

Cycle Chat

75p

Leicestershire & Rutland CTC
Since 1897

Spring 2024



www.ctclr.org.uk

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CYCLE CHAT

Spring 2024

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, by Dave Binks

As in previous winters, I am writing this in Spain, avoiding the typical UK winter (is there a "typical" winter now with global warming causing so many aberrations in weather systems worldwide?). I have been coming here since 2014, missing just one year when Covid was ravaging the world. Since then, there is no doubt in my mind that more and more people are seeking to get away if they can. Looking at the weather back home it's truly weird how it goes from one extreme to the other and back again in a very short time. This year here it has been the warmest I've experienced by far. And yet some people still don't think global warming is real. I plead guilty to being one of the culprits with the amount of flying I have done recently, so don't bother pointing that out when next you see me.

The Leics & Rutland CTC/Cycling UK group is looking increasingly under threat of closing due to lack of active members, despite there being 800 members in our area. If you are one of those 800 who doesn't get involved, let us know why not and what we need to do to encourage you. Drop either the Secretary or myself, an email. Contact dtls on page 2 of this edition.

This edition includes a couple of very interesting reports of tours undertaken by local members. If you have done similar, or just a single day trip that might interest others, please share it with others.

PLEASE NOTE MY NEW EMAIL
92davebinks@gmail.com

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From the Secretary

Alan Hartshorne



Hi everyone I hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year.

Although I had my flu jab I seem to have had the flu over New Year for at least a week. I got two shocks in January, the first was a new one for me; a motorist apologised for being too close, and the second whilst waiting at traffic lights on the bike in freezing

weather a naked lady walked across in front of me. Definitely another first!

Last year at Long Buckby riding up the hill on my way down to Watlington with my loaded camping trailer, I became aware of a Police presence and to my surprise it was an armed team apparently making an arrest. They let me through, but turned all traffic coming toward me back, so riding up an horrendous hill with traffic squeezing past as they made its way back was not good.

I enjoyed a trip to Cannock Chase, and although it rained one day, I enjoyed the ride to the German War 1 Cemetery. If you have never been it's worth a trip.



There are two Cemeteries; the big one is off the road past the other, one by the road, that one includes British, Australian & New Zealanders. The soldiers buried here either died of wounds in the nearby Military Hospitals or during captivity in local prison camps.

You can round it off with an off road ride up the Sherbrook Valley. I rode from there to Kidderminster, riding back two

days later to Leicester.

As I expected, 2 years on from the Highway Code being updated it seems no notice has been taken of it, as I still get very close passes, drivers turning left across me, and other stupid things. On the plus side I have also met some really nice motorists to whom who I have been grateful for their help. But when you read there are many drivers with lots of points on their licence yet still allowed to drive you have to wonder about your safety. Our cycling officer said that road

safety training for 2 schools has been suspended because the vehicles were travelling over the speed limit, therefore putting the children's life at risk. When I joined the CTC we held 2 "Standard Rides" each year plus a "rough stuff" ride. That meant the Sections had a chance to ride and meet together, a dinner dance prize presentation, Map reading Competition, a Freewheel and Pace judging and a Rally. Meaning we all met socially for these events. But almost all have now gone as we replaced the Standard Rides with an Audax event, but even that stopped when numbers made it impractical. We had the Fuchsia Ride, the last one being held the week before John Allen died, was, again, low in numbers. The Freewheel, pace judging and map reading was the same. The Cycling Rally held at Whitwick, then Griffydam received a blow when BCF declared that any member riding in what was fun races would lose their BCF licence! It carried on for a few years but wasn't the same. Ray Clay's camping rally at Beaumanor Hall went after the fees got too expensive. Now it seems each group prefer only their own company which seems a shame.

We cannot put on events on if only a small group are going to attend, only eight coming to last year's AGM brings the future of Leicestershire & Rutland CTC into question. Yet we have over 800 members in our county. Members willing to help or promote events are thin on the ground.

So it's up to you!

Anyway - I hope you have a good year's cycling, and keep safe.

Alan

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

Leicestershire & Rutland CTC AGM
Saturday 11th of May. 2.00pm at Botcheston VH.
See www.ctclr.org website for details

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.



Technical Topics

By Peter Witting

Foul Weather Clothing

I was hoping for a few fine days last November to complete some external rot-proofing and decorating. Fine chance! The wet weather from October continued, setting new records and consequential record-breaking floods! So how did you cope? Nothing worse than cold, wet feet, hands and head.

I've found Shimano's MW7 winter SPD boots perfect for such conditions. Just ensure they are a size larger to use with thick rambling socks on top of regular socks. I've paid top whack for winter cycling gloves from Castelli, but fingers still get chilled in extreme weather. What worked for me were the Seal-Skinz Waterproof Extreme Cold Weather Insulated Mittens, used with a silk liner or equivalent from Damart. Those with Raynaud's syndrome might need battery heated gloves.

Wearing a helmet, I've found it limits the thickness of protective layers underneath. A waterproof helmet cover is therefore the first step. I have a thin skull-cap as the base layer that covers the forehead and ears. In extreme cold I then use a Buff, worn balaclava-style, as further protection. Finally, I use a Castelli Estremo WS thermal cap. Depending on the helmet size, you may have to juggle the layers to fit! Ensure you have an additional buff around the neck.



Kit for Global Warming

While we were suffering the foul winter weather, the Tour Down Under was taking place in the Australian summer – apparently equally extreme. I was watching on TV as Aussie champion Luke Plapp emerged from a pile-up with his torso looking like an item in a butcher’s window, with jersey torn and horrid loss of skin. Last June in Cycle Chat I commented on the benefits of Graphene. Ekoi market jerseys incorporating the material, which is claimed not only to help dissipate heat, but to resist tearing in a crash. It seems Luke Plapp’s team had not chosen their jerseys from Ekoi! Lesson learnt?



Photograph: Tim de Waele/Getty Images

Armchair Cycling Technology!

For those who relax between rides by watching others riding their bikes, then you probably watch “The home of cycling” Eurosport! That usually, but not always, means subscribing to Sky. It’s therefore frustrating, having paid the fee to Sky, to find races not being shown on Eurosport but available for additional payment. Previously it was GCN+ ‘til that got closed down. I then found that Discovery+ offered the additional coverage. It’s the streaming service owned by Warner Brothers who also own Eurosport! Like GCN+ it requires a monthly fee but, who knew, it’s free to Sky subscribers! Once signed up via Sky’s on-screen Apps menu, you have access to the additional races – and advert-free!

Electric Vehicle (EV) Weight Issues – Postscript

I note that Parisians could see parking charges for non-residents being tripled for heavier vehicles, depending on the outcome of their February referendum. The higher charges would apply to owners of petrol and diesel or plug-in hybrid cars that weigh more than 1.6 tonnes as well as owners of [electric vehicles](#) over 2 tonnes.

This was aimed at “very expensive cars, driven by people who today have not yet made the changes to their behaviour that have to be made”. While aimed at heavy and polluting SUVs, clearly some EVs would fall foul of the new limits. Could this happen here?

Whilst on a recent overseas group cycling holiday a funny thing happened.

The evening before, we used to publish a short notice of where the next day’s rides were going. This was left on the desk of the holiday company that had taken us as part of a package holiday. This informal situation had worked for many years and was available to anyone passing the desk on the way into the dining room.



One morning, as someone who had published a planned 70 miles ride with a lot of climbing, I glanced at the list as I went into breakfast and noticed someone had written on it:- “Hello, I’m Maureen. Michael has said I would enjoy it and so would like to join you. Can you let me know the details? I’m in room 212.”

This was a bit strange, because Michael had just gone home and I had never met anyone in our party named Maureen, but as the holiday progressed, members came and went as they were able to find time from home and work commitments, so it wasn’t unlikely, and it may just have been another cyclist who happened to be at the same hotel.

After a few unanswered calls to her room I finally got to speak to her. After a rather confusing conversation between us it dawned on us both that she thought it was a 70 miles *coach* trip!

The Michael she referred to was one of the holiday company reps and she had looked at the wrong list.

Perhaps needless to say, she didn’t come!

Dave Binks

We Record Their Passing

We have recently lost some memorable people from our local cycling fraternity

Peter Witting has written the below to remember them

Janet Neal

Janet died last November aged 89. She was the wife of our longstanding Leicestershire & Rutland Secretary Eric, to whom we give our condolences. Janet was an active cycle-tourist, riding with the Hinckley and Nuneaton Sections as well as attending national events including the Easter Meets of the Rough Stuff Fellowship, plus overseas tours. Janet was also a renowned supporter of animal charities. Janet's funeral was attended by a number of long-standing members of our club.

John Cutler

John was a tireless worker for cyclists and died in January aged 79. Philip Gray, the publicity officer for CTC Northampton wrote: "John was a hugely knowledgeable and dedicated cycle campaigner in Northamptonshire for many years. As one of the Cyclists' Touring Club's (as it was then known) Rights and Planning representatives in the county, he was a thorn in the flesh of council highways planners for many years. While we sometimes wish local cycling provision were better, John achieved many changes to council road plans and policies, from which we still benefit". He was the CTC national councillor for Northamptonshire for some years. He was also a regular at the CTC East Midlands Camping Rally at Beaumanor Hall. Peter Witting recalls being phoned by John in advance of his visits to Leicestershire for

recommendations for the best CAMRA listed pubs!

Pete Etheridge

Readers of Cycle Chat will in recent years have read Pete's reminiscences of cycling in his youth. He died last October aged 94. He was a prolific time-triallist, famously as a "barrow boy" on his trike. His daughter, Jane, recalled that he had survived so many accidents and medical emergencies that he seemed indestructible! Famously he was riding the North Road 24-hour time trial when fog descended during the night. He moved to the road centre to follow the white line. I think he would have been on his trike when, from the opposite direction came Nim Carline doing the same thing. I believe they both ended up in hospital. On one of Peter Witting's Thursday Club rides, he failed to negotiate the descent of the hill from Gumley to Smeeton Westerby. An ambulance was called to attend but typically Pete sent it away! Pete is survived by Sue.

Pete Etheridge



Just for fun

A mini touring quiz No. 3



Rutland Jeff asks how observant you are

When out cycling, do you keep an eye out for curiosities?
Here is one that Rutland Jeff. has found – can you find the answer?

Crossing the **Welland Valley**, between Rutland and Northamp-tonshire, is Briton’s longest railway viaduct (still used by goods and passenger trains), built between 1876-1878, and is 1275yards long.

How many bricks were used (estimated) to construct it? (There’s an in-formation board mounted beneath it on the roadside). Answer to the nearest one million, will suffice.



Answer below

Another test to
come in the next
edition

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About*

David Grimshaw or David Smith? - OOPS Wrong One!!

In the last edition of Cycle Chat, Your Editor claimed he had bumped into David Grimshaw recently when their paths crossed East of Leicester. He had been out for a ride in the lanes around the Billesdon area and Buttercups tea room. He told the Editor that he rides alone most of the time now, claiming to be the “Last man standing” out of the old. Leicester City Section. Not bad for an 87year old!

My apologies to both parties, because it was **David Smith** he had met, not David Grimshaw. (Red faced blush from your Editor}

Rebellion Way (part 2)

Words and photos by Paul Hand

Continued from the Winter Edition.

After a hearty breakfast we left the Rose and Crown in Snettisham and immediately had to climb a steep hill out of the village, not the best of starts to the day. Heading north we soon came to the village of Heacham, near the coast.

Heacham is currently home to Norfolk Lavender, but there is evidence that there was a settlement there over 5000 years ago, although the present village dates from Anglo Saxon times. The main church dates from 1230, one of the oldest building in the village. Heacham also has ties with Pocahontas who was married to John Rolfe of Heacham Hall. Her grave is currently in St George's Church in Gravesend, Kent.



From here we joined the coast and rode along the sea wall north towards Hunstanton. It was a bright day with a keen breeze off the sea. It was nice to get off the road and also have a different vista.

It was only a couple of miles into Hunstanton, which is now a popular holiday destination having been developed as such in the mid 19th Century and the main reason for the railway

having been brought to the town.

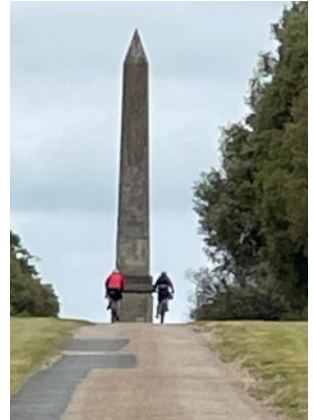
We continued north out of Hunstanton dropping south towards Ringstead and following the road towards Burnham Market and ultimately Burnham Thorpe. This small village was the birthplace of Nelson. Although the house where he was actually born was demolished shortly after his father died, there has been a new rectory built on the site. For such a well known historical figure there is very little to commemorate him in the village.

Pressing on we followed the road to the entrance of





Holkham Hall and followed the imposing drive up hill to the obelisk. Holkham Hall was originally built for the 1st Earl of Leicester and is still the family home, although open to the public at certain times. It has a large estate and the grounds provide some wonderful views across the Norfolk countryside. Apparently the house cost a fortune when originally built and almost bankrupted the family. As a result they could not afford to make changes to the building as fashion and fads changed, as a result it is thought to be one of the finest original examples of Palladian Architecture still surviving.



We rode through the estate, passed the imposing house and on to the road to the coast again, where we picked up a track which took us through some conifer woods to the head of Wells Salt Marshes.



Many people know that Wells Next The Sea was a very important port in the north of Norfolk and although it is not quite as vibrant as days gone by, it still has a few boats using the port facilities, but it is mainly a tourist location.

The route out of Wells was a little challenging, having to negotiate some of the small back lanes which twisted and turned uphill south out of the village.

The route took us to Walsingham where we stopped overnight.

Walsingham is a renowned place of pilgrimage since the 1060's after an alleged apparition to Richeldis de Faverches by the Virgin Mary which subsequently resulted in shrines being built and consequently two priories. There has been a revival in the 20th century and it is seen as an important place to Christians. This was very apparent during our overnight stay.

The following morning we left to continue on our penultimate day. Our overnight

stop was at North Waltham, which was a few miles off the route, so this was to be a slightly longer day than usual. The route today appeared to be about 50/50 road and track with the first few miles being on the road.



Although we had had a good nights sleep, it seemed ironic that the first village we road through was Great Snoring. The name obviously creates amusement to visitors but has its origins in old English meaning settlement of the people of Snear.

Shortly after passing through Great Snoring we came upon Thursford, another small and pretty Norfolk village, which is home to the Thursford Collection. This was started by a George Cushing, who was born in the village and started the collection as a bit of a hobby, but it has since grown into one of the most important steam collections around. Unfortunately it wasn't open at the time we were there so we could not call in.



The route took us along some very quite and pleasant country lanes as we progressed towards Holt where we had decided to stop for some lunch. So far on the trip we had encountered very little traffic along the back lanes to the point it was a strange feeling as we approached Holt and had to deal with traffic in the centre of the town.

Holt appeared to be quite a vibrant town with everyone going about there business, lots of shops indicative of this being a market town. It was interesting to note from one of the information boards that Holt was subject to almost total destruction in 1708 from a fire which quickly took hold and burnt

almost all of the buildings. Clearly has rebuilt over time to be an important place in Norfolk life.

Holt is also home to the Gresham's School started by Sir John Gresham in 1555 and its alumni has included the likes of Benjamin Britten, Richard Cockerell and James Dyson to name but a few.

After a very pleasant lunch we continued along the road to Baconsthorpe where we detoured to visit the castle. It was a very pleasant day and the countryside in which the old castle was situated was idyllic, so peaceful with the only noise being birdsong. Baconsthorpe is a 15th Century castle owned by the Hendon family and now in the care of English Heritage. Clearly it had seen turbulent times and reading the information board gave some insight to its rise and fall. It was undergoing work at the time we visited to ensure it was safe as some of the structure was starting to crumble and hence it was covered in scaffolding.



Those that know Norfolk will appreciate that it is not a flat county and after leaving Baconsthorpe we climbed Bodham Hill to West Beckham and then on to Sherringham. On arrival at the station we were greeted by a rather large steam train preparing to leave. Sherringham is again a lively tourist destination, borne out by the number of coaches in the car park, most of which appeared to be heading for the station.

After leaving Sherringham we left the road and started on some of our first tracks of the day and rode up to Beeston Regis Heath. On entering the woods, and finding the correct trail, which was a bit of a challenge, it ascended very steeply in a short space of time. The surface was loose and stony and very quickly i was in bottom gear struggling to keep traction and forward momentum. Although it was only about 100m long the trail seemed a relentless climb, however once at the top



there were some great views back over Sherringham and the surrounding countryside.

Following the trails through the heat took us eventually to the grounds of Felbrigg Hall. This is a 17th Century Jacobean house now in the care of the National Trust. After leaving the grounds of Felbrigg we were back on the road and started to descend and lose all the height we had gained, I

suppose what goes up must come down. We continued to Erpingham where we left the official route and followed to road to our overnight stop in North Waltham.



I think without exception we had been welcomed by all our hosts at our overnight stops and they had ensured that our bikes were safe and secure.

The following morning it was again a cold start, albeit dry. I suspect that the winds off the North Sea keep the temperatures down. This was our last day and we had a 44 mile journey to get us back to Norwich and our original starting point.

We retraced our steps to Erpingham as we wanted to do the complete route. We could have cut the corner and dropped straight down to Aylsham, but felt this was not in the spirit of the ride.

Picking up the route at Erpingham we then entered the Blickling Estate, another large country house in the care of the National Trust. The original house dates



from the early 15th Century and was in the ownership of the Boleyn family. It is understood that Anne Boleyn was born there. The current house was built on the ruins of the original Tudor house in the early 1600's.

A couple of miles after leaving Blickling we entered Aylsham. Aylsham is another market town that grew up from the original roman settlement. In 1372, John of Gaunt was the Lord of the Manor and was the principle town of the Duchy of Lancaster.

After stopping at the Bures Valley Railway station for a cup of tea, we joined the track that runs along side the narrow gauge railway for the 9 miles to Wroxham. This railway was built on the track of the original full size passenger line after it became defunct. Although it has struggled in recent times it is still managing to operate.

The track is quite narrow in places and it was definitely single file all the way down. I'd like to say the views of the countryside were nice,



but unfortunately the concentration needed to avoid catching the fence on one side and the bushes on the other meant that sight seeing was minimal.

Having reached the end of the line, we rejoined the road that took us into Wroxham. What a shock that was, the centre was packed and the traffic queuing around the one way system. It seemed it was living up to its title of the capital of the Broads. Roys of Wroxham seemed to be doing a good trade as ever with people swarming everywhere.

We decided that it was probably safer and quicker to dismount and walk across the road and the infamous Wroxham Bridge. It is said that this is the second most difficult bridge to navigate, the most difficult being Potter Heigham. Looking at the traffic going over it, they also seem to be making quite a hash of it due to impatience and traffic volumes.



We left the buzzing metropolis that is Wroxham and rode to the south of the bridge, by the marinas and towards the residential area south of the river Bure. It was in this area, Beech Road to be precise, that George Formby had a house.

We continued on a mixture of road and small tracks east towards Ranworth, when the route turned south west on its final run in to Norwich. Fortunately there were a few cycle tracks we could take on the final mile or two as we entered the city centre and found our way to the start at the Railway Station.

We had covered 267 miles over 6 days. A pleasant pace to allow us to take in the local area and stop and find out about some of the places we were travelling through. It is of course possible to do the route in two or three days, but you would miss the views and history of the area.

For those of you contemplating this route, it is very doable on a touring bike with decent tyres, and does lend it self to adaptation to avoid some of the slightly tricky off road section, but there is very few of those and they are easily walkable if necessary.

So, three down so far. The Cantii is in the planning for 2024. Watch this space....

Portugal End to End

October 2023

Words and photos by Linda as she describes her latest adventure

I was meant to have visited the Douro Valley in Portugal previously, but the Covid pandemic and the demise of CTC Tours had put paid to that, so tentatively I booked an end to end tour with another company.

We flew to Porto minus our bikes as these were transported to and from Portugal by the company. This made for a much less stressful journey and gave us the opportunity for two days sightseeing in Porto. It was extremely hot and left me wondering what the cycling would be like in that heat.



Cobbles

The first day of cycling saw us meeting our group and being transported by coach to a reservoir near Paradela in the north of the country. We were a fairly large group and once people had retrieved their bikes and tinkered around with them we all set off at our own pace, following the route we had been given. This area of Portugal was very rural and we passed farms and a couple of reservoirs without seeing anyone. It was very hot and hilly and there was also a lot of cobbles in all the villages we passed through; so quite a tough first day.

The end of the day was a lot easier as we picked up a disused railway track, now converted to a cycle track (ecopista), to our destination, Mondim de Basto. We stopped for a welcome ice cream and cold drink at the former railway station, but there was a sting in the tail, as somehow we didn't quite pick up the right track from the railway station, thereby incurring a lot of extra miles, climbing and cobbles! Nobody seemed to know where the hotel actually was, although that could have been due to my poor Portuguese, learned via Duolingo (an on-line language teaching course)!

The next day started well as it was downhill from the hotel, although on cobbles, to pick up the cycle track for a few miles before arriving in Amarante with its romantic bridge (named after the Portuguese equivalent of St Valentine). We



then came to the River Douro and the beautiful vineyards on the steep terraced banks of the river. The rest of the day was quite pleasant with beautiful vistas and not as hot as the previous day, so the hills didn't feel quite so bad. We arrived at our destination with plenty of time to wander around and explore.

We cycled near the Douro the following day and again there was a lot of climbing and a lot of cobbles, but some lovely accommodation in a former convent. However, it did involve a chase by four farm dogs, one of which bit me, although we had been assured that dogs weren't normally a problem in Portugal!

The following day also involved a lot of climbing to our destination, Belmonte, and another lovely former convent for accommodation.



River Douro

The next day included a coffee break near the castle at Sortelha and the end of the day saw us climbing steeply up to the fascinating hilltop town of Monsanto, avoiding tourists wandering around on the final stretch of uphill. Monsanto seemed to have been hewn out of the rocks and boulders and was extremely interesting. The view from the fortress at the top was billed as "amazing", but unfortunately the clouds and then the rain set in, but we did get a sense of the dramatic setting. It was certainly a very fascinating place and it would have been good to have had more time and better weather to explore further.

The next day saw us crossing over the border to Spain. It was only a morning ride and there was plenty of time to stop at the border on the Roman bridge over the river separating the two countries to watch the eagles and vultures soaring high in the sky.



Spanish/Portuguese border

We also stopped at Velha, one of Portugal's oldest villages, with its Roman and other ruins. We arrived at Alcantara in Spain for lunch and then wandered around the town, where there was another Roman bridge and many old buildings to explore. The accommodation was yet another

former convent, but had also seen use as a mill amongst other things. The following day turned out to be not good for cycling. We ended up cycling for miles along a straight road through pouring rain with a headwind to boot. There was absolutely nowhere to shelter and thunder could be heard in the distance. We arrived at the cafe soaked to the skin, but fortunately there was a wonderful warming soup on offer. The rain eased, but did not cease for our return to Portugal, so we missed the beauty of the Serra de San Mamede Natural Park.

We arrived at our destination of Marvao, but by then the rain was so heavy that we couldn't see the castle or any of the other sights in this spectacular hill top town.

It was still raining the next day, so we still couldn't see Marvao, but as it wasn't too heavy, we set off to Vila Vicosa, crossing the border a couple of

times en route. At one point, the road had completely disappeared and we had to negotiate an enormous hole, helping each other carry bikes across. The highlight of the day was the impressive aqueduct at Elvas, which dated back to the sixteenth century.



Aqueduct near Elvas

Villa Vicosa was an impressive town with its castle, palace and vast open squares, but not an easy place to find an evening meal at that time of year! However, the day ended with us all receiving text messages from the government about an imminent storm with danger to life, so it was decided that we would not cycle the next day and a coach was arranged! The coach journey saved us a day of 65 miles cycling to Moura, but also meant missing a couple of historic towns en route. Fortunately we were glad to be out of the rain and wind, and arriving in Moura were happy to stay in the hotel until the rain temporarily stopped. We ventured out to explore the town, but again the heavens opened, so we dived into a coffee

shop and practised our “Duolingo” Portuguese' as no English was spoken. Luckily the next day was a lot better, so we carried on our journey by bike. The scenery comprised mainly of fields of olive trees and the odd ones of livestock. Again we were treated to eagles and vultures soaring overhead and sometimes feeding in the fields. We crossed over the border and back again and eventually arrived at our destination of Mertola. There was even an opportunity to sit on the balcony, enjoying the view, the evening sunshine and a drink.



Temporary stop for a herd of sheep

The final day involved quite a bit of climbing in some remote countryside and the weatherman agreed to stay fine for most of the day. The last 10 miles were mainly downhill to the coast and we gathered at a cafe outside Tavern so that we could enter the town together. Tavern was a shock to the system with all the holiday makers, but fortunately the sun shone for our arrival at the beach and the finale of our end to end cycle tour of Portugal. Altogether, 564 miles cycled and 65 by coach: a great way to experience Portugal for the first time with a great bunch of people.

**This year's theme for the
Photographic Competition is**

CYCLE PATHS OR TRACKS



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 people cycling on their bikes
(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 2023)

Class 6: Theme of the year is yet to be decided. (George Clownes Tray)

Last date for entries extended to 28th February 2024

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.**

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Derek Willans Reports on the Mince Pie Meet

Regular readers will know the last two years, attendance for which had been badly affected by Covid fears, had greatly reduced the numbers attending and thus the amount of money raised, but we were back to normal on Sunday the 17th December 2023 for the event. We were hoping for good weather on the day and our prayers were answered!

We had a great turnout of at least 300 or 400 cyclists. We raised £1000 from the Tombola and donations and the catering group donated all their takings of £700. Ian Hill from Derby and I took the donation to Rainbows on the 7th of January 2024. See attached photos of Ian and I presenting the cheque to Rainbows for £1700 and also a photo of Belton Village Hall.

I wish to pay tribute to all the volunteers who gave up their time to make the whole event possible. Also, many thanks to all the people and businesses who gave prizes, and donations, by way of money and goods to make the day a success. People and businesses are still recovering after lockdown and it wouldn't be possible to have the event without all these contributions. We are in a fortunate position to help in some way towards Rainbows Charity for Sick and Dying Children and young people who will never have the chance to do the things we take for granted.

Below is a list of businesses who contributed to our prize draw. Please support them with your business and mention the event.

Pedal Power, Loughborough Tel: 01509 272076
City Cycles Ltd., Narborough Rd., Leicester. Tel : 0116 2894499
Leisure Lakes , Wilsthorpe Rd., Derby Tel: 01332 872947
Cycle Inn, Chilwell Road, Nottingham Tel: 0115 9256647
City Cycles, Humberstone Lane, Leicester Tel: 0116 2640654
Cotic Ltd Tel: 07970 853531
South Wigston Cycle Centre Tel: 0116 2477900
Cycle Trax , Loughborough Tel: 01509 233532
Rocky Riders , Nottingham. Tel: 0115 8229657
Velo Verde Café, Scriveton Tel: 07950 916683

Derek Willans (left) and Ian Hill (centre) present an enormous cheque for £1700 to Rainbows at their Loughborough HQ.



Peter Hopkins has been looking through some old photos and has copied the below for your interest.



Loughborough CTC at South Croxton, about 1978/79 at a Loughborough Section lunch stop at the Golden Fleece, South Croxton. Just look at the size of the group – AND the age range from old Rupert Abbs (Echo photographer) on the left to a couple of 3-4 year-olds AND plenty of teenagers! Peter Hopkins is bottom row right. A different cycling world!



This was taken at the 1974 Birthday Rides (based on Ipswich) and features Ian & Jessie Hay, founders of the Mince Pie Run, at the front, looking young & fit!

Reducing The Number Of ‘Close Passes’

The use of video evidence

Colin and Rosy Gray pass on their knowledge and experience of a particular video camera.

The Highway Code species at least 1.5m space gap when passing a cyclist. Police forces treat road safety very seriously, but they are under resourced and very few cases come to court.

There is no standard method of reporting incidents, but there is a form, [National Dash Cam Safety Portal \(nextbase.co.uk\)](http://NationalDashCamSafetyPortal(nextbase.co.uk)) although not all forces accept it. But it can generate a witness statement and reference code for the police force. The link above explains.

Very few cases result in a successful prosecution unless there is independent evidence, but a video may get a warning letter sent to the driver which may help to reduce future incidents. And in the event of a collision, can greatly help any insurance claim.

For most people the key criteria to look for in a video camera, are:-

- Reasonably cheap and certainly less than £100.
- Battery life at least 4 hr to record at least 80km.
- Simple to use.
- Suitable handlebar mounting.
- Acceptable video quality. (Must be capable of reading a vehicle number plate, in most situations.)

We looked at lots of cameras and eventually bought a “**Chilli Bullet Cam Mark II with wi-fi**” at £80. *

It weighs 72g, not the lightest camera available, but no burden, and has a good handlebar mount. (See picture of camera mounted on our tandem.) A second mount would allow it to go on a second bike. It can be mounted underneath your ‘bars, or the underside of a Garmin/Wahoo mount. Software automatically inverts the image you view so it’s actually the right way up.

- The wide angle lens gives a decent view of passing cars and the image is really clear, which should help any police report.
- There is also an App for downloading to a smartphone which will display the exact time, needed by the police, on the video.
- The video can be stored and viewed, in MP4 format (a very common type) on a smartphone or any computer
- It’s also possible to use the App to store and view videos on your phone.

- A red LED to show it is recording is clearly visible in bright light.
- It can be switched to still images if preferred.
- Videos are recorded in 3 minute sections, then saved as separate files.
- A full charge of the battery gives close to 5 hours recording time. An external power supply option is available.
- There is a built in microphone to record all conversation.



Finally here are a few points that may be helpful;-

- Make a mental note of the time of the incident so the appropriate video can easily be located.
- Videos should be edited down to avoid wasting police time. 5 seconds before and 5 seconds after a ‘Close Pass’ is more than sufficient. Various free video editors are available, just look on Google for them.
- The number plate must be readable.
- Concentrate on what are dangerous or very close passes, and your evidence should be clear. If you are in a group ensure your mates are shown riding responsibly.
- You should not post your video on social media if you want to stand a chance of a prosecution. Keep a record of any uploaded videos for at least 12 months.
- Finally your video will not be accepted unless you say you are prepared to attend court in the area where the incident occurred. Please don’t allow this to put you off. Prosecutions are very rare and if you need any more reassurance or information please see [National Dash Cam Safety Portal \(nextbase.co.uk\)](http://nextbase.co.uk).

This article was written in October 2023

* Other makes of camera are available.

Interestingly, only a few days after this article was received by The Editor, a short item appeared on the Guardian newspaper’s website saying how more and more of the public are submitting videos to the Police. In most instances it’s dash cam footage from inside motor vehicles, but also many cyclists are sending them. In the majority of cases sent to them, the Police are acting on those reports. Sometimes just a warning letter is sent, and sometimes a prosecution is made for quite serious offences.

Annual Sulley Rides

Sunday 17 th March

This year's annual Sulley Rides will be on Sunday 17 th March, starting and finishing at Lutterworth Town Hall in the centre of Lutterworth on the Market Place, LE17 4AT. There will be a choice of four routes to suit all riders: an easy and mostly flat 30km ride, moderate 50km and 70km routes, and a more challenging 100km route. The rides are open to all and are a perfect way to start the spring after a long winter, and a good opportunity to catch-up with cycling friends from across the DA and beyond!

The Control at the Town Hall will be open for entries from 09.00 until 11.00, and rides must be completed by 16.30 when the Control will close. Toilets are available at the Hall and refreshments will be available all day. Station Road car-park close to the Town Hall is free on Sundays

Riders can enter the event at the start (£5 for adults and £1 for under 18s, payment by cash or card). Please keep an eye on the DA website (www.ctclr.org.uk) in case the weather causes a last minute cancellation.

The annual Sulley Rides are traditional 'reliability rides' where participants aim to complete their chosen distance within the time limit. The challenge is for riders to be self-supported and self-reliant and to navigate the route using the route sheets provided at the start and their own print or digital maps (gpx files available). The rides are named in memory of David and Doreen Sulley, founders of the Lutterworth section of the CTC, and have taken place every year since 1990, apart from 2018 ('Beast from the East') and 2021 (Covid pandemic).



We look forward to seeing you on Sunday 17 th March!

For more information please contact:
sulleysride@ctclr.org.uk

See the Advert elsewhere in this edition of Cycle Chat



NOTTS CTC CHARNWOOD IN THE SPRING AUDAX

Sat April 27th 2024

Starts 08:30 TO 09:15

Trowell Parish Hall, NG9 3QA

DETAILS

Interesting rural route mostly on minor roads.
104 km with Café Controls at Mountsorrel & East Leake.
Refreshments provided at the start and finish.
Minimum average speed 12 km/hr; maximum 30 km/hr.

ENTRIES

£9.00 for Cycling UK or Audax UK members.
(Plus £3.00 insurance for non members)
Entries close on April 15th or when 220
entries received.

Please note No entries on the day

Entries via <https://audax.uk/>

ORGANISER: Rob Gibb
robert.gibb45@gmail.com



Profits from this event support



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Photograph poster or scan QR code for more information.

THE SPALDING FLOWER PARADE will take to the streets again this year, on Saturday May 11.



At least 60 decorated floats will process through the town of Spalding, from 11.00 am, many decorated with spring flowers. Floats will be parked-up for static viewing, and flower displays elsewhere in the town all day.

Events also on Sunday 12th.

CHECK the website. [www.https://www.spaldingflowerparade.org.uk/](https://www.spaldingflowerparade.org.uk/) for up to date details.

If accessing by car, note that the town centre will be closed to ALL vehicles for the parade.

Thanks to “Rutland Jeff” for the info.

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

Editor: Dave Binks, email; 92davebinks@gmail.com tel; 0794 1151792
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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

Hard copy printed by Sarum Graphics tel 01722 324733

Charnwood in the Spring – Saturday 27th April 2024 A Notts CTC Event

Following the highly successful 'An Autumn Day Out' in October our next Audax event in aid of Lincs and Notts Air Ambulance will be "Charnwood in the Spring".

Details at https://www.audax.uk/event-details/11191-chnwood_in_the_spring

The start venue is Trowell Parish Hall, NG9 3QA, which proved ideal when used for 'n Autumn Day Out'.

As usual there are controls at Stonehurst Farm, Mountsorrel and Love and Piste, East Leake.

With starts from 08:30 and last finish at 17:10 the 104 km route should be suitable for most cyclists.

Entries are limited to 220 so if you wish to ride enter early to guarantee an entry -last year the entry limit was reached several weeks before the event.

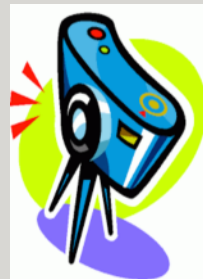
Every penny of profit from this event will be donated to the Air Ambulance. The Charnwood 2023 event raised £1315.12.

For those not wishing to ride then please consider offering to help out for this very good cause. To volunteer for helping to check riders in before the start or at the finish or at the two café controls please contact Rob Gibb, robert.gibb45@gmail.com.

Alternatively if you are able to help with refreshments before or after the event, or bake cakes please contact Terry Scott, email terrydpscott@hotmail.com.

We are looking forward to a really good day that promotes Notts CTC and raises a lot of money for a very good cause.

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 92davebinks@gmail.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.

THE SULLEY CHALLENGE RIDES

SUNDAY 17th MARCH 2024

Held in memory of David & Doreen Sulley,
CTC members, and the originators of the event
This event is open to all – not just CTC members.

Entry fees: £5 (£1 for under 18s) cash or card
Choice of 100; 70; 50 and 30 km routes
Start between 0900 and 11.00. HQ closes at 16.30.

Venue and start/finish:
Lutterworth Town Hall, Market St, Lutterworth LE17 4AT
Toilets at the HQ, free parking nearby on Sundays.

DO NOT USE MORRISONS CAR PARK
(nb:- town car parks are free on Sundays)

Routes have been slightly modified from previous years and will be updated as necessary on the website. You would be advised to recheck the event details on the website (www.ctclr.org.uk) prior to the event for any changes – especially in the event of a cancellation/ route changes, etc

Landranger 140 and/or 141 depending on which route is taken.

Riders are advised to pre-fill their entry forms (available from the website) in advance to reduce queues at the start.

Event organiser Robert Sulley email: sulleyride@ctclr.org.uk



Cafe News



The only news I have at the moment is there is a new cafe “The Hungry Pilot” at Husbands Bosworth Airfield. This is used mostly for gliders so isn’t noisy.

They get a few cyclists popping in already and a few more would be welcome!

The entrance is on the Sibbertoft to North Kilworth road, just to the east of Welford Road, south of Husband’s Bosworth.

Location: <https://goo.gl/maps/66ahmNGWwNhHeXau6>

Just a reminder that many local cafes are shown on

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1R4nZWGoLVfwL92CQhaSZGbF8&hl=en&usp=sharing>

If you have anything of interest to other readers, please let Cycle Chat know so that it can reach a wider audience.

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.:- 92davebinks@gmail.com

NUNEATON		Nuneaton CTC Cycle Club – Rides List -			Thursday rides meet at 10.30am. .
 CYCLE CLUB					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Distance</u>		
1st Feb	Thurs	Hill Top Gdn Ctr	Half day	Anne Taylor	2476741276
8th Feb	Thurs	St Marys Hinckley	Half day	Jim Gerrard	7876457146
15th Feb	Thurs	Peoples Café Bed	Half day	Roger Payne	7757103139
22nd Feb	Thurs	Sutton Cheney Wharf	Half day	Paul Hands	7414474233
29th Feb	Thurs	Pingles Café	Half day	Ann Jenkins	7921822378
7th Mar	Thurs	Burton Fisheries	Half day	Anne Taylor	2476741276
14th Mar	Thurs	Astley Book Farm	Half day	Angie Fisher	7824808788
21st Mar	Thurs	Morrissons	Half day	Paul Hands	7414474233
28th Mar	Thurs	Dobbies Gdn Ctr	Half day	Eric Rowland	7768396806
4th Apr	Thurs	Hill Top Gdn Ctr	Half day	Jim Gerrard	7876457146
11th Apr	Thurs	St Marys Hinckley	Half day	John Andrews	1162865738
18th Apr	Thurs	Peoples Café Bed	Half day	Chris Taylor	7772920613
25th Apr	Thurs	Sutton Cheney Wharf	Half day	Paul Kutcha	7414474233
POSTCODE KEY - NUNEATON LIBRARY - CV11 5DR, HILL TOP GARDEN CENTRE - CV7 9LH PINGLES CAFÉ CV11 4LX, ASTLEY BOOK FARM - CV10 7QB PEOPLES CAFÉ BEDWORTH CV12 8NF ST MARY'S HINCKLEY LE10 1DW, BURTON FISHERIES CV11 6RA					

South Section

Contact Neil Dixon for more details on 0788 9854459

Before attending any of these rides, please confirm that they are actually taking place as-is, or if they've been changed. The best way to do this is to send me an email at northneil@gmail.com. Someone will hopefully be at the start at the appropriate time to lead the ride, but anyone wishing to ride to the destination separately are quite welcome to do so.

Date Start

Date & Time	Meeting Point	Elevenses	Lunch	Leader
Feb 11 9:30	Broughton Astley	Brandon Marsh	N/A	
Feb 18 9:30	Broughton Astley	Thornby	N/A	
Feb 25 9:30	Broughton Astley	Twycross	N/A	
Mar 3 9:30	Broughton Astley	Ratcliffe Culey	N/A	
Mar 10 9:30	Broughton Astley	Tur Langton	N/A	
Mar 17 9:00	Lutterworth	David Sulley Memorial Rides (100/70/50 Km) David Sulley Memorial Rides (100/70/50 Km) Start Point Lutterworth Ton Hall		
Mar 24 9:30	Broughton Astley	Thornby	N/A	
Mar 31 9:30	Broughton Astley	Foxton		

Neil Dixon Tel:07889854459 E-Mail:northneil@gmail.com

Web:<http://slctc.org.uk>

Facebook: SouthLeicsCTC Group

Twitter: #SouthLeicsCTC

CHARNWOOD RUNS LIST

Date	Start	Eleven's	Lunch	Leader
03 Mar	9.30 W	Burbage Common	Market Bosworth	Nick
10 Mar	9.30 M	Newton Regis	Sweepstone	Paul
17 Mar	9.30 A	Willington	Ticknall	Martin
24 Mar	9.30 H	Twycross Zoo	Carlton	Dave
31 Mar	9.30 W	Quorn	Anstey	Jim
07 Apr	9.00 M	Barton Marina	Coton in the Elms	Pete
14 Apr	9.00 H	Hinckley	Ridge Lane	Martin
21 Apr	9.00 B	Quorn	Sutton Bonnington	Dave
28 Apr	9.00 A	Rosliston	Orton on the Hill	Nick
05 May	9.00 W	Enderby	Newbold Verdon	Paul
12 May	9.00 S	Markeaton Park	Willington	Lyn
19 May	9.00 M	Fradley	Elford	Jim
26 May	9.00 B	Beeston Marina	Ruddington	Martin
02 Jun	9.00 A	Market Bosworth	Austrey	Dave
09 Jun	9.00 W	Countesthorpe	Stoney Cove	Nick
16 Jun	9.00 S	Castle Donnington	Ticknall	Paul
23 Jun	9.00 H	Atherstone	Stoke Godling	Jim
30 Jun	9.00 M	Fradley Junction	Rosliston	Martin

A – Ashby HSBC
M – DFS Measham

B – Belton Church
S – Lount X Roads

H – Heather Church
W – Bagworth Village Hall

Runs contact: Lyn Gale 07779 794317

Leicester Easy Riders

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

**The deadline for the Summer 2024 issue of
Cycle Chat is 1st May 2024
That edition will cover June, July & August 2024**



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CTC Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 9JX
www.cyclinguk.org.uk**

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***To: Pete & Lyn Gale, 6 Bluebell Close, Donisthorpe, Swadlincote,
Derbys, DE12 7RW lyntian@hotmail.co.uk 01530 271665***

***Please send me four printed editions of Cycle Chat (a year's supply).
I enclose a cheque for £5 payable to "Cycle Chat" - includes postage.
Overseas rates on request***

Name

Address



Wensleydale off road ride, 2004

photo Dave Binks