

Wednesday, July 20, 2016

## Wednesday Rides

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### Wednesday Wanderers Ride

The weather forecast couldn't make up its mind. Last night it forecast sunshine and showers virtually all day, then this morning it decided it would be fine till 11am, when it would chuck it down for 2 hours. Either way, it was going to be warm and humid. Despite this uncertainty, 14 or 15 opted for the Wanderers, including Max on his shiny classic Colnago, although he did say he had never taken it out in the rain. He did, however, have an 'ass saver' attached to the saddle (see photo of arse and arse saver...), so he was prepared. We had heard that Walton Head Lane was 'closed', but we reckoned that we might be able to squeeze or charm our way through the barriers at the junction with Leeds Road. We set off in one group, trying to make sure we kept in small-ish groups to avoid irritating the cars too much. Leadhall Lane and Burn Bridge and then right to Walton Head Lane, which was indeed signposted as 'closed', but we did manage to get past the signs. Joy of joys! They have resurfaced nearly all of Walton Head Lane to Kirkby Overblow, and it is a delight to cycle on. (Don't tell everyone, or it will be packed with cyclists.) On to Sicklinghall and Wetherby, with the weather still pretty damn good and no real sign of rain. Through Wetherby, where Max left us. He said he had to prepare his caravan, but I think he feared rain might spoil his Colnago and test the arse saver beyond its limits...) On to the A1 cycle path, and then along the lovely, quiet, well-surfaced road parallel to the A1 on its eastern side. With a following wind at least two of us reached 29 mph without undue effort. That made two roads with lovely smooth surfaces today. Around Bramham and towards Tadcaster, once again on a quiet, tree-lined road, which gave some welcome shade in places, as it was quite hot in the sun. A short jiggle over the A64 to bring us into Tadcaster on a small, quiet road. Straight past the 'road closed' and 'no entry' signs to the temporary footbridge, where we met a friendly policewoman on a bike who agreed to have her photo taken with us. After causing an obstruction on the footbridge by loitering where it was not sensible to loiter, we discussed coffee and agreed on Thorp Arch, as it was likely to be able to accommodate all of us, which was indeed the case. When we emerged from our long-ish break, the sky had darkened and the humidity increased, and we feared the heavens might open shortly. Back along the cycle path into Wetherby and then the Harland Way to Spofforth and Follifoot, but still no rain. In fact, by the time we had passed Rudding and had reached the Showground, the threat of rain had receded, and I suspect everyone got home or to Hornbeam unsoaked.

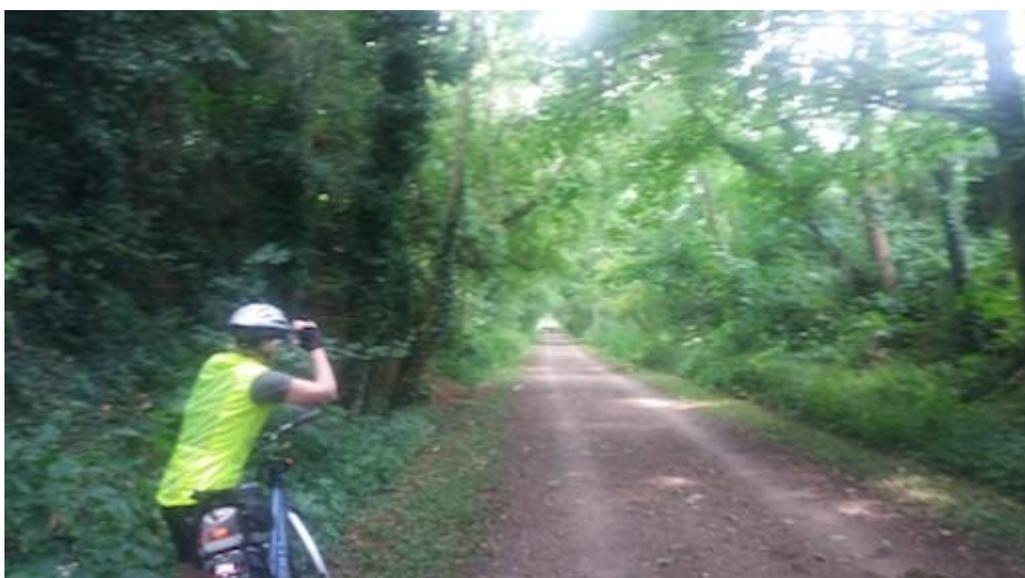
About 38 miles. CPS





### **Poddlers Ride**

A seemingly normal Poddlers' ride, on a rather strange humid hot day. Burnbridge, Kirby Overblow (where Jo left us to see a television ariel person), Wetherby, Boston Spa, and back to Wetherby, where we stopped unusually for a very necessary cup of coffee. Thus to the Harland Way, where bike riding turned to Bull Running at Pamplona or was it cattle herding in in Montana, with an escaped herd of heffers. Goodness knows where they came from but we...well they, eventually ended up happily playing in a field of barley in Spofforth after a speedy run from Wetherby with a very worried Monica ready to escape over a fence, if there was a d'irection change at anytime. .A very hot 29 miles. 15,249 steps and 79 floors. CG



### **EGs Ride**

The foreboding message of impending thunder storms from the Met Office, didn't dissuade eight EGs including newby, Geoff, welcolme, assembling at Low Bridge for their usual "fix" of "Tour de Yorkshire". Our departure, accompanied by a few, not entirely unexpected heavy raindrops, aimed south to gather at our usual waterhole in Wetherby, all the while expecting dark clouds to envelope the skies and the forecasted rain to descend, whilst we tucked into our refreshments. We were fortunate the forecasters seemed to get it wrong so were able to continue on our way, having in mind, perhaps the need to return home earlier than usual to avoid getting soaked (again).

Aiming to circle around Thorp Arch & Wighill, we set off on our journey along the cycle path passing through the industrial estate where at the roundabout, Norman then left us to return home early.

Towards Wighill we crossed paths with the Wednesday WheelEasiers with a friendly wave and thereafter continued through Healaugh in a hot and muggy atmosphere. In anticipation of a deterioration of weather conditions the remaining seven of us circled north past Askham & Rufforth and then onto Tockwith, pausing briefly for coffees, teas etc at the local post, Dave S even managed a tin of baked beans to top up his reserves, whilst Colin, recently returned from adventure at sea, drifted off to the local pub, citing the need for a cold drink!!!

The wind had picked up a little and the skies seem to darken so we pushed on to avoid the expected soaking. Reaching the Wetheby road junction south of Little Ribston we realised that we were about to beat any impending storms. It was at this point Bill decided to strike for home in Pannel via his preferred route through Spofforth, the remaining six heading directly to Knaresborough, and thereafter, home. Despite the doom and gloomy dreaded forecast the threats of rain were just that. Nothing happened!!! Well we at least got out and enjoyed a brief ride in convivial company and even managing to complete 38 miles albiet flat but at a brisk pace, just in case. ----- Dave Watson (Sorry no pictures).

## Wednesday Long Ride (Part 2)

Seven riders arrived at Wilsill and agreed to head for the tea rooms at How Stean Gorge. Almost immediately after setting off Richard P did a U-turn and disappeared from view. Five riders continued on their way to Pateley Bridge and onward to How Stean. When we reached the turning for Wath it was quite clear that we were missing Richard P and Terry S, not knowing their exact route we decided to go directly to How Stean. As we were leaving the tea rooms we came across Richard and Terry who were just arriving, even so we decided to continue the ride to Masham via Lofthouse. After consuming several scones and a slice of red cake at Masham we headed for home via Grewlthorpe, with three riders heading for Ripon and the remaining two going to Harrogate via Kirkby Malzeard, Winksley and Fountains. A very pleasant and challenging ride with the occasional threat of rain which did not materialise. Peter J

Despite depletions owing to the Reeth away-day, a respectable seven left Hornbeam en route to How Stean. However, Stewart's front changer was having an away day, wouldn't drop onto the small ring and was unresponsive to the obvious things like increasing the cable tension. He headed back to Starbeck from Clint, having been replaced seamlessly by John S who had guessed that he might catch us up at Ripley, where our usual constitutional stop was in progress. A wonderfully obliging NYCC road gang kindly allowed us through their road closure to Burnt Yates, even though they did have to stop operations while we filed past. Thank you gents. Brimham, Smelthouses, Wilsill and Glasshouses marked our progress to Pateley, where the group split as Richard P and I diverted to The Knott and Panorama Walk – the site of many fine villas, dating apparently from the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the railway gave wealthy Bradford merchants the opportunity for their country retreats. Hot pursuit, literally so, took us to the turn for the reservoirs at Lofthouse. Thinking the main group had gone there prior to lunch, we enjoyed a steady pull up to Scar House where there was no sign of the bunch. On the way back to Stean for lunch, we stopped to explore the railway tunnel portal, lost in the dense foliage of summer (see photo, where I appear to have lost the bike). 100 metres from the cafe we met the group, fuelled up and off to Masham via Trapping Hill. Declining the offer to join them, lunch followed at the cafe. Reports came through that the bunch had topped Trapping Hill before 2.00 which meant that we wouldn't make it ourselves. After lunch we explored the bridle path from Bouthwaite to Wath as an alternative to the usual blast from Lofthouse to Pateley and in homage to the Reeth away-dayers. Hardly an alternative, it's really something completely different, better suited to robust touring or mountain bikes but it was full of interest, not least the many opportunities to stop and view the lake. Descending on foot to tarmac at Wath, the next leg involved a severe climb up Silver Hill to Wath Lane in oven-door heat. As the photo shows, Richard judged the bench too hot for a banana break, but managed a calendar picture of Gouthwaite and Upper Nidderdale. Once on the top of the moor, with early heather in bloom, it was mainly downhill to Grantley and Fountains for a much-needed free cup of tea. The handy short-cut from High to Low Grantley proved a trial as we ploughed our way through two galleries of thistles, nettles, brambles and less aggressive overgrowth – strictly a route for winter, we felt. Free tea and a chat with the owner of an ancient Dawes were followed by a steady ride back to Harrogate, via Markington and the Greenway to conclude the lost miles at almost 5.45 pm. Mileage: 61; ascent c 4200 ft.

Terry Smith





### **Wednesday Awayday Ride**

The awayday routes are usually a collaborative effort but due to a last minute change and holidays this one from Reeth was exclusively Colin's so when he mentioned 'a little bit of off-road' we were filled with trepidation....but more of that later.

10 riders gathered in Reeth under black clouds, thunder and a few clashed of lightening and we thought we were in for a real wet day and set off with jackets etc at the ready.

Out of Reeth and on to Marrick Priory and our first walk of the day as we pushed our bikes up the Coast to Coast footpath in our first rain shower of the day.

After another short ride we went off road again as we made our way up the valley and even the postman was surprised to see us on road bikes as he said he only ever saw mountain bikes on this route!

We got to the farm and began walking uphill and when we reached the top there were magnificent views- and a walk down!

Colin had promised a superb coffee stop and he didn't let us down as we crossed the rickety bridge we came to the most remote teas garden in the dales at Helwith.

We got a warm welcome from Jenny and fresh baked scones and chocolate cake and superb views. Malcolm, who was on his electric bike, arrived via the road route and after a break we set off 2.5 hours into our ride having only ridden/walked 8.5 miles!

However we were now onto the moors with our destination being Barnard Castle and with the sun out we enjoyed a great ride over the rolling scenery into Barnard Castle.

There was another short shower(the last of the day) but we climbed out of the town and made for the grass roofed cafe just off the A66 for a good lunch.

Fully refreshed ( some still full from the scones!) we set off on our route back and ,in particular, the climb of the Strang.

There the group strung out with Sue C taking the polka dot award for making it all the way up- well done!

We were all starting to feel the heat (and our legs!) but we enjoyed the sweep down into Arkengarthdale and then we tackled the climb back up and the ride into Reeth.

It was everything we had come to expect from and Awayday ride- hills, scenery, and tired legs at the end. To this one we added a decent walk and an amazing tea shop!

38 Miles, 1300m of climbing, a great day out and a quirky, but superb route from Colin.

Thanks to everyone who came, to Colin for his route planning and to the weather gods who ensured the worst of the weather missed us! Another great day ride. Kevin







