



Happy 80th Birthday Dennis. You are an inspiration to us all!

Message from Dave Preston

'Congratulations to Dennis Butler on his 80th from all of the EG`s. Dennis long may your cranks turn, don't forget to turn them fast, some of the EG`s are near to catching you up on birthdays'.

Message from Dennis

A big thank you to all Wheel-Easy members for making my 80th birthday ride such a success. I have enjoyed your company and companionship over the years, long may it continue. I have made a donation to Martin House children's hospice on behalf of Wheel-Easy as a token of my appreciation. Thank you all.

[Click on slide show for all Dennis's celebration photos](#)

Poddlers Ride Report

Despite the attraction of a mammoth extra long ride up to the Scottish Isles and back, thirty plus people greeted El Butler with a spine tinkling rendition of Happy Birthday to you, as he approached Hornbeam elegantly attired in his new Wheel Easy top.. Gia and Malcolm en route for London stopped by to present him with a certificate to celebrate his inspriational cycling and perfect legs. We left the EG's who had been only too pleased to demonstrate how you should pose for a group photo, and a group of twenty two people managed to set off nearly on time heading up Hookstone, Leadhall, to the

Rossett Path and on towards the Squinting Cat. Everyone quietly, slowly and politely following the ride leader. The sun shining and a total lack of wind enabled us to speed to Beckwithshaw, where Paul T remembered he had a modelling assignment in Otley, and set off with his makeup men and dressers, insisting he would be back for lunch at the Black Swan by 12.30..... No one believed him.

Sixteen people continued, turning right at Beckwithshaw, up Pot Bank and along Pennypot Lane. El Butler leading his band of followers at a strong pace, the ride leader following at a discrete distance. The lure of the hills round Fewston side tracked the Birthday Boy and several of his followers, who took a slightly longer path to Little Alms Cliff, whilst the main group basked in glorious sun sipping iced drinks on loungers and deck chairs thoughtfully supplied by Liz in the Stainburn Forest car park.....(in our dreams). Sur John surged off and we coasted down to Beckwithshaw turned right down and up to the top of Brackenthwaite Lane, but not before seeing the El Butler Magnificent Seven coming over the crest of the hill at Alms Cliff. We arrived in a hot thirsty mass at the Black Swan where we all decided to sit outside....The staff had been expecting a group of 24 Hairy Biker Boys revving in on big motor bikes, our bikes apparently were disappointingly small... and we did not appear to be hairy or big enough... we had not received such compliments for ages.

After a somewhat disorganised food and drink ordering, we were surprised by the speedy orderly manner which we received our orders....a bit like winning the bingo....Paul returned from his modelling assignment, with his team looking quite pink and in need of food and drink. Twenty five people joined Chairman Martin who had left his guernsey in Harrogate Hospital and walked to Burnbridge to give Dennis special Birthday Greetings from all at Wheel Easy and once more the air was filled with the glorious celestial singing of the WE mixed voice choir carolling happy Birthday to Dennis. Kindly Dorethy had brought El Butler's birthday cake and as well as a good meal provided by the Black Swan, we were treated to a slice of lovely birthday bike cake. It was exceptionally hard to leave and get on my bike to cycle home. 24miles by 8 ish, 27miles by 7 ish, and goodness knows what the modelling group did perhaps 33miles by 6. A Grand Day Out. Caroline

#### Wheel Easy Ride Report

As Caroline had more cyclists than she wanted I offered to take a group to Otley via Beckwithshaw, Stainburn Moor, Fewston, Timble and Askwith. Five opted to join me, Steve, Kevin, John, Peter and Alec. The views were stunning as we battled up the many hills. To continue the 'hills' theme we returned via Farnley, Lindley and Brackenthwaite Lane. We averaged 12 mph and covered 33 miles. Paul

[Click on slide show for all today's photos](#)

#### EG's Ride Report

The EGs congregated at Low Bridge, Knaresborough as normal, but Dave P was unable to lead the group due to a back problem. It was generally agreed that we would head towards Benningborough Hall and then return via York. On reaching the end of Abbey Road indecision reigned as to where we were actually going. In order to resolve the issue PCJ set off towards Wetherby followed by the other members of the group, even though this was the wrong direction to go to Benningborough Hall. The committee then decided to go to Thorp Arch for refreshments via the cycle path from Wetherby. The refreshments were well received, as we all received a 10% discount for being men of a certain age. Then it was onwards to York via Wighill and Askam Richard, on reaching York the committee decided to take refreshments at Benningborough Hall. The service at the Farm shop was such that one of our members was so upset by the slow service he decided not to partake of refreshments. The group then made its way back to Harrogate via the usual route of Aldwark Bridge, Great Ouseburn and Arkendale. The group therefore arrived at all the intended places on the route but not necessarily in the right order.

Result of the Benningborough Hall Handicap

Going: Very sunny and warm to hot.

Dave P Failed to start due to bad back

Colin Left at Arkendale for a quieter route

Roy Pulled up for flu injection  
Theo Finished fourth  
Norman Retired to prepare for ride on Friday  
Rob Finished third  
John E Stopped to attend 95th birthday party  
John R Finished second  
Peter Jn Finished first Peter

#### Early morning Ride Report

With lights, because of the fog we rediscovered what a busy impatient place Harrogate is in the morning rush hour. The temperature soared as we went through the dip at Pot Bank and left the mists. Breakfast at Grassington and the back way to Kettlewell only then did we see any more cyclists. A takeaway drink and up the first climb, Dave did the remaining four with just the one pause, Richard walked two, it was hot and it was only his nose that ran. What a relief to hit the cattle grid and it was all over. Only another 40miles to go. Refilled with water at a friendly farm house and lost the race for a table to walkers so a different tea room at Middleham. Drinks again at Masham when it all went wrong for one old lady who smashed up 2 vans and proceeded to reverse at high speed into 2 more and created Masham's new drive in cafe. Police were already on the scene but unable initially to call for back up as no phone signal. NHS then took over. We left shell shocked and onto meet Julie, so a hillier few more miles than planned, but declined her offer of an extended evening ride. Ices at Risplith and I left my pace setter (thanks) worn out in Bilton churchyard. A memorable great ride on a hot day. 2x 80 4800 ft and inspite of my cold we exceeded the target of 12mph and made it 13.0. Richard

2011 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 1350 YTD 135265

#### Message from Dan

Hello! I got back to Reykjavik and to Ljǎ́siǎ́° Endurhǎ́fing yesterday afternoon, after having started my trip on 08 August. Finally I've made it to the end.. though truth be told I'm missing it already :-> but after 3000km in seven weeks maybe it's time for a bit of a rest. So what am I doing? Spending time at a computer writing it all up and courting the media.. but actually I can afford to be a bit lazy, spend time relaxing with friends and getting some sleep. Not all over yet though - I still have to spread the word and publicise my trip in the UK on my return, write a blog or two and wade through 2500 photos, but before I leave there is a farewell concert being held in my honour at Ljǎ́siǎ́° on Thursday, with talented and famous Icelandic musicians appearing, Kvennakor Kopavogs performing and maybe a song or two from me too. Then I have to get on with the serious business of collecting all the promises and working out how to split the money I've raised (in I think four or five different currencies) equally between Carers' Resource and Ljǎ́siǎ́°.

Has it been fun? Rewarding? Breathtaking? All of the above, plus very good for my singing - putting yourself out there to give a solo concert every night (or even every other night) does wonders for your support, your technique, your discipline - and your stage presence. But it's been hard work as well, especially taking on the role of publicist, travel writer, photographer and tour operator as well as soloist, charity crusader and, oh yes, cyclist.. there were quite a few days I spent more time on the internet than on the bike, and still managing 60, 80, 100km before supper and performance. Longest day was 130km, and was also the day my front rack broke.. after it broke again after being welded up, I fixed it with duck tape and a stainless steel fork and spoon! It's been fine since. My coldest day was also the day my gear cable snapped, and took an hour to replace, 4km after leaving the highest farm in Iceland at 469m.. I had to unpack my tools and spares, food and warm clothing as well as just fixing the bike. That was an 115km day and my water bottle had unfrozen completely by 2.30pm. But I've had worse weather in Scotland, Wales, Ireland and England. I also had to replace a broken saddle - not something I'd considered taking a spare for!

The one area I've not touched on (yes, the scenery was jawdropping, but you knew that) is the people. I was to a large extent a one-man show, but that does a disservice to all the wonderful, beautiful people who helped, supported, smiled and laughed, gave me food, bed and even money, and helped publicise my trip, even ringing their friends and families to try and secure a bed for me for a few nights down the road. Kvennakor Kopavogs did a huge amount of hard work on my behalf, resulting in beds

for the night in forty different places.. in August I camped eleven nights (my trip started with five days of 25 degree sunshine); in September I only camped twice, and only paid for a night's sleep twice. I'd have spent more money than I'd made for the two charities without people's goodwill and generosity - and I will be leaving Iceland with many, many more friends than I had when I came.

See you soon I hope - if you can, please do what you can to tell people about my trip so I can push on towards my 5k target (no pounds signs on this keyboard). I'm around 2.8k at the moment if I add it all up so far, though the concert at Ljónsönd will make a big difference and may attract some more donations on the day. Maybe I should try the same in Harrogate?! Thanks for all your support - I hope I can catch up with everyone individually at some point and share some of how passionate I feel about all things Icelandic right now! Take care and sing something uplifting for me! Dan



