

Sunday, December 18, 2016

Wheel Easy Ride Report 554

Short Ride

Ten riders on today's short ride. Taking a route out of Harrogate new to most of the riders, up to Penny Pot Lane where we were faced with a very strong headwind. After struggling up this seemingly never ending road we made a change of direction to cross the A59 safely.

From the former Black Bull we had a lovely downhill run with the wind behind us to Hampsthwaite. Some stopping for coffee - the remainder returning by various routes. 21miles at a nice leisurely pace. Dennis B



Medium Ride

Only eight takers for the medium ride today which meant keeping tabs on the riders was easy, or at least easier though it did mean a few slips-ups from us from lack of concentration! Out on the rather muddy Greenway with lots of warnings about the slippery leaves and then on up the hill to the Drovers. Down and up Watergate Lane past the Gypsies and then coffee at Fountains Visitor Centre where most of us got a free coffee with our cakes. Some (Alison in particular) just smiled sweetly at the counter while Joe and I were sent to the ticket office for special vouchers. This took a fair length of time as the supervisor printed out a whole fist full while we were waiting browsing in the shop. Back to the café and the queue was so long that we were not too late for our free drink.

Refreshed, we started the whizz down the Deer Park with Joe doing his leading form the front but missing the sight of hundreds of deer for which the rest stopped. Through Ripon where we got separated and on to Bishop Monkton via Littlethorpe. The consensus was to go through the Mountgarret Estate rather than the published route though with more slippery mud -no casualties only dirty bikes. Back the way we came from Ripley where a little confusion reigned again and Peter clocked up his 1000 miles for 2016!

An enjoyable and sociable ride with no tumbles on the leafy and muddy surfaces. 32 miles on my computer. Geraldine and Joe



Medium-plus Ride

Dave Siswick and 'Volunteer Needed' were the designated ride leaders for medium plus today. When it became apparent that there were 27 eager medium plus riders, Dave took one group, James Grimshaw (I think!) took another group and Andy became *de facto* leader for the faster group as followed his nose along the planned route.

After a bit of intermingling with the Long group on the way out of Harrogate, our group of eight headed out to enjoy a good ride in better-than-expected weather. We somehow accidentally added on an unintended detour from the planned route, because we turned up at Bean Vintage Cafe in Boroughbridge, having done over 30 miles and after the other two medium plus groups had arrived (or perhaps we are not as fast as we think!). This was a new cafe for me and a very good find. The delay in delivering Darcy's scone and Andy's mince pie was compensated by the quality of the products! Three of the group dropped off at pre-planned points during the ride, leaving five of us to take our chances on the Greenway into Harrogate (lots of leaves but no slippage experienced). A very enjoyable ride in decent weather, with 53miles covered (Hornbeam to Asda) at an average of 15.3mph. Michael I.

Several smaller groups set out on the medium plus ride and I found myself in Jills group which averaged around eight (there were a few comings and goings). We headed briskly off, regrouping at Low Bridge before following the published route through the Dunsforths (exchanging pleasantries with the locals), and on to coffee in Boroughbridge.

The café stop also doubled as an Aladdins cave of glittery little treasures and so distracting that I cannot recall its name! We returned to Harrogate via Markington and Ripley where the group split with some taking the Greenway and Jill, Jeremy and I opting for a bit more road returning via Knox. Another day of good weather and 40+ miles cycling in the company; of Jill, Nick, Jeremy, Maris, Andrew, Liz, Whistler Mike, & Martin. Jeanie F



A splendid turnout on a December day that will not be beaten for clemency of weather.

"Christmas Pudding" pace prevailed as we potttered through the byways to Bean Vintage, where there was a bit of cafe shock. The fare and service however were excellent, once proceedings got under way.

The size of the portions, and generosity of butter and jam etc had to be seen to be believed, with a photo below to demonstrate.

Suitably refuelled we potttered off again to Ripon and Bishop Monkton , where four of our group took the hillier route home while the rest of us tackled Markington and the Greenway.

Thanks to Sue, Debbie, Janet, Paul, Dave W, Tim, Charlie, Colin, James and Justin for excellent company; Very Happy Christmas to all. Dave S.





Long Ride

We managed to get through the Low Bridge chaos before it reached its height, and continued via Farnham, Bishop Monkton, Boroughbridge, Marton and Great Ouseburn to arrive at Tancred Farm just as the other group were leaving. After a substantial, but not very slick, refuelling session, we continued on, braving the potentially mud-infested lane to Walshford, which turned out not too bad. Cattal, Walton, Wetherby, Sicklinghall, Kirkby Overblow followed. We then split into dogging and non-dogging groups to finish the ride. Approx 54 miles, dry, not cold, not windy - pretty good for the time of year. Richard L





Like last week, the shorter than usual, flatter than usual, long ride attracted an unusually large number of Wheel Easiers, making two groups essential. For reasons I don't fully understand, herd instinct seems to take over, and a 50/50 split between the two groups seems impossible as the majority of the herd tries to squeeze into Group One. So Group two were a small select band of six wise sages who were trying to travel a safe distance behind Group One along Forest Moor Lane when another Wheel Easy group overtook us and muscled in between our groups. When we arrived at Low Bridge it was utter chaos. It seems that almost all Wheel Easy rides had stopped there, and at the same time as the Sunday group of EGs were also assembling. By the time we got through the melee, Group One could not be seen. Our plan to keep Group One in sight had fallen apart within three miles of the start!

We all remembered the ride was going to Tancred Farm Shop for refreshments, but the detail of the circuitous route to get us there had been lost on us. With so many cycling groups heading in that direction, it seemed prudent to get there sooner rather than later, so the shortest route was agreed on. Two of the sages in Group Two had announced at the outset that they would be making an early departure for home. John H, very much under the weather, didn't make it to the café stop, as he turned back at Marton-cum-Grafton. Whilst we were tucking into our bacon butties, Dan (having devoured his full English breakfast), announced he would now leave us as he had to return home to get spruced up for a "dinner date". Lucky Dan! A few minutes later, the remaining four of us went to the counter to pay for our butties and drinks, only to discover that our bills had already been paid! Dan - what a true star you are, and what a wonderful gesture of Christmas spirit! It was most appreciated by us all.

As we were leaving, Group One were just arriving and no doubt most grateful to us for reducing café shock so they could get prompt service! Between the four of us (Glyn, Peter R, Martin and I), we could remember the second half of the route, and so returned via Whixley, Cattal, Hunsingore, Wetherby, Sicklinghall, Kirkby Overblow, arriving home at 2.30pm having completed 38 miles. Even shorter than expected, but nonetheless a very pleasant and very relaxing pre-Christmas ride. Eric W.

