

Sunday, June 27, 2010

Wheel Easy Ride Report 218



Wheel Easy on Tour - Coast to Coast June 23rd - 25th
Eight Wheel Easy members, Paul T, Sue C, Malcolm and Gia, Angela P, Richard P, Terry and Paul P met in Pannal early Wednesday morning to travel to Whitehaven for the start of our Coast to Coast ride. A ninth, Tony D, took the train which turned out to be a wise move. Our driver treated the A66, other vehicles and his passengers with little respect, but we arrived in one piece after a white knuckle ride, met Tony, and restored ourselves with tea and coffee by the harbour. The ride from Whitehaven to Keswick was a mixture of old railway lines, quiet roads and the climb up Whinlatter Pass. There was much talk of trying to get to Keswick in time for the England-Slovenia match but Paul was able to keep us up to date with the scores via his mini radio. In Keswick we were turned away at a well known cyclists café even though it was well before the advertised closing time. She had decided to cash up early as it had been a quiet day, and wasn't going to be swayed by our offer to make it significantly busier. In contrast, a helpful bike shop owner stayed on after closing time to repair the broken spoke on Terry's rear wheel., while some found a pub to watch the footie and the rest sat in the square to have a drink. In the evening we had a delicious meal at a café called A Different Taste. On Thursday we set off at nine, had a short delay while Angela found a temporary replacement for her broken saddle bolt (top marks to a helpful hardware store owner) then set off to meet Martin and Yvonne in Penrith. The cycle out of Keswick is spectacular, weaving back and forth across the river then out through the Lakes with views all around. The weather was kind most of the time, not too hot, just a little rain and when there was any wind it was behind us. We stopped at the famous cyclists/walkers café at Greystoke for coffee before meeting in Penrith. The first real climb of the day was out of Penrith and we arrived in Langwathby for lunch at the pub to refuel ready for the three big climbs still to come, Hartside, Garrigill and Nenthead.

Our Wheel Easy training meant that we were able to tackle these in one day, climbing to 2000 feet and enjoying the long, long downhill runs that followed. We arrived in Allenheads in the evening sunshine thrilled with our efforts. Sadly Terry felt unwell for part of the day, but joined us in Allenheads restored for the final day.

This began with Malcolm sustaining the only puncture of the trip which Terry repaired in double quick time, and waving Martin and Yvonne off on what Martin later described as the 'mother of all climbs' we set off for Rookhope. There we took the off road route over the grouse moor which meant a long walk with our bikes but well worth the fine views and the wide open spaces. At Parkhead Station we met Malcolm who had decided to tackle the challenging road route up Crawleyside Bank from Stanhope, had coffee and picked up a picnic. The final run down the Waskerley Way is a credit to Sustrans who had the inspiration to drive this route along miles of old railway line, over fine viaducts, filled with magnificent industrial sculptures and is signed really well. We arrived in Sunderland in the late afternoon, in good sunshine and good spirits. It was a great trip, pretty demanding, especially the middle day but wonderfully satisfying, so many thanks indeed to Paul T for his excellent organisation and memorable recitation of The Lampton Worm! Gia

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Short Ride Report

As ride leader I was under strict instructions to not exceed the mileage limit of 10-15 miles, but please excuse me on this occasion. With the agreement of the group of thirteen we took the opportunity to cycle up to Stainburn Woods with no headwind and lovely sunshine. In order to capture the fine day we also agreed to head for Fewston Parochial Hall for refreshments. They hadn't quite worked out how to put in enough coffee in their cafetieres but the cakes were delicious.

Nice to have Sally's husband John join us today and especially so as he made sure we stopped to make sure our bikes were in good order. Darren and Trevor abandoned us at Penny Pot Lane no doubt for Grand Prix or football, Dan had an appointment which left ten of us to enjoy sitting in the sunshine after enjoying the magnificent views getting to Fewston. Well done to Sarah, Andrea and Caroline who are not (yet) regular riders but all did really well on one of the hottest days of the year. 18 miles from Hornbeam, so not too far off the limit! Gia

Click on slide show for all today's photos

Medium Ride Report

The medium ride proved once again the most popular. In order to have three groups Steve and Malcolm volunteered to be group leaders. The three groups offered a choice of pace. Prior to setting off a few expressed that they wanted to be back in time for the England World Cup match. After reassuring them we would be back in Harrogate for 1.30pm eight of us set off on the route to Ripon via Knox Bridge, Hampsthwaite, Clint, Shaw Mills, Bishop Thornton, Fountains Abbey and Studley Park. After a cafe break at Spa Gardens we returned to Harrogate via Littlethorpe, Bishop Monkton, Burton Leonard, Farnham, Knaresborough. It was an excellent 35 mile ride on a beautiful day. Congratulations to Sue and Sarah who managed to continue their talking while riding up the many hills! Paul

Very Steady Medium Ride Report

Seven cyclists, including first timer Steve who'd pedalled furiously from deepest Leeds in an hour, made suitably relaxed progress to Hampsthwaite where we were joined by Crawford. After each of the two big climbs of the day, at Clint and Shaw Mills, we rewarded ourselves with extended breaks and conversations at the top, and for good measure at quite a few other places too along the route. Hesitation over whether to stop at Studley Visitor Centre or Spa Gardens was decided by Steve's urgent need for a bacon butty which he certainly wasn't going to get at the former, so Spa Gardens it was. In fact, he had to settle for a sandwich of bacon and sausages, but admitted it wasn't half

bad, particularly when washed down with a portion of chocolate cake and a couple of hot drinks. The rest of us, who hadn't cycled quite as far, made do with a little less but all, as always, very good.

Eventually we remembered that we had to get back, and so it was that we (Sue W, Monica, Geraldine, Joe, Debbie, Malcolm, Steve and Crawford) cruised into Harrogate at about 2.15 after 35 very pleasant miles of summer cycling. Malcolm

Long Ride Report

I wasn't sure there would be many takers for the long ride with the England match starting at 3pm, but eleven riders set off from Hornbeam Park on what was already a hot summers day. We headed out of Harrogate on the same route as the medium ride & soon became entangled with the faster group as we hit Skipton Road & through Bilton. The two groups eventually went their separate ways, the long ride towards Burnt Yates & the medium ride towards Shaw Mills. By this point we lost the first of the long riders as Ben left the group. Onwards to Brimham Rocks & Simon was having mechanical problems with his bike & decided to play it safe & head for home at the turn off to Warsill. The remaining nine continued up on to the moors & enjoyed the long downhill run to Laverton. It was then just a few miles to our first caf?stop at Masham where two of our number succumbed to the lure of the football & headed home. With our numbers down to seven we continued to head north from Masham doing a loop through a number of villages that were mostly new to those of us on the ride; Thirn, Thornton Steward, Finghall, Hunton & Newton Le Willows before getting back to familiar territory at Thorp Perrow. Here we had our second caf?stop where we sat outside enjoying the entertainment provided by an Appalachian Step dancing group! It was then a steady ride home through Snape, making our way back to Ripon where Dave W introduced us to a new route to Littlethorpe & then it was home via Bishop Monkton & Knaresborough. A very hot, but enjoyable ride of approx 72 miles in good company. Jill

2010 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 2721 YTD 69504



