



# THE SQUIRREL

Spring 2013



# From the chair

By Ian Udall

So, Spring -or something very much like it- has arrived and with it the start of cycling's proper season.

Winter cycling is 'kind of' enjoyable, mainly in a down-the-pub "I can't believe we rode through that" kind of way, but it is these coming months when the sport comes into its own.

**With Spring we're spoilt for choice;**

The North-West TLI road race season has been running since the start of March, with Seamon's own promotion on 25th June.

The open time trial season has been running since the classic Nova 25 opener, with some fantastic results coming in (p.10) and Seamon's 25 on 21st September as an end-of-season goal.

To get you into shape, the club's Wednesday night 10's kick off on the 17th April (p.14).

If long, steady miles are your thing, there's audaces a-plenty (p.21, 25 & 26), and sponsored rides if you want to put the miles in for a good cause (p.5).

The Sunday runs continue, as ever (p.28).

The club's social events started with the recent Roller Night (p.12) and more is to come.

There are weekends away (p.19) and car-assisted rides (p.14).

**Oh, and then there's the BC calendar....**

The important point to notice is that **NONE** of these events happens by chance. Standing behind all of these events is an army of volunteers that make them possible.

Sport, all grass-roots sport, happens when like-minded Nutters come together to do more than they could achieve on their own.

**Call it "big society", call it "collective action";** it is the heart and soul of cycling.

The Social Run was Darren's idea to 'give something back,' inspired by the club stalwarts of his youth who brought him on.

The Social Run is your opportunity to pass on your love of cycling to someone new (p.14).

So while I hope you get the miles and results in, I also hope you return the favour to that quiet army; join them and do your bit.

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## Treading the boards

Normally showing his mettle on the road, half-day stalwart Martin Wiggan has taken to the stage for Sale Nomads' production of the "rags-to- riches-to-rags-again" musical of Viv Nicholson's 1961 pools win.

**SPEND, SPEND, SPEND**

**7:30pm 8 - 11th May 2013**

**Sale Waterside Centre**

Tickets: 0161 - 969 - 5140

"The chance to see me prance and dance, sing and act (not unlike a night out in Montgomery)" - Martin Wiggan

# Meet your clubmates... Neil Rothwell

1. When and where were you born?

Middleton, Manchester, on Grimshaw Lane, just down the road from John Willie Lees Brewery. Moved from there when I was 5 to Widnes then to Fullwood then Swinton and ended up in Sale aged 14. My Dad was in Lancashire Fire Brigade and we moved around a lot with his job.

2. When did you start cycling and what was your first club?

Far too late aged 45, pootled around with my mates on a hybrid for several years. Wanted to up the ante so looked around for local clubs, eventually plucked up courage to turn up at Rackhams one Sunday morning armed with an Eccles cake (didn't know about café stops at the time). Did the Social Thrash with Darren to Dones Green.

3. What is your favourite training/ touring route?

Anything with the sun on my back. Meerbrook or Cat & Fiddle via Goyt.

4. What was your first race, and first win?

First Race - Club Wednesday night TTs at the Kilton. No wins although I was briefly given first on handicap in the Dukinfield 25 until **they realised they'd made a terrible mistake.**

5. (Which performance do you rate as your best?)

Warrington 25 last July – 1:05:24 closely followed by Kilton 8.75 in August 22:17 (first ride after shaving legs).

6. What is your favourite meal?

Curry or anything with Chilli in it.

7. What were you like at school?

Studious and too quiet, had the teachers worried.

8. What kind of books do you read?

Science Fantasy, Adventure, History.



*Neil Rothwell on the September's Bob Richardson to Chester.*

9. What kind of music do you enjoy?

Classical, mainly English Composers. Good old Ralph Vaughan Williams in No.1 spot.

10. And your favourite type of TV programme?

Hmmm.... watch very little TV. Can't stand adverts and the modern trend to dumb everything down.

11. Which newspaper do you read?

None.

12. What is your ideal holiday destination?

Anywhere I can do stuff, i.e. ride my bike.

13. Do you have any hobbies?



## Meet your clubmates...

Used to but they've all gone to pot with this cycling malarkey. Played the E flat Bass in Rochdale Brass Band for many years and I have a stamp collection in reserve for when I need to change to a less strenuous sport.

14. Who would play you in a film of your life?

Mr Magoo

15. What is your greatest fear?

Being in a situation over which I have no control, i.e losing someone you love through an illness. Happened to me 5 years ago with my Dad.

16. How would you describe yourself in a Lonely Hearts column?

In need of a good Woman to sort me out.

17. What is your most unpleasant characteristic?

I over-think things. Before I make a move I'll think over every possible way it can go wrong. Need to be more impulsive.

18. Which characteristic do you most dislike in others?

Dishonesty, lack of a willingness to help themselves.

19. Who would you most like to have met and why?

Ernest Shackleton, a proper hero and leader. Knew when to call it a day and turn back, takes a lot more courage than ploughing on regardless.

20. What was your most embarrassing moment?

Standing on Karen's feet when we were saying goodbye after the Malham weekend.

21. Four words to describe yourself.  
Must get out more.

## Road race

10th March saw the South-West Scotland Cycle Project's season opener road race in Castle Douglas, near Dumfries.

Ed took a very early lead in the 4th Cat event, after only 1 mile of a 32 mile race, into a head wind. For most riders that would be suicide, and presumably the rest of the bunch thought the same and were waiting to reel him back in.

Except, as any Half-Dayer could tell you, this is Ed 'let me rip your legs off and feed them back to you' Blum.

Ed's lead over the bunch extended to 92 seconds at one point, and only fell to 30-odd seconds because of the terrain.

Ed's 10 BC points have pushed him into 3rd Cat.

Roll on the 2014 Llangollen Direct.

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## From the web



A particularly mal-conceived cycle lane? Los Angeles in the days before the car became king. The past is another country. See COPENHAGENIZE.COM - urban cycling.

# Manchester - Blackpool



Social section founder Darren Buckley is asking members to join him on a fund-raising club run to the seaside – and back.

July 14 is the date of the organised Manchester-Blackpool ride and Darren – who has previously had surgery for a brain tumour – is hoping to repeat and better his fund-raising effort when he last did the ride in 2003.

He said: “It was 18 weeks after my surgery and I managed to raise £1,500 for the Christie, who’d looked after me. I was pleased with that but this time I really want to blow that figure away.”

After ten years in remission, Darren’s been told he will again need treatment later this year as a tumour has reappeared.

He’s inviting/challenging club members to take part in the ride in aid of the Christie –

and to raise even more money by riding back home again.

“It would be about 130 miles so it’s a proper challenge worth sponsoring. Feedback and promises to ride have been coming in thick and fast on Facebook but there’s still room for more,” said Darren.

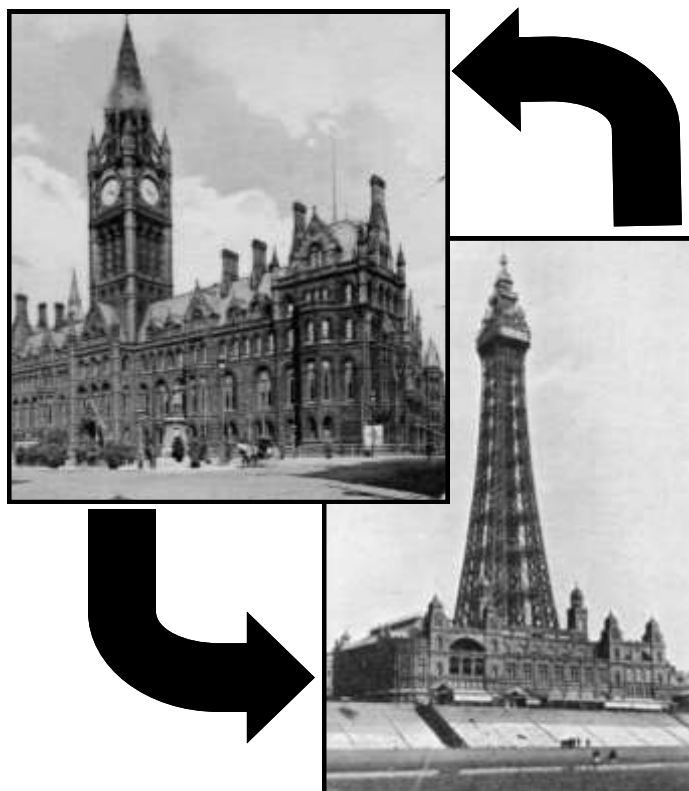
He’s set up a Just Giving page to collect donations and has arranged for a group discount on entry fees - £12.50 instead of £17.75 – if people go through him to sign up.

“Not everyone will want to ride back and we’re looking at sorting out transport so all of our precious bikes don’t get man-handled too much!

“It’s really nice way to raise money for a good cause – and I think a group photo at the start and one at the finish will really help to show off Seamons at its best,” said Darren.

If you want to help Darren, contact him. Read more about his story and why he wants to help the Christie by visiting:

[www.justgiving.com/seamonscc](http://www.justgiving.com/seamonscc)



# Hammered? I don't think so

By Mike McConville

I feel I must have a word with the Seamons Awards committee; there must have more deserving nominees than me for the "Hammering of the year". The reasons for giving me this award were well down on the standard that is required for such an "honour".

The Hammer is not a unique award, many sports clubs have their own version. When I played rugby I won the "Moby Dick", awarded to the player for the 'Most Outstanding Bollock' dropped on the rugby pitch. I got that for taking a 22 drop out, something a prop forward should never do. I ended up kicking the ball to the opposing wing, who promptly ran in for a try. I was heard making the excuse that I thought there was nothing else on. A worthy effort for the award, if I might say.

While playing cricket I won the "OSCA", I use the term 'playing' very loosely; I was only ever picked because I had the keys to the bar. I did make a fine effort to win the award. I was standing at fine leg on a hot summers day thinking what to do next. While contemplating the problem, I decided to have a fag, so I decided to light up. I was wearing a large cotton wool filled bandage over my thumb at the time. The bats man cuts the ball. OMG, its coming my way. Panic sets in. What do I do? Set fire to my thumb and the ball goes over the rope for a 4, a worthy winner at that annual dinner, if I might say.

I have won the Hammer before. My memory of why is not as clear as it should be, I made two efforts one year to win it. There was a Sunday morning one winter before we had the new kit, and I was not sure which top to wear. So I elected to put a large Ski Jacket on, to chase the half day group to Beeston and back in. I got very, very warm and was



dropped in Tatton Park on the way home. Boy, was I glad to cool down then. I may have won the hammer for my efforts in the 24 hour, when after completing some 265 miles in 19 hours I completely collapsed under the trees at Prees island, spread-eagled and asleep. The bottom had dropped out of my world an hour or so earlier. Both worthy efforts for the Hammer, if I might say.

This year there was no mention of my return from Llangollen, when I got a taxi from Chester train station to J19 of the M6, ran out of money at that point so I was forced to finish the ride on my bike. Worth a mention, I thought.

I won the award this year for next to nothing. I took part in a bike ride on a Saturday in May that was just 1.65 miles long and took 7 minutes 34 seconds to complete I then got off the bike and had a not so memorable trip in a helicopter. You can't say that a bike ride of



1.654 miles is a worthy of anything, let alone something as prestigious as the Hammer.

The OMT Friday Night Fair Play League have also chipped in with the odd comment or two about the rules for the awarding of hammer. And have discovered that there is a clause in the handbook where it states that the Hammer cannot be awarded posthumously.

The Awards Committee got it wrong this year. The club's legendary Vets' Half -Wheel champion was seen out terrorising the Social Section, there must have been some deserving nominees that day. Various senior members of the Social Section have been heard encouraging riders on to the footpaths in icy conditions, just to increase the numbers of **nominees**. The club's president even made a vehicle assisted attempt at the 100 in 8 and fell just short of the finishing line, none of these efforts even got a mention.

The OMT Friday Night Fair Play League have noticed various senior members of the committee buying drinks for whoever wants one, to try to ensure that they do not get nominated for this award. As their job takes them all over Europe and the USA thus depriving them of the time that is required for mid-week training that would eliminate them for this award.

So I call upon all my fellow club mates to put the Awards committee to the test and make at least one attempt in their Seamons life to win this prestigious award, because if I win it for a third time I am obliged to keep it.



## facebooked

Ah, modern social media, where would we be without you? [North Korea, most likely]

It's difficult to do justice to the prosaic, the wonderful & just plain weird posts Seamons members make...

"Winnats - yeah, Winnats." [A big "Hi" to Kevin]

"Beer - the recovery drink of champions."



"Boo hoo, wah, wah, wah!" [We felt your pain]

"Seamons cupcakes are ready :)" [Thanks, Julie!]



"The boys are back in town and the leader of the pack don't take no messin' " [I've no idea either]

"Anyone know where the finish line is in Llangollen?" [Ed, now you know for 2014]

"A delicate question but I have to ask... Shaving legs - start at the feet and work your way up, but where do you stop?" [Delicate, indeed...]

# The first Sunday in March

By Keith Stacey

All the talking and training is done, the day has dawned, its cold but not freezing and its dry. Tens of thousands of pounds worth of carbon fibre litter the pavements outside Rackhams in Altrincham and there is an undefinable expectancy in the air.

Excuses are made by those regular half-dayers as to why they are not joining the run **today but we've heard it all before. Either** your up for it or your not. There can be only one winner but who will it be? The Saturday morning chain-gang has identified the strong men, trouble is there are so many of them. And Robin is back to defend his unbeatable record of wins and Keith is keen to repeat his win of last year.

At 9.10 the group sets off and its 16 strong, the largest number for many a year and only a fool or a wise man would care to predict the outcome.

After the roundabout at Lymm corner the pace is already high, riders are doing decent turns at the front whilst Ian Holmes and I sit on the back, observing.

We only get to Plumbley and Adam has a front wheel blow out in his brand new tyres. **On this run nobody waits to help and it's a** really tough break.

At Sandiway we are stopped by temporary traffic lights which gives an opportunity for a Tour de France style break (you know what I mean). And were off again. We have already averaged 19mph and as we approach the lights at the Kelsall by-pass Holmsey asks **Robin how he feels. "My legs are like jelly" he** replies. Next thing we know he has gone from the back to the front and the race is on. I record 49mph but the group all stay together. But now its through and off single file. By Christleton roundabout the speed is a

steady 22 plus and onto the Chester bypass it goes up again and we are doing 27/28 on the flat and the chain gang training is obviously paying off as the group look really smooth (except of course for strong man Ed who keeps looking behind him and leaving gaps to the rider in front – all part of his tactics he explained to me later).

Off the by-pass and on to the old road as we head into Wales. Holmsey carries straight on by himself, to meet us later at the café. The wind is now more to our right and the peleton swiftly adapts to changing from the inside (very professional).

Anticipation is building, we all know that Marford Rise is coming up, who will make the first challenge? Who can counter? Who can hang on?

We soon find out. All hell breaks loose. Several riders fancy their chances and despite **the gradient the pace doesn't slow. I'm** straight out of the back (as expected) but surprise surprise, the next one to get dropped is last years winner Keith Bailey. I see two others drop back but that still leaves eleven riders in the break. The other three getting together to share the pace but surely with no chance of getting back on again. And nor did they.

And so it continued to the finish. No one could get away from the largest bunch ever at this stage. Along the Vale of Llangollen with the splendid River Dee to the left, surely one of the most beautiful places in Britain. But there is no time to consider the view, the finish is close, the riders know Robin has a fearsome sprint so no point leaving it to the last minute. Martin takes off, its his best chance, he gets a lead, nobody wants to **chase. Robin sees the danger. He won't give**



up without a fight so he sets off in hot pursuit. Trouble is he has a passenger. They overhaul Martin but Chris Seipen comes off his wheel closely followed by Eamonn and Ed. Sean confines later that he left himself boxed in but he has done an excellent ride in this company.

So its victory for come-back kid Chris and they all make their way to the café thankful to have arrived safely and most wondering **only if.....**

The usual reception group was at the sign to cheer and take photos, many having been away for the weekend, and they are joined at the café by another group of members that had set out early on Sunday.

I arrive several minutes down and Holmsey arrives even later but the biggest surprise was when Adam walked in, long and hard ride on ones own and surely the most heroic ride of the day. Now in next year's event.....



**Photos:** Jeanette (above) crossing the line at Llangollen's town limits.

Chris Seipen, Robin Haigh, Sean Davenport and Martin Wiggan at the cafe(below).

Chris Siepen (inset) crosses the line.



## Best clubman

At the end of February there is something uncannily familiar about the leader-board:

1. Dan Snape	41
2. Phil Holden	40
3. Rick Meadows	38
4. John Coles	35
5. Mike McConville	34
= Keith Stacey	34
6. Dave Barker	32
7. Peter Coles	30
8. John Hammond	29
= Malc McAllister	29
= Karen Popplewell	29
= Steve Stoddart	29

If anyone is puzzled, what is going on is as follows.

There is hotly contested trophy called the 'Best Clubman' (except a year or two back when Sally Cowan was 'Best Clubperson'). This is awarded on the basis of accumulated points for participation in Club activities throughout the year:

3 points for full attendance on a Club Run

that goes to the published destination (hence endless debate about what counts as full attendance and what constitutes a valid reason for not going to the published destination; normally you get 1 for starting at Rackhams and not getting to the destination and 2 for getting to the destination without starting at Rackhams)

2 points for Friday night Club Night (but nothing for going straight to the OMT)

2 points for being out on a Wednesday night for the 10/8.75 (preferably riding or actively helping, but no penalty for those who just hang around doing nothing much).

2 points for a range of special club activities like the Velodrome, Open 25, Tour of the Berwyns etc

**This is why there is a 'register' and an appeal via Facebook for a list of those who were out with the various sections on a Sunday.**

Such is the competition that you typically need 250 to 260 points to be in with a shout, which is why it is also sometimes known as the 'Get a Life' trophy.

## M&DTTA time trial series



Congratulations to Sean Davenport (left) for completing the hat trick in the M&DTTA time trial series' junior competition.

Sean dominated the series, winning all three events.;

9th March	24:55
16th March	23:49
30th March	24:34

So that's another M&DTTA Lunch in January 2014 for Sean, then.

# Llangollen direct & indirect

By Johnnie & Carol Pardoe

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## Llangollen ...

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## Stop press: Roller night

More than a few surprises on the night as the young half-day lads came up against experience.

**The first warning came when Ed Baldwin's initial torque snapped a crank arm.**

One by one the half-dayers were knocked out, leaving Ed versus Dave Williams in the final.

Dave Williams took the title.

**The "Summerseat-Fallowfield Commute" training plan will be available shortly.**

was when Adam walked in, long and hard ride on ones own and surely the most heroic ride of the day. Now in next year's event..... watch this space.

Photo: *The "Three Stooges" (below) welcome the Llangollen Direct riders into town.*



# New Life Member

By Johnnie & Carol Pardoe

Welcome to our newly elected Life Member, Dave Barker. This is a rare and very special award, a presentation that has only taken place on seven occasions since the Club was formed 64 years ago.

The success of any great club depends on a core of hard working members willing to give of their free time, sometimes beavering away unnoticed behind the scenes.

**Joining the Seamons CC in 1972 it wasn't** long before he was involved in the running of the club, serving in excess of 10 years as Hon. Treasurer, and also Chairman, and President twice.

He has organized numerous open events in the name of the Club, and is the current organizer of the classic Tour of the Berwyns Audax event, which he took over from Dave Matthews.

For many years he was on the organizing committee of the Annual Dinner and took a key role in our 50<sup>th</sup> year celebrations. In recent years he has been setting up the photo display for the Dinner.

He is always available to assist in the promotion of Club events, whether it be roller contests, marshalling or manning results boards.

Dave regularly sacrifices his Club runs – he **wouldn't put it like that himself** – to encourage younger members and less experienced riders.

As well as being involved in the Trafford Cycling Forum and the Trans-Pennine Trail, he has somehow managed to keep track of the Club points system, which at the end of the year reveals the Best Clubman of the Year. He has undertaken this duty for as long as anyone can remember.

On the bike he is a former Club 100 mile



*Reg Blease (L), Club President, awards Dave Barker (R) with his certificate and welcomes him as a fellow Life Member; well deserved recognition for an exemplary club-man.*

champion, and is one of only two members who have achieved Super Randonneur status in Audax, riding 200, 300, 400 and 600km Audax rides in the same year. This qualified him to ride the prestigious L.E.L. – London-Edinburgh-London - 1,400 km of continuous riding, which he covered in 101 hours, the only Seamons rider ever to do so.

There is no doubt that when he was transferred from the Anfield Bicycle Club 41 years ago, it was their loss and most certainly our gain.

Comparatively speaking of course, with only 42 years service, he is the new kid on the block! But what he may lack in longevity he has more than made up for in his dedication and valuable contribution to Club life.

Congratulations, Dave, and may you continue to enjoy life in the Seamons for many years to come.

## Club news

### Car-assisted social run

Are you a bit bored with riding on the flatlands? Want to try out your climbing legs? If so then this ride is for you. On Sunday 5th May Bob Mc Partland will be leading a car assisted ride to Blaze Farm.

The ride is aimed primarily at the Social Section but is, of course open to everyone. Meet at 9.30 am at Poynton Coppice Car Park, Shrigley Road, Poynton and the Hilly route will take us up the Brickworks Climb, Windgather Rocks and then through the Goyt Valley up to the Cat & Fiddle and into Wildboarclough. It will give us an opportunity to discover roads we can't reach when starting from Altrincham. See the route details in this link.

Let Bob know via facebook or e mail bobmcp5765@gmail if you are interested or need directions to the meeting point, which is only about 18 miles from Altrincham.

<http://ridewithgps.com/routes/1835116>

### Obituary to Les Myers

It is with regret that we report the passing on of Les Myers, Roy's Dad. He enjoyed many years riding with the Touring Section in the 80's. Our sincere condolences, Roy.

### Doing your bit

Darren Buckley has published the Social Runs list for the rest of 2013. All that's needed now are coordinators to guide those runs to their destinations..

The Social runs have been a HUGE success for Seams in the last few years, introducing many new people to the club.

Please show your support and put your name down for a post-race warm-down.

### Wednesday night TT's

Our Wednesday night time trials start again in 3 weeks. The first one is 17th April and the full list is on the website. We need at least 7 people to help each night to make the events happen safely. Is it fair to expect the same people to turn out every week and every year?

Please have a look and see which dates you **will be able to help with. I'm asking you to get in touch now** so that we can plan nights-off for the regular helpers. If you wait until the night and then turn up, we do appreciate it but it does mean that the regulars will already be there and will have given up their evening unnecessarily. So please choose a date or two and tell me / your partner / your employer in advance. My number's in the handbook or mail me at sea-monsttsec@hotmail.co.uk.

Thanks in anticipation. John Barry

### Congratulations to...

**Johnny Coles** who joined the Club in 1953 and celebrates 60 years membership this year. Former runs leader and Hon.Treasurer for many years, he is still a regular member on touring section runs. Rumour has it that he celebrated the occasion by treating himself to a brand new Van Nicholas titanium machine.

### And also to...

Long standing member **Clive Rock**, who celebrates his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday shortly. Happy Birthday Clive. He is still nimbly riding his bike on a very regular basis, and now joins us at the Spinney on a Tuesday.

I personally was always grateful to Clive for looking after me in long distance events in the 80's/90's.



# Club dinner

By Johnnie & Carol Pardoe



*Prizewinners for 2012 gather behind the trophies (above).*

With 144 tickets sold it was a welcome return to the Burlington Suite, elegantly prepared for us in Club colours, each round table identified by a notorious Alpine or Pyrenean climb.

Dave Barker had once again produced a superb photo display, covering the diversity of **the Club's activities throughout the year**, photos courtesy of JP, Johnny Coles, Darren Buckley and Julie Seddon and others. The Club Archive is now up to 18 volumes, dating back to 1948, and had its annual airing, along with **JP's Facebook** – remember, when JP is about, keep smiling.

The official Prize-winners' photo was taken by Johnny Coles, and then our Guest of Honour for the evening, Dame Sarah Storey and her husband Barney were escorted into the room by our President Reg Blease and his wife Vera.

MC for the evening was Ian Udall, who ably

guided us through the formalities, and we were kept busy during the meal with the annual Carberry quiz. Our special Guest, Dame Sarah, gave us an inside view into her fantastic year in competition, culminating in the Paralympics in London. She is a great Ambassador for our sport, not forgetting husband Barney, a medal winner in his own right on the track. We wish them both good luck in their forthcoming BIG event in June.

Ed Baldwin conducted the Prize Presentation in his own inimitable style, assisted by daughter Valentina, backed up with a power point show (slide-show to you and me) of the winners in action.

The President, Reg Blease, presented Dame Sarah with two cheques from the Club for her

## Club dinner ...

chosen charities, and Lucy Seddon presented her with a bouquet of flowers. Carol Pardoe presented her with the club pram for Sarah's expected baby in June, in club colours, crafted out of wood specially for the occasion by our props manager, Roger Haines.

Martin Wiggan, Club B.A.R. Champion, gave an excellent speech on behalf of the prize-winners, comparing his training routine with the other "Wiggo", a cold, damp cellar in Timperley, versus the Canary Islands.

One of the highlights of the evening was the bestowing of Life Membership on David Barker by our President. In attendance were 6 former Presidents, 6 Life Members, 2 Founder Members, and Founder Member Bob Richardson's widow Mavis, with a special mention for Life Member and former President Jim Boydell, travelling up from Eastbourne, and Founder Member Reg Herbert who had travelled up from Shropshire.

After such a full programme there wasn't much time for dancing, but Lucy Seddon, aged 9 – still awake at midnight! – had a great time picking up disco skills from Karen,

and our Junior members are to be complimented on their sartorial elegance.

A very enjoyable evening, in-keeping with our long-established Club tradition of organizing a proper "do"! - one of the last remaining real Club Dinners in the area. Many congratulations to Karen Popplewell and her team.

Surprise awards on the night, not on the menu card:

Most Meritorious: joint winners, Sally Cowan and Paul Barber

Hammering of the Year: Mike McConville, somewhat bemused\* but, we think, relieved to be in a position to receive it. (\*See page 6).

Freewheel trophy: Paul Lomas (Club cartoonist)

Half wheel trophy: Ed Blum (2<sup>nd</sup> in the Llangollen)

Malc Judge Long Distance trophy: Andy Swain, for his End-to-End and the 12 hour.

**Reg Herbert Ladies' Trophy:** Joanne Blakeley, for some super rides this year, and her high placing in the National Hill Climb at Ramsbottom.

**Below:** Ed Blum & the Half-Wheel Trophy (L); Dan Mathers and bagged silverware (R)







**Clockwise from above:** Andy Swain with a well-earned Malc Judge Trophy for the hardest of LeJOG rides; Sarah & Barney Storey with a Seamons -liveried pram; Joe Lockett, Junior 10 & TT Champion; the Life Members convene; Valentina, Lucy & Carol sort out the raffle.





# Cyril the Squirrel

Club mascot & agony uncle



*Hi my name is Cyril, yep, a Squirrel called Cyril - I've had to learn a few things... the hard way and have a wealth of nutty experience.*

*In this section you can write in with any questions about love, life, cycling or anything at all. If you have any interesting little tips or short stories to share feel free to send me an e-mail. Don't worry if you don't have access to a computer, they're not all they are cracked up to be.*

*Oh! and before we start, enough of the stereotyping not all Squirrels are named Cyril, my brother is called Andy, he works for the secret service and another thing, I've heard all the nut jokes in the world and so too have my two Ginger sisters, Cyrilina and Cyrolphina.*

.oOo.

Dear Cyril,



I am writing to you as a last resort as my life has been devastated.

Last week whilst out on what should have been a much deserved 100 mile plus early season fat burning ride on a beautiful day I punctured three times before I had got any decent miles in and used all my tubes so I had to get a taxi home (it cost a small fortune). I got home early, put the bike away and was going upstairs for a shower when I could hear my wife in the bedroom puffing, panting and making moaning noises. At first I thought she must be having a hard session on the turbo trainer so opened the door slowly and quietly so as I wouldn't startle her. There it was - she was having another kind of session in bed with Tony from across the road. I closed the door and left them to it, I sat down shaking and absolutely gutted I didn't know how to han-

dle it.

I think this could be a one off but it has left me feeling upset and without any trust. What should I do? I can't keep all this in and want to start feeling better? -RG

Dear RG,

I feel your pain. We don't get many days of good weather and for it to be ruined in this way is a real bummer. There are a few basic mistakes that really stand out in your letter, firstly you should always carry a repair kit in-case of a few punctures too many, check for flints and cuts in the tyres before you set off as this could have caused your first puncture. Next, have in your phone contacts the number of a local taxi firm and agree a good rate before you get in the taxi. I am relieved to say though that hearing your wife was possibly having a Turbo session you were sensible enough to not startle her as bursting in the room whilst at maximum effort could have made the rider jump and resulted in a very nasty accident. Always eat something straight after a ride, your shakes could be carb/sugar related. As far as trusting again, invest in some quality puncture resistant tyres and remember – no tyre will ever be perfect. I hope you had some of Sally's spares at home and were able to salvage some of the day and managed to get a few more happy miles in. -Cyril.

.oOo.



Dear Cyril,

I was being chased by a police dog last week after (regretfully) shop lifting some items from the local bike shop. I made the mistake of trying to escape through a little tunnel, over a see-saw and through a hoop of fire. The dog finally

caught me as I was weaving in and out of some sticks. -CB

Dear CB

Cyclists have never had much success at running. - Cyril

.oOo.



Dear Cyril,

The saying goes, "See a penny, pick it up and all day long you'll have good luck." Well I beg to differ. I was

out training last Saturday, and whilst stopping suddenly to pick a nice shiny penny up from the road I was badly injured by some of the other cyclists in the chain gang. -

[Name withheld]

Tut, tut, serves you right, Scrooge. -Cyril

.oOo.



Turbo Training people – Cut down the time needed on your Turbo by playing Benny Hill's theme tune "Yackety Sax" on your i-pod. -TC

Good Tip, TC. It really works. -Cyril

.oOo.



Dear Cyril,

There is someone of the opposite sex that I fancy at the Cycling Club.

What should I do to give myself the best chance of catching his attention?

-Female

Hi Female,

I would forget it if I were you. Do you really want to have a relationship with someone who will never be at home, he's smelly and tired when he is and then he daydreams about bike rides or components all day and thinks about what he could have bought for his bike when he gets the bill after taking you for dinner?

He will be at least two dress sizes below you and your leg razor will always be clogged up.

Try and go out with a footballer instead, they earn loads of money and get their boots and shorts for free so never have to spend any money. They hardly do any work and always have nice cars so they have loads of time to take you shopping or to fancy restaurant's and guess what? They never look at the bill!! (Fill your boots girl)

-Cyril

## Tyddyn Bychan weekend

The Bunkhouse at Tyddyn Bychan has become available for the nights of Friday 21st & Saturday 22nd June.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Bunkhouse, you can check it out here;

[www.tyddynbychan.co.uk](http://www.tyddynbychan.co.uk)

Bob McPartland is looking to book the Bunkhouse for another notorious Seamons Tourist weekender; expect bikes, bara brith and beer, and other things beginning with 'B' (possibly).

If you're interested then please contact Bob on: 07921 661 449

Alternatively, contact Bob via Facebook. Or actually talk to him face-to-face (it's still permitted).

The proprietor, Linda Parker, has obviously developed a soft spot for the Tourists. Not many would send a Christmas card....



# M&DTTA annual lunch

By Johnnie & Carol Pardoe



This most sociable of local functions was held the day after the Seamons Dinner. Probably the best value meal of the year, provided by Mrs. Bell and her white gloved team of serving ladies. Double helpings of soup, hot-pot, apple pie, chocolate fudge, lemon meringue available to all those with suitable appetites, absolute heaven for hungry cyclists.

Our newly elected M&DTTA Hon. Secretary, Carol Pardoe, took charge of the raffle and made sure that the Seamons got their fair share of the prizes (it was luck of the draw, honest!).

Organizer Derek Hodgins was in charge of proceedings, and suitably entertained us in his own unique, friendly and relaxed style. Another proud day for the Club with our racing members picking up a fair proportion of the silverware detailed below.

Many congratulations to all concerned, and the best of luck in the forthcoming season.

B.A.R. certificates (25, 50, 100 miles and 12 hours):

6 <sup>th</sup> Martin Wiggan	23.405 mph
7 <sup>th</sup> Steve Stoddart	22.172 mph
9 <sup>th</sup> Phil Holden	20.040 mph

TEAM CHAMPIONS:

Seamons CC - for the 5<sup>th</sup> time!

LADIES B.A.R. trophy:

1 <sup>st</sup> Karen Popplewell	22.935 mph
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JUNIOR B.A.R. medals:

2 <sup>nd</sup> Sean Davenport	24.729 mph
3 <sup>rd</sup> Joe Lockett	24.141 mph

MIDDLE DISTANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

3 <sup>rd</sup> Dan Mathers	25.067 mph
9 <sup>th</sup> Steve Stoddart	22.436 mph
10 <sup>th</sup> Karen Popplewell	22.134 mph.

(Also LADIES CHAMPION)

TEAM: Seamons CC

Best First Year Rider Wagstaff Award:

Sean Davenport.



# Tour of Berwyns & Llangollen Panorama

By Dave Barker

These two classic Seamons Audax promotions are on Saturday 18 May.

Both start at Willington Hall, near Kelsall.

The first section is the same for both events, 35 miles to the Prospect Café in Garth (in the hills north of Ruabon). From there both follow the Panorama Road overlooking Llangollen and the Dee Valley. Then they split. The Berwyns goes along the north side of the Dee to Corwen (50 miles) and takes a B road towards Bala. This is where the route really gets stuck into the Berwyns mountain range, first going over the Milltirr Cerrig pass to Llangynog and then following some remote but glorious lanes from Llanrhaeadr to Llanarmon at the head of the Ceiriog Valley.

**If you're lucky a tail wind kicks in for the run** down the valley to Chirk (just over 90 miles).

The two routes converge in Chirk. The Panorama gets there by crossing the Dee just west of Llangollen and climbing up to the ridge road overlooking the Dee and the Ceiriog Valleys before the descent to Chirk (just under 50 miles).

Both rides then meander through Shropshire and Cheshire to Tilston (70 miles for the

Panorama, 111 for the Berwyns) and then by slightly different routes back to the finish at Willington Hall (just over 125 Berwyns, just over 80 Panorama).

The start time for the Berwyns is 8am, for the Panorama 8.30. To qualify inside the time limit, you have to complete the Berwyns in just over 13 and a half hours (by 9.45pm); for the Panorama you have about 11 hours (7.30pm).

You get all this (plus tea or coffee at the start and a £2 subsidy for food and drink at the finish) for £5 which makes it infinitely better value than any Sportiv you might be considering this season.

We want a bumper Seamons entry for both events; all of you can handle 80+ miles in 11 hours and quite a lot of you are capable of doing the longer ride.

Entries preferably by 11 May to Dave Barker. There is a link on the website so that you can download an entry form; or you can get one from me; we also need a couple of helpers to staff the controls at Garth and Corwen which will mean a nice day out in Wales.

## M&DTTA Lunch...

50 MILE CHAMPIONSHIP medal:

LADIES CHAMPION:

Karen Popplewell: 2.13.38

100MILE CHAMPIONSHIP medal:

LADIES CHAMPION:

Karen Popplewell: 4.42.01

JUVENILE "10" CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY:

(over 2 events)

Sean Davenport 51.01

JUNIOR "10" CHAMPIONSHIP medal:

2<sup>nd</sup> Joe Lockett 49.38

12 HOUR CHAMPIONSHIP:

9<sup>th</sup> Martin Wiggan 237 miles

10<sup>th</sup> Steve Stoddart 231 miles

11<sup>th</sup> Andy Swain 230 miles

14<sup>th</sup> Phil Holden 210 miles

**Photo (L-R); Sean Davenport, Karen Popplewell, Phil Holden & Steve Stoddart receive Seamons' team trophies at the M&DTTA Lunch.**

# Route des Grandes Alpes Pt.2

By Dave Matthews

**Continued from the Christmas edition of the Squirrel:** *Read of Dave's further exploits on the Route des Grandes Alpes. Days 1 to 4 have seen Dave ride from Geneva to Valloire, tackling plenty of cols en route. Day 4 ended with the Col du Telegraphe and a brace of bad drivers. Can things only get better?*

## **Day 5 Valloire to Guillestre (106k, 2500m)**

What a day in prospect---The Col du Galibier (2642m) followed by the Col d'Izoard (2360m) with its famous Casse Deserte near the summit.

The weather had cleared up and the Col du Galibier road was in prime condition. The road had only just been opened following the winter snows and the snow banks were melting across the road as we gained height giving us spectacular views of the snow lined road and surrounding peaks.

Once over the crowded and lofty summit of the col, which gave ever more spectacular views of the Dauphine Mountains to the south, we dropped steeply down to the cafe on the Col de Lauteret. Following a restful brew served by a friendly Irish waitress, we then followed the rapid descent of the Lauteret through Briancon and onto the lower slopes of the Col d'Izoard.

I had been looking forward to climbing this col for many years, ever since a map reading error near Embrun in 1989 caused our Seamons CC party to visit a new, lofty housing development several hundred metres of ascent up a dead end road, rather than the south side of the col itself. Even at 23 years later I dare not reveal the identity of our leader up this white road, as bringing down the wrath of a senior member of the club is no trifling matter!

The scenic reputation of the Col d'Izoard is enhanced by the rugged landscape of the Casse Deserte near the summit, often seen on TV as the Tour de France heroes ride past. However, our 1100m ascent was up the huge, but rather boring north side which wends its way endlessly through trees to the summit; possibly the only disappointment of the whole trip for me. But I can always go back to ride the spectacular south side---maybe?

We embarked on a long 30 k descent from the summit of the col to our overnight stop in the town of Guillestre after a long and tiring day. I arrived in the town ahead of the last group and checked for directions to the hotel from a group at the local town centre cafe. I wanted to make sure that I got this right as I was in no mood to get lost in the maze of streets. The locals showed me where to climb back up to the road marked on the route sheet as leading to the hotel and I then followed this road up a further steep hill in baking heat---but no signs of the hotel! To cut a long story short, 30 minutes later I arrived back where I started in the town centre to establish that the route sheet was hopelessly wrong and I had been 100metres from the hotel where I started! Not a good experience at the end of a hot, hard day, and yet **again ample reason to partake of Dr D's prescription.**

## **Day6 Guillestre to Auron (97k; 3100m)**

According to the KE route sheets this was to be the last of the really hard days, including an ascent of the highest paved road in Europe 2802m (9500ft) over the Col de la Bonette. We started straight out of Guillestre onto an early morning ascent of 21k and 1100m up the beautiful Col de Vars (2108m).



I consider this to be one of the most scenic roads on the trip, with a lovely small lake enhancing the view near the summit.

Once over the summit we followed a long descent alongside the river Ubaye before arriving at a cafe stop in Jausiers (1213m) run by a rather dodgy looking character sporting a pigtail. Just outside the cafe the road turned left by a prominent signpost---Route de la **Bonnette; La plus haute d'Europe; Alt 2802m; 23k**. A lot of climbing, but the post

also gave encouragement with our first sign to Nice at 143k distant.

As with the Col du Galibier, the Bonnette had only just opened after the winter and was probably in the best possible condition for a cycle ascent. The snow melt was filling the rivers which rushed downhill in spectacular fashion whilst all the surrounding peaks were picked out by their snowy ridges. Once on the col itself at about 2700m, there is a final loop road to the summit cairn and



### Route des Grandes Alpes...

plaque at 2802m. This loop was still blocked by huge snow dams in the road which prevented access to cars and motorbikes---but it was just possible to drag a cycle round the snow blocks and get to the highest point free of any other traffic.

Beyond the summit we enjoyed a 25k descent with 1700m drop down to St Etienne de Tinee in the valley far below. The descent was enlivened when a car came screaming round a blind bend at me on the wrong side of the road going uphill with the its right front suspension in the air and mostly out of control. Fortunately I had become wise to the dangers of these descents and was tucked in to my side of the road sufficiently to avoid this maniac. Soon afterwards I heard a scary hiss of air from my front tyre, and gingerly braked to a halt with puncture number 4. Thanks to Warren who stopped to help me change the tube and then accompany me down the col in case I needed yet more assistance.

Down in the valley we enjoyed a brief cafe stop at St Etienne de Tinee before following **“a final gentle climb” to our hotel in Auron.** Once again the route sheet fooled us as this gentle climb turned out to be a gruelling 400m ascent which was not really appreciated after the two major cols we had already ascended. Yet even more reasons to follow **the good Doctor D’s prescription in the evening!**

#### **Day 7 Auron to Castagniers (114k; 1400m)**

There was an **“end of term” feeling in the air** as we left the hotel for a fantastic 50k descent alongside the river Tinee on the D2205. Surely the hardest parts of the ride were over now and we could promenade all the way to Nice---but at this stage we were mer-

cifully unaware of the difficulty of the climb to Utelle!

Following this long, exhilarating descent we turned left off the main valley road to ascend 400m to the ancient and picturesque hill village of La Tour. On this winding and hot ascent I kept thinking how much this road reminded me of hill climbs I had previously ridden in Provence---until I realised that I actually was on a hill climb in Provence!

La Tour (603m) is a village lost in time with a cobbled main square and an ageing population. After making some enquiries from a couple of pensioners, I found that to leave the village centre it is necessary to dismount from the bike and carry it down some steep cobbled steps. The steps eventually return you to the narrow motor road which bypasses the town and leads onwards to the next hill village Utelle.

Beyond La Tour the road descends steeply with several twisting bends and drops far enough to give the impression of returning back to the river Tinee in the lower valley. However the road eventually levels out into a narrow, tree lined passage before exiting into open spaces guarded by the adjacent sign **“Attention; Chaussee Etroite sur 5 km; Sans Glissieres ni parapets”.** My rubbish French took this to indicate a narrow road with little protection from the drop below.

The climb to Utelle (1174m) turned out to be **the “sting in the tail” of this whole ride and I think that I suffered more on this than any of the better known cols.** The road was heavy and narrow for the 800m ascent, the gradient registered a fairly constant 14% and the temperature rose to around 40degC. The one redeeming feature is that the last 100m of ascent over a sharp ridge is avoided by a short road tunnel cut straight through the hill. What a relief to gain the village and meet Mandy who had prepared yet another excel-

lent al fresco lunch.

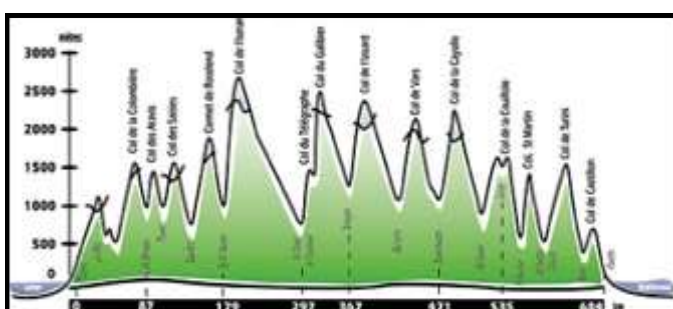
After lunch we enjoyed a steep 900m, 15k descent to St Jean la Riviere where the road joins up with the D2565 route leading directly downhill to Nice. No such joy for us though as after 500m we turned left off the main road to climb a few hundred metres and 12k more to the hill village of Levens. Whilst initially groaning at the thought of yet more hills, this road turned out to be a real highlight. It follows a spectacular route way above the main valley floor with great views and, for once, moderate gradients. Beyond Levens we followed yet more, narrow hill roads towards Aspremont, before descending to our last overnight stop at Castagniers and a well deserved celebration meal.

### **Day 8 Castagniers to Nice (14k; 100m descent)**

Day 8 was intended to include a short climb back to Aspremont followed by a short descent to the Promenade des Anglais in Nice. On this occasion most roads in Nice and the Promenade had been closed for the Nice Ironman Triathlon. Thus we had little choice but to descend 14k down the main road from the hotel direct to Nice Airport, where we packed up the bikes and caught our various planes back home after a tremendous, memorable journey through the Alps.

Especial thanks to Stuart and Mandy of KE for leading and looking after us so well--- with unfailing good humour throughout the trip.

*(Please note - all distances and heights are best estimate)*



## **Eureka Audax Rides 2013**



Eureka Cafe on the Wirral has been sheltering, supporting and serving cyclists for over 80 years. It is so famous, it has several documentaries to its name giving

an outline of the history of the cafe and some of the many personalities associated with it.

The last Audax rides leaving Eureka Cafe, to our knowledge, were 20 years ago when the now defunct Sunspot Cafe and the Llandegla Moors were on the 200k route.

Eureka cafe is still used as an audax UK ride control point. However, a group of local CTC and audax riders believe that the cafe really should have its own rides starting and finishing in the cafe. So here we go in 2013.

"Eureka Excursion" 200km This ride is based on the Peak Audax "Eureka" ride---but starting at the Cafe itself and visiting the beautiful village of Ellesmere at the southern point. The route then heads off to Bunbury, Congleton & Wilmslow before returning through Great Budworth to the Wirral. A generally flat ride with many interesting and scenic lanes.

"Two Mills Tour" 110km rides out to Bangor on Dee and then returns to Eureka Cafe via Bunbury and the Delamere Forest.

"Two Mills Twirl" 60km is an introductory ride visiting Hildegard's Cafe in Holt followed by a return to the Eureka cafe through Aldford and Mickle Trafford.

Further details of these good value rides, entry forms and route sheets are available at

[www.audax.uk.net](http://www.audax.uk.net)

Entries on line using Paypal or through the mail now available until closing date of 2 April 2013.

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# Chester & North Wales CTC/Audax

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Saturday June 8 - from Corwen

**“BARMOUTH BOULEVARD”** 200k. This ride takes you along the east side of Lake Bala to a control at Llanuwchllyn and then over the Trawsfynydd mountain road to Harlech. The tremendous scenery of lakes, sea and mountains continues as you ride on to Barmouth, the estuary causeway and then the Bird Rock road to Abergynolwyn. Then follows another mountain road through the Dyfi forest from Corris to Mallwyd and a further climb up to the last control at Cross Foxes above Dolgellau. The return route is now very straightforward through Brithdir, Bala and Llandrillo to Corwen. Outstanding, beautiful scenery on this ride.

The brand new **“VYRNWY VARIANT”** follows “Barmouth Boulevard” to Mallwyd---then breaks right at Dinas Mawddwy to climb Bwlch y Groes, descends the Eunant to Lake Vyrnwy and then crosses the Hirnant pass to rejoin the original route near Llandrillo. An even higher standard of scenery and climbing---one of the more challenging 200k Audax rides in Britain!

**“BRENIG BACH”** 100k. The return of a Graham Mills’ classic. Only available as a permanent the last few years, this ride has now returned to the calendar as from 2012. The route heads out from Corwen to visit the remote Cwmpannaner before returning to civilisation and a cafe control at Pentrefoelas. You then continue up through Nebo to Llan-sanan, the reservoirs and Llyn Brenig. The last 20k is all downhill. A superb and challenging 100k ride with remote roads and stunning scenery.

**“BALA PARADE”** 60k. An scenic, slightly hilly, introductory ride to Audax which circumnavigates Lake Bala. 1000m of climbing in total, so bring some low gears.

Further details and entry (on line via paypal or by conventional mail) for these good value rides at [www.audax.uk.net](http://www.audax.uk.net)



## Cafe corner

By Cafe Queen



With Spring comes longer rides and the hope of better weather. So Café Queen provides directions to emporia of all things cakey on some new routes and some updates on old, familiar haunts.

As HMCQ and her retinue processed to Llangollen, she happened upon **Hildegard's at Holt**, which she pronounced to be "excellent" for a small group. The café is at the top of hill after the narrow bridge and traffic lights, turn right by the triangle. LL13 9YG.

Turning the royal shoulder to Zephyr, and heading east on a riparian excursion, HMCQ encountered **Polocini's at Romiley**. As a cycle-friendly café, this is bestowed the highest order of accolades; "East Cheshire's answer to the Eureka Café at Two Mills."

This slice of cycling nirvana is to be found close to the canal on Central Drive, Romiley. Check out their website:

[www.polocini.com](http://www.polocini.com)

As HMCQ promised at Christmas, Alsager Hall Farm has been inspected and is deemed more than acceptable; "excellent local food, farm shop and friendly welcome." However,

they're a "bit slow with big groups" (over 10), so remember to leave your entourage at home. Alsager Hall Farm is to be found on the Radway Green road out of Alsager, indicated by a big sign after the pub on the left. Sadly, it is closed on Mondays. ST7 2UB.



Smelling of new paint (as surely everywhere does to Her Majesty?), the newly extended Congleton Garden Centre now has twice as much space, with sofas and coffee tables, and a new carpet. "Nice and warm!" Ideal if one needs to take one's entire household.

More local, but less well known, is Grasslands, otherwise known as the Snowdrop Café. This is on Free Green Lane which joins the Plumley road, B5081, to the A50, handy if one needs a bit of emergency sustenance on the J2/9. "Lots of space, good food, good welcome." Closed Jan/Feb. Open every day. WA16 9QY.

And finally, "one has been here before:" The Galley at the Aqueduct Marina. "Please note the spelling, 'e' in the middle," Her Praeceptorix admonishes. If you are a big group they appreciate prior warning. Tel: 01270 525043



### Caption competition

Steve Stoddart captured Phil Holden (foreground right) at the M&DTTA Annual Lunch.

Some pictures demand a tag line. But which one? So many seem to work...

*"Oh, no. I think I've just said something controversial."*

*"That fourth helping of pudding might have been a bit off..."*



# CLUBS RUNS LIST

	Half day	Tempo	Touring	Social
21st Apr	Blaze Farm	Elvis Cafe	Buxton	The Wizard, Alderley
28th Apr	Rose Farm	Blaze Farm	Arnside Weekend	Astbury*
5th May	Two Mills	Congleton GC	Blaze Farm	Spinney, Allostock
12th May	Dagfields	Delamere	Chester	Jodrell Bank
19th May	Tattenhall	Chestnut Centre	Hope	Grasslands, Peover
26th May	Buxton	Chester	Elvis's Cafe	Malkin's Bank*
2nd Jun	Prees	Cat & Fiddle	Grindleford	The Wizard, Alderley
9th Jun	Elvis Cafe	Dagfields	100 in 8	Riverside, Whatcroft
16th Jun	Meerbrook	Tattenhall	Monsal Trail	Pott Shrigley
23rd Jun	Nantwich Marina	Astbury	York Rally	Farways GC, Sutton
30th Jun	Longnor	Two Mills	Ipstones	Delamere*
7th Jul	Manley	Buxton	Southport	Henbury
14th Jul	Cat & Fiddle	Nantwich Marina	Holmfirth	<b>Manchester-Blackpool**</b>
21st Jul	Poole Marina	Beeston	Wrenbury	Grasslands, Peover
28th Jul	Hope	Meerbrook	19 Gates	Aquaduct*

\* Last Sunday of the month the Social runs are longer and are not advisable for less experienced riders.

**FRONT COVER:** Dame Sarah Storey, our Guest of Honour, delivers her after dinner speech at Seamons' 2013 Annual Dinner.

**\*\* Manchester - Blackpool:**  
 Show Seamons at its best.  
 See Page 5 for details of this 130-mile charity ride in support of Christie's.



## Nuts

By Lomas

