

Sunday, August 22, 2010

## Wheel Easy Ride Report 226



Short Ride Report  
Spirits were high as eight of us gathered to conquer the challenge of today's Short Ride. Spirits lowered as comments like: "I'm the one who fell off last week" "I did too" "My tyre burst" "This is a first for me" "I hope I can keep up"

filtered to my ears. Having ascertained that between us we could rustle up two elastoplasts, three antiseptic wipes an oxygen supply (later discovered that this was Matt's very sophisticated water tube) and three tools kits, we crossed our fingers and left the "Beam" via the wooded path to Leeds Road, the Mallinsons and hence to Beckwithshaw and Little Almscliffe. Thankfully, everyone reached the summit in one piece. On hearing that we would be passing the Sun Inn, Alison and Lizzie suggested looking for the peacock - a recent star in the local press who seems to have a number of names including Peter and Percy and, according Stuart, hovers round the fields behind the pub.

So the great peacock search ensued. Stuart, gazing into the cloud-filled sky asked what the name is for someone who studies clouds. A "Nubilist" sprang to mind but Google later confirmed that it's a Nephologist. Obviously, the Greeks win on this cloudy issue! Following the classical debate we turned to matters ornithological in the Sun Inn Carpark. Nothing except a lot of bikers, walkers and drinkers possibly, - Alison thought the latter a good idea but, nothing venture, we yielded not and carried on past peacockless fields and soon to be closed Pennypot Lane. The pace was brisk and apart from Alison who did not want to cycle by her Bilton home, the consensus was to carry on via Roden and West Lanes. This would mean adding a few miles and making the ride around 20 but smiling broadly at their progress so far, Matt and Adrianne gritted their teeth and off we went. Lizzie and Alan had remained saddled so to speak and, like Caroline and Stuart, enjoyed the challenge of climbing out of Hampsthwaite and Knox Mill Lane. Still sitting beautifully, Lizzie and Alan left at Bilton Lane. Adrianne and Stuart departed on Skipton Road and



that bursts of speed were the order of the day as the more youthful charged at the hills. We continued to Shaw Mills and Bishop Thornton and then Darren had the first puncture. But it was soon mended and we made our way to the coffee break at the National Trust café by the lake in Studley Park.

Lake? Shall we call a barren waste (see photo). The NT are carrying out improvements - soon to be finished. Having a scone and coffee by the side of a civil engineering site felt just like the good old days of pre-retirement for me!

Setting off through the park we were heading down the long drive when my chain decided to do something strange, locking the back wheel and coming apart in the process. Exciting times! But with some good help I was soon on the road again. Through Ripon we headed to Skelton on Ure and said cheerio to Sandy and Chris who joined us for the day. Then at Boroughbridge one more puncture made for another relaxing stop. We were back home to Harrogate by early afternoon. 39 miles on a perfect cycling day. Martin W.

Long Ride Report Kettlewell and the Scarecrow Festival. Do we know what attracted 27 Wheel Easy riders to opt for the long ride today? Having completed the ride we can safely say it was the weather, the glorious views that come at every turn on this magnificent route, the joy of riding with Wheel Easy and the fun of the festival in Kettlewell. Even the ride up to Stump Cross wasn't a chore as we grouped together, the wind in our faces was very manageable, the sun shone and the colour of the heather was just beautiful. Dave Preston led the slowest of the three groups, there were eleven of us and his fine and experienced leading skills meant we all arrived back in good spirits and with energy in our legs. Well done to Sally who having done Wetherby Filey earlier in the year completed the Kettlewell ride which is a real challenge; to Tony whose purchase of a hybrid bike has enabled him to enjoy much longer rides; and to Malcolm whose touring bike is unwell and borrowed our son's Cannondale which lacks the lower gears, but managed the distance despite having to work that bit harder up the hills.

Angela survived a nasty moment in Hebden when a motorist pulled out of a side road without looking, and she narrowly managed to avoid hitting the bonnet. Dave P was at his most eloquent in explaining to the occupant of the car exactly what he thought about their driving. As we arrived in Grassington, the fast group were leaving, the middle group were finishing their lunch, then we met Matt and Sarah Klein (Wheel Easy members) and their new baby who had passed us on their way from Harrogate.

The run to Kettlewell via Conistone is a beautiful route, with views of Kilnsey Crag and the Wharfe below us. We met the faster group already on their way back and then Bill who seemed to be on his own! Kettlewell was thronging with people, scarecrows and Wheel Easy cyclists. We met the middle group who were clearly waiting for a group photo, then we heard that some of the riders had got so excited that they had gone up Park Rash! We made our way home back to Grassington and Hebden, through Appletreewick and on to Bolton Abbey where we made a dash for the Abbey tea rooms. As they were closed we ended up at the farm shop by the old bridge where we had good tea, home made cakes and ice cream. The run back through Ilkley, Otley and finally Stainburn was as fine as the rest of the day, sun shining and wide views all around. This had to be one of our finest rides. Thanks again Dave for guiding us so well. 11 riders x 74 miles. Gia

Fast Group  
The long ride was a visit to Kettlewell via Menwith Hill, Greenhow and Grassington, to look at the scarecrow festival. The fast group consisted of 10 riders who made a brisk start from Harrogate but were constantly facing a severe westerly wind. The effect of this was that riders had to ride down some of the steepest hills to maintain any sort of reasonable speed. The fast group arrived at Grassington for refreshments and were soon joined by the touring group led by Eric Waters. The fast group proceeded to Kettlewell and had an enjoyable time strolling around the village admiring the scarecrows. Two members of the group, Mark and James, decided to attack Park Rash and two other members from Eric's group joined us for the homeward

journey. At Ilkley, a breakaway group of even faster riders headed off at their own pace leaving the remainder to proceed at a more reasonable speed. The total mileage covered by the ride was 74 miles.  
Peter

Slightly faster touring pace group  
It was wonderful to see 27 riders turning up for the ride to the Kettlewell Scarecrow Festival. It speaks volumes for the success of Wheel Easy, and the progress that each cyclist has made, that so many are now undertaking such rides - and with huge smiles on their faces! Success brings logistical problems - trying to divide the 27 cyclists into smaller groups of similar speeds. As usual, the 'Fast boys and Gill' were the first away: 10 down, 17 to go! The remaining 17 were divided into 11 "slightly slower touring pace" led by Dave P, and 6 "slightly faster touring pace" led by myself. We were riding into a north westerly wind, which made strenuous work. After Menwith Hill, Peter B opted to leave the group and cycle alone, 1 down 5 to go! At Stonehouse, Bill W decided to drop back and join Peter. 2 down, 4 to go! At Geenhow Peter and Bill overtook us whilst we had a 2 minute breather! So the race was well and truly on, and the 4 remaining members of the 'slightly faster touring pace group' threw caution to the wind and blasted it all the way to Grassington, arriving at Cobblestones cafe just behind the 'Fast boys and Gill'. Peter B drank his coffee and set off for Kettlewell beating us there by a long way - the fable of the Tortoise and the Hare springs to mind! As soon as we arrived the group splintered in different directions. One opted to go over Park Rash, two opted to hitch a ride home with the departing 'Fast boys and Gill', one opted to set off home alone. 4 down 2 to go! So it was just Will and myself that walked around Kettlewell in the sunshine enjoying the delights of the Scarecrow Festival, the glorious afternoon sunshine, and an ice-cream. Our favourite scarecrow had to be the one with the Gordon Brown mask locked in the village stocks.

Arriving back at our bikes we were joined by James M who'd been up and down for Park Rash for a bit of fun. The 'slightly slower touring pace' group then pulled into town, so after lots of chat and photos the three of us set off some time after 3pm. I then remembered I needed to be in Derby at 8 pm and said I would be home by 6, so we upped the tempo for the return trip, arriving just after 6pm after a stop for tea and cakes at Bolton Abbey. How beautiful was Wharfedale in the sunshine of Sunday afternoon - this route is my version of cycling heaven! What a superb day out, and I hope all 27 enjoyed their day as much. For the Captains Log: 5 riders did 74 miles, and 1 did 87 miles (Park Rash and Ripon): 457 miles total  
Eric

2010	Wheel	Easy	Miles	(approx)	Today	2782	YTD	100426
Captain's	Log:	Wheel	Easy	2010	mile-ometer	passes	100,000	mark

