

Sunday, February 4, 2018

## Wheel Easy Ride Report 611

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### Short Ride

Welcome to Simon who, though a very accomplished cyclist, opted to join the Short Ride - he was warned that the leader was unfit! Thus, seven of us left Hornbeam via the Matterhorn route onto Hookstone Road where a nasty incident almost occurred when a driver seemed determined to share my spot at the junction with Hookstone Avenue. Remonstrations over, we continued to Little Almscliffe where Paul B awaited our arrival. He had actually thought he would catch us on the way to Whinney Lane but saw two cyclists hurtling ahead and thought he'd missed us. He hadn't but what a flattering mistake! From Pennypot Lane, we took the first left across the A59 and then turned sharp right beside the decaying Black Bull and down to Kettlesing. Now, it's only fair to declare that this was a plagiarised route. Martin had devised and followed it several weeks ago. It was much admired by Caroline and seemed like a good idea - meaning that I could now claim three in my repertoire of rides! However, it appears that there are several routes from Kettlesing and Tang. Peter undertook one and the rest of us followed Dennis encountering Peter at Clapham Gate. The descent to Hampsthwaite was joyous and the decision was taken that Dennis, Peter and Simon would continue to sample the delights of Sunday lunch at home while the remaining five dived into Sophie's.

Here, we met Jill who was awaiting Gia and Paul but, lurking behind two delicious pieces of coffee cake were Bridget and Anne (apologies if that's the wrong name). They had cycled so were fully deserving of cakey comforts. Seated in our corner, we watched the arrival and subsequent consumption of the most enormous panini - debate followed as to the plural of panini because there were actually one and a half; PB with his Latin caput on said "panina whilst Alexa said paninis! While Paul of the Panini struggled on, Pater Paul B updated us on his progress with the Old Testament. This proved painfully elucidating especially the bit about the plague of "emerods" (sic) visited upon the Philistines. What with that and the Pope's support of the Protestants in 1688, our brains were like blotting paper. No wonder Caroline felt the need to finish off Panini Paul's garnish!

After returning via Knox, we took various routes home. This was a lovely 21mi ride - thanks to those who inspired and those who played so well. Sue D





### **Medium Ride**

'Twas a cold and murky day but it was dry, not icy and not blowing a gale, so much better weather than many days recently. Fortunately the pace was easy, to give the chance for unused muscles to recover some fitness (well that was my excuse anyway).

A small group of four, including Helen, a guest rider from Co. Durham, set off down to Low Bridge in to Boroughbridge where we picked up Mike and then through Farnham to Bishop Monkton, Roecliffe and Boroughbridge. On our way there we saw lots of large groups of cyclists, obviously some sort of event on today. All of them were in large pelotons and I'm sure they could teach us a thing or two about riding in groups.

It was a relief to reach Boroughbridge and a warm cafe where the men were banished to the "Naughty Table", the women having displayed irreproachable behaviour throughout the ride!

After taking on calories, we set off again for the Dunsforths and Great Ouseburn, past the vineyard. The vines are still looking quite small and will take a few more years before they start to produce Yorkshire wine (T'wine de Ouseburn?). Shortly after Great Ouseburn we lost Dave P as he had a sore leg and needed to cycle back slowly. Hope you're OK Dave.

We then had an uneventful return to Harrogate via Knaresborough in warmer temperatures. 35 miles in good company, as ever.



### **Medium-plus Ride**

We are getting used to these sub-arctic temperatures and so there was a good turnout for today's rides. I took the first nine comprising Monica, Jill, Mike, Liz F, Terry S, Rob, Chris R and The other Helen. I made sure we had at least a couple of chaps with us, partly to sort

out any mechanicals but mainly because I didn't want to get involved with any of these "Women Only" groups and be forced to wear tight black lycra and behave disgracefully. Monica led us to Knox Bridge because I still can't find my way through Harrogate and our main mission was then to intercept Terry S in Hampsthwaite after his train journey from Leeds. (OK, we were slightly late and he had moved on to Birstwith). We managed to slide past Sophie's and kept moving swiftly to try and warm up. Stripe Lane soon sorted that out and as we approached Brimham Rocks we found ourselves in a short blizzard. We lost Jill at this point as she took a warmer route back (we strongly suspect this involved Sophie's). The blizzard stopped and we were soon buzzing along towards Sawley and began to smell the coffee at Fountains Visitor Centre for warmth, comfort and delicious goodies. Keith's team caught us up there but he was too late to pay for my lunch. Liz F advised me to hand him my receipt and claim it on expenses. (Note to Liz – this did not work). We dragged ourselves away and there was then a short kerfuffle when Helen thought she had lost her Garmin but it had wandered off in to the far reaches of the lining of her jacket and was eventually retrieved. This gave Mike enough time to pump her tyres up as his eagle eyes has spotted they looked a bit soft. What a gentleman! The deer park looked lovely and we did spot a small herd dashing along, pursued by one small dog! The rest of the ride was going swimmingly when, we foolishly let Liz F distract us from the Occaney route home and take a more scenic version which eventually involved returning via Farnham, Lingerfield, Scotton, Ripley and the Greenway. We weren't expecting that – but then, nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition. Once we reached the Greenway, Mike promised to hold her down so we could all hit her but she made good her escape with a cheery, "see you all in May". Fortunately, Liz is now off to Australia and New Zealand for three months, so we can all look forward to some respite. Only joking, it was a really good winter's day and a great team effort on route finding and having fun. Helen T





Our group of eight left Hornbeam with Alison leading us out of Harrogate to Knox Bridge with me back marking – a position I jealously maintained for most of the day. We bade farewell to Gia and Paul after the snow flurry at Brimham Rocks but gained Glyn and made our way to the Visitor Centre at Fountains Abbey to warm up and take on calories. It was a difficult call to leave the warmth, whereupon we discovered that Mike from Helen's group was pumping up various tyres for his team (who had then left him behind!) but he refused to provide the same service for our group.

On our journey through Ripon we displayed newly acquired skills. Many in the group had bikes with disc brakes and after a full morning of squealing disc brakes, we found we had the ability to orchestrate a symphony from brakes with different pitches of sonorous squeaks. This did not last however as two key members of the strings section promptly left to return to Harrogate in haste. Perhaps this won't catch on!!

The remainder of the journey back to Harrogate via Bishop Monkton was largely uneventful but pleasant despite the cold. James, on his new electric bike, clearly restrained himself from leaving us all in his wake and, as we each took our leave of the group on the way back to Hornbeam, the comments were of a good day in good company and we were glad to have made the effort to get out. Keith T



Just five of us in number started out from Hornbeam hopeful that the weather forecast might actually hold for us on this cold day as we weaved through Harrogate's sleepy suburbs we crossed Spruisty bridge "said to have been crossed by the charismatic King Charles 1 on his way south after been handed over by the Scots".

We continued on up Grainbeck Lane to Killinghall and out towards Hampsthwaite and up Elton Bank having sped through Birstwith turned right at Ross bridge and up the toll road which in all the years we had lived here we had never used coming out on on to the Pateley road we push up hill and turned right on to Stripe Lane continuing up hill. Under a darkening sky we arrived at Hartwith village and it started to snow....so much for the forecast!! Having arrived at Brimham rocks things were looking bleak and rather wintery but mother nature looked after us and we reached the top and right turned on to the road past Warren farm and and down on to Careless House Lane, quite apt today considering the weather and all taken at a much slower pace than normal.

We turned left on to Hebden Bank and down the steep hill and up pasted the Sawley turn continuing down to Fountains Abbey. Having arrived at Studley Royal a nice lady held the gate open for us to pass through. We pasted St Mary's church at the top which was built by the family of the 1st Marquess of Ripon...; St Mary's Church was one of two, late Victorian, memorial churches in Yorkshire, built by the family of the 1st Marquess of Ripon in memory of Frederick Grantham Vyner. The other is the church at Skelton-on-Ure, and the architect of both was William Burges. Vyner was murdered by Greek bandits in 1870 and his mother, Lady Mary Vyner, and sister, Lady Ripon, used the unspent ransom, gathered to obtain his release, to build two churches in Vyner's memory on their Yorkshire estates. Now down to four we reached Ripon rather cold Oliver's pantry was a welcome sight indeed. Having restored ourselves with coffee and food we headed back to Knaresborough via Bishop Monkton I peeled up off at Bond End and left the rest to ascend Knaresborough hill to home. A cold but enjoyable winter ride. Tony P

### **Long Ride**

It was chilly at Hornbeam this morning. Four riders opted for the Longish ride to Stean. At Ripley we were joined by two more and it was agreed that we should keep off the higher ground to avoid frost and ice.

Phil sporting a very nice and clean new winter bike had indicated he was out for the morning only and would only go as far as Pately.

Progress was reasonable to Summerbridge. However here the clouds darkened and we experienced a pretty heavy storm of sleet and snow. Staying low had turned out to be a good decision.

Three of the group stopped at Pately with three continuing to Stean. Another 50% ride (finishers to starters) but it was hopefully going to be better than Eric's ride in Jan when four finished out of eight a result of a broken frame and a damaged knee !.

With continued up to Stean where the precipitation stopped as quickly as it had started and the sun sort of came out.

The café at Stean was quiet but is now quite swish and the welcome warm and friendly. After the break we decided in view of the temperature (hovering at 1-2'C) we would return as we came out but opting for a Hampsthwaite return rather than the Greenway.

Ride stats. Just under 50 Miles, 1000M climbing and lovely views of the beautiful area we are so lucky to live in, but feeling very cold. Martin D







