

Sunday, September 18, 2016

## Wheel Easy Ride Report 541

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### Short Ride

There were only four of us for the short ride today but it is quality not quantity that counts. So Dennis, Corinne and Malcolm joined me for a jaunt through the sunny countryside. Having been warned that the area around Beckwithshaw would be busy with a Harrogate Harriers Trail Race we opted for Oakdale Bridge and Pennypot Lane, but with Pot Bank closed for the race Pennypot was even more than usual a busy race track.

But we survived and turned off to cross the A59 at the Black Bull, the swooped down into Kettlesing. We dawdled along quiet sunlit back lanes coming across the house with a magnificent flower display (photo), and arrived at Clapham Green before making haste for the inevitable Sophie Stop at Hampsthwaite. Lots of cyclists were doing a Leeds 100 event and arrived but we were comfortably ensconced in the garden and were not moving whatever arrived! Soon Steve and Neeta Wilson appeared and also joined us in the garden. Eventually we headed homeward along Hollybank Lane and the Greenway. Twenty exceptionally pleasant miles in the early autumn sunshine. Martin W



### Slow-Medium Ride

There were two gents and eight ladies for today's ride and we set off for Boroughbridge in glorious sunshine. Lovely to see Ruth back with us after a little break over the summer. The route had to be changed from the one posted on the Internet as I was not sure of the way.

We rode to Knaresborough, Abbey Road and turned right to the Wetherby Road. It was here that we were passed quite easily by the Red Arrows. Great sight. We took the left turn to Cowthorpe, then Cattal, across the A59 to Whixley, then Thorpe Underwood, Great Ouseburn, The Dunsfords, Aldborough arriving at the cafe for well earned treats. Thank you Graham for keeping me on the right route.

The way back was via Minskip, Staveley, Farnham, Knaresborough where we went our separate ways back to Hornbeam or home.

The distance was about 37 miles ridden at 10.7 mph on lovely quiet roads for the most part. Well done Ruth for completing the ride first time out for ages. Jean B



### **Medium Ride**

"Mercy Me!" What a lot of riders this morning on a very promising looking day that just got better and better as the day progressed.

There were three Medium groups, two as advertised plus a third for those who fancied a more leisurely pace. I set off first, with Keith and Co hot on my heels. There was a Flower Show going on in the Showground but we managed to weave our way through (slightly against the flow of traffic it has to be said) and henceforward enjoyed a delightful, fairly brisk ride, only stopping at the Marston Moor Memorial for a photo stop – kindly executed by Sir John. I am using the modern meaning of "executed", i.e. "done". No cyclists were hurt during this ride.

We were only slightly thwarted en route to Thorp Arch by a large sign saying "Road Closed" because the Tadcaster ten mile Run was taking place today. The nice Marshall let us through "at your own risk" but in truth the race was nearly over and there were only a few stragglers being nudged along by the broom wagon – so not much risk involved.

The sun shone, the breeze was light and there was unanimous agreement to stop for coffee at The Greenery in Thorp Arch. I think all cafe owners should call in there for a lesson on how to run an efficient operation. They were not in the slightest bit fazed by two groups of Wheel Easy, even though a posse of Yorkshire Lasses were there before us, plus lots of other customers at the busiest time of the day. We enjoyed a leisurely chat and the only breaking news on the wireless this morning was that a hitherto unknown photograph has been unearthed of AA Milne and Christopher Robin with Pooh, Piglet, Tigger and A PENGUIN!! It seems a sequel is going to be written with a winter theme (to take account of aforementioned Penguin). This has got to be more exciting than another series of Game of Thrones.

The day was hotting up so layers were discarded as we readied ourselves for the last lap through Wetherby, Spofforth (via the cycle track) and Follifoot. All in all a wizard day out in July style weather in delightful company. Many thanks to Dave P for diligent back marking and we managed to lose: No Riders! 40 miles. Helen T



A group of nine riders negotiated the strange traffic entrance arrangements to the Harrogate Flower Show at the Showground before heading towards Spofforth, whereupon we lost Sir John "bridging" the gap to the first medium group. However, they did not seem to be going any faster and we "buffered" up to them on two occasions before stopping to inspect the Memorial in Tockwith to the Second World War bomber that crashed on returning to Marston Moor Airfield. It reminds me of Airfix balsawood models made in childhood. We detoured in Billbrough to look at the tombs of Thomas Fairfax and his wife Ann in St James Church and had a short "historical discussion" on the Fairfax's family heritage in Yorkshire. Our coffee break was in Thorp Arch where we once again met up with Helen's group. Splendid fast service and good fare kept spirits high. Alison and Gordon had left us for a watering hole in Wetherby, leaving Jo, Maggie, Charlie, Jill, Paul and myself to refuel before setting off back to negotiate the Harrogate Showground once again. It seemed more chaotic than when we had left this morning but the cars eventually gave way (or gave in!) and we all managed the mayhem to return home after a most enjoyable and sociable ride. Keith T





### **Medium-Plus Ride**

On a day like today the ride to Greygarth Monument is one of the best on the calendar, great views, testing climbs and as Colin says some fairground descents.

Thank you to my fellow riders who helped navigate our small group round the course, James, Paul, Charlie, Debbie and Gia. Gia M







A warm late summer Sunday was just the ideal day to go to Greygarth Monument, as there were quite a few cyclists it was decided to form another slower paced group. Andrew was elected as leader as he knew the route and had his 'state of the art' GPS, Steve, Bridget, Sally with daughter Holly, Alison, Liz P and Liz F made up the group. Holly hope you enjoyed your day out with the older generation, you did very well to keep up with us!!! Down a very busy Greenway we negotiated our way through tiny tots weaving about on their bikes, dogs and walkers everywhere, we made it safely to Ripley. After a drag up out of Ripley the scenery opened up and we made good progress up and down dale. The day was perfect for cycling, warm and clear skies, the views were stunning. The group soon reached the lane to go down, then up again to Greygarth monument. A few of the advanced group was just vacating the monument when we arrived. After a summit climb to the top, Gia and her group arrived. Roseberry Topping was clearly visible though a little hazy, we reluctantly left the monument as it was very tempting to laze there in the sunshine. After more up and downs we headed to Fountains Abbey for our cycling drink and cake. Suitably refreshed we headed home via Ripley and the Greenway, which was still quite busy. 42 glorious miles with stunning scenery on a lovely day, thanks to Andrew for leading the ride. Liz F

For those with the luxury of no time constraints and in view of the blissful late summer day, extending today's Greygarth Tour seemed the only logical decision to make. Four of us set off to Little Alms Cliff, Swinsty and Fewston Reservoirs with Timble Hill the first serious bump. Alas Jackie started with mechanicals and a bent rear hanger. Colin worked the magic and we continued north along Rues Lane, over the dam at Thrusscross, crossing Greenhow Hill Road and then left to Padside. A puncture for Jackie, deflated spirits and she decided to

take the option of an early bath. The panorama from Heyshaw Moor was stunning but we were keen to descend Yorke's Folly for some well-earned lunch in Pateley Bridge. Colin then played a blinder – out past Gouthwaite Reservoir, turning east in Ramsgill to Bouthwaite and then 1.5 walking miles on bridleway (Fountains Earth Moor) meaning we approached Greygarth Monument from the West. Back via High Grantley, (not before C foraged for a giant puffball - we're advised, lightly sauté in butter, with a sprinkle of black pepper) Sawley and the final bump at Hebden Bridge which redeems itself only by the beauty of the trees along the carriageway. Thank goodness we had sneaked in a quick stop at G & T's for calories. Thanks to Colin for his excellent route and congratulations to Jeremy on his longest WE ride and for having a blessed Garmin and camera, enabling me to report 51 quality miles and 1,121 metres of climbing. Sarah C



### **Medium-Plus Ride (Faster Group)**

Being the only Long Rider not doing the Audax Ride the only choice left was to join the Medium Plus Ride. It turned out that it was going to be a "self-led" ride. It was apparent that there was some confusion as to what the route was, so PCJ stepped in and led the ride. The group set a brisk pace out of Harrogate via the Green Way to Ripley and then up Scarah Bank. After a minor course correction near Watergate Road we managed to get to Sawley. Having successfully navigated the turns at Risplith, the group reached Grantley but those at the front promptly headed off in the wrong direction. Fortunately this was rectified quite quickly and we were back on course for moors above Dallow. From then on it was good riding through Dallowgill, a small course correction at Greygarth Monument and then down the "helter-skelter" towards Kirkby Malzeard. Now it was decision time "Where are we going to eat", the majority vote was for Oliver's Pantry so it was off to Ripon through Kirkby Malzeard. At Oliver's Pantry we were not disappointed with the selection of food, which was enjoyed sitting out in the glorious sunshine. Now another decision had to be made "Which way home?" The unanimous decision was to go back via Bishop Monkton, Markington, Ripley and the Greenway. Apart from the long wait for a gap in the traffic while trying to cross the A61, the return journey was completed without incident. A pleasant ride with very good company. Peter J



### **Long Ride - 200k Audax**

Ten of us left Hornbeam at 8.00am for the second manifestation of the Wheel Easy 200k Audax Taster rides. Amongst the numbers were three riders who'd ridden their first 200k on the previous taster ride and two more new to the distance. Audax riding is all about having a great day out on the bike so it was fitting we had great weather for our endeavour. Whilst there was a slight chill in the air at the start most of the day was to be hot and sunny with a light SW wind. The majority of the route was on quieter roads and designed to be mainly flat. The first 50k leg took us to Bedale where I'd picked a little Scottish Bistro with a worldwide reputation for our first stop. Whilst perhaps unusual choice for Wheel Easy when you've ten riders to feed and get back on the road ASAP McDonalds delivers surprisingly well.

Trundling onward to Northallerton the road seemed busier than usual, perhaps the sunshine had brought out more than the usual quota of Sunday drivers. We rode on lanes to Thirsk and then over to Helmsley via Coxwold and Ampleforth. We suspected Helmsley (114k) would be busy and the cafes full which was indeed the case. However, on such a great day the Bakery next door to our usual Wheel Easy Café proved a more than adequate alternative to what would have been a long wait for food.

We left Helmsley the flat way out to Harome and onto the flatlands that ultimately stretch over to Kirkby Moorside but soon turned South to Slingsby for the hilliest section of the ride down through Castle Howard Park. Back onto flat terrain we pressed on to Haxby (155k) for a cold drink. The wind was once again helpful as we rode North West to our penultimate stop at Morrisons in Boroughbridge (186k). At this point we had done 117 miles but with just ten miles left and with the possible exception of myself there was little obvious signs of anyone flagging. We reached Forest Lane Head (200k) just before 6.00pm Glyn returned to Hornbeam for his car, four more went straight home for tea and five of us decided we'd go to the Gardeners Arms for a quick debrief. Here we met Bob Johnson who was unable to join us as he had decided to set off Friday night after work and spend the weekend riding a 700k Solo Audax ride. His presence represented a clear warning that these type of rides can become addictive. The day was resoundingly considered to be a great success and further similar rides will be planned. Andy C



