

Wednesday, October 22, 2014

Wednesday Rides

Short Ride

Report to follow



Poddlers' Ride

Having just returned from holiday late yesterday my head was still a bit fuzzy and not in this world, now I had to organise the Poddlers into four routes. Steve volunteered to take the two short route rides and I the two longer loops of the route planned. The weather was grey and dismal but dry at this stage and after sorting out nine Poddlers joined me as we headed across The Stray and down Claro Road to the Greenway. When we arrived at the Iron Bridge we bumped literally into Steve and the short riders group coming from Asda direction. As a new group leader you soon find you learn on the job and your mishaps and losing people are quite a cause for fun and banter. At the end of the tranquil and autumnal Greenway I found I had lost a duckling and now we were nine plus Steve's' group.

Then we rode on to Ripley past the castle and up the woodland path at the end. I now had found the lost duckling Gordon and we returned to ten ducklings. At this time I realised also I forgot I had a co-pilot, David so my apologies to him as I needed David to keep track of how many we were losing on the route. At the end of the Greenway Malcolm took a photo of the combined group in which they were talk of striping off for a saucy picture for the calendar, but as the calendar was done and it was chilly thought it was best not to, much to Malcolm's relief.

After the steep rise up to Clint Bank with a bit of huffing and puffing, a quick rest at the top we headed towards Birstwith, in the direction of an ominous black sky. Swooping down to Birstwith we then took the Darley road , (murmurs of 'we are not going into Darley Pit again are we?') To everyone's relief we turned off down the toll road. Stopping on the bridge to admire the view the cry went up 'Car' as a panzer hurtled towards us with a glowering woman at the wheel, with an expression of 'Get out of my way' on her face as we clung to the narrow sides of the toll road, she did not even stop to pay at the honesty box. Now it was unusual to meet one car on the toll road,

when another car came in the opposite direction a few yards on, but this time driven by a more considerate lady driver who smiled and waved as she squeezed past us. At the top we turned left then right up the long stretch of Stripe Lane towards Brimham Rocks and now the rain started to pour down. Mike became the caped crusader and a gust of wind nearly turned him into Mary Poppins as he nearly took off into the air. After discussion of who was going where a few ducklings returned home and six of us went towards Brimham Rocks but decided to cut it short and head for Ripley and a quick route home as we were now getting wet and cold. Encounters with cars seem the order of the day as we headed towards a right turn towards Brimham a car was stopped in the middle of the road but not far enough out to see the Poddlers heading towards the car, I held back just as it started forward and saw the startled driver as he saw the whites of our eyes as he quickly turned right. Then further on another car hurtled at speed over the blind summit towards us in the middle of the road.

Now six wet soggy ducklings we arrived in Ripley where two carried on homewards and four when to the castle tearoom. Over hot coffee, carrot cake and scones we soon warmed up and talk was on the plight of wildlife. Mike enlightened us with a delightful tale of how in India the dead are laid out on platforms for disposal of the corpse in which the vultures come and eat the bodies. This has been going on for time immemorial but now the modern anti-inflammatory drugs in the corpses are poisonous to the vulture and they are on the verge of extinction, which leaves the people with an issue of how to dispose of the bodies to their traditional beliefs. On the ride back down the Greenway David shot off and the three of us meandered after him, when a loud shot rang out, we made a joke that we hoped that they had not taken David as a flying duck and had a pot shot at him and was relieved to find him waiting at Bilton Cross. Wheel Easy not only entertains but also educates you and I would encourage people to lead rides its great fun. Not a completely washed out day 26 miles approx. LizF.

Wednesday Ride

Sue and Martin suggested a ride out towards Menwith which as the weather turned meant we kept changing plans. Martin was in favour of an early coffee stop which was vetoed and we pressed on. Martin sensibly turned off towards Sophie's, while Sue, Paul, Terry, John and Gia headed for the Stone Cross Inn. It soon became clear that the rain was coming in earlier than forecast, but Terry carried on towards Greenhow. The rest of us turned down to Darley and with instructions from behind made sure we did not drop down too far in to the valley and made it to Hampsthwaite to meet up with Martin, Malcolm and some of the short riders. Pity about the weather but good ride and good company. 28 miles Gia M

EGs' Ride

It was a so so weather forecast, bight in the morning with some rain later, and unlike Sunday it was quite accurate.

We had twelve riders at Low Bridge, including Colin who had arrived from Leeds on the train, to Hornbeam, but as the train was late he missed the start from Hornbeam so headed for Low Bridge and the 10-00am start. Colin has ridden with us before and it was nice to see him again.

York was the chosen destination, so it was down the B6164 to Wetherby (in three groups of four) and Morrisons, this was handy as three of our riders had elected for an early bath (or shower). Whilst tucking in to our toasted teacakes it was noticed we had gained an extra rider in the form of Dan, who was observed contributing to Morrisons profits by also tucking in to something.

The prize for sartorial elegance went to Dave Wilson, resplendent in his new Wheel-Easy strip. He was however observed admiring his new found elegance in the full length mirror in the gents washroom.

We now had minus three plus one, riders = ten,(no more maths), on the way to Thorpe Arch via the cycle track, then Taddy, Appleton Roebuck, with of course a quick look at the river at Acaster Selby (damn, still flowing south).

On to Bishopthorpe and the cycle track to Tesco`s cafe. In a previous episode we had mentioned that Tesco`s cafe was to close with a new one being opened on the ground floor. The cafe was on the ground floor. It was called the Giraffe (the giraffe is a very high animal which was also reflected in the prices), so it was on to the cafe in Rowntree Park (nice and reasonably priced).

Then it was home via Acomb and Rufforth with a banana break at Marston Moor, then on to Cowthorpe, with the fellowship being dissolved between the Ribstons, with some heading for Knaresborough and t` others for Harrogate (in the case of Colin, Pannal station). A nice ride, a bit damp towards the end but nothing serious, probably the last ride in BST for most of us, and around 60 miles max. Dave P



Long Ride

This was to be a tale of two rides. With calculations in our heads, balancing miles, time and the weather, six riders set out for Timble and Wharfedale. Although the gales of recent days had subsided, the stiffish head wind made the pull up to Stainburn Forest heavy going for some; and, we felt the first specks of rain. The climb to Askwith Moor ended with a re-grouping and a look at a cloud formation that suggested we had gained a bit of Cairngorm, with snow, over towards Gt Whernside. - all an illusion, of course, but enough to trigger an "ear-worm" of Joni Mitchell's "Both Sides Now".

The weather prospects meant that there was no debate about taking Carter's Lane to Beamsley today and we pressed on through Nesfield, where Terry and Lesley had the ignominy of being outpaced up the rise by a runner! At the turn for Addingham via the footbridge, a route conference split us into the two rides, with David and John opting for what must have been an early lunch at Bolton Bridge, with the rest of us opting for a walk, carry and push over the wire bridge into Addingham. Pausing for a photo outside the Ferryman's cottage, Richard P led us into Low Mill Village, once an industrial outpost of Addingham, now almost entirely residences created in converted mills and cottages.

A brief wind-assisted section along A65 took us into Ilkley for what looked like a good time for lunch. But what followed was a hilly architectural tour taking in work by Lutyens (Heathcote) and Brodrick (Wells House – which began life as a hydro, as many big Ilkley buildings did, but turned to education as the College of Housecraft before being converted to flats). At last precipitous back lanes led to a full Christ Church café for beans, cakes, tea and updates on cycling holidays for 2015 already booked.

The climb up to Cow and Calf helped settle the lunch. Again the wind was helpful and our photo shows the greyscale panorama as the group's back-markers tackle the last ramp of the climb. There were no takers for another long climb – up to the Royalty pub – so we opted for a

short one up to Farnley via Otley and a full-looking Wharfe. Damp back lanes through Castley, Weeton and Dunkeswick led to A61 and Kirkby Overblow, where Richard and Chris were nowhere to be seen. For once, they were behind Lesley and me, having added a tour past Weeton Church to extend the architectural content of the day. This time it was the work of Sir George Gilbert Scott – he of St Pancras.

A brief tea stop at the Shoulder of Mutton shop brought the sad news that the shop, known for its hospitality to cyclists from near and far, is to close at the end of the month. Not enough trade is the all-too-realistic cause of its demise. From Kirkby, the bypass took us to our various destinations after a damp but not overly wet day, during which a lot of jacket donning and doffing took place. Meanwhile, in another part of Wharfedale, David and John took the usual circuit from Bolton Bridge over Stump Cross to Greenhow where, I understand, the rain was rather heavy.

Stats for both rides were very similar - Ilkley route: 52 – 58 miles, c 4000 ft climbed; Greenhow route: 52 miles, 4000 ft – but the speeds were very different! Terry S

