

Sunday, December 7, 2008

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 137



Ice cut into our numbers today, but still around 15 or so Wheel Easy troopers were at Hornbeam by 9.30am, most wearing a large proportion of their total wardrobe of cycling gear, balaclavas, buffs and thermals. Mervyn, determined not to miss a Sunday ride, had driven over from the Lancashire border despite treacherous conditions, especially around Blubberhouses.

Paula, Lynda, Paul P and Mervyn decided to limit their ambitions to a quiet route they had enjoyed last Sunday, through the woods to Sainsbury and into the park behind the tip. Here, Paula executed a graceful tumble on the icy path, fortunately at very slow speed and so came to no harm. They stopped at the garden centre on Forest Moor Lane for breakfast, and deciding that conditions were just a little too dangerous turned back to Hornbeam. Although more time was spent chatting, drinking and eating than cycling, it was a very enjoyable morning with good company and laughter. (PG)

The rest set off in the direction of Tockwith for the annual cyclists carol service and lunch at the Village Hall made by local mums in aid of the playgroup. At Low Bridge, where the photo above was taken, Paul T and Sarah opted for a shorter route home. Dave P and a small group who had gone ahead were nowhere to be seen, which left just 5 of us to pick our way through the treacherous patches along Waterside.

After that, however, the ride to Tockwith was problem free, though the low winter sun barely lifted the temperature above freezing, and several layers of gloves and thermal socks didn't necessarily ensure warm fingers and toes. Cycling at a relaxed pace, we passed through Little Ribston and Cowthorpe where Sue reached her target of 3,000 miles for the year. This achievement called for another photo (below).

We were first to arrive at Tockwith, though within minutes dozens more cyclists were converging on the Village Hall from all over Yorkshire. These included Dave and his company who had put in some extra miles via Great Ouseburn, and Malcolm Y, Peter B (and others?) who had gone even further north, to Ripon.

After some refreshment most walked to church for carols, but of our group four returned directly home. I was on a solo mission, and after a good lunch pedalled down to Walton and joined the cycle path to Wetherby and Spofforth. As expected, some of it was frozen solid and had to be cycled, or in places walked, with great care. Despite that it was being used by quite a few families on Sunday afternoon walks. As the light began to fade, I completed the 30 miles ride through Follifoot to Pannal and home. Thoroughly enjoyable, and because caution was the order of the day, almost effortless. MM

.....Debbie N.....Sue C.....Peter J (!).....Eric

