



BEDFORDSHIRE NEWS



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FROM THE EDITOR

PAT OWEN

Christmas always takes me by surprise and this year is no exception, especially as early winter has been so mild. I trust you are all getting to grips with your preparations for the festive season and I would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and all the best for 2012.

Our AGM took place in November and a report of the meeting is included in this edition, together with details of the new committee.

It has come to our attention that rangers at Priory Country Park have received a number of complaints about inconsiderate cyclists, using the shared path through the park. Whilst it seems unlikely that CTC members would be guilty of such behaviour, can I remind all our cyclists to give adequate warning to pedestrians on any shared path and not to use excessive speed and take care whilst passing them.

One of our long standing members, Jenny Crook, is leaving Beds to live in Yorkshire. We will miss her, particularly on the monthly classic ride, and I would like to take this opportunity to wish her good luck in her new home and hours of happy cycling – she may, of course, have a few more hills to contend with!

AGM 6 November 2011

The 85th AGM was held on the 6th November and Veronica Brown welcomed 14 members to the meeting.

Election of Officials: All the current officials were willing to stand for re-election with the exception of Dave Lukes, who had decided to stand down as Secretary because of ill health. The meeting thanked Dave for his hard work over the past couple of years and wished him well for the future.

Acting Secretary, Carole Murphy was elected as Secretary and Chris Waters was elected as Treasurer. The new committee line up is as follows:

**President/Easyriders/Album Custodian
Chairperson (committee)**

Secretary

Treasurer

Promotions Officer

Registration Officer

Welfare Officer

Newsletter Editor

Webmaster

Auditor

Veronica Brown

Neville Hobday

Carole Murphy

Christopher Waters

Chantal Lewis

John Harris

Richard Marshall

Pat Owen

Andy Raybould

Barry Frost

Summaries of the Acting Secretary's and Easyriders' reports follow.

Acting Secretary (Carole Murphy)

I feel the year can be summarised very simply in two words: all change! The new committee has worked hard to improve communication with members by email; also to organise the creation of a new CTC Bedfordshire website in conjunction with our webmaster, Andy Raybould. David Lukes, as Secretary, ensured that all ride leaders were reminded of CTC policy requirements by circulating key documents relating to 'Good Practice' when leading groups.

This, along with painstakingly compiling and updating details of CTC volunteers and officials together with contact information, before he had to take time out because of ill health, has made my task as acting secretary easier than it would otherwise have been. Thank you Dave.

At national level, a consultation on Member Group structures and procedures overwhelmingly endorsed changes to give Member Groups more flexibility and freedom to conduct their affairs as they see fit, while of course fulfilling the existing mandatory requirements for the election and responsibilities of committee members. Relevant policies are being redrafted by HQ.

Thankfully, how to ride a bike does not change..... and you never forget!

Easyriders: see Veronica's report.

We have continued to offer Classic, Gentle Rough Stuff, Evening and Starter Rides on a monthly basis.

Classic Rides have been enjoyed by between three and six each month, covering all directions from Bedford.

Gentle Rough Stuff has been co-ordinated by Stuart Mason since April. Twelve took part in The Rough Stuff Fellowship Ride, which was led by Dave Lukes, from Shuttleworth to Tempsford.

Starter and **Evening Rides** took place between April and September, but interest remained low, with a maximum of three on any of them.

85th Anniversary Celebrations:-

On Sunday, 10th July 22 members from all over Bedfordshire enjoyed a picnic in Ampthill Park and 6 members took part in the car assisted ride from Oundle to Kirby Hall on 21st August.

Registration Officer Report

The September figure for CTC Bedfordshire membership is 590, an increase of 40 members since July 2010.

Community involvement

CTC Bedfordshire is actively involved in the various cycling forums established by local councils.

In addition it works closely and effectively with local cycling campaigns such as Cycling Campaign for North Beds.

Easyriders (Veronica Brown)

We have had rides on most weekends, but 3 were cancelled due to snow and several others shortened or poorly attended because of heavy rain. We had 22 Saturday and 50 Sunday rides, plus one showing of digi-slides, one Christmas lunch and one summer supper.

Car assisted Sunday rides attract more people as they open up new ground. Parking at Salcey Forest, we rode along the Grand Union Canal from Bozenham to Stoke Bruerne. We rode the Lode Way twice this year, parking at Anglesey Abbey.

7 rides were altered, usually due to weather conditions. The shortest distance travelled was 12 miles to Danish Camp and the furthest was 45 to Higham Ferrers.

I did think that having a museum to go to would make the ride interesting, but the Glenn Miller Museum and the 306 Squadron Museum had no takers. I do hope that Stotfold Mill will continue to appeal to members – maybe the added attraction of an event helps.

4 members of the section did the Churches Ride in September, 2 cycling and 2 walking, raising about £380 for the churches. The winner of the CTC points competition is Veronica with 169, followed by Ian Osborn with 160 and Phil Lund with 145. If anyone would like to organise this section please get in touch with me. (Veronica intends to continue as section secretary until next year's AGM. Editor)

GENTLE ROUGH STUFF

These rides were started by Dave Lukes and since his illness have been organised by Stuart Mason, aided by Roy Pearman. Stuart emailed Carole Murphy shortly before the AGM and reported that a variety of rides had taken place since April, ranging from 15 to 31 miles. Numbers attending varied from 2 to 6 riders, depending on the weather.

Destinations included really good runs to Twinwoods, Grafham Water, Sandy Hills and beyond, Pirton Hills, Potton Wood and the old Roman road and tracks to the east. We understand that there were also unintentional passing visits through the odd rave or two!

Stuart believes that some of the rides (especially those led by Roy, he says) are well worth repeating but is also busy thinking of new ideas for 2012. If anyone would like more details on these rides do contact Stuart on: **01767 316054** or you could email him on:

stuart.v.mason@googlegmail.com

LESLEY NORMAN

Members may recollect that Lesley Norman, a Beds CTC member was tragically killed when cycling near Lombez in Southern France. Committee

member, Richard Marshall attended an event to celebrate Lesley's life held at the RSPB headquarters near Sandy, where Lesley had been employed for 22 years.

Over a hundred of Lesley's family, friends, work colleagues and others wanting to pay respects attended the event.

An audio-visual of Lesley's life was presented, showing many aspects of Lesley's life, including her love of cycling. This was followed by a planting of a Sweetheart Cherry Tree in the lovely grounds of the RSPB in memory of Lesley.

The final part of the celebration was the showing of 'Born to Fly', the RSPB's latest film production, dedicated to Lesley, who had worked with the RSPB team to bring this film about cranes to fruition.

LAST WORD

We are aware, as the CTC Bedfordshire committee, that we represent the whole of the county, but most active members seem to come from Bedford and the north of the county – hence advertised runs lists and other events reflect this northern bias, (though we did hold the anniversary ride in July in Ampthill, as we believed this to be a good central point for members in the whole of our area).

We would very much like to learn about the cycling activities and the views of members in Luton and the south – do you join rides organised by other cycling organisations? Perhaps you are happy cycling as part of an informal group? Do you get together with other CTC members in Luton and the south? Would you be interested in organising CTC rides in your area? If you have something to say do get touch: see '**contacts**' page 1.

Stop Press: A Bedford school is seeking a volunteer to teach bike maintenance to Duke of Edinburgh's Award pupils, preparing to take on a challenging cycle expedition. Interested? Contact Neville (see page 1) by Jan 10th.