

Sunday, August 12, 2012
Wheel Easy Ride Report 328



Wheel Easy welcomed its 300th member today. It's not just about the numbers but the amount of pleasure that Wheel Easy has given to its members. Great bike rides, new challenges and adventures and new friendships.

Short Ride Report

13 riders took to the short ride, 11 ladies and 2 men We welcomed Stanley from London who is in Harrogate for a short stay and was impressed by the stunning scenery to be found so close to Harrogate. We were fortunate to have Darren with us as mechanic in residence (thanks Darren). Our route took us down to Burn Bridge and on to Brackenthwaite Lane and then up towards Almscliffe Crag. Although there was not much enthusiasm for a café stop at the start of the ride, the leader's persistence led to all agreeing that a visit to the Honey Farm cafe was an excellent idea. Hot honey cake and scones and lots of Olympic chat made for a pleasant interlude. Home via North Rigton, a 16 mile ride with plenty of good hills enjoyed by all. Sue Couture

Medium Ride Report

About 14 riders, including several recently joined members, opted for the medium ride to Almscliffe Crag. We had a pleasant ride up to Little Alms Cliff, in ideal cycling weather and less wind than usual. In Stainburn Wood we met a group of cycling promoters, offering free samples of Gatorade, who were promptly invited to join Wheel Easy. After this point, the ride leader's knowledge of the route became sadly lacking; fortunately Malcolm came to the rescue and guided us successfully through Leathley and Braythorne, up to Almscliffe Crag, where we paused for a photo and banana stop. It was mentioned here that Malcolm's promise to some newer riders that there was "only one hill" proved to be rather less than accurate! We returned to Hornbeam via several more hills, spurred on by Deena's enthusiastic singing. 21 challenging miles, some lovely views and good company. Sue W.

Medium Plus Ride Report

Martin B kindly led off the faster group and Dave P another group which left me with 11 riders on one of the finest Wheel Easy rides in our calendar.

Geraldine suggested it could go on our Desert Island list of top routes!

Justin and visitor Ed had never ridden across the Toll Bridge at Hartwith and several had not cycled the Sawley Moor Lane route to Fountains after Brimham Rocks. Terry helped to shepherd my flock and led us on a route beyond Sawley avoiding the nasty dirty track.

We met Eric returning from half of the long ride and joined Dave P and his gang at Spa Gardens for lunch. Home, stopping at the memorial to the Canadian Air Crew at Aldborough and at The Blue Bell at Arkendale which has plans for a fine refurbishment. 47 miles. Gia

Dave P's Report

As usual quite a few takers for the med plus ride, well they would be especially for a club whose numbers now top 300. Wow!!

Away went the fast group, but still high on the numbers for manageable groups, so another group needed, "I nominate Dave P" said Roy, he was fixed with a stern gaze "You will lead to Knox Bridge Roy" was the reply.

So away went Roy closely followed by Ben, Bob, Dave P and John.

The pace was fast and the question was asked had Roy smelt the bacon cooking?

It has been said that if Roy was in a three man race with Sir Chris and Brad Wiggins and instead of a gold medal as the prize it was a bacon sarnie or a full English he would burn them off.

At Hampsthwaite Terry B and Robert appeared then disappeared only to appear again near Hartwith.

Then it was the long swoop down on the B6265 to Sawley avoiding the steep descent and climb out of Hebden Wood. In order not to feel to wimpish we took the single track Low Gate out of Sawley which finishes with a naughty little hill.

In Studley Park we met up with Eric and two ladies (not a word to Di about this) they were on the Roses Ride and Eric was being very attentive in taking their photo and offering advice instead of suffering on the Wheel Easy Long Ride.

Another swoop and into Spa Gardens Cafe, already catering for riders from Darlington soon to be joined by Gia and the rest of the Med Plus Ride.

Refreshment was taken outside (very pleasant), the main topic of conversation being the Olympics (didn't we do well!).

Then on to Skelton on Ure via Littlethorpe but at Boroughbridge three EG`s Bob, Dave P and Roy found the strain of passing the café too much and succumbed, but felt much better about this on being joined by Ben.

It was nice to take afternoon tea outside and watch the rest of the Med Plus ride speed past on their way to Aldborough.

Then who should come out of the café but Eric`s Ladies, a quick chat then they were on their Rosy way.

The four then made their way to Harrogate in a leisurely manner, the mad element having a day off today.

A very pleasant ride with hardly any wind (that's novel). Dave P

Medium Plus Fast Pace

A fairly hilly ride to Brimham Rocks via the never-ending Stripe Lane and onto Fountains Abbey meant that only seven riders fancied the trip at a faster pace today. Gia introduced us to '2nd timer' Richard and asked if we could look after him as he was new to Wheel Easy - no problem was the answer. However this turned out to be more of a challenge than first anticipated as we struggled to see him in the distance on the climbs. Lesson of the day - always be wary of new riders whose bikes have a Union Flag and their name on them. After a quick stop at the end of Stripe Lane to re-group and catch our breath, this being the first time some of the group had taken this route, we continued past Brimham Rocks and onto Ripon through Studley Park. It was then the usual Ripon café stop at the Spa Gardens, which for once we were able to enjoy outside. We had obviously made good time today as we met up with Eric who had travelled a more direct route from Hornbeam and there was still no sign of Gia's touring pacers as we left. Richard decided to head back to Harrogate by a more direct route whilst we continued with the planned route to Boroughbridge, where we paced ourselves against a couple of Harrogate Nova riders, and then onto Aldborough and Marton. I eventually left the group at the old A1 as they headed back to Harrogate. A thoroughly

enjoyable ride today in excellent weather conditions as it was not too hot for that drag up Stripe Lane and in good company too. 7 x 45 miles (approx).
Martyn B.

Long Ride Report

6 riders opted for the long ride today - Peter, Glyn, Pete, Eric, James and myself. It was decided to reverse the original route due to some similarities with last week's ride so we headed to Knaresborough the Low Bridge route.

As can often happen in fast moving pro tour pelotons, a moment's confusion and a touch of wheels and riders go down. We were no different after a small confusion and a sudden change of direction at the front of the pack and sudden braking caused Eric and Glyn to go down. Glyn appeared to have come off worst in his detour to the tarmac but being a hardy bunch, breath was gathered, bikes checked and we were on our way.

We headed out to Ripon via Bishop Monkton and as we turned to Hutton Bank, Eric departed back to decorating duties. The ride continued via Melmerby, Carthorpe and Snape before stopping at Masham for refreshments. Special note has to be made about the Flapjack at Suncatchers. It appears the cook had forgotten to cut the portions as the amount provided almost completely covered the plate and in terms of weight alone was causing me concern how I was going to get up the climbs with it inside me. With hindsight, a worthy photo opportunity missed.

Suitably fed we headed out for the main events of the day, the climb over to Lofthouse followed by the climb up Yorke's Folly. We picked up the route of the Yorkshire Cancer Research ride who were also suffering, sorry riding over to Lofthouse. I am not sure whether it helped passing some of the riders or whether thoughts of 'If their walking, so could I' slipped into our minds. We regathered at the top for the rider photo and after doing the climb last week the other way round, the general feeling was this was the 'easy' way. The descent into Lofthouse was interesting as usual before we cracked on along to Pateley Bridge where a banana break was had.

The climb up Yorke's Folly was challenging and cramp was starting to set in so we headed back via Darley, Birstwith, Hampsthwaite and Knox Lane where we went our own ways.

A challenging ride of 69 ish miles with great company. Simon H



