

Sunday, October 8, 2017

Wheel Easy Ride Report 595

Short Ride

Welcome to Margaret who was a little hesitant re length and speed. We soon dispelled all those concerns!! It was lovely to see Jane ensaddled after a break in her cycling career. Having had nightmares about people being blown away by extreme gusts, it was a great relief to see sunshine, blue sky and no wind! As a cyclist of little brain, I have two tried and tested routes but was actually persuaded by Jean B to do the "through the hedge" route. This also incorporates that all time pun, "the sloe" ride named after a successful harvest by Caroline. Nine of us went via Forest Lane (in groups of four!) and ten turned right to scale Thistle Hill before crossing the ring road and then going through the gap in the hedge onto the carefree old road to Wetherby Road and hence to Follifoot. P-Sue spotted a wonderful photo opportunity against a background lit by a beautiful white/pink/blue sky. As we pedalled towards the back gates of Rudding House, Nicky and Graham were just emerging from their house clad in lycra (and W E top for Graham)! They joined us for the next photo shoot and rode to Spofforth. We did a very good pace towards Spofforth and came across the body of a magnificent stoat which had obviously been hit but was perfect. Stoa pie was considered! Upward and onward then to the gates of the Brethren Meeting House where the debate re coffee at the Wheelhouse or going straight for the extended route. Caroline and Jane decided that they would take a slightly different course and join us in Ripley. No one spoke up for coffee so we rode through the glorious highways and byways passing Scriven, Lingerfield, Scotton, Brearton, Nidd and thence to Ripley and the long-awaited coffee. Caroline, after waiting patiently, met us and Jo and Paula opted for a pie on the wheel as they needed to be home. A very pleasant hour passed in the sunshine while we sampled the eventual delights of the Cafe. The world was put to rights with much hilarity produced by Jill who was able to provide me with details of devices to prevent cats from using lawns at their convenience! I was able to tell P Sue the names of tried and tested plumber and decorator - all this during the consumption of teacakes and a scone, about which no discussion emerged re scone as in gone or scone as in stone. Satiated, the six remaining pedallers returned via the Greenway. Margaret, do come again - your fears were groundless! 27 glorious miles and excellent company. Sue D





Medium Ride - Group 1

Five of us set off ahead of Alison's group, supposedly going slightly faster. We did get muddled up a bit with the Short Ride but Sue quickly got them under control. Her efficiency was amazing. Our route was Low Bridge, Little Ribston, Cowthorpe and Walton where Graham lead us on to the new cycle path as the rest of us had only ridden it once, if at all, and that was in the opposite direction. As we were approaching Wetherby on the cycle way, I remembered that I hadn't taken a photo and hey presto Nicky and Graham appeared from the other direction so Nicky became our photographer. We decided to go to the cafe on the Shambles in Wetherby and by the time we were tucking in Alison's group appeared with the same intention. Our route back was via the Wetherby – Spofforth cycle path which Mike said would be OK and it was. Between Spofforth and Rudding Lane the group peeled off in different directions leaving just me to tackle the Showground hill! 27 miles and thanks to Mike, Graham, Max and Paul for your company. Liz P



Medium Ride - Group 2

Fourteen of us gathered for the Medium ride. Liz P 'volunteered' to lead one group. So, a group of 'seasoned' riders set off with Liz while I took a second group which included some new faces, Nigel from Northampton and Chris and Chris from Baildon. Denis kept an eye on us from the back. I decided to do the suggested ride the other way round, so we made our way to Abbey Road and Little Ribston, stopping to regroup from time to time. At the next regrouping point a familiar face sped into view. It was Sally! Undeterred by a tyre blow-out at 9.25am, she'd changed it and then whistled along to catch us up. We ambled along through pleasant autumnal countryside with the usual chat about all sorts of topics. Denis left us at Walton for his lunch engagement. The rest of us headed for the café stop in Wetherby. Going through the underpass into Wetherby the massed choirs did a fine rendering of 'The hills are alive ---'. At the cafe we met up with Liz and her group of gentlemen who were tucking into 'healthy' snacks. We decided to use the Harland Way and I was pleasantly surprised as to how dry it was. Then, the only hilly bit of the route to get us back to Harrogate. A good morning! Alison N



Medium Plus – Group 1

It was a fine, wind free Autumn day, still fit to be out in shorts. The Medium Plus ride was very popular today and we managed to split into four groups, even though nobody was listening to me! These four groups were the Fast Boys, two Main Groups and a slightly shorter version of the advertised route.

No sooner were we out of Hornbeam than Liz F had chain problems but Mike stayed behind, determined to fix it and not ruin Liz's day out. That left Monica, Debbie, Janet, Maris, Julie, Me and Tim. Six girls and Tim. Heaven help us if anybody had had a mechanical! Liz F and Mike caught us up en route to Swinsty Reservoir car park, where Liz promptly sprung a puncture and this time Mike and Tim stayed behind to render assistance, twice, on account of a faulty valve. The day was not going well. *Why do you always feel responsible for everything that goes wrong when you are leading!*

Anyway, the sun was shining and we enjoyed lovely views over Askwith Moor and down to the Station Cafe, *where some letters immediately fell off the sign over the door.* I was beginning to feel extreme sympathy with Theresa May. The delicious food, excellent service and charming friendly staff soon revived us and by this time Mike, Tim and Liz had caught us up, having kept up a pretty impressive pace from Swinsty. Liz entertained us over lunch with Further Tales from Holland – the Unexpurgated Version. Don't worry, all your secrets are safe with me and everyone else in the Station Cafe, Ilkley!

Nothing went wrong after this and it really was a beautiful warm October day with the sun turning everything green and gold. At Otley we waved goodbye to Janet who had cycled in from Bramhope this morning and was now heading back home. Our return journey was a favourite involving the hilliest route back to Harrogate in the calendar via Leathley, Stainburn, Almscliffe Crags, North Rigton to Brackenthwaite Lane and Burn Bridge – but worth all the effort.

Not quite the end of summer then! My thanks to all for their entertaining company and particularly to Monica for steering me out of Ilkley in the correct direction and to Mike for sorting out all mechanicals and punctures and also for doing big chunks of back marking and teaching us all how to take a selfie. He did really well, riding in a full suit of shining armour is not as easy as you might think.

I am now going to kick off my leopard print cycling shoes, have a glass of wine and sack Boris. We covered 38.2 quality miles. Helen T





Medium Plus Ride – Group 2

It was one of those days when everything was right with the world. Six left Hornbeam for Timble, and then Ilkley, on a day which started cloudy, soon turned to sunny intervals and

ended in bright sunshine. We lost Peter L to the Cow and Calf, but picked up Dennis and Glyn, neither of whom thought that he would spend the rest of his life regretting not following him. And then we lost Glyn to the delights of Otley. So, five followed James on one of his detours, through Wharfemeadows Park, and round to Pool, Castley, a rarely-taken route up to Almscliffe Crag, then Braythorne, Briscoe Ridge. A route along several ridges, then, and some wonderful views. 42 or so miles in great company. Justin K.



Medium Plus Ride – Group 3



Medium Plus Awayday Ride

Following a suggestion by Mark Townend a few weeks ago a medium plus faster group away day ride was pencilled into our calendars for today. Via messages on Facebook (the power of social media!) various suggestions for routes were swapped and we agreed on a starting point of Grassington with a few hours to go. Julie and I got a lift with Paul Brooks (the orderliness of Paul's van has to be seen to be believed - surely not many tradesmen can have a van full of work kit and still have space for three bikes), Darcy disassembled his bike to its component parts to fit it into Tony's dinky car. Andy met us at Grassington. Mark sadly had decided beforehand that his legs were not up for climbing today. After listening to Paul's request for a bit of flat ride we decided to do Kettlewell - Fleet Moss - Hawes (cafe) - Askrigg - Carperby - Bishopdale and Kidstones Pass - Kettlewell - Grassington, on the basis that not doing Park Rash qualified this as a 'flat' route. The weather was great. Although nippy to start with, we basked outside in sunshine at the cafe in Hawes and enjoyed beautiful rolling Dales views all day. The cafe stop was perhaps appreciated by Darcy more than anyone as he recovered from his first experience of speed wobble/bike shimmy while hitting 45mph down into Hawes. Paul's shouted instructions on how to stop it, as they both screamed down the hill together, were much appreciated by Darcy! Fleet Moss was an 'enjoyable' grind, although at least we didn't look as miserable as the D of E group trudging up the hill. Kidstones Pass was a bit of shock though. Definitely a more violent and painful ascent than Fleet Moss! We arrived back in Grassington before 3pm having done about 53 miles and getting on for 4000ft of climbing at an average of around 13.7mph. Thanks to all for a great ride and day out in beautiful scenery and on some great Yorkshire hills. Michael I



Long Ride

It's strange how sometimes things come together to make an almost perfect day. The boring long ride around Thirsk was one such occasion. Was it the weather, courteous motorists, a good lunch or the pleasant chatter? I don't know, but whatever it was, even a navigational error by yours truly, was almost completely overlooked by the riders!

The pretty bits excelled in the early autumn sunshine, the boring bits flew by and by the end it was hard to believe that we had covered 75 miles. Thanks to all. Phil S





Wheel Easy Abroad Majorca Tour Ride Report, Days 1 & 2

Five Wheel Easy members (Peter R, Richard L, Terry S, Justin L, & Eric W) had a very early start on Saturday morning - the 6.20am flight from Leeds Bradford to Palma. Although we had no choice in the time of departure, it did have one very significant advantage: we could transfer to the hotel, collect our hire bikes, have lunch, and still start an afternoon ride at 2.30.

From our hotel near Alcudia, there is a wonderful 30 mile ride to the lighthouse at Cap Fermentor. It is difficult to think of a better 30 mile ride in Europe! This has some good long climbs, great descents, sweeping curves, on smooth road surfaces unknown in Yorkshire. Then there is the spectacular scenery: starting alongside the beach, where there were kite surfers in their hundreds adding colour to the bay, followed by dramatic headlands and towering cliffs, and all in warm Mediterranean sunshine. Wonderful!

In the evening we were joined at dinner by Vanessa B, who has been cycling in Majorca for the previous week. So, it was 6 Wheel Easy members who set off on our Sunday ride, plus Sean - a friend of Vanessa's from Otley Cycling Club. We took a minibus with bike trailer to Porto on the South East of the island, and after coffees on the side of the harbour (thirsty work these bus rides!) started the ride back to our hotel. After about 8 miles of gentle climbing from sea level, we started the serious climb to the San Salvador Monastery. If there is a rocky outcrop towering over the flat bit of Majorca, the Majorcans will build on it. If it's big enough, they build a village, if it's not big enough, then they build a monastery - and it will have challenging climb up to it. In this case, the climb is 6km long and reaches 1750'. We were promised views from the summit of most of the island, and it didn't disappoint. Vanessa and Sean left us to conquer another climb up to another monastery, whilst 5 of us took a more sedate, shorter route home passing through sleepy Majorcan villages, one of which had a most intriguing name - see photo. It has been suggested that the photo could be the subject of the first ever Wheel Easy caption competition! We

covered 63 miles at a pleasant relaxed pace. 3 more days to come. 3 more rides to enjoy.
Eric





