

Wednesday, June 22, 2016

## Wednesday Rides

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### **Poddlers' Ride**

Summer solstice, strawberry moons, and we don't seem to have had any summer yet. But that is fine for a good bike ride, except you need to take clothing for every eventuality. So the Poddlers', four today despite holiday commitments, painting and decorating, and being lost, set off to Beckwithshaw prepared suitably for all or everything. We snuck speedily through Moor Park, and up to Little Almscliff with a following wind, where we encountered the yellow jumper of Sue's friend, had a photo shoot and then continued rapidly to Menwith avoiding any possible extra loops which had been bandied about before we left Hornbeam. Sadly the road closed sign on the route that would have taken us to Darley and Birstwith was still in the middle of the road and despite Neil's offer of a downhill reccy the thought of having to retrace any steps or wheels was too much for all of us. New Caroline and Neil seemed delighted with the prospect of having to pop into Sophie's for something substantial, with a whole peloton of bikes parked outside. Whereas Sue and I headed back out of Hampsthwaite to Killinghall and the Greenway in order to get home to prepare for forthcoming holiday jaunting. We delightfully bumped into Max who had just left Steve having put the world to rights with the cakes and ladies of Ripley church, and Allison and Surjon who had followed their own route in order to get home for afternoons doing important things. Thank you New Caroline and Neil and Sue for your company..... have a lovely time going up the Elbe. 26 gentle miles at 9mph. or a few paces and 54 floors.



### **Wednesday Wanderers' Ride**

Twelve riders set off from Hornbeam on the best morning we've had for a while. It was still hard to pluck up courage to take a layer of clothing off and the gathering cloud proved us right.

Out past the Squinting Cat and through Beckwithshaw up to Little Almscliffe where we regrouped. At the junction at Norwood, Max and Steve left us to head straight for Ripley leaving the rest of us to drop down the hill to Swinsty reservoir and across the dam. At the junction Mike insisted that we should go up to Timble in the hope of cakes at the village hall. As a true Yorkshireman he had worked out that if they were open he could have two coffee and cake stops here and at Ripley for the price of £5. Unfortunately he was disappointed as they were shut.

On to Blubberhouses where Liz tried to persuade us to take the road up to Thruscross but no one seemed keen. Instead we went as planned up Hardisty Hill and past Menwith Hill. down to Birstwith, up Clint Bank and through the woods to Ripley. Here we met up with Max and Steve who had been sat putting the world to rights while the rest of us were climbing hills.

Sat in the sunshine eating cakes and drinking tea and coffee we had a long and meaningful discussion about tomorrow's referendum. It will be interesting to see who was right.

We finally set off back along the Greenway to Harrogate after a good ride and interesting conversation. Andrew H



### **Wednesday Ride**

With a lot of the regulars still away there were only six riders trying to decide where to ride on a sunny morning. The hills beckoned and Toft Gate Farm was mooted but there is still uncertainty about the opening hours and they were once again not answering the phone (why?)

Anyway we decided to head for Pateley Bridge and make decisions when we got closer.

The Greenway and Hollybank Wood was the route then through Birstwith and over the Toll bridge to avoid the roadworks and on the main road to Glasshouses.

With no response from Toft Gate we set off to Teacups and the usual great food at reasonable prices. Some amusement was had with the newly positioned Vet signs before we decided on the second half of the route. Duly refreshed we set off to Wath for a bout of climbing going up the steep climb where we took out time to enjoy the great views over the reservoir (well that was our excuse for some walking!) and then along the top of the ridge onto the moor. From there we headed for Fellbeck and then climbed back up to Brimham Rocks where we once again enjoyed clear views across the AONB. The payback for all the climbing was a wonderful descent down towards Ripley where we decided on a second tea stop at the church. From there it was back to the Greenway and home. James left us at early to make his way to Knaresborough and the remainder of the group crossed the Stray before dispersing after another good days riding.

Not a long ride (37 miles) but lots of hills (2100') and some great views in wonderful weather. Some interesting chat about a variety of subjects (we ignored the referendum) and as always great company.

Kevin





### **Wednesday Long Ride**

Masham is fast assuming the mantle of a cycle-route decision zone, as yet again the call at Hornbeam was "Masham and see..." In this fog of direction, eight set off towards Ripley for the constitutional stop before heading north past Fountains, Kirkby M and Grewelthorpe, amid large tractors/trailers getting in the grass for winter feed, reaching Johnny Baghdad's for 11.30. Some chose lunch, while others chose elevenses – decisions with consequences later in the day. Returning via Lofthouse was on the table for a while, but was superseded by Middleham and a flat route back. Luckily we had Peter J with us who had knowledge of the loop over Ellingstring, as he had used it on a Sunday ride very recently. Fine tuning at Jervaulx saw us nicely to East Witton and the broad green of the village high street. Challenging gradients and wonderful unfolding views of distant Pennine moors kept us all thinking that this was grand day to be out. The scenic loop from East Witton to Coverham and Middleham was dedicated to absent friend Richard P, currently touring Islay. Coverham, however, posed a problem. Usually we cyclists regard "Road Ahead Closed" signs with impunity, knowing that there is normally a way on foot and therefore bike. Not so at Coverham Bridge. As our picture shows, NYCC really meant it! Concrete barriers tight against the parapets left room for only the slenderest of pedestrians. Luckily a mason was working on the damaged parapet and was content for us to lift bikes over and progress on foot. Thank you, sir – a gesture that saved us from a serious detour up Coverdale. On a different day, this might have been welcome. Middleham was reached at c1.30 for a banana break, during which it emerged that the next realistic prospect of a timely cafe stop would be Ripon, a thought that had the elevenses folk rumbling a little in the midriff area. From Middleham it was straight into 100-mile ride territory, including that Bermuda-like triangle of lanes between Bedale and Ripon. But, with several of us fresh from last Sunday's 100-miler, there were no navigationals and familiar landmarks were still in place – the chained up dog and the fetid animal corpse at the roadside, for example! With the aid of some line-out riding and draughting we made it to Ripon Spa cafe for 3.15, although Martin insists that he shouldn't have had to complain before others did their turn on the front. The scones tasted very good, especially to the elevenses group who by this stage were feeling the effects of their earlier decision. The route back was via Bishop M and Markington, another reprise of Sunday, but without the rain, thankfully. Back to Hornbeam by 5.00, with 77 miles in the legs and over 3600 ft. of ascent. Terry Smith



### **EGs' Ride**

We had thirteen riders at Low Bridge but not unlucky for us. Some of us had had a somewhat tiring but great ride, and two of us looked at vintage bikes in a muddy field somewhat like Glastonbury, over the weekend.

So it was decided to head for Wetherby to a refurbished Morrison's and chat about our adventures.

However on arriving in the new gleaming Morrison's caff, "cafe shock" awaited us (for the first time) as York Wednesday Wheelers and the EG`s and non-cyclists queued.

After patiently waiting and getting missed for our toasted tea cakes a "Magnificent Seven" headed for Otley to take afternoon tea in the Leeds Cafe in the Market place and splendid it was to.

Just as we about to leave a "Famous Five" arrived at our cafe in the Town Square, they had been to Cockpit Farm Cafe, where Norman was not pleased because they were shut, it seems there was something in their advertisements that did not define to closely the meaning of "open to trade" and "licenced to trade".

So while they ordered away we went to Asquith and the joys of Gaspquith Bank being accompanied by York Wednesday Wheelers, in fact all the way to Beckwithshaw. The famous five returning via Kirkby Overblow.

It was a shortish relaxing ride and it was a joy to enjoy the alfresco cafe society of Otley and people watch, hearing comments like "I bet yon pulls a fair plough", "If you can't fight get a big hat" and the ultimate accolade "I bet yon a funny b.....". Dave P



