

Sunday, June 1, 2008

## Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 109

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'There's nuts, completely nuts and Wheel Easy,' as Dave P aptly observed while negotiating the 'interesting' design of the new ramp from Hookstone Bridge down to the car park. Over 20 cyclists eventually huddled under the dripping canopy of trees discussing where to go, and welcomed new father and son riders Tim and Max. Ben was more than willing to postpone his ambitious plan to lead a 70 mile ride to Greenhow and Masham till a sunny day, Dave offered to lead to Boroughbridge, Caroline and Sue were happy to follow on at their own pace, and Malcolm and Paul liked the sound of Wetherby which would bring them back to their homes in Pannal quicker than Ripon, the other obvious alternative.

Long ride. The original intention was for Bill W and myself to go to the NYDA lunch at Thirlby, a nice social event in which CTC members from Teesside and Richmond meet up with NYDA and others for a buffet lunch and a chin wag. Second intention to ask if any Wheel Easy rider would care to join us. The weather and the wind direction seemed to put paid to this intention, however always the optimists it seemed best if we headed to Boroughbridge for coffee and then review the weather situation. Eight decisive cyclists then set off. At the café in Boroughbridge it was agreed the weather made the lunch event a no-no. We were later joined by Caroline who came 'puddling' rather than 'poddling' into the café, and a little later by two more Wheel Easy members who had lost their group. The café crowd then made its way home by different routes in different groups. A bit of a laugh, but another excellent turn out for Wheel Easy considering the Horrendous Weather. DP

Long slow ride. Here is the ride report from two slow feeling young women chasing four elderly gentlemen to Boroughbridge. 'There are four old men going to Boroughbridge any one coming?' and they were gone. The words longer ride floated from the other direction and Sue and Caroline decided to follow the four old men to Boroughbridge in a demure and gentle way as befitted their status. By the time we got to Knaresborough we were wet. By the time we got to Farnham we were soaked. By the time we reached Minskip we were dripping. By the time we reached the café in Boroughbridge, one of five options, we were drenched to the skin. Even our tee shirts were taking on a bizarre wet tee shirt competition look. We were however not as wet as Alec, who we found in the café garden guarding a flashy cars worth of bikes, magnanimously forgoing his hot drink to ensure the safety of his lovely new bike, along with a family of ducks. As we squashed into the café with what seemed like a lot more than four old men, but it's hard to count these days, Dennis and Paul arrived from some detour via Malton or somewhere and the rest of the "old men" plus some quite young ones set off either home or to continue their ride to Hull in an easterly direction. Alec opted to join us on the return via Roelcliffe, Bishop Monkton, Markington and Ripley, an extremely beautiful ride in the sun, without rain. The zoom down to Ripley was wonderful and I now know what it is like to be a speeding flying frog. We took the most direct route back to Harrogate, braving traffic and wet traffic spray, as by now the rain was non-stop and wet. We did take a long time and we did about 35 miles, but it does seem more when you seem to be swimming the route not

cycling.CG (Caroline, please note, we don't have four 'old men', we have 'four elderly gentlemen'! Dave asked me to point this out!!)

Medium ride. Nine headed for Wetherby through Knaresborough and Little Ribston where Tim and Max turned towards Spofforth and the opportunity to get their mountain bikes properly dirty on some tracks back towards Harrogate. The rest wasted no time in reaching the haven of The Gourmet café in Wetherby for the usual refreshments. We eventually accepted that the rain wasn't going away in a hurry so emerged for the return journey to Sicklinghall, Kirkby Overblow, Pannal and Harrogate, a total of about 22 miles. MM

Below is a photo of some of us and the new Wheel Easy banner at the start of the Acorn charity ride on 17 May, which also appeared in this week's Harrogate Advertiser.

