

Wednesday, April 4, 2018

Wednesday Rides

Wanderers Ride

In search of Swarcliffe... Despite the forecast of rain all day, a reasonable number turned up at Hornbeam today for our jolly around Kettlesing. About 11 of us chose to wander, with an unusual selection of members, including Colin T, James, relatively-new member Mark and number of the usual suspects. With the option of baling out at any particular stage in mind, we headed for Ripley along the Greenway, accompanied, unusually, with some of the longer boys and girls, who were headed for Fountains. We re-met Jean B coming down from the junction with Clint Bank Lane. No rain by Hollybank Woods, nor at the road out of Hampsthwaite towards Kettlesing, where we took a group photo and a photo of a signpost towards the elusive Swarcliffe. Up to Swincliffe, right past Birstwith Hall and then left up Barse Beck Lane (where the local yobbos had of course attempted to render the initial 'B' invisible). I had hoped that none of the group had ever been along B B Lane, but, predictably, both Colin and Michael had, although Colin could not remember where it came out. Left uphill again (there were quite a lot of hills on this ride) towards the A59, but then right towards Kettlesing Bottom and left, (uphill, of course) towards Crow Trees and then right towards Hew Green and the elusive 'Swarcliffe Top'. Across Back Lane and then we follow a sign to Reynard Crag Farm, which we know is notionally a 'no through road'. Having reached R C Farm, the original plan had been to return to Back Lane to descend to Birstwith, but there was a bridleway, about a mile long, which should take us down to the bottom road to Birstwith. After some discussions, and egged on by (mountain-biking) Colin T, we started on this very wet, very muddy, very stony track. After about 150 metres downhill, Geraldine realised that this was not actually a very good idea at all, and turned round to join Alison and James, who were wise enough not to embark on the track. About six fool-hardy souls continued, mainly walking through the slough of despond, till we reached the road, where we searched for puddles to cycle through in order to try and remove some of the mud and undergrowth from our bikes and feet. We rejoined the sensible trio in Ripley Church for the first coffee and cakes of the season. It started to rain as we came out of the Church. We never really found Swarcliffe... About 24 miles CPS.









EGs Ride

Three Sheets of Wet'n'Dry

I doubt there's ever been a WE ride that no-one's turned up for (despite there occasionally being no takers for a certain route!), but Wednesday's EG ride came close. The heavens were most definitely open for business early in the morning, and those not away for Easter or otherwise engaged may have made the decision to make other plans. However, a small handful of souls ventured out, though fate nearly yet prevented the ride - Dave S arrived with truck, Dave P came down with stomach flu, and the ride had just been canned when Dan arrived late - with three bikes at the menders', he'd had to swap a bottom bracket the night before! Then a fourth rider appeared - Peter N, a renegade from the Wednesday WE rides, defected and applied for a day EGs pass - having ridden from Burton Leonard on a solid Carrera hybrid! So it was Dave P ventured to remain and make his way gently homeward, and Dave S, Dan and Peter set off Boroughbridgewards without a written

agenda.

They say those who expect the worst are seldom disappointed - well having come toggled for downpour, we were surprised to find that the roads were markedly wetter than the skies, and divested a layer or two, and - in an EG first - made haste past Morrisons for a first stop at Easingwold. Nidd, Ure and Swale were full to bursting, with numerous pop-up lakes having established themselves overnight, but we even had sunshine as we made the best use of the good weather. We dined at the Curious Table, Dave recalling the exceptional memory skills of the waitress there (I'm sure he has a file on most waitresses stored in his own memory banks.) Debating continuing to Thirsk, our return route was decided for us when Dave's cleat refused to engage, so we returned via Aldwark, not before needing our waterproofs again. Dark clouds helped us make the decision to head straight back rather than diverting to Wetherby. Peter left us at Arkendale and Dave and I parted company at High Bridge just as the skies opened in earnest - soggy perhaps, but all glad of the ride. As the saying goes, Once you're out, it's lovely... Dan.



