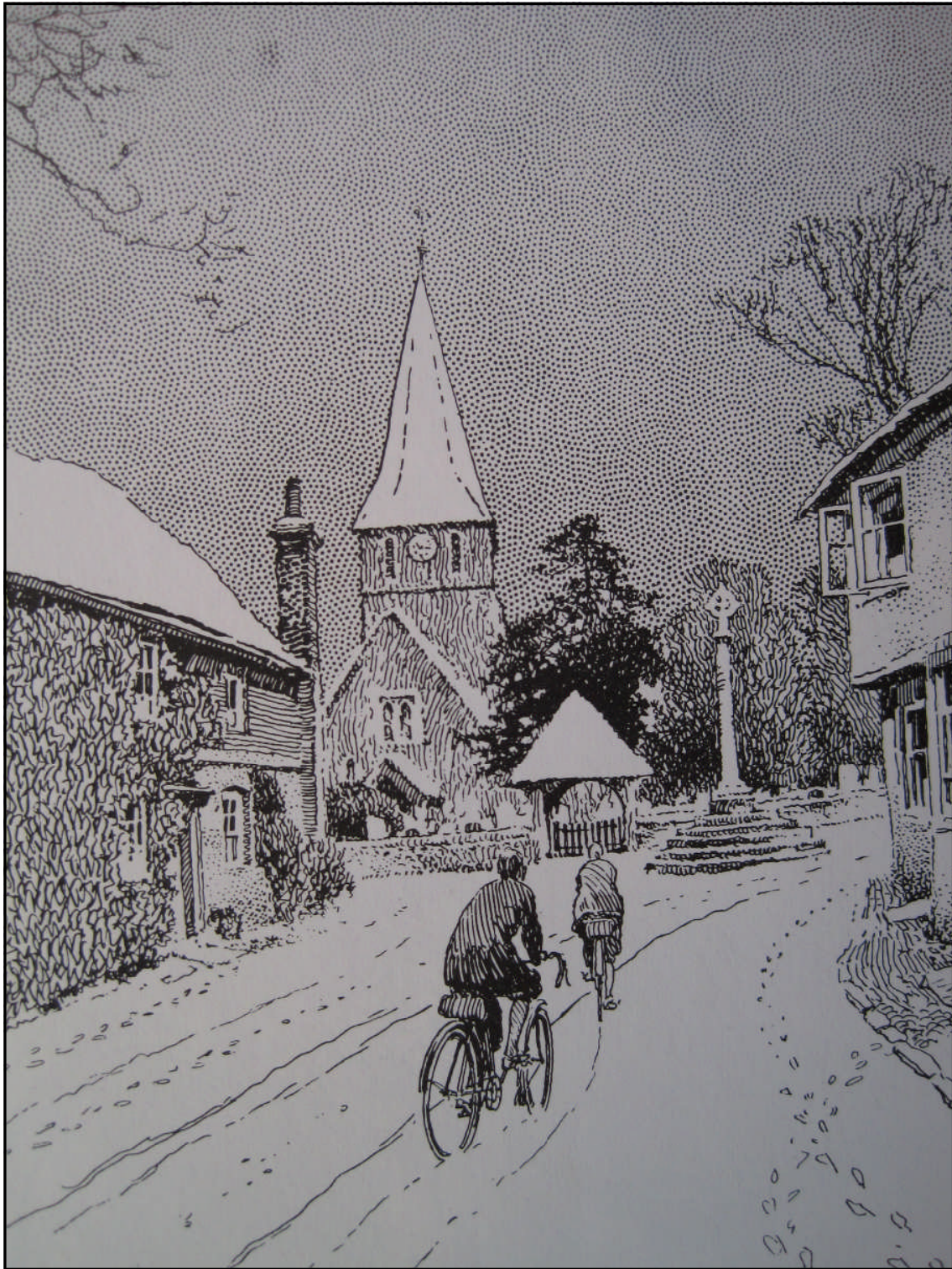


# THE SQUIRREL



January 2010



**Seamons Cycling Club Magazine**



## President's piece

We begin the new year with club membership at an all-time high.

Over the past year Darren Buckley has been at the forefront in starting a new Social Ride group for riders new or returning to cycling and shortly after you receive this edition of the Squirrel a vote will be taken at an Extraordinary General Meeting on allowing youngsters from the ages of five to 13 to join the club as "Go Ride" members.

This is another front that Darren has been pursuing with the aim of getting younger members into the club.

Even if his proposition is not approved (and more so if it is) he will need the help and support of a strong team of existing club members to help organise and run the Social Rides and the Young Rider Training he is trying to promote in local schools.

Several members have already come forward to help but more are needed.

One consequence of the success of the club is the increasing number of riders who turn up at Rackhams on Sunday mornings.

While it is very encouraging to see so many, it presents another problem in that on the half-day run there are really too many riders for one section. A decision will have to be taken to split the section into two runs.

We have yet to come up with a method of doing this which is acceptable to the majority and if a consensus cannot be achieved then an arbitrary split will have to be made. Any ideas??

The annual dinner and prize presentation in February takes a slightly different format this year so please let the committee know what you think of the changes (for or against!) For a start we will be using a smaller room at the Cresta Court so numbers will be limited. Make sure you order your tickets quickly.

I wish you all a safe and happy new year.

Keith Stacey

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# BITS AND BITS

## **Membership list**

JP required an up-to-date membership list from Mike Brooks for circulating the autumn Squirrel. The list duly came, printed on the back of music sheets. What a refreshing change from French verb sheets (guess who that was?)

## **Clubruns**

Our Clubruns list has not gone unnoticed by other clubs who subscribe to our magazine. The question was asked, "How can Prees be a half-day run from Altrincham? Did they get there?" "No, it isn't, and they didn't!"

## **All mapped out**

You must try the Biddulph Valley Way some time, from the coal yard in Congleton. An off-road but well surfaced old railway track leading to Stoke eventually. We came off just the other side of Mow Cop and climbed up the easy way. Flying gleefully down the other side Carol dropped something out of her saddle bag. It wasn't till she got to the bottom she realized what it was. Her ancient and dog-eared OS map of Cheshire. Being starving – what's new? – she chose to

carry on to the cafe before climbing back up to look for it. (The Congleton Garden Centre, near the railway line, is to be recommended for its bacon butties.)

Anyway, back up she climbed. (I was bored, so I went home). On the way she spied a large sheet of paper spread out on the other side. Intrigued she stopped. It was her map! Fully opened up and now with new "roads" on it marked by car tyres!

## **With butter**

At the club Christmas curry Reg Blease was seen trying to butter his poppadom. "It's amazing how thin you can get bread these days" he said.

## **Losing your bottle**

On a North Lancashire run Reg said suddenly: "I remember this spot, I left my bottle here two years ago." And guess what? It was still there!

Carol & John Pardoe



Free-wheelin' Joe Garda shows how where he's up to

## **Meet your clubmates: Dave Williams**

The prodigal son returns from the 70s (is he really that old?) and has injected new life into club nights as our social secretary this year.

He made the headlines in the 1978 Squirrel when he “had his long locks shorn”.

Cheerful and uncomplicated, Dave just gets on with it, be it organizing a club “do” or hanging on to the half-day section.

He should watch out though, there has been a complaint that there are too many Daves in the club, not to mention all the Williamses!

His genealogy studies may prove them all to be related...

### ***When and where were you born?***

September 1961, Sinderland Lane Maternity Hospital, Broadheath.

### ***When did you start cycling and what was your first club?***

I suppose I started seriously when I was 12. I cycled from Timperley to Crewe on my Raleigh Chopper. I joined Seamons at 13.

### ***What was your first race?***

Probably the Slow bike race at the CTC's Norden Rally.

### ***What was your first win?***

See above.

### ***Which performance do you rate as your best?***

National Police 25 in 1980. I rode a short 1:00 with the GMP Cycling Club.

### ***What is your favourite meal?***

Christmas Dinner.

### ***What were you like at school?***

I loved everything about my youth – school included – I wasn't academic enough though. I took a maths and computing degree with the Open University a few years later.

### ***What kind of books do you read?***

The last book of fiction I read was by Ben Elton. I generally read technical manuals but never cover to cover!

### ***What kind of music do you enjoy?***

I am very catholic in my musical taste. From Callas to Costello, Dylan to Roxy. I really like Elbow currently.

### ***And your favourite type of TV programme?***

It has to be something that makes me think: history, nature – I currently like Andrew Marr's Making of Modern Britain.



Dave

***Which newspaper do you read?***

The Guardian.

***What is your ideal holiday destination?***

Beddgelert – I love Snowdonia: the coast, the hills, the castles – and only 100 miles from my house!

***Do you have any hobbies (apart from cycling)?***

Genealogy. Not easy being a Williams, I'm stuck at 1800 – I am the product of generations of Welsh and Lancs coal miners.

***Who would play you in a film of your life?***

Rodney out of Only Fools and Horses.

***What is your greatest fear?***

Serious ill health in the family – anything else has a solution.

***How would you describe yourself in a Lonely Hearts column?***

Young, free and single. Loves cooking.

***What is your favourite training ride?***

The Fallowfield Loop – good enough to use even when I am not at work.

***What is your most unpleasant characteristic?***

Can't cook.

***Which characteristic do you most dislike in others?***

Bullies.

***Who would you most like to have met and why?***

Alan Whicker – He was filming off Anzio during WWII and recorded the explosion that killed my grandfather on board HMS Janus. I would like to find out what the Anzio beachhead was really like.

***What was your most embarrassing moment?***

In 1977. The Seamons staged a road race in Timperley village for which I provided the essential last-lap (large) handbell. I wasn't supposed to ring it but spurred on by friends I grabbed the bell when the riders (Phil Griffiths included) were flying past. I proceeded to ring the bell with all my heart. Next time, I will wait until the last lap I promise.

***Four words to describe yourself.***

Creative, happy, conscientious, busy.

**New members.**

A warm Seamons welcome to new members Alex Smith(Junior), Matthew Wright, Matthew Lucas, John Hammond and Ashley Cress.

And a renewed welcome to Chris Siepen, Martin Dixon and Ian Holmes.

All members please note that there will soon be a new membership form for us to fill out.

Club records are good but can be inconsistent in the format they are kept.

By asking each member to fill out a membership form anew when they renew their membership we can capture all of the same information at once and in the same format.

The new forms will be available as downloads from the website or in the more traditional paper form from membership secretary Mike Brooks.

Please spare the time to help Mike regularise our records.

**Who are we?****By PRO Mike Watson**

New club press officer is Mike Watson, a professional marketer. At his first committee meeting he came armed with enthusiasm and commitment – plus some reflections of how others might see us and ideas for how we might look to the future to develop our club. Your editor asked him to share these thoughts with you as a way of opening up the debate some of us may be already having.

Over to you Mike...

A few weeks ago I was asked to attend a Seamons committee meeting not just because I'm a cycling enthusiast but also in a professional capacity, which is hopefully to raise the profile of the club and generate new members. First impressions weren't that good unfortunately. It could be best described as a great deal of talk but very little action (steady Mike, Ed.) However, I digress, what does seem important to me, is what kind of cycling club do we want it to be, to ensure Seamons is around for many more years to come? The future is in our hands so let's do something about it before it's too late. Here's some of my thoughts and feedback, warts and all.

**Elitist?**

The club is very inclusive and inward looking, with a certain amount of arrogance. The club appears to want only the best of the best and therefore alienates some existing members and fails to attract a wider, less specialist cyclist.

**Old fashioned?**

Changing the perception of any organisation takes some doing especially when it is steeped in tradition. However, without new blood the club will most definitely cease to exist.

**A way forward?**

The club is already embarking on several initiatives which include the Go Ride programme as well as the introduction of social rides for new members but this has to be just the start of the process.

We need to change people's perception of Seamons and that's where hopefully I come in.

This can only be achieved with the full support of every club member so why not make it your responsibility to share your views and ideas with me on a way forward?

Let's be the 'maillot jaune' of cycling clubs!

Please share your comments with me at: [info@reddogmarcomms.co.uk](mailto:info@reddogmarcomms.co.uk)

**Excuses, drama, failure, wind. It must be the Fun Ten!**

The Fun Ten took place on a damp, windy Saturday afternoon in early October.

Carol was more than pleased with her prize of a signed picture of Sir Chris Hoy (on a packet of Bran Flakes – to get her "moving"! especially as she hadn't even ridden. But she did ride over the finish line.

Which is more than Peter Coles did, having been left by Roger to fend for himself all alone on the A50. When he finally free-wheeled in, straight into the pub, Roger rescued his bike and wheeled it over the finish line. Peter complained that someone had moved the finish since last year, four yards further on. Roger had found it difficult to keep up with himself on the return leg with the tailwind, and on fixed.

Phil Holden seemed to be pacing the father and son tandem of Mike and Elliott McConville. All

part of the fun. On finishing Mike discovered that the brakes were binding, hence the mega struggle. He was offered the chance of riding again. Elliott was last seen phoning a friend. Blast-from-the-past Ian Holmes had obviously persuaded his youngest daughter it was fun – not sure whether she was convinced.

Peter-Mark made sure Ian Udall was sufficiently warmed up by making him ride out from home – Didsbury. He was still smiling at the end of what was his first event – a good baptism of wind and rain.

Paul McAllister and Ed Baldwin, minus his poser shoes bought the night before at the club jumble sale, made a formidable pairing to record the fastest time.

Gordon Peake cruised in but who was he with? And is his partner still out there?

After the event, ably timed by John Barry, we all retired to the bar, only to be told that owing to an electrical fault the till wasn't working, so we could only pay by card! Ian to the rescue – the drinks were all on him! Thank you Ian! They were ages coming. Carol went and asked the chap at the bar where they were: "I don't work here, I'm the electrician," was the surly reply.

All the prize winners attended the prize presentation although no-one was sure what they were winning prizes for. Well it was the Fun Ten!

**John Pardoe**

### Johnny Helms Remembered.

It is with sadness that I report the death of Cycling Weekly cartoonist, Johnny Helms.

He was their official cartoonist for a record breaking 63 years, producing some 5,000 illustrations in that time.

A life-long cyclist, Johnny averaged some 15,000 miles a year at his peak, and was thus able to call upon his vast knowledge of the sport and pastime to portray, with his unique humour, virtually every situation the cyclist ever encountered.



**Johnny Helms**

With his permission the Seamons have been privileged to be able to use his cartoons in the Squirrel for many years.

Johnny was a former guest of honour at the Seamons dinner, and we honoured his 60 years with Cycling Weekly by inviting him to be our special guest three years ago.

I have prepared a full and fitting tribute to Johnny for the Club Archive. Any member wishing to view this can contact me directly.

He will be sadly missed, not only by his wife, Ruth, his family, and his club, the Warrington, of which he was president for many years, but also by the whole cycling fraternity.

There is no doubt that through his many books, cartoon, pictures and unique clocks his legacy will live on.

**John Pardoe**

## Notes from CTT National Council (Ian Udall)

The CTT's publicity campaign in Cycling Weekly was discussed at some length. The results of the campaign are not yet known. For an advertising spend of £11,000, the only measurable outcome was that just over 8,000 hits were recorded on a website set up and advertised only in CW's coverage.

However, it was noted that many people locate the CTT website using a search engine, and this would pull up the main CTT website. There were over one million hits recorded on the CTT main website during the 2009 season, but the number of hits in 2008 are not recorded for comparison.

The statistics for the number of rides, particularly Come & Try It rides, have yet to be collated. As a result it is too early to judge whether the campaign has delivered tangible, cost-effective results. A campaign in 2010 will be mounted, with the possibility of looking at other publications.

The subject of triathlon tops was raised, again. This year saw the proposal limited to club events. This compromise appeared to make all the difference (or Liverpool's war of attrition finally bore fruit). So riders turning up for club events can

now be permitted to ride with shamelessly naked shoulders...

After a number of incidents in 2009, it was no surprise that motions to make rear lights mandatory during events were raised by both Eastern and Manchester Districts.

The debate about this was robust, with the mood of the council firmly against change. The compromise solution is that the CTT National Committee will consider making the advice contained in the CTT Handbook (p32) a mandatory text on start sheets.

Testers should note that while the CTT's guidance appears to leave discretion with the rider, cases have been reported where choosing to ignore safety advice (with respect to helmets) has left cyclists at a legal disadvantage. By ignoring advice, they have been deemed by courts to be partly responsible for their own injuries.

Effectively CTT's guidance has stacked the deck heavily against participants in its own events.

On a happier, three-wheeled note, Carl Saint's record-breaking 25-mile tricycle ride in the Stone Wheelers' event in September 2008 was ratified by the CTT. The record now stands at 54.48.

### **BEST CLUBMAN 2009**

With only a fistful of points up for grabs, Dan Snape now has one hand on the Best Clubman trophy. As of December 4, he was leading Dave Williams by seven points.

#### **Leading positions:**

1. Dan Snape 261  
2. Dave Williams 254

3. Reg Blease 241  
4. Phil Holden 233  
5. Mike McConville 232  
6. Peter Coles 202  
7. Keith Stacey 196  
8. John Coles 182  
= Tom Dyer 182  
10. John Verbickas 175

**Dave Barker**



## The ups and downs of the Seamons

We have a new name on the Johnny Pardoe trophy: Charles Carraz. **AND** after he'd been heard to complain that his hill-climbing seemed to be "going downhill"!

Charles charged up Withenshaw Hill to win by a clear ten seconds, proving that he is a worthy Best All Rounder, having been our only finisher in the 12 this year.



**Outside the Ryles Arms after lunch**

In second place was former champion Ian Udall, followed by Keith Bailey doing a great ride to be the fastest vet. His daughter Mel looked very stylish in taking the ladies' prize.

After a promising start the weather closed in to become damp and cool, but not enough to dampen spirits in the free-wheel competition that followed, won by Joe Garda.

With 21 riders in the hill climb, even more competed in the free-wheel, panniers and saddle bags flapping, and in Ian's case, legs too, somewhere behind him in Superman fashion – how did he do that?

There were 38 or so members on the hill, most of whom then whooshed down to the Ryles Arms to enjoy a good, generous lunch in the warm.

Many thanks to John Barry who once again timed the event, and to Dave Williams who organized the meal.

This combined weekend of events is one of the rare occasions in the club calendar when all the sections can come together and enjoy themselves, one way or another!

Well done to everyone who turned out, especially to those whose feet were still wet after the ride out from Altrincham.

Final result of the Omnium Weekend:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ian Udall
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Paul McAllister
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed Baldwin

(Points were awarded according to positions, with Ian's unusual dynamic leg position in the Free-wheel accruing bonus points, Paul McAllister losing points for wearing an ancient club top, and Ed threatening to pump up his tyres for next year)

# A Champion's Tale

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As no doubt you are aware, Robin Haigh won a Bronze Medal in the National Championship 24, the club's first national medal for 42 years.

Robin recorded a brilliant 475 miles, breaking three club records on the way: solo bicycle, vets and vets standard.

Robin is one of those gifted riders who has a knack of totally focusing on the job in hand. Just take a look at the past champions section in the club handbook to prove the point.

Johnny Pardoe interviewed Robin about his great ride.

JP You have ridden the 24 before. How long ago and what did you do?

RH ***Thirty one years ago, I did 392 miles.***

JP What made you enter this year? When did you make the final decision?

RH ***Initially to make up the team, to support Dan and Basil. I made the decision about three weeks beforehand.***

JP What was your target mileage and what did you think you were capable of?

RH ***No target, just to get into a rhythm as soon as possible, see what I was doing at 50 miles, and keep going... (he was on 2.07)***

JP Any turbo work?

RH ***From February till April.***

JP What was your training regime?

RH ***I went out as often as I could, 80 miles was the longest training ride I did.***

JP Any night rides in your preparation?

RH ***No.***

JP Any really long rides?

RH ***Not really.***

JP Any 100 mile events?

RH ***Only one, I didn't do too well in that.***

JP What made you ride your road bike?

RH ***Comfort really, and more positions available with drop bars and extensions.***

JP What did you do in the final week leading up to the event?

RH ***Two Mills on the Wednesday, but nothing special.***

JP What did you do the night before?

RH ***Didn't sleep very much! My wife, Sue, was not impressed.***

JP What was your pre-race meal on the day, and when did you eat it?

RH ***Nothing special.***

JP What were you doing at 50, 100, 12 hours?

RH ***2.07, approximately 4.30, and 250 miles at 12 hours.***

JP Did you ride to a schedule?

RH ***No.***

JP Did you have a bad patch?

RH ***Yes. Around 21 hours when I missed a drink on the circuit. When I phoned my feeding team – this involved twisting my helmet***

**round so I could get the mobile to my ear – they were having chips at the HQ.**

JP Who was your feeding team?

**RH Wilkie ,Keith Bailey, Arran my son. He was handing up a bottle of rice pudding, but not running with it, so when I took it it went all over both of us.**

JP What did you eat and drink during the event, and at what intervals?

**RH Rice pudding and pears, Eccles cakes, honey butties, coffee and orange juice.**

JP Did you enjoy the night, and did you feel sleepy?

**RH No problems in the night, didn't feel sleepy, despite not sleeping the night before.**

JP What lighting system did you use?

**RH Courtesy of Mel Bailey – her work commuting lights. Not sure of make, but they worked well.**

JP At what stage did you realize you were on a good ride and up in the field?



**RH Didn't really know, but I realised I was going well as I was catching riders.**

JP Were you able to finish strongly on the circuit?

**RH Yes, I felt strong on the circuit, but as I had no computer, I wasn't sure of the mileage.**

JP On reflection, did you enjoy the event?

**RH Yes.**

JP Would you consider riding another one?

**RH No.**

JP What advice would you pass on to any other aspiring rider?

**RH Get into a rhythm as soon as possible and ride you own race.**

JP Any other comments?

**RH Thanks to my feeding team, I couldn't have done it without them.**

**Future champion in the making, pictured in the 1970's.**

*jp*

# Dashing through the snow (John Pardoe)

This year's Christmas run was, weatherwise, certainly a seasonal affair, with 13 (brave?) souls on two and three wheels turning up at the Carberrys' Grotto to enjoy the goodies prepared for us by Gail, ably served by her, and John's father and sister.

The numbers were swelled by a car-assisted group – probably the more sensible option for the snowy conditions. With snow now heavily falling the festivities were followed by an "interesting" run up the A50 to High Legh Village Hall.

It soon became obvious that the Fancy Dress riders were causing intrigue amongst the motoring fraternity, resulting in cheerful goodwill and traffic calming. Commiserations to young Alex who survived the half-day excursion into snowy Cheshire, only to part company with his bike on turning into the hall car park.



**Riding out the on the A50**



**Outside the Grotto**

was won by Karen Peake: the photo is of three members bending over, one behind the other, mending a puncture. (Don't ask!) Karen's caption was: "How many people does it take to make a pantomime horse? Three: one at the front, one at the back, and one udder."

Photos on the wall: whose ear is it? Whose legs are they? Photos on the other wall: Whose bike goes with which person?

And so on...

In the fancy dress parade there were three Supersantas, a Spiderman, one Wonder Woman, Superman himself and Clark Kent, plus Jesus, complete with sandals and toolbag. The clapometer gave it to the man from Gallilee/Hale – well done, Roger.

Sixty or so of us sat down to what was an excellent meal, prepared and served by head chefs, Allan and Sara Blackburn.

We were kept busy with a quiz prepared by organizer, Dave Williams. This was a close run affair with Phil Holden just pipping Roger Haines at the post.

The photo caption competition



*Alex gets First Aid*

**Alex gets first aid**



**The fancy dressers**

A team of willing volunteers then restored the hall to its former glory before we all set off home in what can only be described as atrocious, but seasonal, conditions.

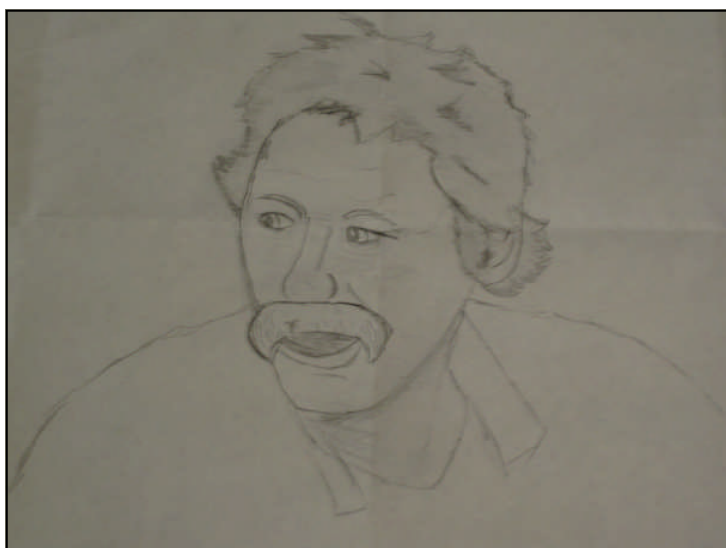
JP, without the aid of satnav, and on three wheels, was invited to guide our touring secretary John Carberry safely back down the A50 to Knutsford. It was quite exciting, but I don't think John saw it that way. At one stage we had a long convoy of cautious motorists in our wake not daring to overtake. Traffic calming at its best – magic!

Meanwhile Wonder Woman, alias Carol, was in close attendance in the campervan, just in case either of us bottled out. It was blizzard proportions at that stage. We didn't!

Many thanks to Gail and John Carberry, and his dad and sister, for the Grotto, to Allan and Sara Blackburn for a great meal, and to our social secretary Dave Williams for rounding off a busy club year in fine style.



**Chef Blackburn at work**



Who is the mystery man?



Talented Valentina Baldwin shows there's more to her than just riding bikes.

**TOURIST TROPHY 2009**

No changes to the overall standings after the Bishop's Castle and Montgomery weekends, so congratulations to Peter Devine on his first Tourist Trophy win.

- 1. Peter Devine 10
- 2. John Carberry 9
- 3. Gordon Peake 8
- 4. Keith Wilkinson 7
- = Reg Blease 7
- = Peter Coles 7

## Antipodean adventures: Part II

My introduction to Australian cycling on the Melbourne Bay Trail had been a great experience, but I much prefer the country to the city. Thus my next project would be to ride out beyond the city confines and sample the legendary Australian outback.

I had now obtained some monochrome copies of the local Werribee maps which showed a minor road heading out north-west through open country for 40k, towards the intriguingly named Bacchus Marsh. Once in Bacchus Marsh I could return to Werribee by a southern loop which gave an overall ride distance of approximately 100k.

A couple of days after the Bay trip I set off on my outback route through Werribee, once the morning traffic chaos had subsided.

As I was heading into a remote area, I was well supplied with extra water and emergency food bars in case there were no cafes or the like en route.

Soon after leaving my daughter's house I had difficulty following the map through town, and got particularly confused around the motorway junctions traversing

Werribee. It soon became clear that my two-year-old map was hopelessly out of date due to the pace of town expansion. The enhanced road system for cars included several new motorway junctions which were not marked on my map. On the positive side, there were lots of cycle tracks alongside the roads, the traffic drives on the left and the locals speak a form of English when asked for directions. Having had previous city experience cycling in and out of Grenoble, I found the experience of finding my way through Australian built-up areas much less stressful than in France.

Eventually I cycled past the last building development in Werribee (effectively the western outer limit of the Melbourne conurbation) to a sudden and dramatic change in road and environment.

The road narrowed and

stretched ahead of me dead straight, gradually rising towards distant hills. Within a kilometre the surrounding, wide grasslands were parched a deep brown colour. This colour was the result of the particularly hot Australian summer that was only just relenting into early autumn. As I continued cycling north-west under a baking sun and clear blue sky, the scenery gradually improved from the flat arid landscape to an approaching vista of shapely, low-lying hills.

The map showed my route meeting the Bacchus Marsh to Geelong main road at a T-junction some 26k from Werribee. (Geelong is a town SW of Melbourne on the bay; incidentally the location of the world cycling championships in late September 2010.)

This T-junction was planned to be my first stop to get some shade and refreshments.

On arrival at the T-junction I got my first big lesson of Australian cycling, as there was some shade from a big tree but absolutely nothing else.

The anticipated air conditioned service station was not even present as a mirage and there was vir-



On the Lilydale/Warburton Trail. Author not pictured

tually no traffic about. As I contemplated the burning sun, the unknown roads and the lack of any sign of human habitation, I was rapidly learning that cycling in Australia can be a much more serious proposition than back home in Cheshire with its mild climate, frequent villages and plentiful cafes.

Once presented with this situation it was time to review my ride plan. Bacchus Marsh was still 12k north and, for all I knew could be another barren road junction with no facilities. If that were the case, I would get very short of water & food – not a prospect to be relished prior to a 50k ride back to Werribee under the hot sky.

Thus I decided to turn south and head back towards Geelong and then Werribee on minor roads through the Mount Cottrell area. In the worst case scenario, I could be sure of getting refreshment after 40k at the outskirts of Werribee.

Well it was 40K before I eventually saw a BP garage sign in the distance, after a hot ride through a rural area where a horse sheltering under the occasional tree was the only sign of life. Once at the garage I could get as much refreshment as I needed after riding 60k through the parched, deserted land.

The contrast beyond the garage was amazing – from deserted roads to modern city suburbs in ten metres! I then found a way alongside the busy roads and through the industrial areas of Werribee for 10k back to my daughter's house and a much needed shower.

When I checked the bike over

the next morning, I found that the old style, ex-parts bin free-wheel was clinking in a manner that indicated terminal decline. Thanking my lucky stars that it had survived the outback, I managed to get a commuter-quality seven-speed block fitted at the local bike shop for AUS\$ 50 (£25). They assured me that the freewheel would last as long as the sprockets – I suppose this was good news?

The fickle Melbourne weather determined my next ride. They say that Melbourne can have four seasons in one day, supplemented by fierce southern winds coming in off the bay direct from Antarctica.

Looking through various options for a sheltered ride, I found a brochure for the Lilydale-Warburton cycle trail along the upper Yarra valley. This route follows an old disused railway track through tall bushland, some 40k to the north east of the city. As well as the bushland offering some shelter from the strong winds, this ride had the added attraction of travelling through a wine region which might offer some civilised refreshments.

The drive to Lilydale gave me some feel for the size of the Melbourne conurbation (Population 4.5 million and rising) – some 70k of built-up area as I drove out from Werribee.

Once I had found the start of the trail just beyond Lilydale (not easy), I set off east under glowing skies along the hard-packed gravel trail.

The first 3k ascent 150m up Mount Evelyn included a passage through a road tunnel

made from a wide pipe set on end. The trail is continually lined by trees which look spectacular, but have left a layer of twigs and branches all along the road surface. Initially I rode slowly trying to avoid these sticks getting into the bike wheels, but after a while this care becomes impossible if any sensible progress is to be made.

Beyond Mount Evelyn the trail gently descends 35k to the old mining town of Warburton, through farm areas and vineyards. The scenery is reminiscent of lowland Scotland with green valleys and low hills all around – or it is until a flock of brightly coloured parakeets flies off the trail to remind you that Scotland is 20,000k north and you are in a whole different place!

After 30k the trail passes through the hamlet of Millgrove, which has a small shop and an enormous sawmill.

Millgrove felt like an unspoiled bit of old Australia, whereas Warburton had succumbed to the tourist dollar (think Broadway in the Cotswolds).

Once in Warburton I had to turn round quickly as it was starting to get dusky and I had no lights.

The return trip was a case of head down and go for it, hoping that none of the larger sticks on the trail would get into my spokes with dire consequences.

When I eventually reached the top of Mount Evelyn the return route was ambiguous; inevitably I took the wrong way which resulted in a 20 per cent descent off route to find the evening rush hour traffic and a horrible 20 per

cent ascent for 2k in all the traf- Melbourne in the evening rush area.  
fic to get back on the trail. hour to get back to Werribee.

Once back on route it was a The next few days were spent to return to the bike and follow  
gentle descent back to Lilydale celebrating my wife's birthday up my internet contact with Au-  
where the car was parked and a along with some Irish friends dax Australia.  
long, unnerving drive across who just happened to be in the

Dave Matthews

# On The Run

The Half Day met by chance the Warrington on the way out to Dagfields: "Aha," was the cry, "the second best club in Cheshire!" The reply was: "Congleton aren't that good!"

The club has received several complaints from the man at 22 Pothole Road, who reported that he was being targeted by a large group of cyclists repeatedly calling out his name. This was preventing him from having a lie-in on a Sunday morning. The good news is that Bill Lowe has said that since his road has been resurfaced the name calling has stopped.

The lady at the very end of his street, Claire Wright, said she had a similar experience, but the problem still persists.

It's funny how an increase in speed on the clubrun, or a slight incline, can bring out the individuality in a slightly less than fit cyclist. He will often be described as a "one off".

As excuses are getting more imaginative and increasingly frequent on the clubrun, it is being proposed at the next AGM that a note from the doctor, or at the very least from your mother, must be produced to the group leader explaining why a rider can't go up to the front *again* this Sunday.

Ed Baldwin and John and Carol Pardoe



"It tempers the spirits and harmonizes the mind, dispels lassitude and relieves fatigue, awakens thought and prevents drowsiness, lightens and refreshes the body and clears the perceptive faculties". You knew that of course. Who needs recovery drinks? (I came across this in a book I picked up in the Audlem cafe, called "Around the tea-table", printed in 1874!)



## St Michael – patron saint of mudguards

September is not a time of year you might expect warm sunshine and dry weather but St Michael was obviously in a good mood at the time of the feast to celebrate his memory.

Michaelmas Weekend had been kind in the past, but even at 8.30 in the morning as Karen and I (*Gordon*) filled the car with bags of food and cycling paraphernalia, the weather was looking particularly exceptional. Not a cloud!

We got on the road to Bishop's Castle half an hour behind schedule. Not bad for us! No sat-nav required as our car almost knows the way unaided.

We pulled onto Foxholes Campsite just minutes after John Carberry and Pete Coles. We'd booked the two static caravans only a couple of weeks before whilst "doing Shropshire" for a holiday.

I emptied the car while Karen put the kettle on and sorted both caravans with tea, coffee, milk, breakfast stuff etc.

Within minutes we were on the patio, now in shorts and T shirts, cup of tea and biscuits and admiring the stunning panorama of the Long Mynd.

As we pondered an afternoon's ride and rustled the map a Red Kite drifted silently across and set the atmosphere for a perfect, chilled-out weekend.

John took a call from work which reminded me to turn off my mobile. Pete Devine arrived without Wilkie! – delayed by work!

It was so pleasant we had a struggle moving, but the bikes called and we potted off along familiar lanes with no cars and only cow pats and butterflies to avoid.



**Roger Reclines**

The Long Mynd and Stipperstones looked inviting but the valley route won. Lunch was soon taken at The Horseshoe Inn, Bridges near Ratlinghope. A delightful riverside spot especially when the sun shines. An isolated country pub, fighting for survival no doubt, with a good kitchen and some less common, but stunningly good local ales. Being on the Shropshire Way and a Shuttle bus halt is possibly its saving grace. Long may it survive! Several in these parts are boarded up.

With the River East Onny at our feet, warm sun on the face, and all day to enjoy, a second pint was definitely "order of the day".

(The significance of my lack of appetite and hesitation to imbibe would only reveal itself later.)

Eventually we pedalled off via Norbury and More. The Sun Inn at Norbury always looks inviting but I've yet to catch it open (*and I've tried*).

The vague plan was to rendezvous with later arrivals at Bishop's Castle. (*Where else? It has two micro breweries*).

By late afternoon, Keith had landed and free-wheeled the half-mile downhill to the town. With bike then strapped to Roger's van he completed his first run of the weekend without turning a pedal! A "PB" for Keith. If we had a "*non-hammering of the year award*", he'd be prime candidate.

Back at base Karen had returned from her town reconnoitre, and was putting the finishing touch to pans of hotpot and/or chilli and rice, for the Friday-after-work arrivals and us riders of course. Again we could sit outside in T shirts – it makes all the difference!

Late arrivals: The Burns contingent, Andy, Sue and daughter Rachel, arrived with the MPV packed to the roof. John & Sheila, (friends and Seamons virgins) blended in straight away.

(John has since bought a bike and may just have caught the cycling bug.)

Mr Pardoe had arrived first thing Friday and camper-vanned in the field with one other tent. He'd gone solo around Montgomery, Clun etc and returned to find the field resembling Glastonbury as the site was warming up to its busiest weekend of the year. Such is the attraction of Michaelmas celebrations.

Chris Thompson (our Man in Black) arrived on three wheels. Pulling all his gear on a clever trailer and interrupting his Wales End to End.

Fourteen in total! How good is that?

Plates of chilli appeared and disappeared. (The significance of my lack of appetite would only reveal itself later.)

We managed to accommodate all the tents and Roger's VW "home" next to the statics with guidance from Wendy & Chris – our hosts at Foxholes. They are genuine sorts and I must thank them for their hospitality (on both my visits this year). The site is relatively new and now has a superb eco-friendly toilet/shower block with solar panels and various "green" gizmos! I hope we will be their guests for years to come.

(By the way, it has two-and-a-half big fields for camping/caravanning and a self catering bunkhouse. Plus the two statics that we've already booked for next year. It's a 15-minute stroll along the Shropshire Way to one of the friendliest towns in England – only just! Wales is about a mile away.)

All fed we set off on foot for some town centre evening refreshment and possible liaison with our mates – the Wigan Wheelers.

For once the tourist section stayed together for the whole trip, albeit only half a mile.

The Six Bells is one of, if not my favourite pub. A long and proud history of brewing. Big Nev's is a superb homemade pint and Neville is also an ideal landlord

tate car, and eventually a proper ambulance.

Gosh – what a fuss! I was wired up and looked after by some cracking people. They were all brilliant and a big thanks!

An hour later and just avoiding a visit to Shrewsbury A&E, I was discharged, having promised to go to my GP first thing Monday. "I can't do Monday morning, I'm on a First Aid refresher course," I said. How ironic.



### Breakfast

and micro-brewery guru.

Everyone was set for a good evening – except yours truly. My lack of appetite suddenly turned to severe nausea. Feeling grotty I sneaked off, out of sight (not a good idea for which I've since been reprimanded) and then passed out half way across a dimly lit street. (How silly).

I remember reviving, soaking wet with sweat, and surrounded by familiar faces. All hell had broken loose as my condition had invoked the attentions of Bishop's Castle's First Responder (Mary); an off-duty fireman (2<sup>nd</sup> responder?) who'd had his radio on; a paramedic's es-

Turned out my blood sugar was "low" or hypoglycaemic – a word I'm avoiding. What had gone wrong? – We'll probably never know. I've got several paper printouts to prove it. Worst of all, I'd only taken the top off my first pint! If nothing else at least, in future when I'm caught with a Mars Bar, I can claim "medical necessity"!

Also a thank you to the young lad who shifted me to the pavement and then declared to our crowd: "There's an old man collapsed around the corner – is he with you?" Old Man?! – I did say it was dark didn't I?

I got dispatched in a taxi for an early night, whilst the rest completed the run with an aperitif of the Michaelmas celebrations in the Three Tuns. (The other micro brewery – what a town!)

Saturday dawned, bright and beautiful. I felt fine (phew), and Karen supplied us all with a superb "full English breakfast" with delegated assistance. All washed down in the sunshine with champagne and strawber-

ries. We know how to live! England at its best!

Rides, walks, and town centre celebrations commenced. I was inevitably put on a "short lead" and kept off the bike, under supervision. Tagged, I think it's called.

Michaelmas Celebrations at Bishop's Castle (don't forget the apostrophe), are a rich mixture of street theatre, music, food and craft stalls.

Timeless yet buzzing. Processions and displays of brightly polished old traction engines. A real highlight and numerous. Then, every renovated old tractor in Shropshire, looking spick and span followed by vintage cars. You find a vantage point between the 18<sup>th</sup> century town hall and St John's Church on a 1 in 6 incline called High Street.



**Andy and Sue asleep**

Fire-eaters, Bangra dancers and drummers, pub bands, street orchestras, folk and music hall singers etc etc. It's all free, although you can donate a fiver and get your badge and programme. The organising costs are in the thousands and our donation was freely given, led by the well known Mr Big Spender himself – Pete Devine. His face was a picture as he donated his fiver and turned to see us walking on for free. (We paid up!)

Samples of British eccentricity were abundant, making Lycra-clad oddities look unusually "normal".

There's that much to see, hear and talk about, that so much is inevitably glossed over. A display of various local furniture manufacturers is hidden a little out of the centre in the local college building. A must see next year.

Later in the day as our "riders" re-appeared, it was apparent various groups had been out and about. Detail was hazy but one contingent had ventured Clun direction and made the

only one not making a fool of yourself. The more self-conscious sneaked into the adjacent hostelry which soon completely ran dry. Another PB for some. (You know who you are!)

The Bangra Band broke ranks and led all the, mainly local, children up & down Main Street in a homemade lantern parade. Visualise a cross between the Piped Piper and the Arabian Nights. Brilliant – lump in the throat stuff, honest!

A stunningly good rock outfit, with authentic Hammond Organ, drowned out a local pub and rumours abounded that Robert Plant (singer of Led Zeppelin fame) could make an unannounced appearance – he has previously. Not this year!

"Dazed and Confused" by it all, half way down Main Street, was a crouched, homeless-looking figure. As I went

most of the great weather. Messrs Carberry and Haines had been to a distant motorhome & caravan retailer. Expensive plans were formulating? They returned to find a chromed-up "Curry Caravan" which they visited twice during the evening! A measure of its quality? Not quite the sort of motorhome Mrs Carberry has in mind.

As the sun disappeared and just an extra layer was required, we found ourselves warmed up by a mass Bangra dance session in the High Street. It wasn't embarrassing to join in. It was embarrassing to find you were the

to donate some coppers, I realised it was our very own Mr Par-doe.

"Are you alright John?" He'd got a new camera which was keeping him quiet. It's not often you hear JP swear but I'm sure he said, "It's bloody marvellous, I'm bringing the whole family next year".

Back to camp and despite the late hour it was still warm enough to sit outside, reminisce, giggle and polish off the last of the champagne and cups of tea before giving in to sleep. The later arrivals back didn't wake a soul.

Sunday and Chris Thompson Bishop's Castle was into the best ever". No small praise set off before we awoke to complete the penultimate day of his Welsh E2E. We'd gained a Wigan Wheeler – the same Ian we'd adopted in York. He's actually from Coventry way (and cycles out and back), but that's another story. His claim to fame was being second in the National Hill Climb – but only for three minutes. The advantage of being first off. He's organiser of the 2010 NHC. You see, we only mix with cycling's top brass.



Cycling was not the only a-traction at Bishop's Castle

Breakfast-on-the-patio weather, again. Runs soon set off towards Corvedale for some "Shropshire miles under the blue sky", and lunch at "Stormin Norman's" – another Sun Inn and micro-brewery (where else)?

A walking group, including myself, had a car assist to Stipperstones and climbed to a viewing spot. On such a beautiful clear day the views stretched for miles, including the Berwyns in the north, to the west Snowdonia and closer Montgomery and Churchstoke. Another lunch for us at The Horseshoe – superb spot.

Michaelmas celebrations Day 2 and the finale eventually attracted us all back to the town. The feast of St Michael at the end of summer is when the harvests must be safely gathered in

and all seasonal rent and taxes paid before the autumn equinox. Geese (one at least) fattened on the stubble fields, gets eaten. In Nottingham it's the Goose Fair. Michaelmas daisies are at their best as the days draw in. "Eat a goose on Michaelmas Day. Want not for money all the year" the saying goes. On the cycling calendar this all means – "mudguard time again"! As club weekends away go, this one was being voted as "one of

or perhaps short memories! The weather really helped and there's something for everyone. JP reiterated his intent to bring the grandchildren next year. (When he'd said "the whole family" I thought he'd meant all his cameras and bikes!)

For once we weren't escaping the British weather but actually delaying departure time and making the most of the never-ending sunshine. Plans to extend the stay till Monday next year were being discussed as the bikes inevitably got strapped on top, inside, and on the backs of the cars.

We reluctantly left about 6pm as Andy performed a packing feat similar to an Everest expedition. A list of what he hadn't brought would be fairly short! They'd even found an extra bike over the weekend, but that didn't go back.

Next year the weather can't be guaranteed but the enthusiasm will endure. Be there!

Gordon Peake

**Paul was the only Seamons rider in the M&D Christmas "10", doing a 24 minute ride.**



Paul McAllister

## Tenth anniversary for Monty's mob

**The Montgomery weekend is not for the faint-hearted or fair-weather cyclist, as these recollections by Johnny Pardoe and Martin Wiggan make clear. Worryingly, both seemed to have enjoyed themselves despite the hardships. A sure sign they need to consider another hobby!**



**The magnificent Montgomeriers ride again**

It is hard to believe that this year was the tenth Montgomery weekend, and even though it is the darkest, coldest wettest time of the year it gets more popular each year.

Twenty-three of us, including founder member Reg Herbert, sat down to dinner on the Saturday evening.

On the Friday, Phil Holden and Mike Brooks ploughed a lonely furrow to the traditional first day watering hole at Stiperstones.

Meanwhile the "A" team ventured west to Emily's at Lake Vyrnwy, where some of the chosen few were treated to a complimentary whisky or two. Probably all part of Robin's plan as on the return to base via Welshpool the bunch was treated to one of his loops over the back side of Long Mountain – in the dark. Experiences like that make the comfort of the Dragon Hotel even more welcome.

Saturday saw the "A" team lunching at Presteigne after taking a devious route which climbed what must be the steepest climb over the

Kerry Ridge. Well done, Robin. Later Basil Le Roux produced the route profile on his lap-top for all to see and enjoy – in the comfort of the bar.

The "B" team, although suffering a 40-minute delay when strongman Mike Brooks snapped his chain only yards after leaving the hotel, did go on to complete the circuit of Abermule, Kerry Forest to Clun for lunch. This was followed by an extended mid-afternoon tea-stop at Bishop's Castle, getting back to base just before dark.

Sunday, Robin and the "A" team "enjoyed" a 44-mile circuit, taking in Bishop's Castle, Church Stretton and back over the Mynd from Little Stretton to Ratlinghope. Then, as a bonus, Robin took the group over

the Bog. (It's a good job the majority don't know where they are.) Quite a few members reported worn-out brake blocks. I wonder why! Meaning Dan Mathers treated Martin Wiggan to a "bit of off-road" along the western edge of the Kerry ridge (remember they were on road bikes). Result: some very wet feet. It all adds to the "enjoyment" of this now permanent and unique club fixture.

Despite the weather forecast we were reasonably lucky with most of the heavy rain falling in the night.

Another great weekend, and again, many thanks to Robin for his organization.

PS. The picture of Robin with his chain-saw has nothing to do with Mike's snapped chain...

PPS. King of the Sprint: guest rider Dave (Louise's). King of the Mountains: Ian Udall. Pool: Dan Mathers.

Scrabble and cribbage: Phil and Mike complained they kept being interrupted by people buying them drinks.

## More Monty's madness

### Day 1 – Emily's Cafe

Another fantastic weekend in Wales enjoyed by all. A fantastic event as ever and the weather, the company, the price and not to mention the Garmin, did not disappoint (well apart from the Garmin).

Friday saw us head away from tradition, having been let down the previous year in Stiperstones, to visit an old haunt; this time well prepared.

In previous visits to Emily's Café it has always been wet, so to arrive there dry and see a roaring open fire in the posh room as a welcome was simply magic.

Emily, udder in one hand and saucepan in the other, quickly set to getting the tea made. Having drafted in help from her sister they made light work of feeding us all.

As if she was trying out an experiment she offered everyone a "small" whiskey. A few politely declined and a few out of politeness also accepted – though not without some murmurs of trepidation. Five minutes later out came the wine glass measures and the lads were set. Keith, Rob & Nigel all supped up, with Dan Mather needing more convincing and choosing, rather sensibly if you ask me, to disguise the drink as un-supped tea.

When we left we were stocked up and ruddy faced, and as if to see whether their comedy experiment had worked, Emily and her sister waved good-bye to the wobbly ones.

The run-in on day one was all set to be the usual crazy race in the dark, punctuated by led lights, except for the unforeseen route change that the Gar-

**There's even a pool  
(table)**

min had in store for us: a two-mile detour up Long Mountain.

### Day 2 – Prestigne

The Garmin claimed another victory on day two with a brutal start to the day, climbing over 3,000ft before lunch.

We struggled up sections of 20 per cent onto the Kerry Ridge, which saw many of us beaten and, having run out of gears, walking. We held our breath as we saw Chris Siepin try to take a sprint for a sign on the way, only to see the bunch turn right just as he had shot past at 50kph. Funny.

Lunch was another dry affair, which having sat in wet clothes in previous years I have to say was an improvement.

We filled our stomachs and headed off to find flatter B-roads home. Punctuated by the odd ten per cent bump, we arrived in Bishop's Castle just as a lorry-load of currant teacakes arrived and were promptly toasted. Two Nigel? Was that really necessary?

The rain had started as we arrived, and so in true Montgomery style the run-in to home was mayhem. Balls-out madness with early attacks from Seatpin and Dave. Soon caught by a super-strong and revitalised Dan Mather, Dave took the final sprint. Fantastic efforts from Keith (Tigger) Bailey, Robin, Basil & Charles (who bridged a gap with what seemed some ease) to stay in a



group to the end, the rest of us had dropped like sodden dishcloths back into the darkness.

A top night ensues in the pub and we slept like kings.

### **Day 3 – Kerry, The Ridge & Bishop’s Castle.**

On Sunday, I wanted to have an easier day as I had a busy day planned at work, and so with a similar intention, Dan offered to create a route just for us.

Robin took the main bunch over a “flat” run for what was supposed to be some 40 easy miles (rumor has it that you have still got some explaining to do, Rob).

Dan and I set off to Kerry into a headwind. Then turning left in Kerry we rode up the most beautiful 30-minute, alpine switch-back road. It really was great. First gear all the way chatting. Then left over the ridge, on what were supposed to be tracks – but turned out to be mud baths, we eventually arrived in Bishop’s Castle at noon for a spot of lasagne at Poppies.

Once again the run-in was wet & for my tired legs simply too fast. Watch out for Dan Mathers in the next season. He will be flying.

All in all a fantastic weekend. Thanks to everyone who shared it with us, I hope to see you all there again next year.

**Martin Wiggan**

## **Friday 13<sup>th</sup>**

In retrospect, possibly not the best date for an AGM?

Chairman Mike’s report summarised the year and highlighted all of the hard work put in by members in support of the club’s diverse activities (without the aid of a little red book).

In particular, Mike drew attention to the new Social rides as a means of allowing new members to participate without being dragged halfway across Cheshire by the half-day’s pack-hounds, or amiably touring to the very edges of the earth with the club’s gentlemen of the road.

Mr Laffly’s impersonation of the Hon Treasurer needs more work, but he was able to confirm that Seamons Cycling Club was not in need of a little quantitative easing. Pity, a couple of billion might have seen the rollers refurbished.

Mr Brooks confirmed that the club continues to attract new members, who are all people of evidently impeccable taste and judgement.

The Development Secretary’s report became a duet, with Darren and Ed presenting the long list of innovations that Darren has worked on during 2009, from the Go Ride programme to the social rides.

The time trialling year’s highlights were recounted, with particular acclaim for Robin Haigh’s

ride in the 24hr and Mel Bailey’s year as a whole, from setting a new women’s Ten record and winning the M&DTTA Wagstaff Award in the face of stern competition.

Mr Haigh & Ms Bailey saw further plaudits in the road race secretary’s report with victories in the World Firemen’s Championship and women’s UK road racing. I leave my gentle reader to ascertain which way round.

The tourists’ postcards from the edge included Yorkshire, and when not in foreign parts they put a lot of effort into supporting club activities – particularly marshalling the club’s RR and TT events.

The Pardoes signed off their tenure as the Squirrel’s editors with notes on its origins and its continued popularity.

Mr Williams recounted the 2009 social calendar, which spanned everything from the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner to the Rola Kola nights in the OMT. Roll on the Christmas Curry ([bad] pun intended).

Mr Blackburn gave an extemporised report on the website’s year, with a particular highlight being the new forum, where the full minutes of this AGM are available for those of you who are gripped by this digest and eager to read in full, mellifluous prose.

The election of the club’s officials saw Messrs Watson and Baldwin join the committee for eve-

nings of tea, cake and learned disputation. A big 'thank you' to Carol, John, Dan and Allan for all their work in the service of the club over the last year.

The second half of the AGM saw a point of order raised regarding the conduct of the AGM.

The bone of contention was whether the notice of the AGM should have included the agenda and full wording of the propositions, which were to follow. The propositions were debated, but a final decision was deferred to an EGM.

The first proposition was to introduce a 'Go Ride' membership to find a means to dragoon children off the streets and into a phalanx of ruthless War-

ington-beating testers. Or was that just my interpretation of the programme's aims?

The second proposition was a revision to the means by which Life Membership is bestowed. This is understandably a subject close to many hearts, which saw impassioned arguments on both sides.

The debate was diverting enough to warrant a revival in January, so those of you who missed it will have a chance to catch it at the EGM, to be held on 15<sup>th</sup> January. Your invite will be with you shortly.

Ian Udall

## Coffee break quiz

Forget sudoku and brain trainers, the Squirrel coffee break quiz is where you really get to test those grey cells.

If you think you know your way around Manchester, navigate your way through the clues below to find the missing words. They are all districts or areas in or around Greater Manchester.

An example to get you started: Why does a dog always...his bone? The missing word is "Bury".

Answers are at the bottom of the page.

Come to the Bring and Buy ...

Before coming to bed remember to put the ...the door.

I've got to ...because my tea is ready.

I can't wear my trousers because the tailor is ...

The plates were so hot I couldn't ...

Is it sleet? No, it's ...

The farmer says there's nothing growing because it is a ...

Does the wine merchant ...?

I thought you were normal until I found out about your ...

A ... is another name for a snow covered pasture.

The cast were ...stage for an encore.

I asked the shot putter 'ow far 'e could ...

Ask not for ...the bell tolls.

"Eh lad, is that a grouse in't meadow?" "No, lad, it's a ...

Answers:  
 STRANGWAYS, WHITEFIELD, BROUGHTON, IRLAM, HULME, DUCKINFIELD,  
 SALE, BOLTON, RUSHOLME, ALTRINCHAM, OLDHAM, HALE, FALLOWFIELD, STOCKPORT,



## Road Racing Season Roundup 2009

2009 has seen some outstanding performances by our road racing members.

Robin Haigh has won the National Category C title for the LVRC road race points series and won silver medals in the Fire Brigade World Championships road race and time trial. Robin has managed to bag four first places, one second place and one third place in LVRC series events.

Two of his wins came from breakaways – one of which, in Kent, was a 50-mile break – ouch!! The other was a smaller break but still impressive. The rest have been bunch sprints proving Robin is an all round talented guy (as if we didn't already know!!)

Robin also managed a win at the Oulton Park TLI race and as mentioned above excelled in the Fire Brigade World Champs in Toulouse.

At the time of going to print, Nige Harrop is lying fourth in his category in the LVRC

points series. Out of his four counting events so far, Nige has managed a 2nd, 4th and 6th.

In various other events Nige has bagged 2nd and quite a few 4th to 6th placings and has been a key player in the tactics at the front of the bunch in TLI races. He reckons he still needs to learn to sprint properly then he might win something!

Meanwhile, Mel Bailey has gone straight in at the deep end in her first road race season competing in the National Women's road race series and has put in some great performances in these tough events. Here are some words from the lady herself:

"In March I decided to enter the BCF Women's

Race Series, being able to keep up with the half-day section spurred me on to try and get race fit, and take on some competition.

The first was the Cheshire classic race, a local circuit that goes up Acton Bridge ten times. There were 60 riders, a big field and because of this it ended up being a good learning race, I managed to stay in the right places to finish in the bunch.

The second race in Ayrshire, Scotland was a shock. The small field of 21 riders had travelled a long way and were serious contenders. The pace went up, and the terrain was hilly, giving a testing race. I got dropped on the final climb and trailed home shattered.



**Robin Haigh turning the thumb screws on the bunch on his way to victory in the 2009 Bashall Eaves Road Race.**

majority Elite, first and second category riders. This proved to be particularly tough as it tested my cornering and sprint work. The lung-bursting effort taught me a lot for any future Crit rides I attempt!"

2009 has also seen some good performances by Martin Wiggan, Harry Streuli, Keith Stacey, Paul Smith (who has won the RR trophy based on BC points) and Chris Scholes. Martin, Harry and Keith all managed top-ten positions in their age groups in the Seamons TLI road race.

Well done to everyone!

The next race in Capernwray, Lancaster only lasted one lap for me when we hit the first major climb on the circuit.. Back to the drawing board!

The final race of the series I did was the Warwick Crit race, another small field, this time 13, the

**Louise Eden**

# Testing Times

I would like to start by saying thanks to everyone that took part in this year's club events.

It has been a great year with the numbers raising each week with club members and other club members taking part in the Wednesday night events, thanks again to all who help out marshalling and to Steve Booth who was the time keeper this year.

## Wednesday Nights

The final standing in this year for the Wednesday nights were

Winner	Paul McAllister
Second	Martin Wiggan
Third	Roy Myers

## Club 10 Championship

The result for the club 10 championship was

Winner	Robin Haigh
Second	Ian Udall
Third	Dan Mathers
Vets Winner	Keith Stacey
Ladies	Melanie Bailey

## Club 25 Championship

The result for the club 25 championship was

Winner	Robin Haigh
Second	Dan Mathers
Third	Paul McAllister
Vets Winner	Keith Stacey
H/cap Winner	Basil Le Roux
Ladies	Melanie Bailey

## Club 50 Championship

The result for the club 50 championship was

Winner	Ian Udall
Second	Allan Blackburn
Third	Dan Snape
Vets Winner	Allan Blackburn
Ladies	Melanie Bailey

## Club 100 Championship

The result for the club 100 championship was

Winner	Dan Mathers
Second	Ian Udall
Third	Robin Haigh
Vets Winner	Robin Haigh

## 24 Hour

Congratulations to Robin Haigh who finish third overall and set a new club record at 24 hours of 475.75 miles in the RTTC National event on the D24/1 course. Well done also to Phil Holden who finished with a distance of 352.37 miles.

## 12 Hour

Congratulations to Charles Carraz on finishing his first 12-hour event, covering a distance of 220.98 miles.

## Hill Climb

The result for the hill climb was

Winner	Charles Carraz
Second	Ian Udall
Third	Keith Bailey
Ladies winner	Mel Bailey
Ladies Second	Valentina Baldwin

# 24 Hour Riders



Dan



Phil



Basil



Rob



Charles Carraz - Club BAR  
and Hillclimb Champion



Mel Bailey - Ladies TT Champion,  
50 Champion, 25 Champion, 10  
Champion and Hillclimb Champion



Brendan Coyle



Roy Myers



Dan Snape

There must be something in the Coles' genes.

The touring section has long known of John's penchant for trails, hills, old drover's tracks and runs which seek out the impassable.

His skills as a route-finder are surpassed only by those of his bike handling. Who has not marvelled at the cat-like reflexes that enable him to stay upright and still progressing where lesser mortals are pushing or stopped?

Brother Pete is clearly cut from the same cloth when it comes to devious routing around.

First he gives us a mystery run that seems to wheedle all over Cheshire's farmyards, pastures and bridleways before popping out only near Acton Bridge.

The run out to the Candle Factory included a last-mile detour which seemed to serve no other purpose than to get the cartilage straining. This was followed immediately after lunch by an off-road excursion around the back of the castle.

On the run out to Blaze Farm, Pete eschews the hill climb hill for all the others he can find nearby.

"We've been that way before," he often offers. "I know, it's because it's easier," I often think.

What sealed the gene thing for me was the Christmas dinner run to the, err, Old Market Tavern. He promises us 40 miles between Rackhams and the pub.

This he delivers, as ever.

But what I'm wondering is how come it took us until nearly 2pm to get there?

That satnav's got a lot to answer for.

Sitting idly at the back of the bunch gives one time for reflection.

And so I came to wonder about the spelling of town names and why we Brits make it so hard on ourselves.

When planning my End to End, I noticed there were several spellings given to John o' Groats. Sometimes it had a capital 'O', other times not. The space between the 'o' (capital or not) and the 'G' (nearly always capped) would appear and disappear as whimsically as the apostrophe between them.

The road signs had different spellings,

businesses in the town used different spellings on their shop signs or letter-heads.

Even the top of the famous signpost lays its own claim to what should be correct (all caps, no spaces.)

Take Bishop's Castle. Clearly a town in need of an apostrophe. Nope. Not on their official entrance-to-the-town sign it isn't.

Or our hill climb hill. What do you call it? Withinshaw? Withinshawe? Wythenshaw, even?

And then there's Sedbergh. Even the Squirrel's given it a couple of different goes that I've noticed: Sedburgh, Sedborough.

The only way I've found to arbitrate these tedious musings is to look at a map. But not just any map – an OS map.

There you can see the black-and-white proof of where you are, and how you should spell it.

For the record, I think it should be Withenshaw Hill, Bishop's Castle, Sedbergh, John o' Groats. Just don't get me started on Irlams o' th' Height.

Ever wondered what the use of a tricycle is?

As a first-rate snow plough, that's what.

Undeterred by the wintery conditions on the Christmas Curry run, John Pardoe had ventured out on his trike to meet up with some of the Tourers at the Carberry Garage Grotto.

For those who'd ridden out from Altrincham, and those who'd ridden there first to then ride back out, it was quite clear the weather was not for turning and the snow was set for the day.

After the cracking curry and festive frolics of the village hall thoughts turned to the journey home.

The bulk of the touring section headed back towards the Old Market Tavern, taking with them some of the other brave souls.

For JP and yours truly it was back down the A50.

Fair play to John, he denied himself a free ride in the Pardoewagon (driven out by Wonder Carol) and chose instead to risk it through the snow.

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Thanks to the extra stability of that third wheel it that I'd persuaded him to ride back and then left made sense for him to go in front and blaze the trail. Ahem. him to make the last few miles on his own. Oops.

This he did all the way back to Knutsford, where-upon I turned off to go home. Just a little bit guilty

Thanks for the wheels John!

John Carberry

### Seamons CC On-Line Forum

Just a reminder to all Seamons members that we now have an on-line forum where you can access discussion topics on all things Seamons CC related. The forum includes discussion topics on racing, training, club runs, local affairs and jokes to name but a few. There is also an area for members to buy and sell their old cycling gear.

The forum is for Seamons members only and so allows us to discuss topics we wouldn't necessarily include on the (public domain) website (AGM minutes for example). The forum has been up and running for a couple of months now and over 50 Seamons members have already registered to use it.

If you'd like to register simply click the link on the Seamons CC website (News page) or alternatively go directly to the forum... [www.seamonsccforum.co.uk](http://www.seamonsccforum.co.uk) and click on Register. Once your registration has been verified you'll be free to login to the forum, browse topics and even add your own replies and/or create your own discussion topics.



**Don and Jim seeking top tips, before it's too late, from the Greatest.  
(Never mind Lance Armstrong)**

## Sportive shenanigans

Sportives sometimes get a bit of stick for being an expensive way to enjoy a glorified club run. But they can have their good sides too.

Phil Thirsk took part in the Cheshire Peaks and Plains ride, all in a good cause, and here recounts his experience.

The event was organised by two guys involved with St Rocco's in Warrington and as my father had been in St Rocco's some time ago, I supported the event and raised some cash for the hospice

It was quite a hard ride cycling into a head wind for a lot of the time, and constant rain. To make matters worse, just coming into Alderley Edge after 20 odd miles, I had to keep left of a man hole in the road and ended up cycling into a large puddle hiding a big pot hole. This split my back tyre and inner tube!

I was lucky not to fall off into the path of the car overtaking me or to bring down the two guys behind me on the hill.

I managed to repair and reinforce the tyre from the inside (you know, it stopped raining just long enough for me to do this!) and fit a new inner tube. Both held all the way round but I had to re-

place the tyre. Thankfully, the wheel rim was okay.

I was tired and glad to get home after the ride and just left everything in the garage. But hey I did it; I cycled a total of 63.93 miles in 4hrs 8 minutes of cycling time, a total elapsed time of 5 hrs 5 minutes. This was just over 30 minutes longer than my last 100Km ride earlier in the year. I was really slow mending that puncture!

I spoke with one of the organizers afterwards and they had already raised £3,000. They hope to make the event an annual one with distances of 100 mile and 60 miles.



Phil Thirsk ready for action

Phil Thirsk

## From the archives

Our wonderful club magazine goes back a long way, carrying our history and our memories.

Here are few snippets from old Squirrels. Whether you remember them or not they tell us something about how times have changed. Or not!

**November 1961** "...the Llan-gollen Trophy has not been seen for a few years. All the

known winners have been contacted but nobody has the Trophy." (The one we present now was first won in 1969. Where's Pickles when you need him?)

**January 1962** "...Social Secretary (One K Stacey) would be grateful if all those possessing modern pop records would bring them up to the clubroom on Fridays. The Club hopes to start a skiffle group in the near future."

**March 1963** "...The Woodlands Cafe at Middlewich asked

6d for a cup of poor tea after a tremendous delay so the club walked out without paying."

**May 1963** An advert: "Elvis Presley King Creole LP (slightly damaged) 5/- contact..."

**June 1963** "...Although the second Record Hop was not as good as the first it realised £2. This in addition to the money from the first Hop and the auction will go to purchasing a good typewriter for the club."



**SEAMONS  
CYCLING CLUB**  
1948 - 2010

*You and your guest are cordially invited to the Seamons CC*

**ANNUAL DINNER AND PRIZE PRESENTATION**

**SATURDAY 6<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2010**

**CRESTA COURT HOTEL  
ALTRINCHAM**

**19.30 - Arrival of guests**

**Three course meal & coffee  
Prize presentation  
Music**

**00.30 - Carriages**

*For tickets please contact Dave Williams.*

***Tickets - £23***





# CLUB RUNS



Date:	Half Day Section:	Touring Section:	Social Section:
31 January	Blaze Farm	Rose Farm	Lavender Farm, Dunham Massey
7 February	Beeston	Impromptu *	
14 February	Buxton	Beeston	Garden Centre, High Legh
21 February	Dagfields	Mow Cop	
28 February	Two Mills	Frodsham	Hills Garden Centre
7 March	Llangollen	Llangollen **	
14 March	Meerbrook	Barthomley	Dones Green
21 March	Rose Farm	Rainow (Common Barn)	
28 March	Tattenhall	Nantwich Marina	The Spinney, Allostock
4 April	Castleton	Easter 50 in 4	
11 April	Rose Farm	Audlem	Wizard Café, Alderley Edge
18 April	Dagfields	Buxton	
25 April	Delamere	Chester	Plantation Cafe

\* After club dinner

\*\* Meeting time reverts to 9:00

# LAST

# LAUGH

