

Sunday, September 27, 2009  
**Wheel Easy Ride Report 179**

---



New members arriving today took our membership for 2009 to over 200 members so welcome to them and to those who have been with Wheel Easy since May 2006. Today we had a record number of 57 assemble for the rides. Thanks too to our six leaders for the varied rides including an off road ride.

#### Short Ride Report

Seven riders set off on a "Wheel go somewhere to suit us all if possible, mystery tour". "Follow me to Beckwithshaw "was the first cry. Off we went via the back roads and the Squinting Cat, arriving at said destination but losing one rider who turned back due to mechanical failure. The remaining six riders, man and woman fully, tackled the ascent of Shaw Green and swooped gleefully down Brackenthwaite Lane into Burn Bridge. Here we lost another rider who found the attraction of being near home too much to resist. The remaining five (scrumdiddlyumptious and lashings of cream) couldn't resist the lure of Pannal, where an outbreak of "a chain set eating trousers" was swiftly dealt with, Follifoot Ridge, Rudding Park, Forest Head Lane and Bogs Lane. At this point riders started splitting off from the group to head home "in time for tea". Several miles, almost sunny, by a happy and well behaved group - well done. Max

#### Medium Ride Reports

Eight riders set off at a good pace towards Ripon via Knaresborough, Farnham, Copgrove and Bishop Monkton. No sooner had we arrived at Spa Gardens for refreshments when we were joined by Gia's group. The route back to Harrogate took us through Studley Royal Park, Bishop Thornton, Shaw Mills, Burnt Yates and Hampsthwaite. It was a lovely ride with a few good hills. We covered approximately 40 miles.

We wish Ian all the best for the 4th Brompton World Championship which is held on Sunday 4th October 2009 at Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire. Paul T

As above but the other way round. And more slowly. We were all right until Paul joined us. Me Paul led 12 out of Hornbeam via a sneaky u-turn on Victoria Ave and were joined at Knox by Him Paul, waiting for Other Paul who had gone the other way. So now we're 13. Asking for trouble, and it came to Trevor with a puncture. No problem, he'd got a spare tube, which was promptly punctured half a mile later. So we left him to either rot at the side of the road or be picked up by his missus, whichever was the soonest. Otherwise a fine ride once the trials of Clint Bank and the steep climb out of Shaw Mills were out of the way. On to the cafe in Spa Gardens and then back via Littlethorpe, Bishop Monkton and Farnham to the usual ride disintegration in Knaresborough. Paul B

#### Middle Medium Ride Report.

Seven of us chased the fast group to Ripon Spa Gardens who were very surprised to see us arrive so soon after them! Jo was anxious to tell them that we were in fact ambling along! Phil H left us at Bishop Monkton and the rest of us joined the faster group leaving Ripon completing the ride the other way round from the designated route. Alison had never done the route this way round and loved the different views. Thank you to Paul T for leading us home. Excellent ride. Gia

#### Long Ride Report

The promised sunshine didn't arrive, but we still enjoyed fine views on the long ride today which took us to Wharfedale & Nidderdale. We took the familiar route out via Fewston & Timble, with 3 of the group opting for the scenic detour round Little Snowden before we dropped down into Askwith & on through Ilkely & Beamsley to Bolton Abbey. Here three people had to turn back either due to other commitments or deciding that was enough hills for the day. The rest of the group carried on through Embsay & then had a few miles on a slightly busier road to reach our lunch destination at Cracoe. A welcome stop at the farm shop tearooms, obviously a popular cyclists stopping off point as there were several groups there when we arrived.

Our return route took us along a very narrow & scenic road to Thorpe & then to Burnsall & Appletreewick. Then it was the toughest hill of the day climbing up to Stump Cross before the long run down Duck Street & home, for most of the group via Menwith Hill & Hampsthwaite with a couple of people heading for Pennypot Lane. A hilly ride of approximately 64 miles. Jill

#### Off Road Ride to Harewood, East Keswick and Wetherby

It was good to see a magnificent turn out at Hornbeam for all 4 WE rides. It was especially good to have 2 new members specifically joining today for the off -road ride, and to make life easy for us, they were both called Elaine! 12 riders set off on the off-road ride in superb conditions. The unusually dry weather in September ensured we would have good hard surfaces and no mud to contend with. So with good intentions and high expectations we set off from Hornbeam in the direction of Leeds Road, and promptly lost more than half of the group who thought they knew the ride was going and continued towards the traffic lights - wrongly - as the ride was immediately turning left along the cycle path to Crimple Valley. The bridge over the River Crimple is still missing - well over 2 years after it was washed away - so we lifted bikes over barbed wire and walked the bikes across the stepping stones to rejoin the path on the other side. The herd of cows in the field had left their usual offerings on the grass, and knobby tyres seemed to throw the s\*\*t into all sorts of

unwelcome places. I didn't know there was a load of it underneath my saddle until I lifted my bike up by the saddle and discovered a very moist feeling on my fingers! I was lucky - others found it on chins and cheeks!

After climbing through the woods we crossed Follifoot Ridge on the track skirting around the golf course and then on the road through Kirkby Overblow to Barrowby, where we dropped down the steep hill, and went off-road again to Harewood Bridge. We entered Harewood Park and enjoyed a great ride through the park, with a close encounter with a magnificent stag (see photo) and along Leeds Country Way to East Keswick. After a short section through the village we were onto the bridle paths again, this time on the steep descent from Harewood Avenue to the footbridge over the River Wharfe. At this stage I realised the two Elaines were both 'adrenalin junkies' as they overtook me on the fast downhill gravel track - and I thought I was motoring! Welcome to Wheel Easy!!

Near Wood Hall hotel we joined the Ebor Way bridle path. 5 riders turned left opting for the short cut back to Harrogate, 7 riders turned right to continue past the hotel and on to Linton and Wetherby for our refreshment stop in The Shambles. We then returned along the railway path to Spofforth, and the Higgs Lane before another fast off-road track took us to the horse underpass below the A658 Harrogate/Knaresborough bypass. After a climb up Follifoot Ridge again, we had a great descent through the woods, and across the fields (those same damn cows again!) before the final crowning glory - a watersplash through the River Crimple!

A simply magnificent 30 mile ride (half of it off-road) in great weather, with wonderful long distance views up and down the River Wharfe, and sheer enjoyment all the way. Its difficult to imagine a better off-road ride so close to Harrogate. Eric



