

Wednesday, November 30, 2016

Wednesday Rides

Poddlers' Ride

There were several nice Wanderers who were dubious about the billed 46 miles to Stump Cross and back who decided on a shorter less icy route towards Arkendale. Several of these kind riders asked me to join their alternative route. As most Poddlers don't like ice and the regulars were fulfilling important engagements elsewhere I had already decided upon a solo jaunt to Bishop Monkton, Markington and Ripley, so thank you but no. The usual route plus the newly tarmacked lane to Bilton Hall was followed. The main high spots included... no ice after Knaresborough; no cyclists cycling; BUT one weasel nearly under my bike wheels; two llamas chewing; three wrens squabbling; four red kites glowing gold; five six jays being busy; six ladies knitting...seven bullfinch hanging apple like.....etc. etc. 28 miles and so on. CG.



Wednesday Wanderers' Ride

I was ready with crampons, ice axe and climbing ropes to scale the hills to Stump Cross Caverns that was plan A, unfortunately the weather though dry was very cold and roads were icy. As a good mountaineer I accepted common sense was the better part of valour, therefore the group democratically decided that Plan A and B were out and would head East. Not sure where we planned to go but the decision was cycle to Old Bridge at Knaresborough and have a referendum, now we all know about referendums! After a debate it was decided we would go to Tancred Farm Shop. The cycle group now became a democracy, there appeared to be no clear leader, so we all followed the first cyclist off and hoped they knew the way. Along Abbey Road up to Farnham, a quick stop for eggs and onward to Arkendale where Liz P made a phone call to the café to check if they could cater for 12. It was cold but sunny, a lovely day for cycling, as we made our way over the main road to Marton then onto Little Ouseburn, Great Ouseburn to Tancred Farm café. After drinks, delicious bacon butties, lemon drizzle cake and scone, the group had another discussion on the best route back. At the road junction first call was to turn right then left, no second call was to turn left then right which we did and arrived at the railway crossing where we had to wait for a passing train. Then we headed towards North Deighton, Little Ribston where four went towards Knaresborough and eight to Spofforth. Despite no official rides today due to the weather the group managed a great ride of 35 miles approx. Liz F



Wednesday Ride

With low temperatures and an early morning frost on the road it was a difficult call as to whether to ride today or not. A reasonably large number of riders assembled at Hornbeam along with a group who had opted for a walk and coffee as their preferred form of exercise. After the long riders and Wanderers had left there were only 5 riders for the Medium ride and it was agreed that the proposed route was too risky so a route towards Wetherby was selected as the safest option.

Through Burnbridge and up to Kirkby Overblow was ridden with great care but it was clear that the roads were not too bad and with the sun coming out we had probably made the right choice.

We had some great views over towards Harewood with lots of red kites overhead and we made our way through Sicklinghall and Wetherby and on to the cycle path towards Thorp Arch.

We then stopped for coffee and refreshments in the Trading Estate where we had good portions and value for money.

We also had a masterclass on bike sizing from Sara (you would have been proud of her Colin!) who was riding her new Spa bike today and was helping Monica decide whether she should take the plunge and also get one. This led to a bike swap for the second half of the ride as Monica road tested the new Spa Audax bike courtesy of Sara.

We rode out of Thorp Arch towards Cowthorpe, Little Ribston and Follifoot into a cool headwind. From there we made our way towards the Showground with Sara reclaiming her bike and heading towards Pannal whilst the rest of us made our way back to Hornbeam.

We were all glad we had made the decision to ride today as we had clear skies even though it was cold but the wind wasn't too bad.

The ride was 33 miles in good company which was not only exercise but a learning experience for some of us! Kevin



Angela's Ride

Four ladies, Sue, Jeannie, Janet and myself, who couldn't resist a bike ride despite the cold weather headed out a little later than planned to do what became known as Angela's winter warmer. The roads were dry and free of frost by our 10.30 start and we headed off out to Burn Bridge where we took Brackenthwaite Lane up to Armscliff Crag. The sun was low in the sky which gave a wonderful golden light to the views which we all agreed were fantastic on today's route and why we love living and riding in Yorkshire. Dropping down from the Crag we headed off up Cinder Lane to take the 3 gated roads which comes out two thirds of the way up Norwood Bank. Did I mention the spectacular view over Lindley Wood reservoir? From here we dropped down Norwood to take the very steep ascent of Jack Hill which rewarded us with even more spectacular views over Swinsty and Fewston from an aspect that we don't usually see. It was then on past the Sun Inn to our lunch stop at Upper Cobby Syke Farm and we were all starving. No wonder, when we realised that in only 18 miles we had climbed over 2100 feet. The various combinations of bacon, sausage and egg sandwiches went down well with 2 mugs of tea and coffee all round; it was just a shame that the proprietor couldn't raise a smile. So after a lengthy lunch stop, ahem, well over an hour, well the chat was too good, we set off back for Harrogate on a kinder terrain there being just a couple of hills on the return leg. Everyone agreed that they'd enjoyed the route, and forgave the woman who detests hills for planning the hilliest of rides (because we were all kept very warm) and Sue, Jeannie and Janet all discovered some new roads that they'd never ridden before. Just short of 28 miles and just over 2650 feet of climbing in fabulous company. Angela P





EGs' Ride

Twelve E.G.s headed south in the morning sun, accompanied by the slowly melting early frost, this time bypassing Wetherby and aiming for Boston Spa, Bramham and early lunch at The Lemon Tree cafe, Tadcaster. Terry W. wrong-slotted in Wetherby on his supercharged electric cycle, (touch of into the future maybe?) Despite the best efforts of Geoff he'd disappeared seemingly in a puff of smoke!! and no amount of chasing revealed his whereabouts.

However confident in his built in sat nav to aim for our cafe break, we continued on.

Dave P. & Nick left us at Boston Spa, having pressing commitments at home.

Pushing up the hill to Bramham we diverted down through Stutton arriving in Tadcaster, relieved to see, as expected, Terry awaiting us.

Our usual fare complete, we ventured down to check on progress of the reconstruction of Tadcaster's main road bridge damaged last November in the floods. Opinions varied but the previous estimate for completion by Xmas is highly unlikely having in mind the extensive work still outstanding. Despite reports of five weeks delay it

seems more like work will not be complete until February.

Onwards we pressed to Catterton and Angram, where Norman, Bill and Terry deserted the group, to head off home early.

In the continuing dry and sunny conditions we "sailed forth" through to Rufforth, picking up the pace a little. A brief halt at the Marston memorial saw Colin leave us to hurry off home to attend to more pressing matters. Have many were left? No idea! (As Dave P. says herding cats has got nothing on leading a group of old cyclists!!)

Heading now for home we wandered through Tockwith and then over the river Nidd bridge to climb up to Hunsingore & Walshford & onwards to home completing 43 miles in, for the time of year, rewarding conditions. Dave Watson.

