

# The Squirrel

The Number One Cycling Magazine Published By **Seamons CC**

Winter Edition 2022

Not Available in Most Shops

## Bumper Interesting Story Issue

With Free Book



Unidentified Cyclists Sensibly Cycling Along The Cheshire Lanes Two Abreast - This Is what Makes For A Happy Life

## 2022 Could Be The New 2021 But A Lot Better

### According To Scientists

In other news - a recent joint study between The University of Scotland and a University in British Columbia, found by using a series of placebo double-blind tests that a tourist rider would be more likely to buy a checked shirt than any other discipline in cycling with Audax riders coming in a very close second. Research showed that the pleasure from long hours looking at maps and plotting with the grid squares and the release of endorphins when a good route was found

subliminally drew people from this pastime towards the squares on a fabric. Riders from the challenging structured style of rides such as an Audax ride tended to lean to a more bold and daring choice in his twill melange plaid shirt, and it's no coincidence because Audax is a word that means bold and daring. It must be said that both Matieu Van Der Poel and Wout Van Aert have both been seen in a checked shirt and both have cycled for pleasure.



Royalty Free Stock Photo of Man In Checked Shirt

Seamons Xmas Cafe Stop at the Apus Peak, Knutsford (19th December) photo courtesy of Chris Currie



This Months' Sound Engineer Edvald Boasson Baldwin



## New Section! Tolstoy's Coffee Break Corner

Nick Welch, pictured cornering on a trike below, shares his interesting memoirs from the years gone by with a fascinating mix of local history and club life shenanigans.

Look out for Nick on Pg 15



## Turton's Inclination To Be A Climber

Tom's scintillating story of making it to the top and why you too should give competitive hill climbing a go.



Grind your way to Pg 3

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# We Need Your Stories *...Desperately*

## Tech Tips - Cable Maintenance

By Dave Matthews

In February 2021 I rescued a fellow cyclist whose rear gear cable had snapped off inside the STI shifter. A very tricky job to dig out the nipple and frayed cable end from inside the shifter drum before fitting a new cable. A job that I did not wish to repeat.

Well it's happened again in Autumn!---another colleague with a semi-stranded bike with snapped off gear cable right inside the STI lever. This one was an absolute pig to get out as the cable had frayed out inside the drum as it snapped. Nightmare!

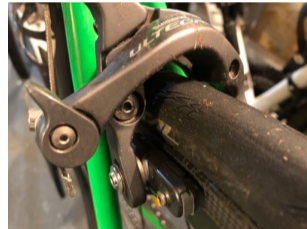
So---please look after your cables to prevent this.

- Inner gear cables should be replaced at least once per year. If you can---replace the outers also as this makes for much smoother changes.
- Inner brake cables should be replaced at least once every two years for safety reasons. Not so important to replace outer cables, unless you can see the inner reinforcing (spiral) wires peeking out through the casing. A head torch helps in threading the cable through the lever.
- Note that Campag and Shimano/Sram cables should not be interchanged.

Campag has generally smaller diameter.

- It's best to use quality stainless cables---well worth the slight extra cost for enhanced reliability
- Only do these jobs if competent---especially the brake cables. If not sure, use a competent bike shop

Hopefully, I'll never have to dig another broken cable out of an STI lever.



**If you stock up on brake cables make sure that all the next bikes you buy aren't fitted with disk brakes**



## Europeans Put A Sock In It

Did You Vote For Brexit or have you not read the Daily Mail?

Dear Squirrel, I don't know what's going on with the sock world right now but I think it's ridiculous!

Almost every time I buy a pair of continental style cycling socks they come in odd sizes. You have to buy two pairs to make a correctly sized pair. It's a scam!

Most of my socks arrive sized Large and Regular - they are attached to each other in the same packet. What makes it worse is that L&R is clearly marked on each sock... idiots!

Personally I blame Europe, and this is exactly the reason why I voted out.



The only good thing that came out of the whole corny collaboration was straight bananas; they fitted perfectly in my back pocket.

## YOUR STORY COULD APPEAR HERE.

*Write in with a top tip like our very own Dave Matthews up there or a short story. If you fancy yourself as a bit of a Pulitzer Prize contender why not write about something that you've done and share it with the club like Tom has with his fantastic account of his new competitive streak on the next page*

## Nights to Declare



### The Germans help A Seamons Member Escape From A Mallorcan Hospital

After a Citroen Berlingot decided to pick a fight with a cyclist on his way for a leisurely lunch at a Mallorcan cafe little did it know that it had picked a fight with a Seamons Cycling Club member.

Ed, from the revered Altrincham based club is used to a bit of ruff & tumble with his muddy exploits on the cyclocross course and he is well versed on how to come off a bike gracefully and with dignity when the unfortunate & unexpected happens.

Unfortunately this Berlingot was in a class of its own and knew how to throw a punch. The fight was like Mike Tyson versus Walter from The Beano and Ed threw dignity out of the window and was hospitalised for a month.

During this time in hospital where Ed was cared for by the Mallorcan doctors & nurses - but mainly by his beautiful wife Sue, Seamons sent over their Foreign Affairs Representative Martin Wiggan with his assistant Emily to check that he was ok and hadn't had his sense of humour damaged too severely as this could not be seen on any x-rays. Martin and Emily managed to raise some good cheer and chuckles leaving the hospital knowing that they would be able to report back with positive news.

After Ed had mended enough to travel he was flown back to Manchester with a German team who repatriate injured cyclists abroad via a small jet ambulance and they transferred him to Wythenshaw Hospital. Five days in there then a few weeks recovery in bed, he is now back at home recovering nicely and getting about with his crutch.



**The next picture I take is from the inside of a hospital**

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# The Club's Specialists

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## I'm On A Highway To Hill...A One Way Ride!

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Dedicated Hill Climber and Upwardly Mobile Man TOM TURTON Tells Of His Journey Towards The Sky - *Exclusively* to The Squirrel

**A**s a brief introduction; "I'm Tom Turton, I'm a hill climber". There I've said it, that's the first step to address my new-found cycling addiction / discipline.

So, let's back track a little. I started cycling in my early 20's with Seamons CC and the social group, learning about group riding, gears, clothing, cadence, tyre pressure, local routes and the famous hale sprint.

After some time, I advanced to the next group up which was then known as 'The 50's' and before long I plucked up the courage to ride with the Half Day on the 1st Sunday in March, arguably the hardest half day ride there is 'the Llangollen thrash'. Unfortunately, I didn't make it all the way to Llangollen, but I decided to keep riding with them over the next few years. Yes, I got myself fit hanging on the wheels of the likes of Allen, John, Chris, Jeff, Pencil, Keith, Martin, Marco, Robin, and Paul to name a few but I never competed regularly. Maybe a couple of road races at most.

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### We Are Not Talking About A Half-Arsed Effort Here

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Fast forward a couple of years and I'm a fully-fledged Half Day rider who was fortunate enough to meet a beautiful young lady, now my beautiful wife, Ellie, on a Social Club Run on the day when I'd overslept and the Half Day lads had left without me. We now have a 2-year-old "Grace" one of Seamons youngest members.

Before the arrival of Grace, I decided to open my own butchers' shop 'Turtons of Hale'. Four years on from opening, two of those as a father, I'm an unfit dad with a belly to show. Weigh a hefty 75kg (once 62kg) I needed to push myself to get fit again, lose weight, and have something to aim for. But what kind of cycling would suit a time stretched father and businessman? Then I discovered hill climbing.

For those not familiar with hill climbing - it's simply a time-trial up a hill. The gradient and length vary and that's what makes it such a special and pure discipline.

It's simply you and your machine versus the hill, gravity and a stopwatch.

We are not talking a 'half-arsed effort' here, or 'just going well', we are talking a full on, core wrenching, lung busting, muscle trashing, heart peaking assault.



Your 150% maximum effort will take you to some of the darkest places you've ever been on a bike as you refuse to give in, as your body stretches every fibre, drains every drop of energy to beat no one but yourself and your competitive ego. This is hill climbing. For me, my love of hill climbing is simply the fact that each competitor and peer, whilst may not be equal in speed, are totally equal in the amount of effort they put in.

The other beauty is the total lack of prima donnas in the scene, with the top-level riders actively cheering on competitors further down the field and the respect that they show to everyone, giving them support and advice. This is because whoever pins on a number in a hill climb, they deserve respect, there is nowhere to hide, no wheel to suck, no sticky bottle, no team support, or tactics - just you and a stupidly steep hill.

Hill climbing is normally held in September and October culminating in the national championship on the last weekend in October which is a huge event for both competitors and spectators, but with hill climbing growing in popularity Macclesfield Wheelers decided to hold a 'summer' hill climb series, this was just perfect preparation for the hill climb season, I just had to enter!

You don't need a special bike, just take off your bottle cages, saddle bags, and wear minimal clothing (ditch the helmet).

However, more and more riders are building bespoke hill climb bikes. This is what makes it even more interesting - no limits on weight, and the lengths riders go to, to save a couple of grams is crazy!

I went down this route and ended up with a hill climb bike which comes in at an amazing 5.2kg including pedals, power meter and Garmin. All the gear no idea springs to mind. But If I was going to take this seriously, I wanted my equipment to be the best it could be.

Now to my first hill climb, Teggs Nose in Macclesfield. I arrive on time, collect my number, get the bike set up on the turbo and I begin the warmup, numbers are looking good. Feeling strong. Keeping my eye on the time. I get to the start line, before I know it it's my turn and I'm asked to step forward.

Here it comes the 30 second count down. Deep breath. 20. Don't think about the gradients. 10. Remember to start the Garmin. Five, four, three, two, one... Go!

I explode off the line. Focusing on my watts. Easy, don't go off too hard. I relax into a rhythm, crowd cheering me on with the banging of pots and pans and the ringing of cow bells.

Halfway in I hit a short decent. Time to recover gasping for air! The gradient shoots up 17% I bury myself, long straight ahead, the next crowd of spectators are so far away.



I finally reach them. God it Feels like snail's pace. But my watts are high, stay positive.

Final section now! Uphill sprint! I jump out of the saddle and push down hard to spectators shouting my name. Every pedal stroke hurts. Focus on that line. I lunge for it. It's over! I manage to stay upright freewheeling to the junction. Time to review my performance, I'd been able to hold a high power and knock 3 minutes off my previous race time. I was grinning like a Cheshire Cat in a dairy. How fitting as I descend the cat and fiddle road into Macclesfield. The taste of blood is evidence I'd given it my all. I knew from that moment I had found something special.

A handful of hill climbs into the summer series and I'm starting to make friends and recognise the big hitters who are all keen to share advice. I'm absorbing everything like a sponge. With each hill climb I enter I give it my all and every fibre in me wants to cross that line as fast as I possibly can. Dribbling over the line as I collapse on the roadside, tasting the blood in my mouth, I get up moments later, once my heavy breathing has subsided, cheering all the other riders on whilst trying to control my hill climber's cough.

Each rider absolutely thrashes themselves to the point of exhaustion, some having to be caught and held by organisers of the event.

I take a step back and think to myself, I'm in my element! Loving every second of watching all participants but secretly counting down the hours until my next lung busting effort. With each training session my power numbers increase. Each week I see if I can better myself, placing mid field for most of my summer series, I decide to set my sights on my next upcoming challenge "the Seamons Hill Climb Championship" Around 3 minutes for the win.

"That's not hard" I can already feel you thinking. But you need to get a perspective of the effort required. It's not just about achieving the climb, whilst preserving your legs for the rest of your ride. It's about spending your entire reserves of everything you have in one effort.

I knew I would be up against some top lads, so I knew I had work to do. Training was tough, but I wanted to work as hard as I could. Lots of high-power sessions!! The intervals in the sessions were varied in length, I give it all I can, heart racing, lungs searching for air, watching the clock slowly tick away, followed with a short recovery ready to smash myself again. One minute really can take a long time to count down but for each second I hurt, each second I gained fitness.

I was able to ride the hill a few times on the run up to the event. Starting from under the tree. Giving it full gas only to die halfway up and dribble over my imaginary line collapsing into the grass verge. I need to reign it in save something for the end. I was happy with my times on the run up to the main event only 4 seconds off my PB of 3:09 surly race day I could clinch a PB maybe even the win.

One week to go before Seamons hill climb, I got hit with a bad cold, a gift from Grace my lovely daughter. Thanks sweetheart. It wrote off all my planned training sessions. All week I'm constantly thinking about that hill, will I be able to race? Will I do a good time? But at the same time trying not to stress myself out too much.

The morning of the Seamons hill climb. I'm up early, on time. A slight sore throat has re-emerged having subsided Friday. It's ok I'll be fine, let's head out in the car and go check the hill out. I park up my car, the door helped open with a gust of wind. Wow it's windy, times will be a little different today. But let's give it my all. I drive back to the waterside in Macclesfield and warm up, Numbers are looking ok, legs are feeling a little sluggish, but I'll shake it off, towards the end of the workout I'm feeling good. Let's ride up to the climb.

It was great to see everyone, chatting to the likes of Bob, Pencil, Dan, and Stephen while trying to desperately keep warm while I wait for my number to be called.

I noticed Keith marked out the start line a bit further back than I'm used to. I'll have to not go out as hard as usual, but I'll be fine. Cont'd...

**N**umber 5 called up, that's me! - 30 seconds called, deep breaths I listen for the 10 second call, 3,2,1 **GO!!**

I try not to go off too hard, keeping my watts reigned in. I hit the right-hand bend hard! Keep something back for the middle section.

I come to the middle section, time to ramp it up, but couldn't quite seem to reach the higher watts. I just didn't feel sharp. But I'm suffering. Before I know it, the line is there, just a few feet away. You think to yourself you can't do it, that it's impossible to sustain this effort for even one more pedal stroke. You see nothing but that line, no faces, just a background wall of noise as you somehow power that final metre across the line. I fall to the side gasping for air, I knew I was slow as I crossed the line, but I was hopeful it was enough for a good placing. The times were:

1st Kouros Driscoll	2.48
2nd Ronan O'Cualain.	3.24
3rd Stephen Dooley.	3.35
4th Dan Mathers.	3.37
5th Richard Shaw.	3.43
6th Tom Turton.	3.49
7th KEITH Bailey.	4.28
8th Alex Roy.	4.06
9th Bob McPartland.	4.55

To summarise finishing, 6th was a tough pill to swallow. But I must mention the absolute cracking ride by Kouros Driscoll, hats off to you sir.

Withenshaw lane had been a focus of mine since I decided to start hill climbing so I was a little disappointed, but on the positive side looking back at the first attempt I had done this year after brushing the cobwebs off my bike that had been lying dormant for so long was a time for 4:49. So to knock 1 minute off on race day, and to having had slightly better results on the weeks running up to the event of 3:13. I have to be happy with that.

I'd also been able to reduce my weight to 65 kg. My aim now is to focus though the winter and work to continue to improve my power and to shift a final few kilos. Ready for the next Macclesfield Wheelers summer series.

### **2022 will be my year.**

To conclude. If you are to take anything away from this article it is this:

### **Your competition is YOU!!**

Whatever your size, speed, gender or weight you all receive total respect from other competitors and spectators. They recognise that you have put yourself on that line. You stood up to be counted. Pitted yourself against the hill.

Now unless you are exceptional, you won't be winning.

### **The whole point is to beat yourself !!**



# Don Smith - A Seamons Legend



Don Smith (Seamons C.C.) leads the blue team over the line in the 4,000 metres pursuit race in the Olympic Games selections trial at Fallowfield this afternoon.

STORY OF THE WEEK!

Leaving school at 14 I went to work in Central Manchester in the printing trade, I cycled to work every day, this got me interested in cycling so I decided to join a club, The Club I joined was the Clarion, C.C. (does it exist today?) The Clarion had its origins in the Trade Union movement. Interestingly it owned a Clubhouse and a plot of land at Oversley Ford near Wilmslow a very desirable and expensive site which is now the Valley Lodge Complex owned by the The Moat House Hotel Group it is situated exactly on the site of the old Clubhouse. How the Clarion came to own this clubhouse and plot of land would make an interesting story. It had a full time steward, bar and snooker tables, where all our club runs finished although we still had quite a way to go to get home. But It didn't seem so far in those days. How the Clubhouse came to be sold I have know idea, but if the Clarion owned it today they would probably be the richest cycling club in the UK.

My first racing was in 1946 on the Wades Green Course near Warrington where my first 25 was a 1hr 12min a respectable time but not quite as good as I hoped for. I began racing in earnest in 1947 my first outing of the season a 25 mile TT with a not very spectacular time of 1hr 23mins must have been windy! But later on in the season on the East Lancs Road I managed to a 1hr 4min which was a big improvement. Some the big names winner of the events I rode in were Rubin Firth, Cyril Cartwright, and Ken Hartley.

1948 in an early season Medium Gear event 72" I I clocked a 1hr 3m 42 which made me 2nd fastest after Cyril Cartwright who did a 1hr 1min and in fact I got down to a 1hr 2min later in the season my fastest for that year . To modern cyclist these time will seem slow but these were very fast times as the National Record for 25 was round the 59 min mark although it came down to 58 minutes. Up to this point I hadn't done any track racing and was drafted in the forces for my National Service which did change my life somewhat.

Stationed at RAF Compton Bassett in Wiltshire near Chippenham I soon got my bike and joined the local cycling club Chippenham Wheelers. Where I had road in assorted 25's grass track meeting with varying success. I got my first taste of track Racing at Herne Hill, where the RAF held their National Championships. There the Pursuit was held on a time trail basis which I won. My first big Championship and also showing that my strength lay in this shorter distance and not in long time trails.

1950 out of the forces and back to earning a living and getting adjusted to civilian life, this is when I must have joined the Seamons I have no records of this period other than memory. My family had moved to Hale quite a posh area compared with Openshaw I joined the local Club the Seamons as it was nearer to home and seemed more a more progressive club than the Clarion.

This is when I started racing at Fallowfield. the appeal of Fallowfield were twofold one was the racing and two the prizes. They had a point system 3pt for win 2 for second 1 for third, at the end of the seasons these points were totalled up and depending on how much had been taken at the gate they were given a value and paid out on this valuation, not quite as amateurish as it should have been but it certainly had a lot of appeal to me and many of the other performers who like myself were working class lads and weren't adverse to winning the odd bob. The track was surfaced with red shale, cycling was quite a popular spectator sport with good crowds at all the Tuesday night events including a couple of bookies. It had a banking of 30 degrees and racing could take place rain or shine. When the track was resurfaced with a 45 degree banking the crowds started going down. With new tarmac surface and 45 degree banking if it rained there was no racing.

It was also the heyday of Reg Harris. After war in the fifties British Sport was in the doldrums we couldn't produce any winners in sport at all. Reg without doubt was the outstanding British Sportsman of that era. He was probably the first truly professional British Cyclist who could hold his own with anybody in the world. He would draw crowds whenever he appeared. He was something to see, as back-marker in the handicap sprint, a one lap race he gave 1/2 a lap away to the slowest rider and would still win by a good margin.

My own favourite event was the Motor Pace racing 5 ordinary motor bikes with a specially adapted roller on the back, the cyclist had a high gear and started in single file with somebody pushing you along until you had enough speed to pick up your allocated motor bike once you had your bike you were off and soon picked up speed it made for exciting and spectacular racing, I excelled at this event and collected many points.

One of the highlights of the year was the Manchester Wheelers annual open meeting where International stars from all over Europe came for this one day event. The highlight of this was the last race of the day the Murrati Gold cup a five mile scratch event by invitation only. With about 6 laps to go 3 men broke away from the field myself a Belgium called Raphael Gloroux and a third person who quickly lost the thread. I managed to hang on to Gloroux until the final 500 metres where he broke away and won the race with me completely exhausted just coming in ahead of bunched field in second place. This brought me to the attention of the Olympic selectors and started me on the Olympic trail.

The trials were at various tracks Fallowfield, Herne Hill, and Birmingham, with many cyclists doing their best to make it and many big names falling by the wayside. I decided that the way to make it was simple, when the front man had done his turn at the front and it was my turn to do my forward stint I would put on a burst of speed if that man made the end of the bunch he was good enough to go forward, if he didn't his trial was over. The selectors job was done for them. It may seem hard and not very sporting but I can't believe it's much different to-day. It's called the survival of the fittest.

The final trials were at Fallowfield, it was a very windy day and I was absolutely outstanding at the time I thought and in no way can I not be selected. I sure this was it. Little did I know this wasn't the outcome the selectors wanted. So they would have another final trial but this was at Herne Hill London, so we had to traipse down to London, Unfortunately I had a bit of an off day down there so I didn't do that well.



I was told that I hadn't made it in the final selection, I was very upset as I new there were people who had been selected who were not as good as me. There was a big outcry in the cycling press about the final selection because one of the main selectors was a member of the East Midland Clarion and it was felt to much bias had been given to East Mid Clarion people. 2/3 weeks later without anybody getting in touch with me the final selection of the team was announced in the Manchester Evening News and Miracle of Miracles I had been put back in the team. They had dropped not an East Midland Clarion rider but the mighty Cyril Cartwright ex world individual pursuit finalist of 1949. To be fair to Cyril he wasn't any faster than me but there were two people included in the team of six who were not as fast as either of us. So Cyril bad luck was my good luck. Reading an article a couple of years back in a Cycling Mag which Cyril wrote it still rankles with him after all these years. Even he couldn't throw any light on what made the selectors change their mind. Cyril was certainly not the six slowest of that team by a long way.

Cyril Cartwright was in a way my hero in that when I was in the forces doing my national service, Cyril had Rheumatic Fever and was told he would never cycle again he proved the Doctors wrong and fought back not only did he start cycling again but was the first Britain to reach the final of the World Pursuit Championship an inspirational achievement to myself and many other cyclists.

So having made it, the big adventure began, never having been abroad in my life, a trip to meet the Queen at Buckingham Palace, I wasn't a royalist then and I certainly not now but my mother insisted that I went but it was an interesting experience. My first ever Flying experience, and my first ever visit to a foreign country. We had clear blue skies every day. We had come from a country where food rationing had only just ended and meat was still in short supply. here you could eat as much as you liked with plenty of meat for everybody. All the cyclist's were housed in one room which could be pretty noisy. The track was similar two Fallowfield with a 45 degree banking. The actual racing was very low key as I doubt if their were more than 150 spectators watching on any day. The Italians were the favourites and won the Gold second was the Australians and we were third. The man who got the most publicity was the marathon runner Jim Peters who was thought to be a cert for a medal, unfortunately for him another man thought differently his name was Amil Zatopek, whi had already won the 5000 and 10000 metres and went on to win the marathon leaving poor old Jim exhausted not able to finish

One of my trips was to Denmark where they had a very good 45 degree tracks, Denmark was a sporting revelation with 4 superbly equipped tracks dotted about the country and very nice changing rooms miles ahead of anything in the UK. There I did a 24 hour race on a track with my partner Bill Walsh, this was run in Madison style like the six days events but the riders were all amateurs and their were periods when the race was neutralised. This was the last big event I rode in.as by this time I had started a business making cycle jerseys I decided that I was never going to make enough money in cycling or by working in the printing trade as a compositor so I had the not very original idea of manufacturing cycling jerseys. Not knowing anything about the Clothing business I had to find cloth and a manufacturer to make my products, this I did and Silkin Cyclewear was born. Working from home to start with then premises in Sale. 1953 was not to far from the end of the war and even in 1953 this country had not recovered from the austerity of the war years so their was a market just waiting and Silkin took off. From cycling jerseys. shorts, track suits, to Mens Casual Jacket to a change of name ALDON (Donald) get it? Aldon ended employing 300 people turning out 250,000 garments a years from three factories, selling to all the big names on the high street until I sold out in 1985. But thats another story.. I have to say after 1956I did not ride a bike in competition again, but I did ride to keep myself fit as I believe cycling is a wonderful sport for young and old and does not put strain on the joints like many other sports. THE END





# Skye's The Limit

by Carol Pardoe

It's early May, 2021, restrictions seem to have eased, Scotland here we come! Would they let us cross the border? Would the campsites be open? Would we have to wear masks all the time? Yes, yes, and yes! Oban first stop, our traditional crab sandwich from the stall by the ferries. But as we smiled happily and gazed at our lunch, a flurry of wings whooshed between us, and pouf! John's sandwich was gone. Wrapping and all. Damn seagull! Then the rain came down and we dashed for shelter, observing that no-one else wanted to share it. Social distancing strictly observed.

After sharing the remaining sandwich we headed north to Ledaig campsite, next to the sea. The rain stopped, the sun came out, we jumped on our bikes and went for a quiet ride in the evening sun. There was an excellent cycle lane, separate from the road, and a rainbow!

The next morning dawned clear and bright, and we heard the cuckoo. Let's go, we said, the cycle lane going north this time, then diving off into a wood, up and down over tree roots, cross the road and follow a narrow steep lane, then swoop down to the water's edge and coffee in Port Appin, sitting in the sun! Yey!

Next stop near Ballachulish, and the Corran ferry to Ardnamurchan. Cuckoo again. We called in at the Ardgour Inn for coffee, then followed the long and winding road – UP! – and over to Strontian, to renew our acquaintance with the cafe/craft shop with home-made mushroom soup and bread. This was our first trip to Scotland with the e-bikes, so the climb back held no fear.

Next day, cuckoo again! The Road to the Isles, beautiful, the Harry Potter road past the Glenfinnan viaduct, dramatic.

Mallaig and a calm crossing over the sea to Skye. Through Portree and on to the campsite at Torvaig, on the Staffin road. A warm welcome, as always. They'd had no foreign visitors this year or last, due to Covid, and we too had missed out last year, so it was extra special this time. We had the choice of where to park – our usual spot, high up with an unbroken view to the Cuillins. Magic!

Great ride the next day up the Staffin road, past the Old Man of Storr, now horribly developed with trees cut down, paths, gates and loads of parked cars. Last time along this coastline down one of the hills I managed 44mph on my Van Nick, but I was cautious this time, not sure how my e-bike would handle. Actually, it is very stable, as it's my old mountain bike converted. John found a secluded picnic spot in the grass on top of a cliff, looking across the sea to Torridon. Bliss.

We went west across the island next day to our favourite campsite at Dunvegan, on the edge of the loch. We were treated to brilliant sunsets over MacLeod's Tables. John spotted our neighbour playing his guitar – I had forgotten mine – so we went round. He passed it to me and took out his violin, and his wife played ukelele. Then we spotted our neighbour on the next plot also playing ukelele, so we went round and they invited us into their very big motorhome. Wine was sipped, songs were sung, night fell, then we realised we didn't know each other, and should we be wearing masks, or even in the same space? We decided we were all of a certain age, double jabbed, and so we must surely be safe... The blackbird was still singing at 10.40pm as darkness fell, and the cuckoo as well!

Cuckoo again next morning, a clear blue sky, ride out to the Watnash Peninsula and the Stein Inn. We sat out in the sun next to the blue sea, the Outer Hebrides in the distance. Magic again!

Back to the mainland and Morvich caravan site near Kintail. The Mam Ratagan Pass was calling, with a 16 per cent climb, power 5 was required and it was still hard work, the battery visibly going down. It was worth every pedal rev for the fabulous views at the top towards the Sisters of Kintail, topped with fresh snow. It was a freezing descent, and quite scary it was so steep.

Persistent rain rattled noisily on the van roof during the night, so we took that to be a sign that Skye was indeed the limit, and that it was time to head home.



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*Free Only In The Squirrel -*

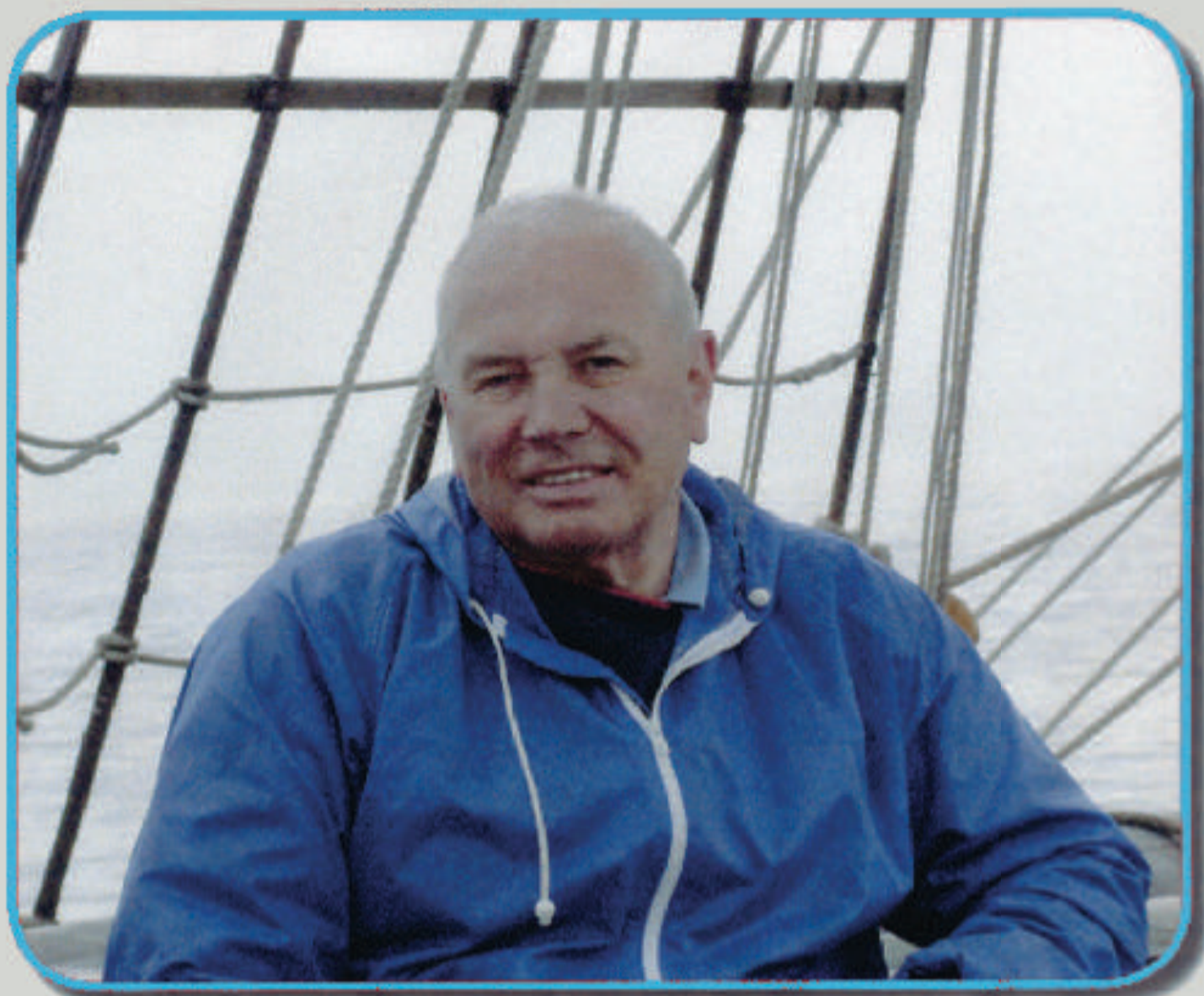
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*This Week's Special Pull Out And Keep Book*

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# **"WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE WAR, DADDY?"**

**The random ramblings of  
an 81-year old**



**By Nick Welch 1940 - . . . .**

**(It's what you did in the dash that's important!)**

## SOME REMINISCENCES FROM NICK WELCH'S CYCLING DAYS BETWEEN 1943 AND 1969

**Nick Welch? who's he then - never heard of him!**

Well, I've known him for 81 years now, but many of you reading this may have never heard of him at all, although a trawl through the Seamons CC's archives may indeed dig up the odd reference to him.

He was born in Wilmslow in 1940. His father had enlisted in the Army a year before and was rather busy fighting the Nazis in North Africa. His mother and father had moved from Portsmouth to Wilmslow, in 1939.

Just before Christmas 1940 his Mum took him, with relations, to visit friends who lived in Sale, in Penrith Avenue. The date was 22nd December 1940. Some may remember this as the first night of the Manchester Blitz. The house they went to (with his cousin Jimmy and Jimmy's mother) belonged to friends, so there were six of them 'enjoying' the evening.

This house (No.22) was situated pretty much at the back of Johnny Pardoe's house on Norris Road and had I been older than I was I would have been literally a stone's throw from John's house. Strange coincidence! The house in the background was on the opposite side of Penrith Avenue.

An extract from a letter written to his father by Jimmy after the event says:

*"It occurred between 8.30 to 8.45pm - as far as I can remember. We all sat round the fireplace, I was playing cards, the others chatting. For a second I heard a sort of shriek and looking up, whilst the light lasted, I saw the ceiling split, just before it caved in. The walls shivered violently and the next I knew was the sensation of being thrown out of my chair on to a floor - of a kind, and being subjected to what seemed like a barrage of coconuts - although I'm afraid some pieces were decidedly heavier. After it had stopped I found myself cramped up under the debris. I shouted out and discovered Gordon was quite near me and alright - outside, I presume. I could also hear the cries and*



*The house in the background was on the opposite side of the road, in Penrith Avenue*

*screams of Marjorie's - and a beam of wood - a very heavy one had pinned her down on top of the heap. I didn't hear Mum for a little while, but when I did, I managed to attract her attention and having kicked one foot outside she and Gordon pulled me out. Mum and I were taken to a shelter and later a policeman found out and conveyed us by car to the Red Cross station where Gordon, Aunty Pam and Marjorie had already been taken. My few face cuts, Mum's little cut on the head and Gordon and his wife's minor injuries were seen to. Aunty Pam had been taken to Altrincham hospital. The baby was OK. Of course, Mum had business to attend to in the Police Station where my wallet, Mum's purse, handbag and papers were recovered, so we were very lucky.*

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taken to the first aid post chuckling merrily. She had to be taken later to hospital. Another visitor, with her 16-years-old-son, who had come to spend Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. Travis were also rescued with minor injuries by wardens, but after being directed to a nearby shelter were

A local newspaper cutting of the event

## HELD UP BEAM

Six “occupants” were trapped under debris when they were sitting around the fire in the lounge of one house, which came tumbling around them, burying them beneath the debris. Mr. Reginald Travis managed to crawl clear with only slight cuts on his finger and head, and held a beam off his wife until wardens came to help to rescue them. Mrs. Travis was uninjured except for bruises.

A friend received head injuries, but her six-month-old son Nicholas escaped with a minor cut and was



missing until discovered after a three hours search and accounted for.

*I cannot tell you how we managed to escape alive”, Mr. Travis said. “If we had been at the back of the house we should all have been killed. I crawled out of the wreckage and stepped backwards, nearly into the crater”.*

## MY VERY EARLY DAYS OF CYCLING

Following the afore-mentioned ‘unfortunate mishap’ at the end of 1940, my mother and I moved from Wilmslow back to Portsmouth, from where she had originally come. Talk about out of the frying pan and into the fire!

The Germans who visited us (uninvited, I might add) were not terribly friendly, coming to Portsmouth night after night to bomb the life out of us. As it happened, the bomb that landed anywhere near us hit houses in the next back-to-back road in Oriel Road, North End. The bomb took out three houses in the terrace so neatly that I don’t think the ones left standing had much damage to their adjoining walls. Today, using Google Maps it’s possible to see those houses, now of course rebuilt,

but distinctly different from the original ones that were destroyed. Then, it gave me an extra playground where I could ride my tricycle with my friend from three doors down in Shadwell Road. We were the bee-knees wearing our plastic goggles that came out of our gas-mask cases, I think it was, but they could be bought for a penny a pair locally. My friend’s mum had splashed out tuppence for his goggles and they had bits of fur around the lenses, so were more

comfortable to wear. I guess that was my first experience of jealousy!

The war ended eventually, my father came home and we moved back to Wilmslow to a new semi-detached house on Moor Lane.

Up to this age, seven or eight, I had had a second-hand tricycle (above) on to which I put many, many miles. Not like the new ‘girly’ trikes that were being sold then, with rear mudguards, pansy chain guards and ‘pump-up’ tyres, but mine had slightly smaller wheels with solid tyres and definitely no mudguards.



*My second-hand trike on which I put many, many miles. Solid tyres (no punctures!) and a single spoon brake on the front wheel!*

By the age of about eight I had another second-hand bike, having completely worn out my trike - and I had learned to ride a ‘two-wheeler’. This turned out to have been a girl’s bike to which my father had had a mild-steel cross-bar welded by Robson’s, the cycle shop a bit further down Moor Lane at Stormy Point. At that point in time I had no concept (and neither had my father, presumably) of how to stick one piece of metal to another. The frame tubing needed to be brazed together, not welded, and within a short space of time the welds broke at the front and the back. At least two successive re-welds also failed. Mind you, at that time the bike was getting absolutely hammered as I used it in much the same way as ‘mountain bikes’ today, ‘tracking’, as we called it, up and down the ‘sandhills’ near Newgate Kennels on the Bog. The front weld kept failing and I was always having to bang it down into place again where the multitude of welds were, and sort-of clicked them back together again.

Punctures on this bike caused a turning point in my life. I was forever getting them and as my father was absolutely useless at anything mechanical, he kept having to pay Robson’s to fix them (1/9d each, I think, from memory). Whether he came home in a bad mood one day or not, I don’t know, but when I told him I’d got another puncture he blew his top and said he wouldn’t pay another penny for repairs to it. I was eight years old at the time. From that moment on I have done everything for myself and I started teaching myself how to repair any number of things. At that time it was bikes, but has



*Aged eleven, the Hercules with 3-speed Sturmey Archer that I joined the CTC with. My ‘11-plus’ reward, complete with all the trimmings.*

encompassed many forms of mechanical items ever since. Get something new, and I would have it in bits in no time to see how it was put together - and learn how to reassemble it and make it work again.

It was customary in those days to receive a 'proper' bicycle as a reward for passing the '11-Plus', and, give my father his due, I received one on my eleventh birthday. It was a *Hercules Kestrel* with a three-speed *Sturmey-Archer* rear hub. It had the regulation 'dropped handlebars', front and rear lights, a mileometer, (should of course be called an odometer) and a saddlebag (I remember, back in days gone by of calling these things 'Sacclebags' - or was that another of Malc Judge's pispronunciations?), that used to press down on the rear mudguard so that it rubbed on the top of the rear tyre, when heavily laden. I think I saved up 6/6d for a carrier very shortly after I had this bike.

The *Sturmey Archer* hub (apart from being incredibly heavy) didn't give a very wide range of gears and so I bought a Simplex derailleur gear shifter and replaced the single sprocket with a double one, with a larger and smaller sprocket, so giving me six ratios with a good low gear (37) for exploring the Derbyshire hills. Nevertheless I rode it everywhere and clocked up an amazing number of miles. I remember dropping down to Kettlethulme on the road from the top of the 'brickworks' hill, up from Pott Shrigley and absolutely flew down the hill, at such a speed that the 'mileometer' just couldn't keep pace and the striker must have hit the end of the indexing 'star' instead of its side and the whole unit flew to bits! It was on this bike that I rode to Duffield one Easter for the Easter break, and also my thinking that even though I had my 'super' low gear, which did all I asked of it on that trip, it would be nice to have a better bike, so I could get more serious at cycling.

In 1957 I started an apprenticeship at Renold Chains in Burnage. The all-pervading smell of the cutting fluid from the machinery on the factory floor has remained with me ever since!

Anyway, back to cycling. My *Hercules* was really far too heavy for any serious riding so I looked around for something better, now I was earning real money. I fancied a *Viking Mileater*; you could buy just the frame and build the bike up to whatever specification you wanted (or could afford). I bought mine from L.H.Brookes in Hazel Grove, fitted with Weinmann alloy rims and a four-speed block and double clanger with a 48/32t combination. From memory (remember this was when I was only interested in touring, hence the ratio ranges chosen, with a four-speed block with 14,17,23,28 sprockets. Cinelli Campione del Mondo bars (a style that I always had until I packed up racing in 1969). All for £29.00!

The Altrincham & Sale local CTC group used to meet their members at Westwoods, on the corner of the road opposite Altrincham railway station on a Sunday morning and we could see the 'racers' from the Seamons ready to go out for the day at the same time.

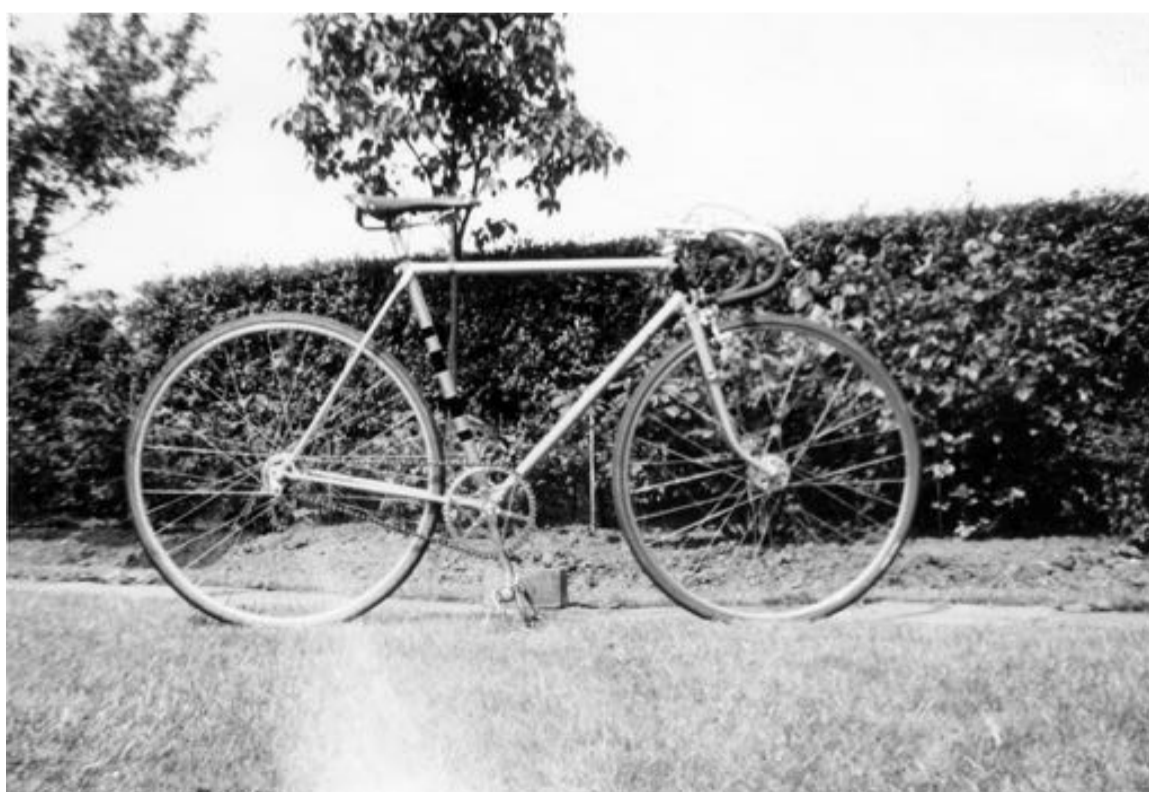
I wasn't really into competition in those days (probably a bit young for all that sort of stuff, anyway), but a few years with them (JKP joined a week following my joining) and we had some good times then, particularly hostelling at weekends, when we could afford it. Buxton, and Miller's Dale taught us a new sort of language, when the riders from Derby used to come up on the train for the weekend - "Ev yer mashed?" being everyone's first question on arrival. Happy days of wading through the river in Miller's Dale carrying the bike over the shoulder in the freezing cold water of a winter's day!

John and I seemed to hit it off together, even though he was a year older than I was (and had a job, which meant he had money left over for other things), and once again followed me to the Seamons, again one week later than I had joined.

But, back to my proposed bike. To go anywhere new and interesting would require more time to be spent in the saddle and I used to ride farther and farther afield, always on my own, carrying my 'Observer's Book of Birds' in my saddlebag (the book was a birthday present from somebody) and would get it out to observe the bird population whenever I stopped for my lunch. I really wanted a decent bike so I started to save.

As much as I could save from my pocket money was put away, all my Christmas and birthday monies were saved. I had set my sights on a *Viking Mileater*; in those days a 'fairly' lightweight touring bike with a four-speed block and a 'double-clanger' at the front giving me eight speeds. My father got wind of this after a time and told me that he would match any savings I kept with the same amount from himself. The bike was one which the dealer would build up to your own specification (make of handlebars, gear ratios, gear shifter, saddle etc.) and I was looking at a total price to save of about £29, with hopefully half of that to be donated by my father.

Just to jump forward a little (if only to fit a photograph taken a little while later on the afternoon before riding The Withington Wheelers Novices '25' the following morning), all the pretty stuff having been stripped off the *Viking*, following a respray in Flamboyant Lime Green; comments about this you will read shortly!



*The Viking 'Mileater', stripped for Time Trials, usually on an '86' fixed, but still on 'Pressures'!*

## CYCLING STARTS TO GET A BIT MORE SERIOUS

Fortunately, I bought my new bike that I had saved for so was able not to be in, except on very rare occasions. I cycled every day, although that always seemed to cause a row whenever I was late home. Being a member of the Seamons Cycling Club in Altrincham I spent a lot of time in that neck of the woods. Friday night, in particular, was club night and I was always told by my parents to be home by nine-o'clock. I never was, often arriving home with oily, black hands that I'd wiped on my chain, claiming some breakdown or puncture had delayed me. What was the sense in cycling ten miles to get to Altrincham, for a club night that started at eight o'clock, if I had to cycle another ten miles home - and be back at nine o'clock?

One good thing that came out of my time at Renold Chains was the pay, (not a lot as a trainee) but I was able to save to buy a decent trike. The one I already had was in fact a bolt-on Holdsworth rear axle conversion which fastened on to an ordinary bike frame. This was a very heavy unit and in the club we had a guy called Arthur Thorlby, recently passed on, I believe. For some unknown reason he used to ride (rather than compete - he didn't race at all) in the Manchester and District 12-hour Time Trial. He could always get in the event as it was never over-subscribed and one day I had a go at him and asked why he did it because he inevitably came about last. I intimated that (even at the age of seventeen) I could ride my touring trike-conversion further - and challenged him to a 'duel'. The die was cast. I entered the event in August 1957. The longest races I had ever competed in were on my Viking (yes, I did get it after all - see previous page - in Club 10-mile Time Trials, where I did quite well, but no races any longer than that.

Doing no training of any kind for the event, just relying on my general fitness. I was off No.27 (at 5.27am) and made a small metal number plate that attached to the frame in true cycle-racing style. I had some friends in the South Lancs Road Club (Joyce and Bernard Blow) who used to feed members of their club in the event, and they helped me with food and drink handed up on the move, throughout the race. Joyce, until the advent of the invincible Beryl Burton was one of the fastest lady racing cyclists in the country at that time. One 'memorable' feed was approaching Nantwich on the way back to the finishing circuit near Goostrey. The course had taken us south (as well as all over Cheshire, anyway) almost as far as Wem, near Shrewsbury and up to that point we'd battled

into a south-westerly headwind. We turned at Shrewsbury and came back north with a lovely breeze helping us along, through Whitchurch, and on to Nantwich.

I was really flying and going around the Nantwich by-pass the road goes up and over the canal bridge over the Shropshire Union canal. Bernard had picked this spot to set up a feeding station, assuming that everyone would slow down as they climbed the gradient over the canal bridge. As I was only being 'unofficially' fed I had no idea where I might meet him, and came absolutely flying down the road being blown by the tail-wind. I think I rather took Bernard by surprise because he stepped into the road pretty late and handed me a feeding bottle of Ribena. I put out my hand in the right place but was travelling so fast that I didn't grab it properly and it went all over me! The Ribena dried quickly into a sticky mess - and I could really have done with a drink at that stage having lived all day on bottles of warm rice pudding - the staple diet of distance racers in those days.

After about 200 miles, at Twemlow Green, near Goostrey, competitors entered a triangular course of about ten or twelve miles around which marshalls were placed every couple of miles or so, so that it could be determined (and measured) pretty exactly where you were after riding for twelve hours. When I got to Goostrey I knew I was miles ahead of Arthur (in fact, he never actually reached the finishing circuit and was estimated to have done about 180 miles in total), so I stopped, and chatted to some other club members, waiting for almost twelve hours to expire, when I could toddle off around the finishing circuit, pass the first marshall and retire, with a recorded distance. I did 205.4 miles and was pretty pleased with the result - for a bit of fun! I caught the train home to Wilmslow from Goostrey, arrived home and slept until lunchtime the following day!

Then I stripped my Viking down and fitted Weinmann alloy wheels - still on (second-hand) high-pressure Michelin '25' tyres for racing, rather than the tubular type that most racers used. I had the frame re-enamelled from blue to metallic lime-green (see comments two pages farther on) and the gears were removed because at that time all time-trial riders used a fixed wheel, rather than gears, as normally the events were held on flat courses.

On this bike I made my debut in open Time Trials. (see photo on the previous page. I'd raced in club 10-mile events on Wednesday evenings, but quite early in the season, in April, 1958 I entered the Withington Wheelers' Novices' 25-mile event in Cheshire, starting by Jodrell Bank Telescope - hence the references to Space ships.

## ***Bike riders born as Sputnik dies***

Under the shadow of the giant Jodrell Bank radio telescope, recording the death of Sputnik II, the Withington Wheelers ‘Novices’ “25” saw the birth of a new generation of racing men. First place was decided very quickly. N. J. Welch Seamons CC number 11 on the card and first finisher, recorded 1h. 4m 27s for his first competitive ride, beating second man, R. W. Murray, Apollo Wh. by 1m. 42s.

Welch’s time was a record for the event which has been promoted since 1932, except for the war years.

Entries totalled 142 and, of the 120 acceptances, 90 were riding in their first race, a welcome sign for the future of the game.

At least three were sons of fathers who had competed (and suffered!) more than 20 years ago.

The morning was bright, but cold for the earlier starters. There were no less than 14 who started late. None, however, would have been in the prize list.

Their lateness was due generally to their lack of knowledge of Cheshire lanes, the new starting point and some course alteration made necessary owing to work on the Manchester - Crewe railway line.

Competition for the team award was very keen, but the Seamons CC trio had a clear-cut lead over Westwood RCC, their 3hr-25-20 being a very creditable performance.

Nick graduated to Seamons CC through the C.T.C. about 18 months ago. On current form he is one of the fastest 10 milers in the club, his best time at that distance being 23min. 50sec. Nick’s 1958 ambition is to win the Junior Championship; we wonder who can stop him!



*A posed photograph, copied from a newspaper, taken in Tarporley, later in the morning after the Withington Wheelers ‘25’, April 1958*



## WITHINGTON WHEELERS OPEN NOVICES “25”

### APRIL 15th 1958

**W**HAT AN AGE WE LIVE IN! Despite traffic lights, traffic islands, halt-signs and even police attention, it is rather surprising that we find ourselves still able to run our Novices event on more-or-less the same roads we used twenty-six years ago for the first of the series.

Could we have envisaged, though, this odd, bowl-shaped piece of machinery in a field at Jodrell Bank, we might have been excused had we dismissed it as just ‘something from Mars’ and, if only by its connection, we would not have been very far from the truth! Yet something like fifty or sixty of our kind stood around at the start of this year’s event, almost under the shadow of the giant world-famous radar-telescope, and if one of the small crowd turned to even glance at the £600,000 wonder . . . . . well, I didn’t see him!

The race topics were just as they were twenty-odd years ago: ‘What gear d’you think?’ ‘This so-and-so saddle’s hard’ ‘Gonn’a be a hard finish’. Even a rider on a pair of ‘woods’ — “long time since we saw a pair of those, Mr. Haines!” “Hum, might even have belonged to me at one time” mused Chas. One thing different, though — no tights, but how in keeping with the Mars theory they would have been at that particular moment.

One lad was overheard to remark - “Didn’t sleep a wink last night, someone’s \*\*\*\*\* dog barking half the night, I’ll be lucky if a do 1-15!” At the back of me the highly sensitive and costly piece of radar equipment busy making history by tracking the dying trail of a small space-ship containing a dog no longer able to bark and which, by the time the lad so short of sleep had completed his twenty five miles ride, would, some 150 miles high, have encircled the earth in another 16,000 m.p.h. surge.

Over twenty years ago an Irishman, one Alo Donegon, was reported to have ridden 25-miles in 59mins 59secs, “but (said most of us) that couldn’t be — he would have disintegrated; and, anyway, they would be Irish miles, so what !”

“Extraordinary, wonderful, fascinating, queer, Marvellous, incredible, Oh! dear, dear!”

Mac’s repeated chanting of the time-honoured formula — “Five, Four, Three, Two, One, GO!” brought me back to terra firma - from realms afar - to find myself

staring at a flamboyant pea-green (merging to bile-green) bike on the ‘starting grid’. Mr. Haines confessed that he also had never before seen one of such insipid hue. Although we would not have guessed, we were, in actual fact, looking at the machine of the eventual winner.

The weather man deigned to smile and favoured us with an excellent morning for the event. He of the ‘vile green’ machine, N.J. Welch of the Seamons C.C. took the premier award with 1-4-27 (the fastest of the whole series), winning by almost a clear two minutes from R.W. Murray of Apollo Wheelers who did 1-6-09. Third was L.J. Green, South Lancs R.C., in 1-6-21. Other award winners were R Johnson, Westwood R.C.C., 1-7-20; B. Tomlinson, Stone Wheelers, 1-7-46; G.J. Dudley, Marple Wheelers, 1-7-50.

The Seamons C.C took the Team medals with a very good aggregate of 3-25-22, and altogether sixteen clubs finished complete teams.

There were fifteen late starters and a surprising feature was that in almost all these instances the rider concerned was positively AMAZED that the time lost through lateness had to be forfeited.

Another successful event, thanks chiefly to Arnold’s first-class organising of it and to those who assisted in every way. A special word of thanks to those who voluntarily forsook their beds (although not required - until much later to the event) to ensure that spare checkers were available for unmanned corners. . . . and how useful they proved to be!

### ***J.E. Forbes.***

**Extracted from the “WITHINGTON WHEELERS  
“JOURNAL”, Vol 20, No. 5, July/October 1958**

It was a fabulous morning, absolutely still and fairly warm and sunny towards the end. Starting at one minute intervals I was number 11 off - and was first to finish, having passed all ten riders in front of me. My time of 1hr 4min 27secs seemed to cause a bit of a stir as it turned out to be a record for the event. I then had to wait two hours for the other 119 riders to finish, waiting for somebody to better my time. Nobody did and I won my first open event, despite the unkind remarks made about the colour of my frame by the event organisers! Two weeks later I won another 25 mile event (the Manchester University ‘25’), then I got beaten into second place in my next outing.

## *Nick is making them sit up*

In between studies for his Ordinary National Certificate (ONC) in Mechanical Engineering 16-year-old Nick Welch has time to convince everybody that he is the brightest young racing prospect to arrive on the Seamons C.C. scene for a long time.

His first season's record can't say otherwise, for he has two Records and two wins out of

Ordinary

five events. He won the Withington Wheelers Novices' "25" with a record time of 1hr. 4min. 27sec., the Manchester University second-class "25" in 1hr 5min 9sec, finished second in the South Lancs R.C. second class "50" in 2-17-46, and was second again in a Club "25."



He also knocked four minutes off Alan Brocklehurst's junior club record with a time of 1-27-46 in the Altrincham to Middlewich and back run.



*The last event of 1958, at the Club Annual Dinner. Mini-bike racing on a slippery dance floor against Doug Hartley, the first man under the hour on 'Cheshire'.*

Following these initial exploits racing on my bike I had become so fascinated by riding my trike that I started racing on it.

The Tricycle Association not only organised events themselves, but, through mutual arrangements with the two-wheeled fraternity, made arrangements for a fair number of these 'open' events to accommodate up to 10% of the entries for trikes.

This enabled us to be able to race on some of the faster courses and was really 'good fun'.

Tricycles are not the easiest machine

to control, particularly when travelling at about 25mph, and around corners. Audrey will vouch for that, because one Sunday, after I had been out training in the early morning and had returned, I left my trike on the front lawn whilst I went into the house. Audrey decided that she'd have a little 'go' on the trike and got as far as sitting (stationary) on it on the lawn. Then promptly fell off, tipping the whole machine over, still sitting on the saddle!

If you feel that you're falling off a bike you tend to lean the opposite way to counter-balance this effect, which has quite the opposite outcome on a trike. The more you try to correct the situation the worse it becomes!



*East Lancs Road 25mile Time Trial (J13) had two dead turns, the first (here) on Newton Road, I think. Just 'honking' away from that first turn*

## SOME MEMORIES OF 1957 AND 1958



*The spoils of the 1958 Season. The four trophies at the rear were Club Championship trophies, I think; the square one is my prized Withington Wheelers Novices 25 event with a row of club, open and Trike Association medals.*



*JKP on 'Cheshire' on his 'trike conversion'.*



*The Barrow 'Brothers'*



*Start of the Annual Cyclo-Cross December 1957. Seamons C.C. versus Sale Harriers. George Arstall, Nick Welch, Forgotten, Baz Regan, Mel Haigh and Johnnie Pardoe.*





*May 1958 - A weekend trip to North Wales - JKP cornering near Bala - not easy that fast on a fixed wheel!*



*May 1958  
JKP and I went to Llangollen for the weekend, seen here on the Berwyns - I believe this is still a popular Club destination.*



*October 1957 - Resting after the Hillclimb at the pub in Langley*

## SOCIALISING WITH CLUB - 1957 to 1958

The Seamons had many 'traditional' rides, tours and pre-season thrashes back in days gone by, and no doubt they are still continuing today. I know of a couple which seem to crop up now and then.

Places that are particularly remembered are Dent and Llangollen, although some were no more than a brisk ride for the first 50-odd miles, followed by a two or three mile thrash at the end, until passing either the 30mph sign outside the village or the village Name Sign itself.

These were eagerly looked forward to as a prelude to the racing season, although, as you will see to your left, many were turned into semi-social events - to be enjoyed by club members.

The photo of John cornering his Trike conversion set in our early days on three wheels was a fairly mild weekend (riding-wise) although the Llangollen Thrash was usually performed on two wheels rather than three.

I remember being particularly taken by the view here in the Berwyns, after we had climbed out of Llangollen itself.

One Annual event was the Club Hill Climb, not an event that I was particularly good at. I was hopeless at climbing the short, very steep hills (that were Baz Regan's idea of fun) but looked forward to riding in October 1957, the Cat and Fiddle road from Macclesfield, which I rode and think was second only to George Arstall shown below finishing in 19m. 54secs.

The only problem was trying to select the best gear for the job. In those days it was only the 'massed start' riders who used gears, pretty much every 'time-trialler' used a fixed wheel, which posed a problem for the Cat, with its reasonable length of downhill about halfway up.

On the day, I chose a 76 fixed and it caused no problems fortunately, although 76 meant having to twiddle a bit on the downhill stretch!



*George Arstall winning the hillclimb on the Cat & Fiddle in 19m.54secs. October 1957*

## ‘AFTER- SEASON’ XMAS DINNER in Marple - December 1957



*1957 Xmas Dinner in Marple*

*If you can see them through the pipe and fag smoke- L to R John Pardoe, Nick Welch, Forget (possibly a blue frame?), Arthur Thorlby, “Right Stack Up” Ian Thompson, don’t know.*



*1957 Xmas Dinner in Marple*

*(Left to right) Unknown lady and gentleman (front), ‘little’ Bob and his wife, Mel Haigh (possibly), Baz Regan, I think, AlanMiddlewich” Malcolm Judge*

Firstly - please excuse my not remembering your name (if I haven’t).

Remembering names has been a failure of mine throughout my life. Some really stick, others, I’m afraid just don’t.

No malice is meant if at the age of 81 years I can’t remember your names. Sorry about that!

Probably if I’d taken the trouble to contact many of you who have appeared in these pages and got hold of the ‘missing’ names from members who were around in that period, I’d have been able to give credit to all those appearing.

I certainly remember you, even if I can’t attach a name to the face!

Christmas in those days were really good affairs, well attended, (considering that none of us had much money to spare then), but hey! - we had plenty of fun, comradeship, a great sport and we kept(keep) fit, didn’t we?



## GOYT BRIDGE

*Mr. Pardoe's lost - again!*

## GOYT VALLEY

*Please don't feed the animals*



# AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND IN DERBYSHIRE



## GOYT VALLEY

*Nick squeezes through a gully under the valley*

## THE HILL AT LANGLEY

*It's OK coming down but hell going up!*



*To be Continued. . . . .*

## SCOTLAND TOUR 1958

In the late-ish summer of 1958, Johnny Pardoe and I toured all around Scotland together on our ‘trike conversions’, (not having the money to buy ‘real’ hand-built trike frames). On the way from Glasgow we headed for John-o’Groats calling in at Killin YHA. Pardoe was no better at Scottish dancing there than I was!



*Loch Tay, on the journey north, Summer 1958*

The following day we rode along the length of Loch Tay, over Rannock Moor where they had just about finished building the dam in the photograph (below), creating Loch Rannoch.



*The new Loch Rannoch, a reservoir, just about finished*

A few miles along this track we stopped for lunch under a small river bridge. The water flowing through it gave some respite for our front wheels to cool off. Two brakes on the same rim was causing a deal of brake fade - some thing I’d never experienced before! Eventually after this long, rough track we

reached the A9, turned left and stayed at Kingussie hostel for a night’s stop-over and then on to Inverness for the next night. The following day we headed up the east coast, staying at what I believe must have been the biggest Youth Hostel in Britain. From memory I think it was called Carbisdale Castle, a massive multi-storied castle which the SYHA have fairly recently sold. Several on-going efforts have been made to reopen it, but some £6,000,000 are required for refurbishment - which the SYHA doesn’t have!

After visiting John-o-Groats, (where we were fortunate in seeing a bike rider finish LE-JOG, then off again to complete the 1000miles distance) and a visit to a trike rider (I think, but can’t remember his name) when he was at work in Dounreay Atomic Power station, we headed west, going right to the north-west tip of the country at Cape Wrath. This entailed a ferry ride right across the Kyle of Durness in a boat little larger than a rowing boat. The two trikes virtually filled the boat! Then, an eleven-mile-long ride along a track as far as the lighthouse at Cape Wrath. This would be quite a trip on a bicycle, but John and I chose to do it on tricycles and some years later Johnny presented me with the Certificate (shown on the next page).

A pleasant day riding south via a B&B in Elphin, north of Ullapool that evening, was going to take us around the coast to Kinlochewe the following day, but after spending the whole of the next morning crossing Loch Broom on a small ferry we realised that our holiday itinerary was starting to slip quite badly, so when we eventually reached a tarmac road we turned left and went directly to Strathpeffer helped by an almost endless down-hill gradient and a north-west following wind. Brilliant!

We were heading towards Edinburgh, to stay with John’s sister, before catching the train back to Manchester, but took time out to visit one of, at that time, Scotland’s fastest time-triallers at 25miles, Bert Frew, in Dunfirmline, where the accompanying photograph was taken. I’m not sure of the exact circumstances of this photograph, because it really does look like my touring trike on the car’s roof rack!

I went back to work at Renold’s to find there had been a big shake-up and reorganisation and my services were no longer required. I actually ‘signed on’ when I left Renolds (the only time I’ve not had a job) but after a day or so went to Morgan’s cycle shop in Wilmslow and worked there for about three weeks until I went in the Army, having signed up for the Royal Engineers for six years, rather than do my two year’s National Service for which I was still ‘eligible’.

ON 26TH SEPTEMBER 1958, I became 23677982 Sapper Welch NJH, in the Royal Engineers and commenced ‘Basic Training’ in Farnborough Hants. For most other Army recruits this would



*Berriedale hairpin, looking south. - We're nearly there now!*

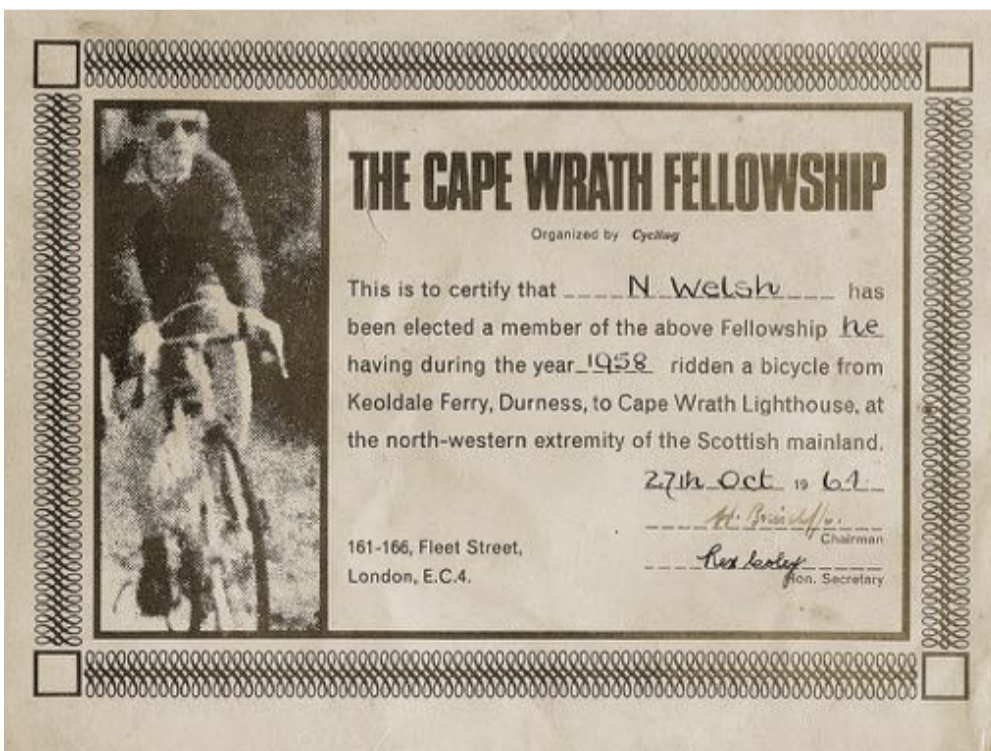


*John O'Groats - Objective One!*

have been for three to six weeks, but the RE training lasted nine months, because all Sappers were trained in all the skills needed to build Bailey Bridges, use explosives, build roads and railway lines, bomb disposal and demolition etc., etc.

On my first session in the gymnasium another soldier bumped into me and I fell on my left wrist and broke it. Now, one thing any recruit doesn't want is to stay training any longer than necessary, so, after having my arm set in plaster I continued training. There were some things I was 'excused', as the activity was not practical, such as being on parade and learning marching and drill, although, thinking back, I do remember doing much of it, including firing rifles and Bren guns, but I wasn't allowed to take part in the passing-out parade as, even after nine months I still had my wrist in plaster and couldn't hold a rifle, on parade, correctly.

The reason that my wrist wouldn't heal (apart from the physical activity involved in the Army training) was that on my first 48hr. Pass I asked if I could bring my 'bike' to the unit, so that I could train. Since it was getting on for winter time, serious training wasn't involved, but I joined the local(ish) civilian cycling club, the Charlottetown CC in Woking. This gave me (particularly on Sundays and club nights) the 'OK' to leave the camp, where we were really incarcerated for nine months whilst training. It was riding my trike



*Objective Two - Cape Wrath*



*Visiting Bert Frew (centre) and Co at his house, I think in Dunfirmline. He was at the time one of the fastest men in Scotland. I still can't remember why my trike was strapped to his car's roof rack!*





*Cove, Surrey, January 1959, and I've got my old trike to ride on at last. Wrist still in plaster. LH brake lever modified as a wrist rest*



*On the Xmas fun run with some of the Charlotteville lads, 1958*

whilst on a fixed wheel for the winter months, resting my left hand on a dummy brake lever that kept mashing up my plaster and often were the trips to the military hospital in Aldershot to

when I chose my regiment, but I'd learned a bit during the training and thought I would try and get a transfer to the REME, which seemed to offer more of what I was after.

We had previously been offered a 'choice' of postings, and being still very keen on cycling and cycle racing, I opted for Northern Command (north England), Western Command (western England) and Southern Command (south England) - so I could continue with my sport. And six of us in a line in the same billet got postings to Christmas Island! Time to put plan 'B' into action.

have it replastered.

Everything else I did. All the bullshit in the billet, and on one's equipment. I built Bailey bridges and took part in every other activity, but towards the end of my nine-month's training as a Field Engineer I realised that I had made a mistake in joining the Royal ENGINEERS, because there was not a lot of engineering involved - it was mostly hard labour. I'd not had any advice from my father



*With the Charlotteville CC - meeting up for the Xmas Fun Run - 1958*

I applied for a transfer to REME and I was able to record my rides with them and I still have my certificates

(2 pages on) for breaking the Army 25mile, 50mile and 100mile Time Trial Records on my trike. I would imagine that they still stand as I would think the odds of there being another serving soldier who raced a trike would be pretty long!

In a short while my transfer came through and in

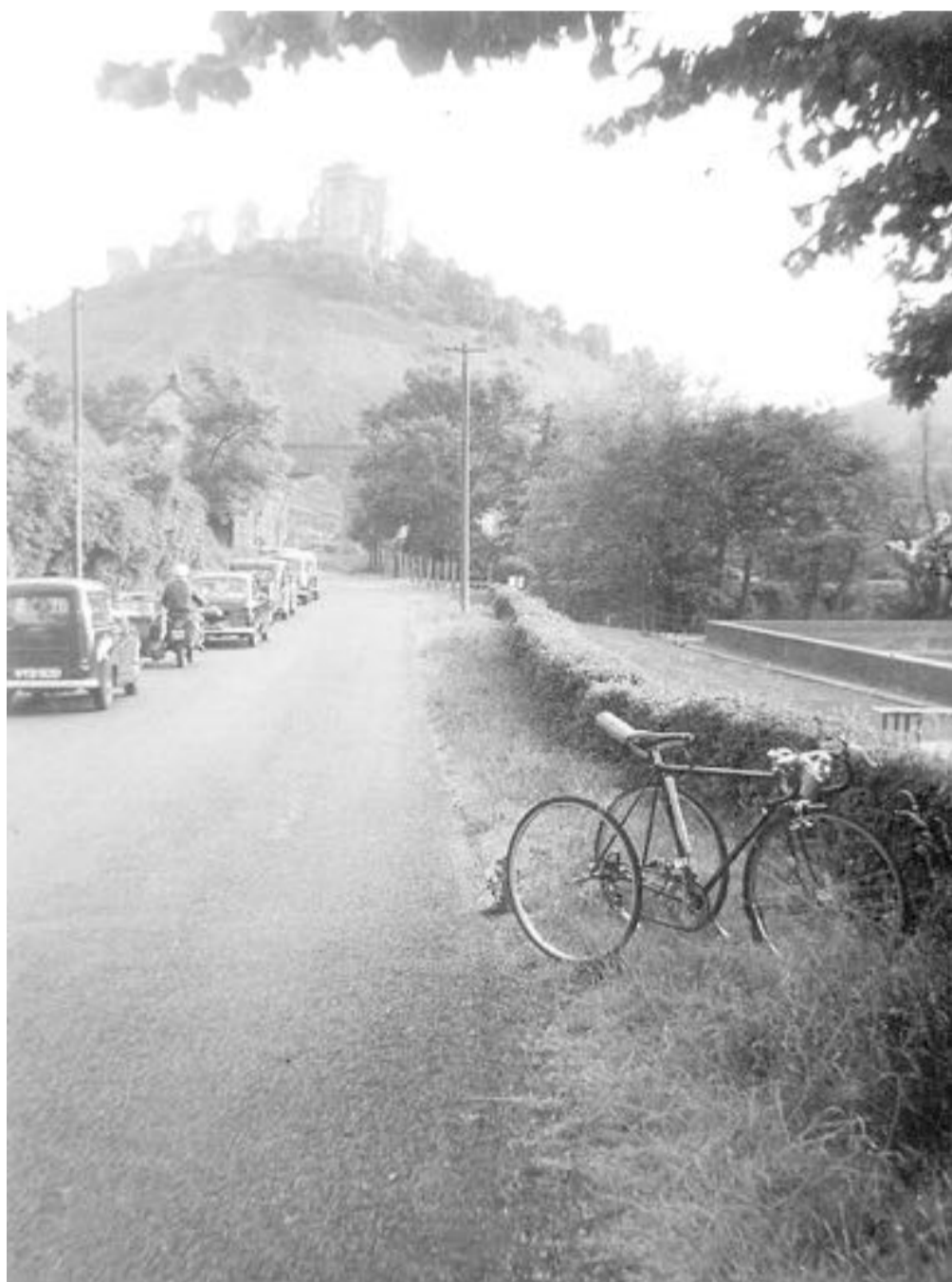


*A cooling down ride up a small(ish) river in Surrey, on the Charlotteville Xmas Run*

about June 1959 I went to Blandford Forum in Dorset, joining the REME as a potential draughtsman.

I think I must have sold my old trike to somebody in the Charlotteville Club, because in the photo (next page), when I was at Blandford I seem to have acquired my new *Higgins Ultralite* trike. I was able to get loads of time off at Blandford, not having to do any basic training as the lads in our platoon had to, as I'd already done ten months by that time. I was given charge of an 'Oxford' motor mower and I spent the mornings grass cutting around the unit, as and where I fancied. There was no restriction on my entry and exit from the unit. There actually wasn't a gate anyway, the buses just used to come up the hill from Blandford and drive all around the camp as they pleased.

Whenever I wanted, I could go out training, as often as I liked, and thoroughly enjoyed riding the lovely roads in Dorset. I rode quite a few races that summer,



*Corfe Castle - Dorset 1959. On the way to Portland Bill from Blandford Forum*



*Johnny - Early days in the Army. How to spend an enjoyable Sunday afternoon bulling boots on his National Service - 1959*



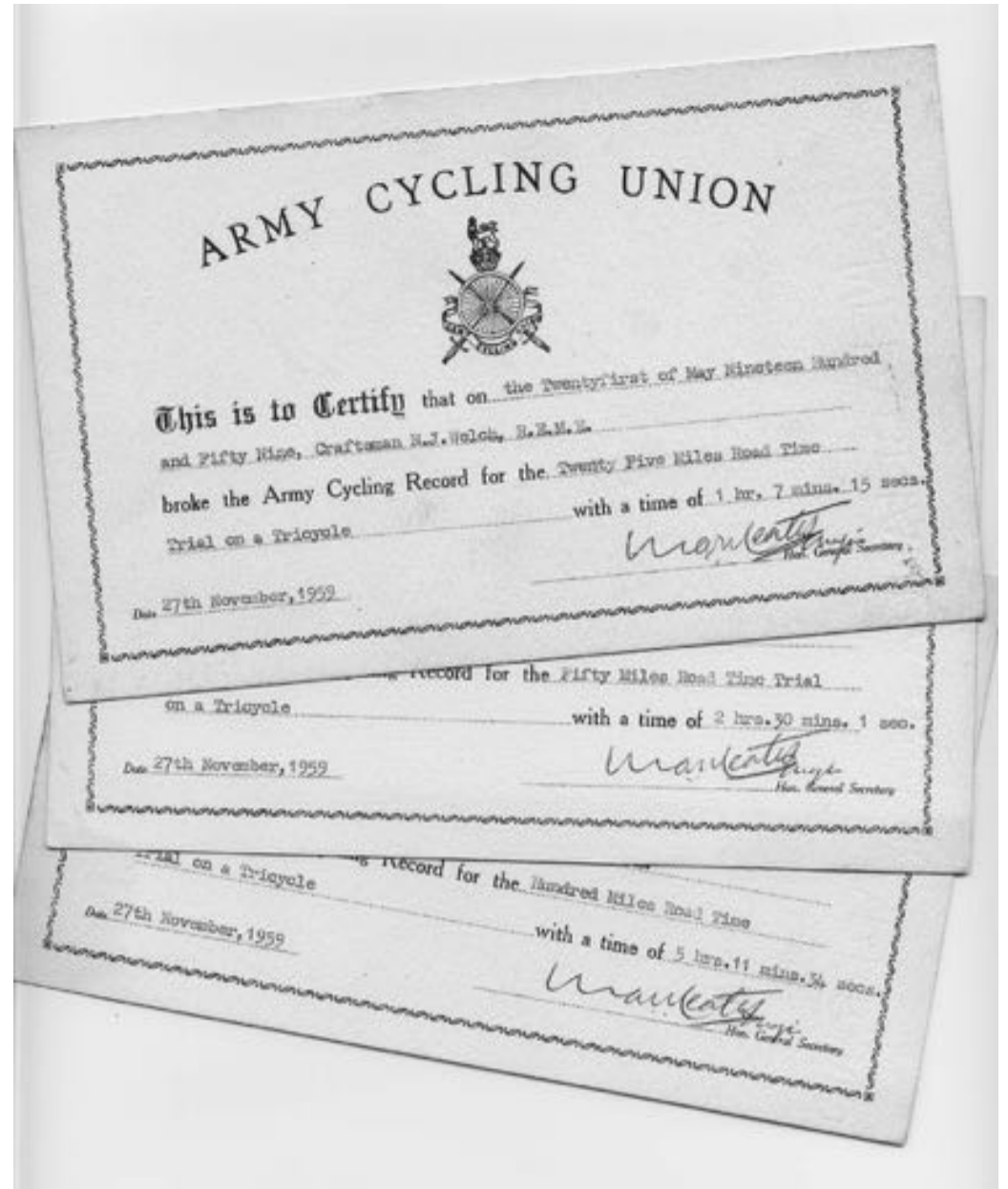
*At Portland Bill, one of my 'days off' whilst at Blandford Forum. Wrist now bandaged, rather than in plaster*

mostly in the Bath and Weston-super-Mare area.

The summer of 1959 passed lazily along, lovely weather, not a lot of work or Army stuff to do. One advantage of Blandford Forum was that I could get home on the train easily. Believe it or not I could catch a train, and remain on it, from Blandford station, and get off it at Wilmslow. And this was an express train -



*The view back towards Chesil Bank and Weymouth*



*My Army Cycling Union record-breaking certificates from the summer of 1959  
25 miles, 50 miles and 100 miles Time Trials*

The Pines Express that ran from Manchester to Bournemouth. In August I received my posting (I had requested the same postings as those when I was in the Royal Engineers - all in England, you will recall), so it came as no surprise to me when I got a posting to Singapore!

Oh well, you can't win them all! I decided to take my trike with me, and when my posting came through to Arborfield, south of Reading, I moved there prior to catching the Troop Ship from Southampton to Singapore and whilst there I constructed a couple of crates to take my trike frame and a few bits and bobs more; the second carried my six wheels and other bits, like saddle bag etc. I was a

bit apprehensive about what state it would be in on arrival, but give the Army their due, everything arrived, intact and

undamaged on 9th October 1959. A couple of spanner jobs and we were ready to sample the Singapore and Malayan roads!

## CYCLING IN SINGAPORE

So, I took my trike out to the Far East and did ride it a fair bit. Singapore is about the same size, and diamond-shaped, like the Isle of Wight; about 25 miles across and 15 miles north to south. It is attached to Malaya by a causeway at its northern tip - and was the way the Japanese came to take Singapore in February 1942. They had captured the whole of Malaya in a couple of months and just marched south, across the causeway and into Singapore - much to the surprise of the Brits who had always expected any invasion of the island to come from the sea, and all the guns defending the island faced out to sea and would not rotate to face inland!

The island was then pretty dense with jungle everywhere except the city itself, a few villages and the roadways. Stray off the (mostly) hard-packed dirt roads at your peril! the island being pretty small it was quite good for cycling, in that respect - but not with respect to the weather. The heat and humidity was very oppressive and energy soon drained, but I persevered and explored the island and a little bit of the Malayan mainland.



*Back from training, on single fixed by the look of it.*

it is mostly just jungle, nobody seems to live there, so there was nowhere to get any food to help me on my way. I was absolutely knackered and was going nowhere, so I sat down and waited for a bus. One travelling south came along after a while and I got on, the conductor helped me to put my trike on the roof-rack and off we went to Singapore. I never rode my trike again; at this time I was just buying my first (of two) MG TCs and motoring was the thing!

I contacted JKP back in UK and asked if anyone was looking for a trike and he immediately came back with the name of 'Rodgerson'. I'm sure he will be a well-known rider to all you club racers, although I've never had the pleasure!

*The last time I would ride a bike, or trike for six years.*



*Some of the other British cyclists on Singapore Island*

There were other Brits on the island who cycled and I met them, as well as some locals who did in fact race, not Time Trials as I recall, but Road Racing. I watched them in an event coming up the hill at Pasir Panjang, lap after lap, behind our unit on a 75mile race. Not for me in that heat! To be honest I don't know how they did it! I used to train but never, in the long run, actually took part in a race.

One day I decided to get some miles in by riding 'up country', into Malaya for about 25 miles into the southern tip of the country, for a change of scenery, but suffered a severe attack of the dreaded 'bonk' when about 45 miles from base. As I said, apart from the roads the country



## BACK TO ENGLAND

I crated up my trike and sent this off to England as I had had word back from Johnny Pardoe that somebody in the Seamons was looking for one. It was somebody called Rodgerson, I believe, and when it went (by Air, I think) I thought that would be the last I would see of it. How wrong can you be? I think our Mr Rodgerson was rather more successful at racing it than myself!

At the end of 1961, twice, I had handed in my bedding, packed all my gear and turned up at Paya Lebar airport for a flight home, only to be chucked off the flights at the last moment. That's the trouble with having a surname that starts with a 'W' - it's easy to cross the last name off the list to let some other 'compassionate' traveller take your place. I eventually got away in January 1962, flying back on a civilian Qantas flight in a prop-driven DC7C. We called in at Calcutta, Bahrain and Istanbul for re-fuelling, reaching Heathrow after 32 hours in the air. With the eight-hour time difference I arrived in UK at exactly the same time as I'd departed the previous day! Overall average speed just 250mph!

Having traded in my Austin-Healey Sprite in Singapore for a UK delivery of a new Mini-Cooper, after three weeks back 'home' on leave I had transport at last, but with the prospect of another ten weeks accumulated leave before I departed for Germany, and by this time getting totally fed up of watching 'Andy Pandy' and the 'Woodentops' on the TV, I thought I might see if I could get a job somewhere to pass the time.

Television was a new experience for me. Singapore didn't have television and my father never had one before I joined the Army, but you can soon get bored sitting watching it!

So, I went into Wilmslow village and enquired at the local Ford dealer (Manchester Garages) if they had any jobs. I was willing to do anything and had a brilliant time delivering and collecting cars, washing and polishing them and generally helping out around the garage. They were a great bunch of lads.

Occasionally, If I was lucky, I'd catch a brief glance of a nice pair of legs through a glass doorway in the workshop, climbing the stairs into the office on the first floor. Nice, I thought. The rest that was attached to the legs was pretty good, as well! Stuck up bird - she even drives herself to work in a *Standard Vanguard*, so I've not much chance there - I thought (incorrectly, as it turned out!)

Audrey and I hit it off very well over the remainder of my leave and when my time came to go to my new posting in Dusseldorf, I drove there in my new Mini Cooper and shortly after doing very little (because there wasn't actually a post for me to take over) I was posted to the Headquarters of the British Army of the Rhine, to work on looking after all the office equipment in the British Forces Germany Headquarters building in Moenchen Gladbach.

That was in March 1962, and in October that year I came home on leave and proposed marriage to Audrey, which fortunately she accepted. (Who could possibly resist such a handsome fella?) We planned the wedding for 30th March 1963, and apart from a week at Christmas when she flew over to Amsterdam for the Christmas break, the next time we met was more-or-less a couple of days before our wedding, exactly twelve months after our first date together.

There was no cycling for me whilst in Germany but we toured the Continent extensively over the next fourteen months until I was demobbed in September 1964, returning to Wilmslow, where we lived until 1971.

## IT'S THAT SAME OLD STORY!

After a while we met up with John again (as you do!). John had done most of his two year's National Service - I think he somehow managed to wangle an early discharge - but anyway we went over to Lymm where he was living to kick over the traces. That's when the rot set in, because out came his photo albums as we caught up on the



*Harold 'H' Nelson, still in his council house in Wythenshawe, doling out his pearls of wisdom in his late eighties.*

previous six years and realised what I had been missing. The bug bit again!

It was late 1965 and I was without a bike and weighed 13st 7lbs. Not a very good start, but I worked at it and lost three stones in three months, and doubt that I could have lost much more than this. Apart from the exercise from cycling all I did was cut out sugar, potatoes and bread. And it worked!

I took up with Harold 'H' Nelson as a coach and used to visit his house weekly (which was in fact a terraced council house that had had the dining room 'converted' into an exercise room) with the installation of a set of 'rollers'. I suspect that training rollers today would be rather quieter than then but (if I'm not mistaken - from the sweat marks on the floor) - the floor was wooden, so what the continual use of this piece of

equipment must have sounded like to his neighbours in the houses attached to his, every evening and all evening, I dread to think.

Harold's Wythenshawe home had, for decades, been the nightly venue for riders, be they juvenile riders or experienced seniors, male or female, national champions or those seeking to optimise more modest performances. Whereas the indoor training used to be based on the use of rollers, he then used a virtual reality system which was popular with riders and helped more efficient monitoring of performance and riding style. He used a wide network of expertise, academic and medical, and was, at the age of 87 years still going strong when he sadly died early in 2016. He had started coaching in 1953 and was the Great Britain Team masseur in the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, seven World Cycling Championships, twenty-one Tours of Britain, three Warsaw-Berlin-Pragues, and two Tours of Bohemia, plus many other events. At the time he was my coach he was also coaching Keith Stacey from Seamons who had won the BBAR (British Best All-rounder) in 1965.

There were many others whom he coached - too numerous to mention, and since September 2013 'H' was the President of the UCI (International Cyclists Union) and was awarded the BEM (British Empire Medal) for services to cycling.

After getting myself fit and losing three stones I decided to get myself a new trike so, on 6th February 1966 I set off in the morning and visited Audrey in Macclesfield Maternity Unit, where she was expecting Christopher, our second son. Following this visit I jumped in the *Mini* and headed for London. I was actually going to the frame maker, *Higgins*, in South Norwood, for my new trike frame. At the end of the M1 (near Watford in those days) my exhaust pipe broke just below the manifold so the exhaust was bellowing out just behind the dashboard. What a racket! You'll know where this is - if you've ever had a *Mini*!

I reached the North Circular road and headed west, then south, to reach the South Circular and on to South Norwood. I picked up my frame (exactly the same spec. as my first one - even the colour, emerald-green) and headed back up North - the exhaust making just as much noise! Back up the M1, across from Derby to Macclesfield, with my head banging from the exhaust noise, just in time for evening visiting at the hospital. Visiting hours in those days were very strict and at eight o'clock we were all kicked out, so I popped round to *The Flowerpot* on Congleton Road, where Martin, my sister's boyfriend, later her husband, worked with his father. I ordered a well-earned pint and was propping up the bar when, apparently, Audrey was brought a cup of tea after I had left. It was placed by her bedside and she got up, walked to the delivery room and produced Christopher, then went back to bed and had her cup of tea!

When I got home, about nine o'clock, I grabbed a bite to eat, took the frame into the kitchen, gathered together all the new equipment that I'd bought and assembled the trike.

By 11pm. I was riding it around the estate. Brilliant! I'd been in the bar when Christopher was born and I didn't know

(because we didn't have a telephone at home) until the following evening when I'd ridden my trike to the hospital, that I had become a Dad once more!

When I'd been racing in the 1950s I had cycled everywhere to events, as I didn't have a car. Local races on 'Cheshire' near the Chelford and Goostrey areas were quite handy, although a faster course on the East Lancs Road which started near Worsley was a twenty-mile ride at God knows what hour from Wilmslow and wasn't conducive to having a lot of energy left for the '25' itself. Then, after the event we would ride off and catch up with the Sunday Club Run, wherever that might be!

I was now looking forward to the racing season, which would start in March or April. Whilst I had been training through the winter on a bike, I never rode two wheels again in competition - I would concentrate on my trike.

So, shortly after this, I started racing again on a trike (a machine that has, and still does, fascinate me). I rode in 25s and 50s at the beginning of the season. I was never very good at 50s on a bike, or a trike, come to that and one TA 50 in Cheshire was the only event I ever DNF-ed. It was a bitterly cold April morning and started to rain. Because of the cold I wore a woollen sweater which got wetter and wetter, and sagged so much it was slapping against my thighs - until I punctured and I failed to finish. I was very close to the start after about 20 miles and really didn't fancy another thirty miles on the next leg in the cold and rain when I could just turn right and be back at the start very quickly. I was on a crap ride, anyway!

Nevertheless, I was surprised (and pleased) that generally I was going faster at twenty-six years old than when I had been nineteen. Today, racing cyclists seem to go on for ever, and never seem to get any slower. In those days we had special events for 'Veterans', who were older than forty, whereas now, and much older than forty, they seem to be able to hold their own against the younger competitors.

The next 'big' event was the Tricycle Association '100' at Shrewsbury - almost a ritual pilgrimage for tricyclists in those days. Not a brilliantly fast course but very scenic! This was actually my first '100'.

I'd taken the tent and slept in a field next to the start near Shrewsbury, accompanied by JKP again.

A wet, dewy morning greeted us the next day, (the constant crowing of the bird population in the field's trees didn't help throughout that night) making a wet start and after a mile I punctured a rear tub, which fortunately made it very easy to change and the first (and only) time I used one of my CO2 gas cylinders to reinflate my new tyre. I'd bought this canister years before and fortunately never had cause to use it, but I have to say it worked first time. I still had my back-up hand pump if not. Two more riders came past me whilst I grappled with the back wheel rim. 'Tub' changed, and we went on our way, trying to make up a bit of time, or at least catch whoever it was that went past me whilst I was changing my tyre. When I caught him I realised that the rider was on my old trike which I'd sold, back in 1961!

A couple of miles down the road and smack!, a fly went

straight into my right eye and I couldn't get it out. I did all the usual things like hold my eye open so that it ran with tears, hoping to flush it out, to no avail. The damned thing just stayed there and I couldn't use my right eye at all - and it remained there for the next four hours or so (OK, so that's bragging - let's say nearer five hours!) until I finished - in the sunshine by that time.

After I'd finished I'd still not got rid of the fly, but did eventually, although my eye was very sore. I drove home and that afternoon went to Woodford Aerodrome to a model aircraft display with an enthusiastic model aircraft builder and flyer, but was only able to see half of the display - through my one remaining good eye!

In 1966 John asked me if I would 'stoke' for him on his tandem-trike in the Westwood RCC '30' shortly after that and I agreed. I'd never

even seen one, let alone ridden one, so it was going to be a new experience for me. The first time I laid eyes on it was at the event, mostly on the East Lancs Road. I did adjust the saddle height, if I remember correctly. That extra five miles per hour achieved on the tandem, as opposed to a solo trike was quite exciting!

A very exhilarating ride (I'd no idea how we were going to get this huge lump of iron around the corners), but we did, and finished up with a club record of 1hr. 9min. 57sec. Recent enquiries revealed that this is still, after 55 years, the club record for a '30' on a Tandem-Trike and may well remain so for some time to come yet!

John and I camped together again in Yorkshire for a non-too memorable Trike Association '50' at York - I was a glutton for punishment with 50s - always hoping that one day I might do a decent time. Even now I can't remember which event it was



*The MDTA '25' on J32. On the Northwich bypass - I think it was a reasonable time for a 'hilly 25'!*

that I broke the Army CU time for 50 miles, but it was 2hr. 30min. 1sec. according to the certificates I have. Crikey - that's only 'evens'!

And so the season progressed. I improved on all my previous teenage times, so that was fine - and I even made a resolution to stop smoking. If I could go faster than before whilst still smoking 20-plus fags a day, then surely I'll be able to improve on those times if I stopped?

I'd raced through 1968 and was still putting in some half-decent performances and eventually stopped smoking at the end of the season and over the winter of 1968/69 did some quite good training in

preparation for the new season.

One Sunday morning I was out training on my trike pre-season; fortunately on a fixed-wheel and was down near Malpas on my way back home about fifty miles away, when I felt a growing pain on the outside of my right knee. It was really painful and as, fortunately, I was on a fixed, managing to ride home, just letting my right leg 'come along for the ride', rather than doing any work, as my left one was.

After fifty miles I came to the hill out of Wilmslow, travelling north on the A34 and really struggled, but arrived home in one piece. I rested the knee as much as I could, but as a cyclist I used to get paranoid if I had a day off cycling and wasn't

## RACING AGAIN - 1964 to 1969



*Cornering at Nantwich in the TA '50' in 1966*



*Westwood RCC '30', some time in 1966. Creating a Club Record which still stands - 1hr-9mins 57secs - , I believe after 55 years, and may possibly remain in our possession for some time to come!*

'getting the miles in'. Several times I tried riding my bike but the knee hurt like hell. I went to the doctor and remember attending a physiotherapist in Stockport on several occasions who massaged it, to some effect. But after a while the pain would return and then I heard of an osteopath in the Corn Exchange in Manchester so phoned him up.

I visited his little 'cupboard' in the Corn Exchange and removed my shoe and sock and placed my foot on a small wooden pyramid he had placed on the floor. He bent down and sort of just moved my foot around a little, for probably less than a minute - and pronounced me "fixed". Call me cynical if you like but even though (or perhaps because of) charging me only 7s 6d for the treatment I couldn't see how it could have had any effect.

I got on my bike and rode home without the slightest pain! I couldn't believe it! Then for a couple of weeks I went out and the knee was fine, but after that time the pain gradually came back and I went back to my doctor. He sent me to Macclesfield Infirmary, and after a couple of physiotherapy sessions was given a Cortisone injection right into the middle of my knee joint. This, surprisingly, to me, seemed to have a good effect and I started riding and training again. There was some pain there, but not too bad and when I discussed this with the doctors at the hospital they said that I could come back and have it injected whenever I was going to race.

I thought fairly long about this and reckoned that my knee was trying to tell me something and very reluctantly decided that having it injected to relieve the pain was just ignoring what it was trying to say to me and by continuing racing I would probably do some permanent damage. So I retired from cycling, sadly.





*I've got a trike, just like my daddy!*

I'd had my suspicions that it was a cartilage problem as occasionally, when younger and I was kneeling, playing on the floor, for example, the knee would 'lock' in the bent position and it was only by gently trying to straighten it whilst manipulating the joint with my fingers that it would 'unlock' and physically jump back into position and over the following years it would occasionally lock up whilst the knee was bent. This caused problems sometimes whilst climbing stairs because having put my left foot on one step, my brain knew what I should do to place my right foot on the next step, but the knee would lock and I'd go flat on my face.

That's not quite the end of the story, however. Now, I hope I get this part of the story right, because it was just after I retired and moved to Anglesey in 1999. In 1996 we bought another caravan (which we still have), a 15ft. *Swift Corniche*, and one week we went to stay on the Caravan Club site in Rhayader in mid-Wales. On the roof rack of a car was a trike - an emerald-green trike, with a TA chainset and Campag gears and all the extra brazed-on fittings that I used to have on my own trike. **It was my old trike!** I spoke to the man and his wife and (and this is where it gets a bit hazy), it turned out that (*they said*) They also had another green trike at home, both

bought second-hand, and both had been mine, apparently! I asked the lady if there was a dent on the top tube, left-hand side about six inches from the front end, where the handlebars had hit it when I had a crash coming down Church Street in Wilmslow; and yes, it had.

I'm not sure exactly where they came from but I think it was near the A580 in south Lancashire and I contacted Ross Forbes, who is the organiser of the Withington Wheelers Novices' '25' today, who lives in that sort of area and asked if he knew who they were, but couldn't shed any light on the matter. But a strange coincidence, nevertheless!

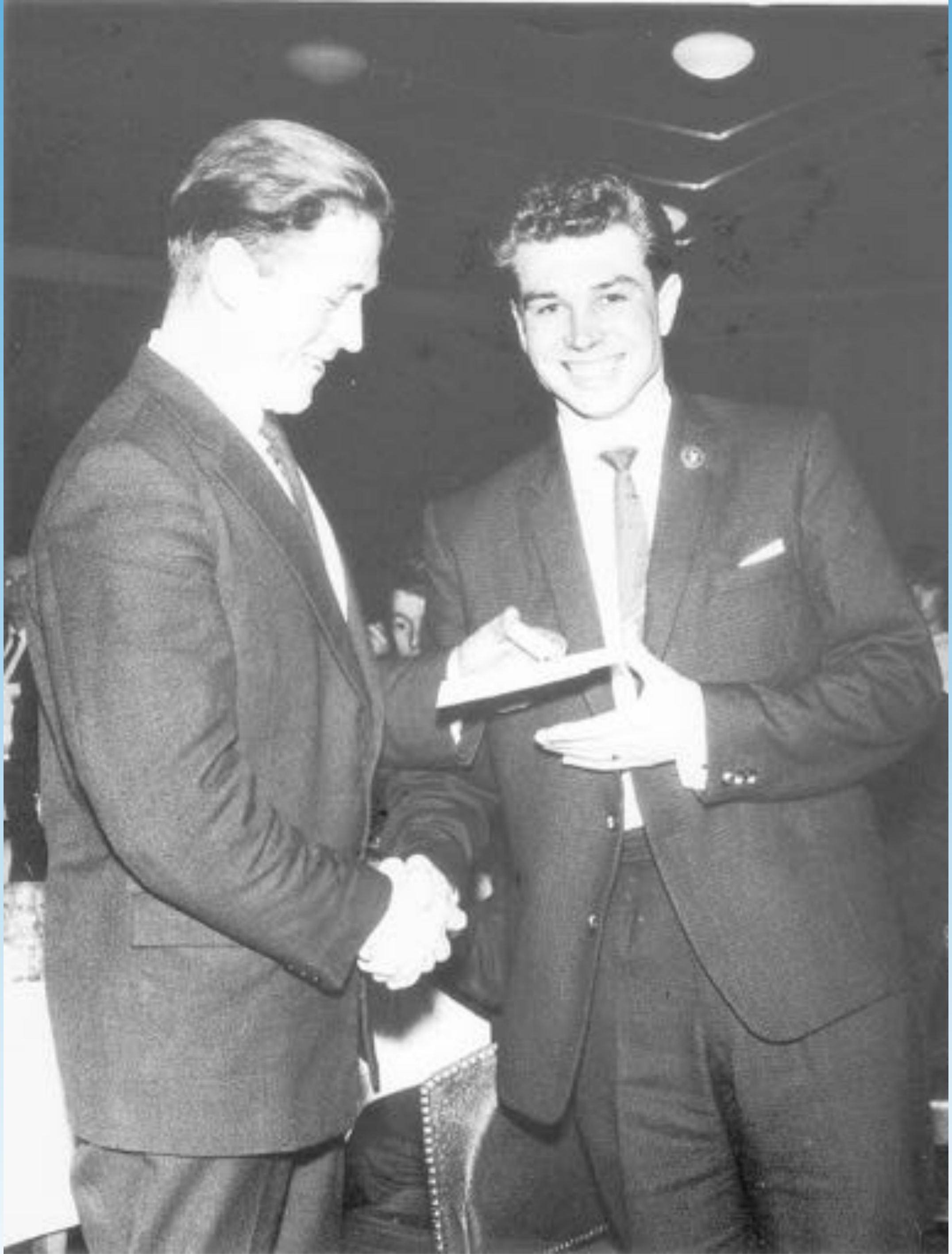
It would be around the time of the Millennium when I would see John again (and many other familiar faces), when I attended the Club's 50th Anniversary in Altrincham. About twenty-two years on from that evening, and I've not seen him since, but believe that he is still very active (for an oldie) in the club. Long may you flourish, Dad!

Well folks, that's about the lot for now. I can't (at nearly 82 years of age) and a couple of gammy legs, get about very well at all. This was originally 'diagnosed' as Motor Neuron Disease (but after seven years of struggling, was then rediagnosed as a suspected brain problem, *Hydrosyfalus*, so looking like I was heading to the operation table - again. That has now been poo-pooed, although the specialist I saw wants to see me again in December. Walking has become very difficult these days and visits to car racing circuits and motoring 'events' is almost an impossibility. I do have a 'mountain bike' which has done about 6 miles (still with the tiny rubber spikes sticking out of the tyres) which I'm hoping the club will accept from me, so that it can be auctioned to bolster the club funds. I found I couldn't stay upright very well on it. Cheerio, for now, it was great whilst it lasted!

*Nick Welch*



*John Pardoe trying out my first 'proper' trike at my parents' house in Wilmslow.*



*'Nim' Carline presenting me with an award (which, escapes me now), at a Club Dinner. This may well have been in 1958. What an honour - Nim had just broken the Lands End to John o'Groats End to End record!*



## MY HERO: BIG DAVE DUFFIELD

I'm sure, by now you must all be getting bored stiff, so I'll end, if I may with a couple of memories, not necessarily 'achievements by Nick Welch' but associated with cycling back in the 1960's.

The first and second are a couple of photographs of my 'Tricycling Hero' - Big Dave Duffield. I didn't take the photographs, so I'm not sure where or when they were taken.

Judging by his number (1) the bottom shot was probably taken whilst riding an event, somewhere- probably a '100', which he was rather good at- and -

I guess the other one (top) must have been on one of the rides which Dave liked - and was also pretty damned good at - City to City Record-Breaking.



## Julian Alaphilippe

Stage 5 of the 2021 Tour of Britain starting at Alderley Park then taking in many of our local riding roads featured many of the worlds top professional cyclists

