

Sunday, August 16, 2015

## Wheel Easy Ride Report 485

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### Short Ride

No ride report.

### Medium Ride (1)

A large-ish turnout of around 24 for the medium ride. Weather forecast was good – no rain, very light winds and some sunny spells. Paul B took the first group of around 12, and Geraldine and I took the rest, which included veterans Dave Preston, Bill Whale and EG Roy, plus a couple of new faces, including Jonathan from York and Corinne from Harrogate. We didn't see Paul and his group for the rest of the day, so I guess they did the same ride as we did, only quicker. At Low Bridge, Gordon and Alison turned up, making the numbers up to 15. Farnham, Ferrensby, Arkendale and across the A1 towards Marton-cum-Grafton and Great Ouseburn. We lost Alison for a while, as she has some knee problems, and Gordon went back to offer support. At Branton Green Dennis and Alison and Gordon left us to return via Upper and Lower Dunsforths, whilst we continued over Aldwark Bridge and then left to Aldwark itself, a road I have not often travelled. On to Flawith and then Myton-on-Swale, site of the battle of 1319 where the marauding Scots beat an army of inexperienced English clerics and farmers. Dave Preston was our guide to the bridge in Myton and the plaques explaining some of the history. The group photo was taken and we proceeded past Sir Ken Morrison's country pile, Myton Hall. He wasn't mowing his lawn on this occasion. We stopped in a courtyard in Helperby Hall and admired the motto in French which Bill had told us about: *'Les marionettes font, font, font trois petits tours, et puis s'en vont'* Discussions took place about the meaning of this rather arcane motto, and subsequent research on Google suggests it's part of a Swiss nursery rhyme. On to Boroughbridge and Morrisons for coffee and refreshment, at which point Peter left us. Back to Harrogate via Minskip and Staveley. Rather surprisingly, as we reached the top of Knaresborough Hill, Gordon appeared and told us that Alison was just behind. About 43miles. Joe





### **Medium Ride (2)**

Forty two miles on a day that started off quite chilly and didn't really warm up that much. This elite group sped off and, notwithstanding an errant chain and sticking front brake, left the whelks to follow on behind. Needless to say, we never saw them again. A lone EG - aah - joined us at Low Bridge (didn't we spot 3 EGs amongst the whelks?).

We wandered through Farnham, Gt Ouseburn and on to Myton (thanks, Graham – the other one – for guidance in this area) and were really ready for R&R in Boroughbridge. Somehow the remaining 12 miles on the return home via Minskip and Staveley was faster. Al was in charge at the back, thanks.

Paul B



### **Medium-Plus Ride (Slower Pace)**

We were doing route 174 which went to Masham, Bedale and Kirklington. Quite a number elected to join my group at Hornbeam but as we went to the Greenway via Asda while Paul's

group went round the Stray they got behind us and as they overtook there were a lot of desertions! So we were a group of 4 - Maris, Andrew and 2 x Liz. Once past Sawley the route was new to most so the hills came as a surprise but we managed even if we chose to walk at times. At Grewelthorpe I managed to take the wrong turning but we still had a lovely ride into Masham and cut off 2 miles in the process! Masham was busy with cyclists but as we were only 4 we found a table at Borders cafe and tucked into bacon sandwiches while having a fascinating discussion on family history. As we climbed out of Masham and on to Thornton Watlass, admiring views of Wensleydale and Pen Hill, Paul's group caught us up and we rode into Bedale together. However my group wanted to go into Bedale centre so were on our own again. We had a lovely, much flatter ride back to Ripon, stopping at Hutton Conyers for banana break though there was a lot of chocolate consumed. Back via Knaresborough and the final hill of the day. 60 miles, 2470 feet and all should have been home for 5pm. Liz P



## Medium-Plus Ride

**Group:** We started off from Hornbeam with six and this increased to eleven as we left Ripley. Alan was joining us for his first Wheel Easy ride and by the end of the day Jeremy had completed his longest ride ever.

**Route:** Ripley, Sawley, High Grantley, Kirkby Malzeard, Grewelthorpe, Swinton, Masham, Thornton Watlass, Bedale. Snape, Carthorpe, Kirklington, Sutton Howgrave, Wath, Hutton Conyers, Ripon, Littlethorpe, Knaresborough and Harrogate. - 62 miles

**Highlights:** The company and their enthusiasm for cycling, the views, the route and especially the parts I had never ridden before.

**Refreshments:** Johnny Baghdad's in Masham and Olivers in Ripon.

**Mechanical faults.** Unfortunately we lost a rider at Sawley due to a faulty derailleur.

**Thanks** to James for ensuring I followed the route and from discouraging me from taking shortcuts. A great day everyone - thank you



## Medium Plus Ride - ( Fast pace )

At Hornbeam, Paul and I agreed to split the group in two so I set off with about eight riders - the 'faster' group. However, a navigational error resulted in us tagging onto the back of the steady group down the greenway to Ripon.

At Ripon we split again only to find that our group had reduced to four. Undeterred, we pressed on to Masham for a coffee stop and were just leaving for Bedale when the rest of the group arrived. With fewer hills we were able to enjoy the scenery and were treated to vast, cloud-washed skies against the background of freshly-harvested fields with barely a whisper of a wind. It seemed too good to be true. And it was! Shortly after leaving Bishop Monkton, Alex, on his first Wheel Easy outing, suffered a broken chain.

Despite our best efforts we were unable to get Alex going again so three of us set off to Knaresborough where Steve kindly offered to go back for Alex in his van.

Thanks Steve and, Alex, we hope to see you on further (uneventful) rides

## Long Ride

Seven riders set off from Hornbeam on the long ride to Malham, one of the harder of the rides in the calendar. It was a cool start to the day, but by Menwith Hill the temperature had risen enough for us to peel off the top layer, and thereafter we were blessed with almost ideal weather for the task - pleasant warm temperatures and virtual absence of wind. Two of our group were currently recuperating, and announced they would only be with us for part of the ride, so as we passed Stump Cross Caverns John H and Richard L peeled off for an early coffee stop and return home. The remaining 5 continued to Grassington where we had our brunch stop at Cobblestones café. The ride past Kilnsey Crag and up through Littondale was as delightful as

ever, followed by the climb out of Arncliffe, pausing for a photo stop looking back down Littondale with Arncliffe below. We then had the wonderful scenery around Malham, first the Tarn then the fabulous Malham Cove. We made a second refreshment stop to restore our depleted calories at Cracoe, before returning down Wharfedale: Burnsall, Appletreewick (where Peter J and Richard P took the shorter route home via Stump Cross and Duck Street), whilst Trefor, Dave W and Eric continued via Bolton Abbey, Beamsley, Ilkley, Otley and Almscliffe Crag. A late puncture delayed our return home to just after 6pm. Ride stats: 89 miles, 5,700' ascent, 13.6mph average. Eric W





### **Off-Road Ride**

Reeth, 9.30 saw 2 Colins, 2 Robs, and only one Dave.....can this be Wheel Easy? .....But it was, and we set off by road through Healaugh to Surrender Bridge where we took the old lead miner's track (now a good shooting track) past the old smelt mill and chimney up to the moonscape of mining spoil that forms the East edge of Gunnerside Gill. Casting about a bit, we found a faint track down into the Gill, which gave us by turns boggy rough grass, scree, and rabbit-grazed turf as smooth as a bowling green before we reached the bottom where we sat in the sunshine having a sandwich among the mining ruins. Then the tricky bit, fording the beck and scrambling up where the beck has undercut to reach a rather sketchy track to Lownathwaite mine, where the peat store, engine house and smelt furnace survive. I might have to take that "track" off my list..... From Lownathwaite, it's a good shooting track out to the road west of Gunnerside, which becomes a scenic track following the Swale to Keld, the motor traffic must go the other side of the hill via Thwaite.

At Keld we had a welcome stop for tea and cakes at the campsite.....it's even cheaper than "Teacups"! Then by road through Thwaite and Muker, but turning off before Gunnerside onto the Old Corpse Road which closely follows the Swale. (We did well....the road was quiet, as it was "closed" due to bridge works.....but no working on Sunday!) We finished the last of our food on a rocky "beach" watching the Swale before taking the footpath and footbridge into Reeth. Well done Dave and Rob, it was a tough one for your first off-roader. Colin T







