is

WATER

This year we will repeat the method used in 2020 when we were unable to hold the AGM in other than a "Virtual" form via Zoom.

Instead of requiring entries to be in print form, which would usually be on display at the AGM, we are asking for entrants to submit digital entries "on line" in .jpeg format (the usual type for digital cameras). They will then be posted on the internet for all to see, in Google Photo Albums. However, recognising that not all have access to digital cameras and the internet, hard prints can be sent to John Catt at 32 Bramcote Road, Loughborough LE11 2SA who will scan them into digital form. In this case you must include a note giving him permission to include them in the on line album. If you want your prints returned, enclose a self addressed stamped envelope.

There is no entry fee but a maximum of 4 images per category will be accepted from individual members.

The Google Albums will contain the warning that copyright remains with the photographer and unauthorised reproduction is not permitted, but there is no way that we can prevent anyone from copying the images, so entrants must be prepared to accept this risk.

CATEGORIES :-

Class 1: Pictorial (Smith Trophy)

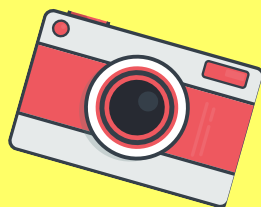
Class 2 Club Life - to include at least three cyclists
(Alan Haywood Rosebowl)

Class 3: Humorous (Sue Greaves Shield)

Class 4: Novice (member who has not previously entered a photo)

Class 5: Junior (under 18 on 31st December 2021)

Class 6: Theme of the year: "Water". (George Clownes Tray)



Last date for entries 31st December 2021

Send your entries in .jpeg format (including your name and membership number) to : - photocomp@ctclr.org.uk

**PLEASE MAKE IT CLEAR WHICH PHOTO GOES INTO
WHICH CATEGORY.**

Charnwood's Summer

Nick Tudor-Jones

Looking back on the ride schedule for the past few months I seem to have been otherwise engaged for several weeks and I think some rides were called off. I guess it is partly the fault of lockdown which has meant that various members have developed other forms of exercise – and acquired caravans. That is not to say that walking Hadrian's Wall or the Cotswold Way are not excellent achievements!

Anyway, the memorable rides upon which I can report include a car assisted route starting in

Desborough – in very wet conditions, but we soldiered on – After passing the Triangular Lodge at Rushton – built by the father of one of the Gunpowder Plotters in 1593-7, we breakfasted well (along with many other cyclists) at Geddington -which boasts one of the 12 Queen Eleanor Crosses built by King Edward I in 1291-5 in memory of his wife Eleanor of Castile. (Did



Rushton Triangular Lodge

photo by Dave Binks

you know that the comedian Josh Widdicombe is a direct descendant of Edward I, French royalty and a first cousin of Queen Elizabeth I?).

Our intended lunch stop at Fermyn woods would have taken up too much time due to a late start so we pressed on (thankfully now dry) and followed the cycle route next to the A6116 to Corby Euro Hub. This resulted in some map reading as there was now a railway line in the way. Walking our bikes through a wood led us to a little used bridge. However and we then toured several housing developments trying to find our way through (*Haven't we been here before?*) and eventually got back to Desborough Leisure Centre and our cars before they locked up.

Another foray to the eastern edges of our range was led by Paul Hand and took us from a start in Oakham along the cycle route along the western and

southern shores of Rutland Water via Edith Weston and Langham to breakfast at the Rutland Garden Village near what must be the most secure business park in the country – inside the old Ashwell Open Prison. Again I got the feeling that I had passed a certain point on the route before, but this time it was intentional as Paul had added a loop into the route!

Fast forward to our annual week’s cycling holiday arranged with usual meticulous detail by Lyn and Pete Gale – this time centred on Bellingham in Northumberland.

To also cater for those members who have what Stephen Dee calls “Tin Tents”, Lyn had found Brownrigg Lodges and caravan site so there was a choice of accommodation to suit all. The lodges are timber barrack-like buildings built in 1936 to provide holidays for disadvantaged children from Newcastle and subsequently used for healthy “Outward Bound” type courses. Our first ride circumnavigated Kielder Water after following the cycle route along the north side of the North Tyne River to Falstone for breakfast. Part of the cycle track along the north shore was closed for repairs so we were diverted onto timber haul roads which were quite coarse gravel and teeth rattling. We resumed after lunch at Kielder Castle along the road rather than the trail and paused for tea at Tower Knowe where waffles were consumed. The next day was a walking day with the group following the burn through the wooded gorge up to the Hareshaw Linn Waterfall. Refreshment was called for on the return and was taken at the Bellingham railway carriages café and Heritage Centre.

Back on the bikes, we set off northwards and continuously uphill – but eventually were rewarded by whizzing downhill, towards Otterburn. Breakfast (can you tell it’s my favourite meal?) was provided at Otterburn Woollen Mill. The biggest sausage rolls I had ever seen were on offer and sampled by some.

Otterburn is the base for the largest military training ranges in the UK where they can fire multiple rocket launchers etc. So, having been assured that such ordnance was not being used that day, we headed up onto the moors, noting the signs about not picking up any strange metal objects. The



Kielder Water

sheep and cattle don't seem fazed by the whizz bangs.

We descended to the village of Elsdon but found the pub shut due to Covid and turned to notice a café in the front room of the adjacent old schoolhouse. It's called the "Impromptu Café" but has been going for about 40 years. Inside, the walls are completely covered in cycling photos and memorabilia. Dave was told that he was sitting in Victoria Pendleton's (ex multi World and Olympic Women's Cycling Sprint medallist) favourite seat when she was a student at Newcastle Uni. The owner, Allan, suggested that we should have his "Gibbet Cake" which would provide the energy to climb the hill out of the village!

Our group split from here, with Jim needing to bag a BCQ (British Cycle Quest) credit up Gibbet Hill, but the rest of us took a more direct south westerly route back along a cycle route to follow the River Rede. Halfway up the other (no less steep) hill out of Elsdon, my bike decided to unship its chain inwards and jam



The Impromptu Cafe at Elsdon

everything up, and I gracefully fell off onto the verge - and not for the first time this trip. I eventually worked out which way to adjust my rear derailleur stop. The other group could still see us from afar and noticed my fall with amusement.

As we were close to Hadrian's Wall, a day's sight seeing was in order and we visited the Roman Fort at Vindolanda. A superb museum explains the history, and displays some of the finds including some 470 leather shoes, armour and many other uniquely preserved items.

Jim and others headed for Haydon Bridge to bag another BCQ. There's a bit of a competition going on here with Stephen Dee – who is in fact unstoppable, as he reports in regularly from all over the country, which he has been crisscrossing all summer. (No doubt a subject for a future article(s) Stephen?)

Our big meal out at the local hotel was accompanied by a group of Essex bikers – Paul was luckily able to translate the local dialect.

To conclude, it's been a funny old year, fragmented, but with some great memories nonetheless and hopefully many miles still to travel.

Why did you go to see a big lump of concrete?



Jeffrey Eaves

A little earlier this year I went on a bike ride, and whilst having a sandwich near my destination, I had to ask myself if I was really experiencing “the start of going batty,” as shortly I would be looking for a big lump of concrete in a field, then turning around and going back home, hopefully satisfied with another good bike ride – but more of that later.



The Iron Bridge at Ironbridge

So, when you are planning to go for a day (holiday) on your bike, how do you decide where to go? Do you just tag along with a group of others and leave the destination to them, or perhaps get out a map -stick a pin in and go there? Perhaps someone said that there are lovely cycling ways at ABC, and that’s your destination, or even, the food at XYZ pub is to die for? Decisions, decisions, decisions! Well here are some of mine – just to show you are not as indecisive as me perhaps.



Stonehenge

As I schoolboy, I was first drawn to cycle-touring by one of my mates who just wanted to explore so, from time to time we would get out our bikes and head for a name on the map and see what was there.

Favourites would be industrial heritage places such as the Severn Gorge, (what is now known as the Ironbridge Industrial Museum), or perhaps a challenge such as Wenlock Edge, and just before we sat our G.C.E. exams, we went visiting churches in the Avon Valley to investigate styles of architecture for our art paper! Then there was another pal, who was only go free cycling on a Saturday afternoon, so our shorter rides convinced me that Staffordshire had a lot to offer, and see, and we found ourselves exploring Cannock Chase, or perhaps Blithfield reservoir country.

When I started work (with day release for continuing education), I somehow gained a girlfriend, who also just happened to cycle, so new territory opened up, as she lived south of Birmingham, whilst I lived due north. So early starts by me for the eighteen miles to her, thence cycling around Warwickshire, and even onto the Cotswolds before a meal with her family and the ride back to South Staffs.

Occasionally some of us would meet up, and ask where our bikes would take us for a coming bank holiday week-end and whoever voiced an interesting suggestion would end up having to plan a few days for us all, there. Stonehenge was one destination, the Peak District another, just to

name two. Our bikes had set us free, not only to get away from parents, but to roam where we felt drawn. At sixteen I even got my parents to let me have a week away on the bike, just riding by myself and exploring – but did have to agree the furthest point would



be to visit my grandmother living in south Wales, and to have pre-booked overnight accommodation in Youth Hostels! Our world was getting smaller – all as a result of the bike!

Although I was ‘deferred,’ to finish my education, I was just old enough to be one of the last national-servicemen, and as a (now) member of the Royal Air Force, had to have a regular sporting activity so as you may have guessed, chose cycling. This took the form of a bike ride, initially, every Wednesday afternoon, and being stationed at Wendover (Aylesbury) meant grand cycling in Buckinghamshire, sometimes into Oxfordshire, or on the Chiltern Hills. -On one Wednesday I even rode into London to visit the National Cycling Show at Earls Court, cycling back to camp in the dark! Somehow where to go to was always dictated by everywhere being new territory to me, or just sheer curiosity, yet ALWAYS a worthwhile the adventure.

I chose to go abroad with the R.A.F., and ended up in Germany. The weekend or so after my arrival it was an English Bank-Holiday, and I was bikeless, so foolhardy me chose to hike to a nearby town just over the Dutch border (Kleeve) – and hey presto

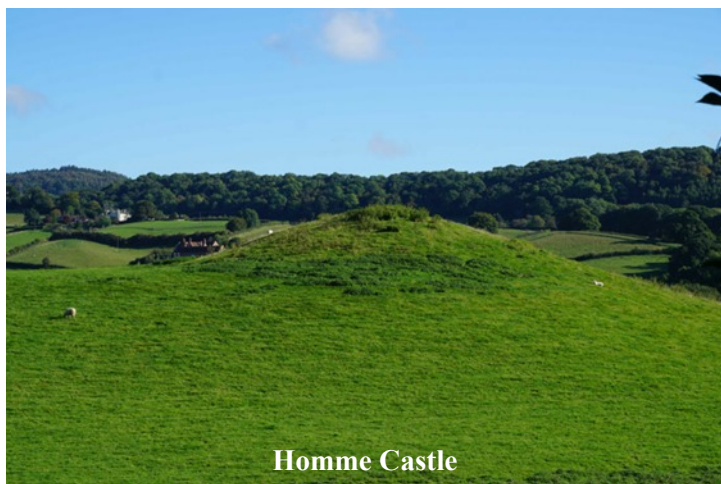


the adventure was a delight, but- I had to return to camp not feeling very well, (I had perforated my appendix), and during my three week stay in hospital made plans and had my beloved bike flown over to join me. (My father had to negotiate despatch from Birmingham). I was then free of the German sit-up-and-beg bike with a brake consisting of a pad that pressed down onto the front tyre, that everyone rode in my accommodation block, and could (and DID), cycle many places in all directions from one of the two camps I was posted to, so, Holland, Belgium and of course Germany provided many places to just go to, and see what were there, Military Cemeteries, designated battlefields, the Catacombs in Valkenberg, even the cathedrals in Köln, and Aix-le-Chapelle, were discovered in order to complete my registered sport

Discharged, and back in the U.K., Cycling was a major part of my life, and initially I would choose to go where I had never been before – always in a different direction to the previous few rides. Holidays became an adventure in every sense, always chosen on a whim, and places I'd never seen/experienced, until disaster struck again. I married a girl who didn't like cycling! Not only that, I literally wore my bike out and with a mortgage and new family couldn't afford another.

The good Lord, was however, looking down on me, and even though I was still riding the clapped-out bike on visiting rounds for my employer, somehow we just found enough money to actually buy a new bike from a mail-order catalogue for £x a month for several months – and by pure

chance a CTC member was trying to start the South Worcestershire Riding Group. Perhaps I was the first to volunteer to join him, and delight of delights – I was cycling again, to new places and



Homme Castle



Bromyard

experiences, but sadly only once a month in deference to our new family, (and I now had church duties as well).

In due course I had to choose where to go, and have memories of one club planning meeting, and offering to lead a Sunday ride in absentia – you choose when and where- only to find they had found perhaps the most obscure place on the map for me – then would give me no clue as to where that was! – My then log-book tells me it was Homme Castle. When we eventually got there, there was nothing worth seeing! Of course we had our three children as well, and they wanted to go out with daddy on the bike, so, yet more choosing where to go that was amenable to me (and them). Two examples were (1) When I chose to ride to the River Arrow with a daughter on the rear carrier, just twenty or so miles away in Warwickshire.....only to find after starting that out the club was going to the Herefordshire river Arrow, forty and more miles away! Or (2) of Johanna's first ride on her own bike with ten inch diameter wheels to Droitwich Glass Church seven miles from home. *If you should pass here,*



it is well worth calling in – its interior walls are all coloured glass mosaic pictures.

Of course there were exceptions such as the club autumn barbecue each year with our neighbouring riding section, or on mid-summer Sunday when we would start out at dawn and stop to cook breakfast for all attending, on picnic stoves at such places as the river Severn estuary embankment, not to mention occasional joining in with district cycling events such as Reliability Rides, or Meriden Sunday and the

Avon rides. Even viewing the cherry blossoms in the Teme Valley, or apple in the Vale of Evesham, or the hop fields around Bromyard!

I had dabbled from time-to-time with using the British Cycle Quest checkpoints as places to aim for and destinations to visit when cycling, so on early retirement these became a regular must, and over the years found me all over the country -still exploring by bike, plus of course impulses for cycle trips to, say, Southern Ireland. The Pandemic however, was nearly my undoing, and coupled with health issues has caused problems, and a near despair that I may have come to the end of my serious cycling.....but not just yet.

I have had for a number of years a very small scale map, to which I affix coloured spots of cycling destinations, so now choose where to go, by (1) what's the weather like, (2) which way is the dominant wind direction, (3) how fit do I feel this week, (4) have I identified anywhere that draws my curiosity, and, (5) which direction have I recently been?

I then set out to my new destination, which this current year have seen me in all places between Lincoln and the outskirts of Northampton, or of Leicester and Spalding. *Just weeks before the first lockdown I had planned a return trip to the Scottish Highlands and also a crossing to the Northern Hebrides – will I ever get there now?*

This so-called 'short article', has turned into something much longer than I anticipated, and doesn't even mention of many thousands of miles riding with a dog behind me in a box on the rear carrier, or even of my cycling

disused railway tracks, Sustrans routes and the National Bike Cycleway, but does hint that a true cycle tourist always has somewhere to go of interest, and one doesn't necessarily need to make a decision where ----- just go.

Oh- that big lump of concrete- there was an article in a recent freebie magazine through the door, of a walker had had been to see the first ever trigonometrical* pillar, which just happens to be at Cold Ashby, near Naseby, in Leicestershire. It made an excuse to go in that direction on the bike to find it last August.

Should you want to visit it, it is hidden in an overgrown hedge, and bears a plaque which reads, "The first observations of Great Britain were made at this trigonometrical station* by Sergeant G.F.Mullinger on 18th April 1936." From this beginning the maps many cyclists now ponder over for places to search out started life, and which-ever sheet you chose to read, adventures begin and personal exploration becomes the ending.

*Yes my big lump of concrete.

Happy exploring



The first Trig Point

A “Champion” Ride

by Peter Witting

Sometimes the heavens conspire in our favour, when everything else seems diminished by the Covid-19 pandemic. So it was in mid-October when our National Road Race Championships took place at Lincoln. The Lincoln Grand Prix was cancelled in 2020 then, in 2021, postponed from May to October. That allowed the event to host our National Championships, and almost on our doorstep.

For years I'd enjoyed a motor-assisted 40-mile ride along the flat-lands from Newark to Lincoln and back for the GP in May. It started when my knees were complaining from too many early season fast climbs locally! This flat recovery ride is now an annual feature on my calendar.

The forecast was dire, with rain and gusty southerly winds. Expecting debris and water-filled potholes, I selected my old Mercian tourer. It had the benefit of a brazed-on lamp bracket on the forks. That allowed a light visible to the front even wearing a full cape against the rain; I wanted to avoid becoming another “Lamp-hole Lenny”. (If you don't know the story, ask an older member of our club, before it's lost in the mists of time – it's a good 'un!).

To benefit from a tailwind back to the car after the race, I'd decided to park at Faldingworth, near Market Rasen. A lady campanologist was surprised to see a cyclist sharing the church car park, rather than fellow bell-ringers. The church has only 3 bells she informed me, the oldest dating from c1500! After coffee from my flask, I followed the A46 for half a mile to reach the flat and quiet lanes, following route 1 of the NCN to Lincoln. I found a bus shelter at Nettleham for 11s – coffee from my steel flask and a chunk of Barbara's boiled fruit cake. The shelter was needed: A local said he thought anyone on a bike that day must be mad; I nodded in agreement!



Pfeiffer Georgi

I arrived on the circuit with two laps to go for the ladies' race. I got a wave from one of the official cars. Maybe he thought I was a course marshal in my orange waterproof top and yellow

rain-legs! Near the finish line I asked one of the ladies who had abandoned how it had been: “Cold and wet” she replied. Full marks for the lack of expletives!

The finish line by the castle had a large screen showing the race pictures from the motorbike camera, with live commentary. What I hadn't expected was that the pictures were delayed by maybe 20 seconds. Was that because the foul weather prevented a plane from flying over the camera to relay the signal back to the screen? As the riders crossed the finish line, the screen was showing them on the cobbled climb 20 seconds earlier – weird! I managed to photo the new ladies champion, Pfeiffer Georgi, smiling broadly after she crossed the finish line.

I then set off to find the official bike park, laid on free for the event. Very few cyclists were taking advantage, possibly due to the weather! With my bike-park wristband, I then sought lunch and shelter before the men's race. My planned pub was closed, likely due to Covid restrictions. Then I discovered the wonderful Cardinal's Hat - a pub for the connoisseur! Not only a full-strength “breakfast stout”, but my favourite Highland Park single malt. Not just the regular 12-year-old; they had the 15-year-old as well. I may have missed the first few laps of the men's race as a result!

With my bike safe in the bike-park I was able to follow the men's race from various points on the cobbled climb to the castle finish line. With improving weather, the narrow pavements were even more jammed with spectators. It became clear long before the finish how the race would pan out, with key riders from top teams in different groups. No surprise that Ben Swift of Ineos Grenadiers would outsprint the rest of the leading group on the final climb.



Riding back on strange roads in increasing darkness, I was glad of Google Maps on my smartphone; Lincolnshire County Council is not the best for signposting! But with a tailwind and the rain long past, I flew along the lanes, setting the dogs barking in the remote houses when I freewheeled.

A day to remember!

The Summer Breakout - Part 1

Neil Dixon

(continued from the Autumn edition)



Loch Ossian

Neil has escaped lockdown by taking the overnight sleeper train (via London) to Corrour, in the Scottish Highlands. He has alighted from the train and breakfasted at the station cafe and

set off into the sunshine and a light breeze.

My route to Loch Rannoch would be heading east towards Loch Ossian, before turning south. I was happy to find that the track was in good condition. I made good progress as I passed the group of walkers from the cafe and continued along the side of the loch. The track started to deteriorate a bit, and I eventually reached a deer ate, which I wasn't expecting. A quick check of the map showed that, in my enthusiasm, I had passed my turn to the south, even though it was an obvious route. I retraced my steps, passing the walkers once again as I went in the opposite direction. This was very embarrassing. I eventually returned to my missed turning and continued in the correct direction. The track was still very rideable, but started to drag upwards for at least a mile, getting steeper as it went. The sun was starting to get warmer, and several times the bike asked me to give it a little rest, which I kindly did.

Eventually the track leveled off, then became a series of gentle rises



and falls for a few miles. I was starting to enjoy the solitude, as well as the fine views across towards the Mamores Forest with Ben Nevis a small peak on the horizon. The ruins of an old shooting lodge were used to have another rest and a drink, although I was starting to think that I

should have been carrying a bit more food. Continuing on, I was met by a group of 4 mountain bikers coming in the opposite direction, one of whom had just finished repairing a puncture. About 400m after passing these guys, I was happy to find a fresh banana lying on the track, presumably dropped by one of the MTBers. It was a case of finders-keepers, and gratefully received.

So far the track had been quite easy to ride, although I had had to cross a few stream-beds, fortunately with only a trickle of water in them. I imagine that after a spell of wet weather they may not be quite so benign. Soon though, the track started to descend, and get a little rockier, and I had to stop a few times to give my hands a rest from constant braking. In the distance I could now see Loch Rannoch, where I should regain the tarmac. A few more miles of track and I did so, glad to be on smooth roads, but also having really enjoyed the 13 miles of track. I resolved to return one day and try the track in the opposite direction, from Corroul to Spean Bridge.

By now I was very hungry and looking forward to lunch in Kinloch Rannoch. Unfortunately I had first the entire 16 mile length of Loch Rannoch to pass, which I did using the quieter south side of the loch. By quieter I mean I was passed by half a dozen cars, rather



**Blackwater Reservoir
and the Mamores**

than the dozen on the north side.

Eventually Kinloch Rannoch was achieved and I made for the cafe, only to find it closed due to lock-down. I had to resort to lunch at the Dunalastair Hotel, and accept the eye-watering prices. Still, I didn't regret it as I was desperate for food, which I ate sitting in the sunny courtyard.

After an hour's rest I was ready to set off for my next destination - Aberfeldy. The direct route was taken, taking the long climb traversing the side of one of Scotland's most iconic Munro mountains, Schiehallion. It being a nice day, the area around the walkers' car park was extremely busy, as this leads to a reasonably easy walk up the mountain. Passing over the top of the climb, I joined the B846 and enjoyed a much deserved fast downhill to Coshieville, passing what is claimed to be the geographic centre of Scotland. Continuing on, I passed the village of Dull (twinned with Boring, Oregon, and Bland, New South Wales !). The tourist

delights of Castle Menzies were soon passed, and I entered Aberfeldy via the steep-sided Wade Bridge over the River Tay. Finding a cafe in Aberfeldy was easy enough as it's a tourist favourite destination, noted for the 'Birks of Aberfeldy', immortalised in poetry by Robert Burns. Having visited before, I ate and drank at the Watermill Cafe and Bookshop.

At this point I was wishing that I'd booked accommodation in Aberfeldy, as I was on my last legs. It seems that when I planned by trip, I must have fantasised that I could do the same sort of rough-stuff/touring distance that I'd been able to do 30 years ago. Unfortunately with 47 hard miles in my legs, I still had about 25 miles to do, including what I knew to be a long steep climb south out of Aberfeldy. The only incentive to continue was that I had booked into a hotel in Crieff that included a well-regarded French-run restaurant. So, with some reluctance, I continued on my way, climbing for 3 miles out of Aberfeldy on the A826. My spirits were rather dampened at this point, but once the top of the climb was reached, I knew that much of the rest of the ride was downhill. There were still a few slopes to cope with, but eventually I turned onto the A822 Sma' Glen road and on into Crieff to arrive at my hotel (Glenearn House), which lived up to it's epicene reputation. I may have over-indulged but I felt I deserved it.

The next day I would continue southward, towards Dunfermline, Selkirk, and across the border to the Tyne Valley, while taking a beating from Storm Ellen, but I'll cover that adventure in Part II.

To be continued



Glenearn House

LEDs

Nottingham CTC's Robert Harvey Gives us some education about lighting



If you recently purchased any sort of light, for your bike, the chances are that you have acquired an “LED”. They are everywhere – in your room lights – your TV and countless domestic and commercial applications - but what are they? Well LED stands for “Light Emitting Diode” and they are a big part of the plan for mankind to save our planet from global warming. If you Google them on the internet, apparently it’s all good news: however, I suspect that is because currently there’s a lot of money and political investment into them. Personally, I have a few concerns and so have cobbled together three articles that should cure anybody of insomnia. So, over the next three *Cycle Chats* this is what to expect

- LEDs - what are they and what do they do?
- LED lighting and the road user
- LEDs and cyclists

LED is short for ‘Light Emitting Diode’. Basic diodes have been around for a very long time- they have the magical property of allowing electricity to pass through in one, but not the opposite, direction. It wasn’t until the 1960’s that ‘light emitting’ diodes started to be seen commercially, when they started to appear as indicator bulbs on switchboards and similar devices. They had very low light output and you could have them in any colour, as long as you wanted red!. Some bright spark then invented the seven segments LED, which meant that they could be used to display numbers.

I remember, back in the 1970’s, buying my first digital alarm clock and yes, they all had red displays (as did the first pocket calculators). In 1972 the first blue ones appeared. Investment of time and money from the laser industry meant that the devices soon started to achieve higher light output with lower production costs. Eventually, development of LEDs meant they started popping up in specialist applications and this is where I had my first encounter with them being used for lighting. In a previous life, I used to play in local pub rock bands. One of our cherished bits of kit were the halogen stage lights (“cans”) which stood precariously on high stands between the stage and the band. They

were great at flooding the performing area with loads of light but they weren't cool. When I say they weren't cool, I don't mean in a rock-and-roll sense, I mean in a Fahrenheit/Celsius sort of way. After sitting at a piano for a couple of hours in front those cans, I was nearly cooked tender; and at the end of the night you had to give them 30 minutes cooling time before you could touch them without ending up in A&E. Then, in 2006 we acquired a high tech set of LED stage lights. In many ways they were brilliant. They were lower cost –much lighter to transport – more reliable – and made considerably less contribution to global warming. However, this was also the time when I realised that something strange was going on. The new lights were very bright and should I inadvertently look directly at them, whilst on stage, I would be momentarily blinded. Not a good thing when you're trying to read dots on a page. However, when I had occasion to be a member of the audience the stage illumination was noticeably less than with the old halogen bulbs.



How can this be: for the performer, the lights are burning your eyes out, but the illumination for the audience was poor?

My first encounter with LEDs on the road was around the millennium when LED traffic lights made their appearance. They were brighter with more vivid colours than their predecessors. Their next noticeable use was when our councils started replacing sodium street lights with LEDs. Some people seemed to like them, but I tend to find the same effect that I experienced when I used them as stage lights. They appear to be very bright: however, there seems to be a lot more shadow than with the previous sodium lights.

The human eye has evolved to help us survive by interpreting our surroundings with what we perceive as colour. The sun radiates energy that contains all the colours of the rainbow which then bounces off objects although not all the colours are reflected. Different things bounce different colours back to us and this is what makes us see things in the colours that we do. The colour mix in the sun's energy is not perfectly even and some colours are stronger than others. Our eyes have evolved to work with the light that nature provides. However, artificial lighting has a completely different colour mix from daylight. LEDs emit a much less balanced mix than previous bulbs, but are very strong on blue/white light.

Continued on page 30.

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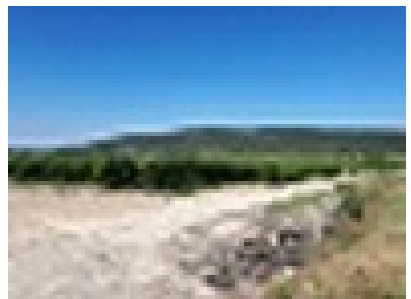
The house has 2 lounges, a large kitchen, 4 bedrooms & a bathroom. In addition to the large garage, the former bakery & shop, there is a secluded courtyard with barbecue & outside furniture.

It is in the village of Argeliers with restaurants & local shops. There is a newly opened supermarket on the edge of the village. The village is surrounded by vineyards, the products of which may be bought at the local Cave Co-operative.

To the north of the village are quiet roads leading up to the Montagne Noire. For off road cycling there is the towpath of the Canal du Midi (165 miles long), tracks through the vineyards & into the hills.

Nearby historic towns include Narbonne (13miles), Beziers (17m) & Carcassonne (31m), apart from historic sites they have large supermarkets & other useful shops such as Decathlon. The nearest Mediterranean beach is 22 miles away.

For more information call Chris on 0116-230-3274, 07982-021559 or access the web site in Google enter 'La Vieille Boulangerie Argeliers'



(Continued from page 27)

“Blue light waves are the among the shortest, highest energy wavelengths in the visible light spectrum. Because they are shorter, these ‘Blue’ or High Energy Visible (HEV) wavelengths flicker more easily than longer, weaker wavelengths. This kind of flickering creates a glare that can reduce visual contrast and affect sharpness and clarity.”

The effect I find from this is that if I look down a lit suburban street that is littered with parked cars (aren't they all) the colours of the various cars are quite indistinct and also there is lots of shadow.



The next thing that's noticeable is car headlights. They are getting whiter and brighter. However, despite them burning out the eyes of other road users they are not as good as the previous incandescent bulbs for illuminating the road ahead in terms of the reflected energy and colour rendition. To try and improve this, LEDs are becoming more

and more powerful. Motorists can now buy super bright and super white LED headlight bulbs. Apart from the obvious, there is another problem here (or several). As light energy leaves a bulb it doesn't project light in a regular pattern (array). Different bulbs will have completely different arrays. Car headlight manufacturers work hard to make the headlight reflectors work in such a way that this irregular light pattern is reflected to give a beam in the right direction. Change the bulb and, hey presto, your light beam will be all over the shop. Not so good if you are approaching a car where the driver has 'upgraded' his lights and is blinding you. This is illegal, but even if we had adequate law officers they do not have any of the equipment that would be necessary to check car headlights. Personally, I am finding more and more that I am having to squint or even look away momentarily because of incorrect car headlights.

So, what about us cyclists?

I explained above how I have come to the opinion that LED lights are

apparently very bright: however, you cannot see that well with them.

The first cycle lights of any power output were carbide which were commercially available around 1897 and they worked by dripping water onto calcium carbide. I've never seen one of these in action but apparently one of the disadvantages was a bad smell. Then along came the incandescent bulb which is the type of filament bulb that we all used in our house lights until recently. I was surprised to learn just how inefficient these old bulbs were. Even when filled with halogen they still only achieved around 10% efficiency. Anybody of any reasonable age can remember how heavy cycle lights used to be because they needed a large expensive battery that didn't last long.



In the 1990's LEDs started being used for cycle lighting, but initially this was purely for tail lights. As said previously, it was easier to produce a red LED than any other and at this time light output was insufficient for a headlight. Today the problems of low-light output have been remedied and we have a vast choice of LED lights for our trusty steeds. As well as being relatively cheap, they are robust and lightweight. After fitting a new battery, incandescent lights used to start to fade quite quickly: however, LEDs have a more consistent output throughout the life of the battery.

So - what's not to like. Without doubt the new light can be very powerful, but as I explained previously they give out large amounts of blue light. So their ability to illuminate the road ahead



isn't in proportion to how bright they are when shone direct to eye. This means that they are great to be seen with, but not so good to see by. If you don't set up the lights correctly there is a good chance that you will actually dazzle other road users. It isn't going to be beneficial to you if your light glare momentarily blinds an oncoming motorist. Also, remember that streets lit by modern street lights seem to leave a lot more shadow and have poorer colour rendition than the old sodium lights. Your

choice of cycling attire might be less visible under LED lighting.

I do wonder where this is all going. LEDs are getting ever more powerful and when I have my motorist hat on, I find that they are becoming as much a hindrance as help. A new thing that's appearing on our streets are LED bill boards - like huge TV sets - at the side of the road. Do we really need these distractions when our attention should be on the job in hand?

LEDs are going to be with us a long time and whether cycling, driving a car, watching the television or maybe just using a room light to read, you are quite probably swimming in blue white LED light. You will have to dig deep on the internet to find any negative articles but they are there. Some people are more prone to being upset by using light sources that differ from natural, so if you are suffering some unexplained ill effects it might be worth your while trying something different.

Robert Harvey

***Cycle Chat is the quarterly magazine of the
Leicestershire & Rutland Group of Cycling UK***

Editor: Dave Binks, davebinks@ntlworld.com tel; 0116 2296015
92 Balmoral Rd, Mountsorrel, Loughborough, Leics, LE12 7EN

Advertising and distribution: Lyn & Pete Gale - tel: 01530 271665

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. Cycling related photos, in .jpg format, with the photographer's name and permission are particularly 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 Group of Cycling UK

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MINCE PIE MEETING CANCELLED

Regretfully, once again, and for the same reason as last year (Covid), the **Annual Mince Pie Meeting** at Belton on December 19th has been **CANCELLED**.

The large numbers who usually attend, in what is not that big a hall and the subsequent crowding that occurs inside are too conducive the the meeting becoming a “Super Spreader” event.

Consideration was given to :-

- a) increasing the ventilation, but this would not have been adequate, and
- b) holding the event outside, but in view of the fact the weather in late December can be very inclement, this was considered too big a risk for the finances, helpers and visitors alike.

Hopefully, by next year, we should be in a better place and the meeting will be able to proceed as usual, so make a provisional note in your diary for Sunday 18th December (date to be confirmed).

Leicestershire and Rutland CTC Carol Service

Sunday 5th December 2021
St. Giles Church
Barlestone, Leics



Service to start 1-15pm

The Adjacent Old School Hall is booked from 12 noon to 3pm
Light refreshments will be available before and after service

Parking for approx. 6/8 cars available at the hall.

PLEASE BRING A FACE COVERING WITH YOU

Cafe News



At the time of going to press (late November) cafes and pubs etc in our area are all open, and mostly without restriction, although there may be some minor restrictions in place. The situation in other UK areas, such as Scotland and Wales, may vary, and ALL may change virtually overnight if HM Gov't deems it needs to tighten up contacts again. So keep your eyes on the local news and don't argue if the establishment owner asks you to do something.

With most people in the UK now double jabbed, and more and more having had their booster, the risk to us all is relatively small now, but IS STILL THERE, so caution please.

WANTED - Your Photos

As I hope you have noticed, more photos are appearing in Cycle Chat but we constantly need more. The advent of digital photography has made taking, manipulating, distributing and reproducing the images easy these days, so there is no excuse for not giving your work a wider audience.



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

Images must be in .jpg format (every digital camera does that automatically) and I must have both the name of the photographer and his/her permission to use it. I am particularly keen to see work that has been shot in vertical format because then it can be used on the front cover!

To keep costs down, only shots printed on the outer covers are in colour, but I can convert any others to black & white.

Forthcoming County Event Dates

Carol Service, Barlestone, St Giles	5/12 See page 33
Mince Pie Meeting Belton VH, Sulley Rides, Lutterworth area,	CANCELLED (COVID) 6/3/22. A volunteer is needed to organise this. Please contact Neil Dixon on 0788 9854459 if you can help
AGM	14/5/22 dtls tba

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.

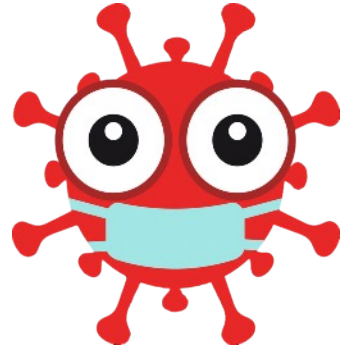
With most having access to a computer, writing a story is easy, you don't have to do it all in one go. A good technique is to write down the bare bones, then go back and gradually fill in the details over the space of a week or two, thus letting your subconscious work away in the background.

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

Please send whatever you have to the Editor.:- davebinks@ntlworld.com

CLUB RUNS LISTS

At the date of going to press we are being allowed to go on group rides again, but with some restrictions. As this is a dynamic situation and can and sometimes does, vary almost by the day, you must keep up to date with the news and what the group leader(s) are saying, but the good news is we do seem to be getting somewhere!



As a precaution, take a face mask and be prepared to use it when entering cafes etc.

NUNEATON					
					
CYCLE CLUB					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Distance</u>		
					Thursday rides meet at 10.30am. Saturdays 10am.
4th Nov	Thurs	Sutton Cheney Wharf	Half day	Paul Kutchta	7414474233
11th Nov	Thurs	Peoples Café Bedworth	Half day	Angie Fisher	7824808788
18th Nov	Thurs	Astley Book Farm	Half day	Paul Hands	7941508045
25th Nov	Thurs	Morrissons	Half day	Jim Gerrard	01455 823787
2nd Dec	Thurs	Dobbies Gdn Centre	Half day	Eric Rowland	7768396806
9th Dec	Thurs	Hill Top Gdn Centre	Half day	Chris Turley	7971289464
16th Dec	Thurs	Sutton Cheney Wharf	Half day	Gill Lord	01455 456708
23rd Dec	Thurs	Heritage Café	Half day	Angie Fisher	7824808788
30th Dec	Thurs	Makins Fishery	Half day	John Andrews	01162 865738
6th Jan	Thurs	Peoples Café Bedworth	Half day	Chris Taylor	24760741276
13th Jan	Thurs	Astley Book Farm	Half day	Bob Allen	24760748788
20th Jan	Thurs	Morrissons	Half day	Paul Hands	7941508045
27th Jan	Thurs	Dobbies Gdn Centre	Half day	Roger Payne	7757103139
POSTCODE KEY - NUNEATON LIBRARY - CV11 5DR, HILL TOP GARDEN CENTRE - CV7 9LH					
UPTON BARN - CV13 6LA, HERITAGE CAFÉ - CV11 4LU, ASTLEY BOOK FARM - CV10 7QB					
PEOPLES CAFÉ BEDWORTH CV12 8NF					
ST MARY'S HINCKLEY - LE10 1DW, MAKINS FISHERIES - CV11 6QJ					

South Leicestershire Section

Contact Neil Dixon for more details on 0788 9854459

DATE	TIME	START	DESTINATION	COMMENTS
2/1/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Tur Langton	To be confirmed if open
9/1/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Thornby	
16/1/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Sutton Cheney Wharf	
23/1/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Billesdon	venue Northern Cobbler, Rolleston Lodge Farm
30/1/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Catthorpe	
6/2/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Welford (Mini Meadows)	
13/2/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Brandon Marsh	
20/2/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Twycross	
27/2/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Draycote Visitor Centre	
6/3/22	09:00	Lutterworth		David Sulley Memorial Rides (100/70/50 Km). Start Point to be confirmed
13/3/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Tugby	
20/3/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Thornby	
27/3/22	09:30	Broughton Astley	Sutton Cheney Wharf	

CHARNWOOD RUNS LIST

Date	Start	Eleven's	Lunch	Leader
05 Dec	9.30 W	Barlestone	Carol Service	Jim
12 Dec	9.30 B	Cossington	Old Dalby	Paul
19 Dec	9.30 A	Belton(?)	Peggs Green	Keith
26 Dec	10.00 M		Donisthorpe	Lyn
02 Jan	9.30 S	Swarkestone	Newton Solney	Nick
09 Jan	9.30 W	Burbage Common	Newbold Verdon	Paul
16 Jan	9.30 A	Snaresstone	Stoke Golding	Jim
23 Jan	9.30 B	Quorn	Sutton Bonnington	Martin
30 Jan	9.30 M	Fradley	Coton in the Elms	Pete
06 Feb	9.30 H	Polesworth	Shackerstone	Dave
13 Feb	9.30 S	Stenson Lock	Hartshorne	Keith
20 Feb	9.30 W	Sutton Wharf	Carlton	Nick
27 Feb	9.30 A	Findern	Ticknall	Paul
06 Mar		Dave Sulley Rides	See Cycle Chat	
06 Mar	9.30 B	Rothley Station	Kegworth	Jim
13 Mar	9.30 M	Newton Regis	Coton in the Elms	Martin
20 Mar	9.30 H	Battlefield Centre	Stoke Golding	Lyn
27 Mar	9.30 S	Shardlow	Melbourne	Dave

A – Ashby HSBC
M – DFS Measham

B – Belton Church
S – Lount X Roads

H – Heather Church
W – Bagworth Village Hall

Assistant Secretary: Martin Bulmer, 2 Ashdale, Thringstone, Leics, LE67 8LW. 07719 875167
Runs contact: Lyn Gale 07779 794317

Leicester Easy Riders

Due to lack of members and old age, if any one is interested on a ride on a Sunday please contact David Smith on 0116 2417908 who goes out most Sunday mornings.

**The deadline for the Spring 2022 issue of
Cycle Chat is 1st February 2022
That edition will cover March, April & May 2022**



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I enclose a cheque for £5 payable to "Cycle Chat" - includes postage.
Overseas rates on request***

Name

Address

**Charnwood Section's holiday in Northumberland.
Nick Tudor Jones and Keith Tilley cross a stream near
Kielder. Photo by Lyn Gale**

