

Sunday, September 27, 2015

Wheel Easy Ride Report 491

Short Ride

Welcome to new member, Tracey and to Sue, a returning "Wheelie" .

Well it was the season of misseds and yellow fruitfulness – "misseds" because by the time we had reached the end of the path from the showground to the A661, we were missing four from the original fourteen who had kindly "signed up" at Hornbeam. Admittedly, Justin had said he and the three friends with him would catch us up but alas and alack, nought there was astirring or even appearing. Caroline, with typical concern, returned to look and concluded that they must have headed for Ridding Lane rather than Forest Moor. We assumed that we would converge at Follifoot but this did not materialise so can only hope that Justin et al had a jolly time. I must say, I was disappointed on many counts but especially the one depriving me of a good look at Justin's friend's saddle – a quick glance across the carpark at Hornbeam had revealed a magnificent example of saddlery being both highly polished and, not to put too finer point on it, comfortable. What a seat! Hopefully, there will be a next time...

After Forest Moor we cycled up Thistle Hill and then threw ourselves on the mercy of the drivers on the bypass and headed safely via the thicket into Follifoot and on to Spofforth for the pose and pout beside the Memorial Gardens. By this time a little sunshine had appeared as we carried on to Little Ribston and thence to the gates of the Brethren Meeting House. Caroline and Peter opted to continue and went home via, Scriven, Brearton, Ripley and the Greenway clocking up 28 miles. The remaining eight decided to take coffee at a recently discovered venue at the Lido (The Watermill) and we arrived to sample their delights – and very delightful they were too. John had the most scrummy looking bacon and egg butty while others had scones and jam. A good find and, by the time we left, blue skies and warm sunshine had appeared!

Jo and Val departed speedily to see the rugby – in Jo's case the recording of yesterday's match against Wales!! Val was going to watch Scotland v the USA which husband Kevin was actually seeing live. Jean led Tracey and Sue back along the extension route taken earlier by Caroline and Peter.

Sarah, John and I returned home after 20 miles .We discussed Sue T's and Sue O's trek and hoped they were having fun.

Thank you everyone and here's hoping Justin is now relaxing having led the "abandoned" to safety.

Sue Downes





Medium Ride

A small group set off to Wetherby, Gateway to the South and since the weather was foggy, lights were essential. We passed through the Showground and Follifoot until we reached the railway track at Spofforth which we followed to Wetherby. The route was changed slightly as we continued through Wetherby to Boston Spa where we had a comfort break.

Here, the group split into two, the larger going back to Harrogate via Wetherby again while the smaller followed the advertised route through Cowthorpe, Little Ribston and Knaresborough, with a stop for coffee and cake at Thorpe Arch café. The foggy weather cleared by the time we got to Wetherby and just as we returned to Hookstone, the skies cleared and the forecasted sun appeared. 31miles, A1 D

Medium Plus – The Other Group

Despite the fog and the damp, autumnal morning there was quite a crowd for the Medium Plus Ride and, even after pushing the fast boys out of the way, Dave S still had too many to contend with. Keith and I didn't step back fast enough when he asked for volunteer leaders, so we took up the mantle of Benevolent Dictator for the day. We did have Liz P with us, so there was no danger of going too far astray.

Our group of thirteen made excellent progress to Lotherton Hall but, as we all had our phones switched off (a sign of advanced years!) we did not receive the flurry of texts and messages to alert us to the fact that it was over-run with a vintage car rally, until we scooted round the corner to be faced by a long, and lengthening queue at the café. We ate some energy bars and then beat a hasty retreat, resolving to find a café in Tadcaster. Hunger and caffeine withdrawal symptoms made for more speedy progress, pausing briefly at the new Leeds East Airport (formerly RAF Church Fenton). The sun was finally bursting forth and layers were discarded before we entered the excellent Lemon Tree Café in Tadcaster, just as Dave S and his party were leaving. All things "cheese" were recommended and sensible size portions were served. Some of us had to admit to feeling a bit queasy afterwards but, as my mother used to say "your eyes are bigger than your belly!"

The rest of the day was really warm and our happy little band had a thoroughly enjoyable and uneventful return journey. Keith baled out in Wetherby due to a knee problem and handed over the mantle of Benevolent Dictator to H – so we all did as Liz told us and used the track to Spofforth, then the usual way home.

Another excellent late summer's day out, with plenty of laughter and banter. Particular thanks to Liz P for astoundingly good back marking and surreptitious leading (I had to look up how to spell that!!). Helen & Keith T



THE Medium Plus Ride

It was busier than the opening day of the M&S sales this morning at Hornbeam Park. There were upwards of 28 wannabee Medium Plussers.

Thank you Liz and Helen and Keith for stepping up to lighten the load.

After regrouping at Burn Bridge, we were seven, and off we went at a pretty cracking pace, wiping the condensation from our specs so we could see the road.

Lotherton Hall was reached in well under two hours, only for us to discover more hordes, this time up for the Vintage Car Show; not that we actually saw any cars. So plan B was invoked and it was off to the Lemon Tree at Taddy. Our only impedance was when I carelessly lost the female members of my little flock. By the time that I had braved the TT trials which seemed to be underway, and rejoined with the ladies, it was a case of "who needs men?", since they had sorted out their own mechanical issue.

Ever was it thus I expect; where are they when you want one?

Lunch was excellent as ever at this venue, where we were re-acquainted with both a faster, and a slower section of our ride.

An uneventful return via Wetherby in good sunshine saw us back in Hornbeam before three o'clock.

Thanks to Janet, Jen, Debbie, and DEB. (That's Dave, Eric, and Bill, for those who don't know).
Happy days.....Dave S.



Long Ride

It was much chillier than I was expecting, and en route to Hornbeam Park several times I had to wipe the moisture from my glasses from the mist overhanging North Yorkshire. 6 of us went out on the long ride, and from a meteorological perspective, we were heading in the worst possible direction: i.e. through the Vale of York renowned for mist hanging around much longer than elsewhere. And so it proved today! We stopped for coffee/lunch at Curious Table in Easingwold, and whilst there we could see signs of the mist raising, but it was a long time before the sun truly emerged and the temperature finally began to rise. Our journey south from Easingwold took us through Huby, Sutton on the Forest, Shipton and along the cycle paths through York to Naburn, before stopping for afternoon tea at Doyly's Tea Rooms in Bolton Percy: all china tea cups and saucers with - of course - doylis in-between. Quintessentially English, and to complete the picture we enjoyed our tea and cakes sitting outside in their English country garden. The sun had finally made its belated appearance and so it was possible for some of us to shed our jackets for the last leg of the ride. We arrived back in Harrogate at 5pm having completed 75 miles on much flatter terrain than the usual long rides. Eric



