

York CTC Social Section Newsletter – October 2007

Well what can you say about this last Summer? Wet, wet, wet springs to mind! However the spirits of the York Section were not to be dampened. With more weekends and holidays planned than ever and, of course, the PBP rolled round again for some of our members, including virgin PBP'er Brett Hill.

The Section managed to get a trip away every month over the Summer.

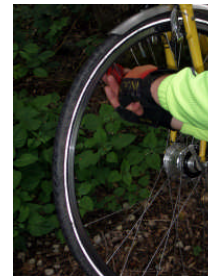
Starting in May with a weekend to stay in the new YHA flagship hostel, Abbey House in Whitby, certainly an improvement on the previous property, however this is reflected in the cost at £20/night, but this does include an excellent breakfast. The Summer was rounded off nicely with a PG Tours trip to North Norfolk, where the weather was the best we've had for any trip this year.

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Edwinstowe – Sherwood Forest Hostel Weekend

Meeting at the fisherman's bridge on a cloudy Saturday morning. We set off on what would become an interesting ride down to Edwinstowe, using mainly cycle routes (TPT route 62 from Selby) and a café stop in Snaith. It all changed with a rather scary crossing of the 'East Coast' main line, when a high-speed train went whistling past (*the train was rather closer to some, than had been anticipated*). Worst was to come, when Steve lost 7 spokes and damaged his mudguard, when a branch got caught in his wheel. Fortunately, the wheel remained true and a cycle shop was found just down the road in Bentley. It was decided to use the nearby Café while the wheel was repaired. Back roads were used after Doncaster (light rain) to get to Worksop, then route 6 through 'Clumber Park' and the last couple of wet miles on tracks to the Hostel.



Steve's Wheel



John, Elaine and Linda

Sunday started with a lot of reluctance to even leave the Hostel. We ended up doing a cold wet ride to Southwell, with a welcoming café allowing us to get warm and dry. The shortest route back to the Hostel was taken.



Worksop (route 6)



Sherwood Forest Hostel

A direct route had been agreed, to return to York. Started with a heavy shower leaving the Hostel, after 5 minutes it had stopped and then remained dry. Cafes at Bawtry and Osgodby were used.

Good Company and **Good Food** made up for a cold and wet weekend.

AK

A Week in June -

A guest contribution from an honorary Section member, John Savin.

The group assembled in Portsmouth on June 10th. Southern Softie, me, arrived by train. Pete G, Nick, & AK got off the train at Petersfield and rode to Portsmouth, (something about Petersfield to Portsmouth fare not at a discount, who said Yorkshire folk were tight?); John Smith and his entourage (harem?), Sally & Linda by car; Andy Gibson by bike from Lambourn; Brett & Elaine by bike via Rowlands Castle's.

Andy had programmed the route into his GPS. This proved to be an excellent method as it was accurate and saved a lot of time especially in the wet. The only problem was Andy's as he had to be at or near the front all the time to show us the way.

After an overnight ferry we arrived in St Malo. After a look round the old town we cycled round to Dinard and had an ice cream on the seafront. As the sun shone we cycled to Sable D'Or les Pins, a very pleasant town just inside Brittany.



The next day we enjoyed a ride in the sun. At midday, the Hard Rider Group, PeteG, left us to do his own thing. The rest of us had an ice cream and rode beside the Canal du Rance to arrive at the appropriately named Hotel du Lac at Combourg. We had a superb dinner in the restaurant overlooking the lake followed by Calvados all round as it was my birthday.

The next morning, we started in the sun and stopped for coffee at Bazouges where it started to drizzle and continued on and off the rest of the day. After lunch in a village square a few miles on, pain au chocolat being the most popular choice, the Easy Riders & Brett set off while the others had an early afternoon coffee. Without Andy to lead us, we immediately took a wrong turn but eventually got back onto the correct route. An undulating ride took us to Ducey with great views of Mont St

Michel on the way. The hotel was originally an old mill sitting astride the river. From the bedroom one can see the fish in the stream below.



Assembling under a murky sky the following morning, we set off on an old railway track. It was very damp which played havoc with my angina. Some continued onto Barenton for coffee. While enjoying our coffee, the heavens opened. The others had thankfully been held up by a puncture and sheltered in a barn to repair it. Lunch was taken in the local Supermarche entrance. Eventually the rain eased and we set off via back roads, passing the imposing Lonlay l'Abbaye on the way, to Putanges Pont Ecrepin.

We had a very good dinner and most of the group then had a noisy party. Unfortunately, as I need my beauty sleep these days, I went to bed but my room was above the party so not as much beauty sleep as I expected!



The final morning was blustery and damp, the Easy Riders and Brett started with the others and then we turned off to have coffee at Falaise, home of William the Conqueror. After that it was literally downhill most of the way to Caen for a lunch of mussels and white wine, superb. In the afternoon, the weather cleared for the amble along the cyclepath by the canal to Ouistreham where we all met up for dinner and the ferry home.

My thanks to all for their enjoyable company and support.

John Savin.

Northern Ireland Tour - July



York Section in Northern Ireland

The accommodation, ferry and route had been sorted for months but there were still two concerns: the grim June/July weather and what type of magazine had Gerry been reading to source and then book a Guest House with the name " Fairy Lands"? No need to worry, the weather, with the very occasional skirmish on the edge of a distant storm, was excellent as was the Guesthouse with not any type of fairy in sight!



A familiar sight!



A good test for the waterproof bags!

The first couple of days were taken up riding from Belfast along the excellent Antrim coast road into Glenariff Glen on the way to Cushendall for an excellent stay at Central Bar. Then navigating the very bumpy terrain around the far North Eastern Tor Head with clear views across to Kintyre and Jura. This brought us onto the Causeway Coast staying over at the A1 Bushmills YHA. The obligatory stop at the Giants Causeway before leaving for the tourist free Sperrin Mountains.



Antrim Coast Climb



Antrim Coast

The next few days were spent meandering through gentle green rolling countryside through Omagh and Armagh before passing through the dramatic Mountains of Mourne to the Victorian coastal town of Newcastle. Then ferry across Strangford Lough to Bangor and along the North Down coastal path back to Belfast for a days sightseeing and black nectar drinking.



Giant's Causeway



Rope Bridge, Carrickarede

A good time had by all then (everyone Guinnessed out) and a well done to John J's better half, Sue. The tough sea trials up White Horse and Terrington Banks paid off in the end!

Dave F.

August Bank Holiday – Ingleton Hostel Weekend



Ingleton Hostel



Ingleborough (view near Ribblehead)

On an overcast and breezy day, 6 cyclist set off for Ingleton, with 1 mile of climbing and 75 miles of head wind. Brett who had just completed the PBP (1225km wet and windy) would join us on Sunday.

We used a new café in Otley 'The Corner Café' the ladies seemed rather surprised to have to deal with 6 customers all at once, we left contented.

Just beyond Ilkley, Steve received a phone call, which meant he ended up doing the ride by himself. In Skipton Nick took us along the towpath of the 'Leeds Liverpool Canal' this gently wound its way round to Gargrave for our second stop and saved using the A65 (worth the excursion).

Climbed over to Settle from Airton onto A65 to Clapham (rather scary) and onto Ingleton. Low-level cloud hugged the hills and looked like it might rain. It was then decided to split up, so some could book in at the Hostel, while the rest took a more sedate pace.

'The Wheatsheaf' was used for the evening meal (food mediocre).



Leeds Liverpool Canal



Gargrave 'Dalesman Café'

Sunday's ride, started with a ride to Sedburgh over 'Kingsdale' with the weather improving (yellow thingy in sky), but there was still that nagging breeze. Not forgetting the Strategically placed gates, especially descending to Dent along with 4x4's getting in the way on the narrow roads.

The cycle route from Dent to Sedburgh was used and rather interesting. Since a tractor with muck spreader came round a corner at a fair rate of knots, needing quick reactions to avoid contact with its contents. The café was greatly welcomed, having taken 3 hours to get there.



View down Kingsdale



From left to right Nick, Sally, Steve and Elaine

Using roads along the west side of the Lune valley, gave nice views over Barbondale and of Ingleborough as we headed to Wray and it's café 'Bridge House Farm'.

A short ride back, for an early finish (4.30pm and 50 miles).

Brett finally arrives having spent most of the day recovering from the PBP.

We'd decided to try a Hostel meal (highly recommended) before taking a walk. Strangely, that evening's conversation tended to be about the PBP. We celebrated Brett's success with a drink (Hum! Now there's a surprise?).



Ribblehead Viaduct and Wherside



Ripon 'Spa Gardens'

Monday taking the back road from Ingleton to Chapel le Dale, Ribblehead (picturesque views), Hawes (wind picking up! and assisting us!), Askrigg and onto Castle Bolton (café stop).

Back roads through Well, Thornborough and into Ripon used 'Sun Parlour' Café (excellent as ever).

With a wind on our backs it was an easy ride back (85 – 90 miles).

All seemed to have a good time

AK

Northumberland: Sustrans Route 1

September saw myself, stoker Lydia and the tractor tyred Galaxy Twin navigating the Sustrans Coast and Castles route along the Newcastle to Berwick section.



Northumbria Coast



Northumbria

Kicking off from the Newcastle Quays, crossing the Millennium Bridge and under the river at Tynemouth, using the 1951 cyclists and pedestrian tunnel (used by 20,000 commuters/day when built). Getting down to the tunnel using the lift and the once largest escalator in the world was not too bad with a panniered tandem - hold onto the brakes and brace yourself! The route then closely hugs the coast along bridleways, greenways, deserted beaches, marshland and on the edges of precipitous cliffs, passing Dunstanburgh and Bamburgh Castles on the way. Stay over in beautiful Alnmouth and then onto the excellent Backpacker's Hostel in Berwick – watch out YHA.

Leaving R1 at Coldstream and into what must be the best route in the Northumbrian Cheviots. This involves cycling a narrow lane due south from Town Yetholm before a green road takes you to 1800 ft onto the lower flanks of Windy Ghyle fell. Superb views at the top, with running the gauntlet from what sheep leave behind being the only downside! Down a track eventually becoming tarmac and then corkscrew at speed down the lovely twisting upper Coquetdale to the Queens Head Inn and civilisation in Rothbury.



Lydia in Tyne Tunnel

Final leg to Corbridge and along the excellent route 22, following the river which passes George Stephenson's cottage, to finish the loop with a beer, alfresco in the sunshine next to the Tyne Bridge in Newcastle.

If you think you know Northumberland try this route and think again! Tourist free scenery, no cars and plenty of pie shops.....

Dave F.

Norfolk Week – September.

As a new cyclist and recent addition to the Social Section I was excited, but also a little nervous as I set off for Norfolk. "Would I be able to keep up?", "Would I get on with everyone, in a cottage for a week?" "Would I irritate anyone?"



Ele and Gregory



Group Photo

I can't answer the last question - you'd have to ask the other 15 about that - but the rest of my worries were completely unfounded.

Most of us arrived at Sedgeford on the Friday afternoon/evening - many of us having got caught up in a diversion on the way. The cottage was in a fabulous location, surrounded by rolling countryside and only about 10 miles from the coast. There was a long dining table that could easily accommodate all of us, which was a bonus, as Ele and Dave produced fabulous meals for us.



Wells next the Sea



Windmill – Great Bircham

For the first two days most of us cycled together exploring the area and visiting places like Castle Acre, Sandringham and Wells-next-the-sea. The weather was tremendous, lots of sunshine and very little wind. PG was still recuperating from his back operation and so did shorter distances, with

plenty of rest - most of us took the opportunity at some point during the week, to ride with him either on or off-road.

The cottage was about a mile from the Peddar's Way, a long-distance walk, which is largely on bridleways. From Day 3 onwards we tended to split in a number of smaller groups, some going off to ride on the Wells-Walsingham Steam Train and walk out to see the seals at Blakeney Point, some riding on-road, some visiting friends and relatives, others riding off-road on the Peddar's Way.



Café Stop – Castle Acre



Repairing Stu's Puncture

Highlights of the week for me were:-

1. Everyone chipping in with preparing food, washing up etc, without having to be asked.
2. Not getting a puncture (I think we had 6 over the week, due to the sharp flinty stone that seemed to be on most of the country lanes).
3. Finding out what my bottom bracket was - (although I'd have preferred to see it in a book, rather than broken and in pieces on the lawn).
4. The fabulous wine that John Smith had sourced!
5. Gregory's (aged 19 months) squeaky shoes.
6. Brett nearly missing tea, as he dozed in the bath.



Wolverton Station (near Sandringham)



Bure Valley Railway

All in all, I think it was a fabulous week. Huge thanks to PG for booking, arranging and organising the week and to everyone else for making me so welcome. I'd recommend it to everyone.

Jenny

Black Forest Delight!

Armed with small tent, trangia and 2 bicycles, the Atkinson's climbed from the River Rhine into the heart of Baden Weurtenburg and the Black Forest. With sunny skies cycle camping was fun, however as they dropped out of the forest towards Lake Constance rain set in. After two day's and one night of rain the more level headed Atkinson insisted on trading extra cycling miles for a posh hotel to dry out sleeping bags and riders. Feeling well rested with clean shaven legs (Anne) and chin (Dave) they headed along the fantastic River Donau back towards the Black Forest. Again with sunny skies cycle camping was fun and included cooking fantastic veggie curry with rice on rather small trangie! A rest day in Bad Wildbad included insane Atkinson (Dave) running 20 miles while sane Atkinson (Anne) managed 3! This was followed by coffee and cake in various cafes.



A fantastic sunny Sunday included a 70 mile ride up and along the highest road (1100m) in the Black Forest (Schwarzwald Hochstrasse) ending with the most amazing decent from Zuffucht to Opperau. The Atkinson's ended their adventure dropping back out of the Black Forest over the Rhine into France.



Countries visited : Germany, France, Switzerland (for coffee), Belgium and Luxembourg

Distance with full camping gear! : 1090km

Total height climbed : 5800m

The Black Forest has a large quiet network of cycle paths, tracks and roads, which climb through forests up to meadows. In Spring the wild flowers and birds are amazing. The climbs are moderate compared with some we have completed during other tours, however the views just as splendid. The most we climbed at one time was about 23 km's. Germany is a very civilised place to cycle where the people are hospitable, have fantastic bakers and show a great deal of respect towards cyclists on the road!

Dave Atkinson.

Dates for the Diary:-

2007

Thursday 25th October, 8pm - York Section AGM. Minster Inn, Marygate.

17th & 18th November – Hostel Weekend to Haworth YH. Book yourself in and let Dave F know.

9th December 2007, 12.45. Cyclists Carol Service, Tockwith.

16th December – York Section Christmas Lunch – Tykes Restaurant, Flaxton. Contact Sally to book. Numbers limited and a deposit will be required.

2008

February – Hostel Weekend. Date TBC.

February 9th & 10th Walking w/e - White Peak - Contact Dave F.

Saturday 8th March – PG Tours to Majorca. Hotel Java, C'an Pastilla. £280 for 7 nights, £390 for 14 nights. £190 deposit to PG by mid November.

Easter Weekend – Cambridge YH. TBC.

April 25th to-27th Cumbrian Lakes & Passes - Contact Dave F.

May 23rd to 25th Beverley/Woody's Top - Contact Dave F.

Sustrans – PG Working Party Dates

30th October and 4th December – Escrick, site of the old station and southwards.

20th November – Riccall (start of path northwards).

0930 start, tea break and finish about 12noon.



Escrick before



Chris Bolton 2 hours later



Stamford Bridge before



2 hours later

Caption Competition

Who's saying what?

Best caption wins a pint of beer on PG at the Minster Inn. Your suggestions to PG or Sally by end November. The Editor's decision is final!!



Final Word

I hope you have enjoyed our latest newsletter. Hopefully in the next edition we will have a PBP report for you and a few "blasts from the past". If you have any suggestions for items to include in future editions please let me know.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM.

Sally