

Sunday, January 27, 2013

Wheel Easy Ride Report 352

It would be good to be a fly on the wall and listen to everyone's thoughts leading up to this Sunday's rides and walks. Will it thaw enough, will it be too windy, will the roads be slushy and wet, will there be flooding, will we stay at home and watch Andy play tennis, will anyone go out on their bike today?

We will never know but the good people of Wheel Easy gathered in sufficient numbers for Martin to lead his band to Fewston, Sue D to amble round Harrogate, Phil to head off to Boroughbridge and Ripon, Terry took four the Knox route to Hampsthwaite and the eight of us were brave enough to head for Sophie's via Stainburn. Gia



Medium Ride

The ride to Hampsthwaite was a slog, but well worth the effort, the views were magnificent, the sun came out and eventually we had the wind on our backs and hey presto we were warm and comfortable at Sophie's. An excellent morning's ride, well done to Liz who made it round in great style and welcome to Michael our guest member from London. Gia

On a morning with snow and ice lingering, and the planned rides looking risky, we needed a Plan B. Or a ride to Sophie's, as it is also known. Dave, Rachael, Terry and I set off to Knox, walked gingerly over the ice on Spruisty Bridge, and arrived in Hampsthwaite as the sun came out. Terry raised the possibility of an extra loop: were we up for it? As we were pondering, Sophie approached us. Her daughter was doing a project on extreme cycling at art college. Would it be OK if she photographed us? We weren't sure that we qualified as extreme cyclists, but we were out on a freezing morning in January - near enough. Our route was settled. Sophie's daughter went on ahead, and captured us sprinting up Clint Bank. Then it was on to Shaw Mills, the Drovers, Ripley and home. The sort of morning when it's easy to stay in bed, but you're glad you've made the effort. Thanks to Terry for persuading us that 20 miles were better than 12. Justin



Long Ride

Report to follow



Walk Around Fewston Reservoir – It ended up as 3 walkers, one lovely West Highland Terrier, and two runners in the magical and sunny (at times) scenery of the Swinsty and Fewston Reservoirs. Our intended route had to be modified as the road around Swinsty Reservoir was flooded at one point, but we put together a good 5 or 6 miles with a pleasant stop at the Visitor Centre for coffee. All the way around the walkers were chased down by Sarah and Yvonne making the snow fly as they set a good pace. And it was so good to see the sun. Martin W





Walk around Harrogate

Route: Hornbeam, Rayleigh Rd, St James Drive, Tewit Well Rd, Stray, West Park Stray, Beechwood Rd, Royal Crescent Valley Garden, Bowling Club, Observatory, Harlow Avenue, Richmond Road, Rossett Beck, Hornbeam (4mi) **Walkers:** Caroline, Jane, Kevin, Sue W, Sue D

I looked out on the snowy wastes yesterday and decided to "chicken" out of leading a Short Ride and offered a Short Walk instead but fearing I might be a Lone Wimp. Thankfully, four gallant souls agreed to join me in a trek across waterlogged Strays and along thawing but icy paths. Was this a suitable alternative to roads lined with heaps of slush and potholes full of water? Only just! The rain had stopped before leaving Hornbeam and we sallied forth under clear skies, bathed in sunshine. We were just walking up Otley Rd when Jane found a 50p coin and Caroline spotted a flock of mistlethrushes (possibly fieldfares – Sue?). Finds and observations over, we entered the Valley Gardens and initially took the lower path – a veritable canal, so went to through the Colonnade (via the Pugh Pas de Deux Pavilion) and then the New Zealand Garden where posing and pouting took place beside the carved kiwi (reminiscent of Knaresborough tree artist). Upward and onward past the children's sledging bank until we reached the road and rather than squelch through the Pinewoods, we went via the surfaced route past the observatory and onto Otley Road. It was 10 55am so Pine Marten or coffee at the Downes' house? A quick call to George and coffee/mulled wine etc awaited. We all returned to Hornbeam and saw Sue off to the joys of Morrisons! Thank you for playing out. Sue Downes