

SADDLEBAG

July 2016

we are
cycling
The cyclists' champion
UK



*Free
Festival
Supplement
with this
issue of
Saddlebag*

Actually it's three copies of the same supplement and we're asking you to circulate them to cycling friends. *And if you only receive Saddlebag by e-mail we'd like to think you've printed off or forwarded the programme to get the message over.*

Bits and Pieces

Note - this is the July Saddlebag and that the current one has a couple of weeks to run.

The dates for the remaining 5 and 10 mile challenges are there. The Kilmarnock and Irvine series have finished. There's still a chance to join in with the Troon, Ayr and Ardrossan outings. They started well at Irvine with 22 narrowly beating Troon's 21. The low point was Kilmarnock with 3 and torrential rain on two nights. We'll take a look at the effectiveness of this project when the others are complete.

Our Secretary, Pat Standen will attend the next meeting of the South Ayrshire Cycle Forum. We'll carry a report in the next Saddlebag.

Sunday 5th of June saw seven Ayrshire members complete the Stirling Tri-Vets ride. They completed the 100-mile ride well within the allowed time and were happy with their efforts. They were the biggest contingent from any CTC group.

The heroes were Pat Standen, Malcolm Smith, Willie Raphael, Alan McMurdo, Drew Kennedy, Bill Gerrie and John Lumley.

*Our southern neighbours D&G CTC are organising the **Stewarty Sportif** based in Dalbeattie on Saturday, 9th July. There's rides of 15, 50 and 75 miles. Find out more at www.dandgcycling.org.uk. They are also supporting the Kirkcudbright based **Galloway Recycle Sportive** on August 13th. It ups the mileages to 30, 67 and 102. Full details are at www.gallowayrecyclesportive.co.uk.*

Closer to home is Marmotte Gran Fondo Ecosse (or whatever it's called) in Kilmarnock with a time-trial and a mass participation event. It's on September 24-25 and **Marmotte Ecosse** should get you there on Google.

*As you'll have picked up from Pending Pedaling the **Tour of Britain** zooms through Ayrshire on Sunday 4th September. Starting in Glasgow it graces Stewarton - Kilmarnock -Mauchline Cumnock and Patna with some hot rubber. They are bound for a Castle Douglas finish.*

As you probably know by now **Pedal for Scotland** is on September 11th with the 110 Big Belter and the 50 mile Classic Challenge.

Will 'sportives' revert to 'cycle events' if we leave Europe?

As it says in the programme Troon is a great place to cycle in, to and around. It's on one of Scotland's earliest cycle routes and it's flat with views.

It's a Festival to celebrate cycling so on both days there are cycle rides. On Saturday the focus is on families, ladies and electric bikes while Sunday features touring rides from 30 to 100 miles.

Saturday is the information day with displays and leaflets on various aspects of cycling in Ayrshire. There are also activities as well as books and bike bits for sale. See next column for more details.



The Festival is an independent initiative funded by Ayrshire CTC. It was planned and staffed by volunteers demonstrating our commitment to promoting cycling in the community.

Please endorse their effort by visiting or participating in the rides and activities.

At the Scout Hall

All leaflet, booklet and information displays will be in the first floor hall.

12.00 - 1.00 Bike Books &c

New and used books for sale. Mainly about bikes and cycling but some walking guides and maps..

The following events will be outside weather permitting. Otherwise they will be in the first floor hall.

10.30 - 12.30 Balance Bikes

The new and successful way to get young children cycling. Bring them along for a session. *Active Travel Hub Kilmarnock*

11.00 - 12.00 Saddlebag Sale

Bring along your unwanted bike bits. Free spaces. If you are selling a complete bike they can be displayed from 10.30am to 3.30pm at your own risk.

12.00 - 2.00 Dr Bike

Free bike checks by trained CTC members. Report to take away. All bikes.

2.00 Make Your Own Stove

A demonstration on how to make an efficient cooking stove from two empty coke cans Recycling with an outcome.

Through the day we expect bikes of all shapes and sizes to appear including yours. If you want to know more about anyone's bike - just ask. Few cyclists are lost for words when it comes to talking about their bike

And don't forget to ride around Troon to show off your bike and remind them that the CTC are here and cyclists are friendly.

It's not too late to add to what we've got so if you have an idea of something we could add get in touch (contact details on back of the programme).





THE DAWN OF THE IDEA



Part 1 of
Linda's
1,500 mile
cycle to Italy

Several years ago I had the idea of cycling to Italy from Scotland on my own. However, when I mentioned my dream to family and friends it was met with laughter as they knew me too well. I was unfit, my knowledge of bike mechanics was negligible as were my map reading skills - AND I have a poor sense of direction. Plus, they thought, the idea of doing it on my own was ludicrous.

But time marched on. I was going to too many funerals, I wanted to prove there was still life in the old dog yet! I wanted to be an inspiration to my children, grandchildren, family and friends. I wanted them to see that dreams can come true and that Italy meant so much to me that I would even cycle all the way.

Every summer as I grew up dad used to drive us to Italy to visit my grandparents. The seven of us would be packed into the car and it took us three long days to arrive. The roads and cars weren't as good as they are now but the journey had to be done, like homing pigeons. When my mum was laid to rest in the little cemetery in Castelvecchio next to my dad, grandparents and great grandparents I missed her so much. My cycle to Italy was more of a pilgrimage.

So I started to get fit and as my fitness level grew so did my confidence. My friend Joyce and I completed the 10 mile Troon cycle ride with the CTC and duly received our certificate. This gave me the confidence to try doing some of the rides with the club. I loved it! They

were a friendly bunch and an inspiration - so I signed up. This was the pivotal point for me. From the ladies' rides I progressed and eventually attempted the main rides. I had the courage to voice my dream again. I cycled to Penrith on my own which was a great learning experience. Setting off, I believed that if I punctured, some kind person would be there to help me! I later realised how lucky I had been and vowed to go to cycle maintenance classes.

So my fitness was steadily improving and I wasn't quite as handless when it came to changing a tyre - but what route should I take to get to Italy? I kept procrastinating over the route planning. I could hear my mother's words in my ear saying "*Domandando si arriva a Roma*" meaning "by asking one gets to Rome" but I felt that wouldn't suffice. A few weeks before my departure date I bought myself a satnav and hastily input a route with the help of family and my friends Joyce and Denis who were going to be cycling part of the way with me.

April Fools' day was the date I had in mind for setting off. My daughter Francesca was going to cycle with me to Reims where Joyce and Denis would meet me and accompany me on the rest of my journey.

I felt excited and apprehensive. The most I had ever cycled before in a week was about 200 miles. Would my body be able to keep going? I was still getting used to my cleats and really wasn't confident with my new satnav! Still I felt it was now or never - and as my daughter informed me - my window of opportunity was only going to get smaller! So I went for it! I could hardly believe that my dream was actually becoming a reality!.....

LINDA EDGE

Another *melange* of unfathomable philosophical thoughts from our long-time anonymous contributor

Using power on your electric bike while going up, or is it down, the Electric Brae disguises the direction of the slope. Using a Garmin may help if the two don't interfere with each other - or your pacemaker. Pedaling round static or freewheeling cars, facing in both directions, raises doubts whether the hill is AC or DC so just as well that recharging is not available there. The comment occasionally heard, "Nah, it's no' a hill at a!" does raise questions about the influence of the hill.

It was said at one time that mariners took their ships round the other side of Arran to avoid the magnetic effects of the Electric Brae on their compasses - or so I've been told.

Hybrid bikes and hybrid cars don't seem to tally somehow. The latter has a motor while the other emits sweat and carbon dioxide in loud puffs. Electric bikes, with batteries near exhaustion, seem to combine the two.

Owning an electric bike might encourage dieting to lose the pounds that the e-bike is heavier than the previous bike - a sort of zero sum game?

If chargers become available for e-bikes at cafés we'll never get away from them.

Very few of us can claim to have tackled anything as ambitious as Linda's ride but quite a number have used the bike to explore further than their own back yard. Foreign tours are still a CTC focus and it is not all that long since they retired the information service that passed on advice by way of travellers' reports. The internet came along and suddenly we were all travel writers.

But the written word can be a cold teacher and there's nothing better than hearing the story told with the enthusiasm of the returned wanderer. That's when you pick up good tips that are never in the guide book and sense that edge of uncertainty that a new environment brings. That's the heart of the adventure.

THE WANDERERS RETURN

So you're back and want to talk about your trip. Somewhere there's another cyclist ready to go or trying to make up their mind or hoping to find the courage. Whichever side of the done-it/do-it coin you are on there's likely to be someone quite near who's ready to talk or listen about a trip to Cyclokazan, Bikeville or wherever. But who might that be?

Saddlebag invites its readers to let us know where they've been and we'll publish a list - we'll also try to put people in touch with each other.

Twenty-five years ago you could turn up at Glasgow Airport with a bike clad in pipe-lagging and find it on your arrival in Crete, Cyprus or Majorca - and that's when it went free as part of your weight allowance. Things have changed and it looks as though hiring a bike at the destination is becoming the norm.

Back then the discussion was about boxed, wrapped or looking like a bike when it got to the airport. Now every carrier has its own rules, conditions and charges which keep changing. That's when the experience of others is useful in making travel decisions.

If you are reading this you are likely to be travelling from Ayrshire so you want to hear from people who've gone from Prestwick, Glasgow or even Edinburgh airport. And there's always the train - but that's another changing story.

To start the ball rolling, or should it be the wheel turning, here's some people and place links : *Ronnie's done the Santiago/Compostella Pilgrim's Way and a dozen other tours, some with Gerry who's not bad on Germany 'with a little help from a friend', Les has been everywhere with or without a bike, David's got pockets of Italy and France off by heart, Pat and Drew have been in 10 USA States and Mexico, briefly, and Linda's got a hot-off-the-press route to Italy.*

The inspiration for this came from Jimmy Nimmo's detailed notes on his recent trip to Majorca which were published in facebook. They give a rounded view of his preparation and subsequent experiences. As a template it could work for other destinations so if you want a copy e-mail Drew at Saddlebag.

We know Jimmy's been to Majorca so where have you been? Or where do you want to go and what do you want to know? Hear it via the Saddlebag travel forum.

WITCOMB



Pending Pedaling

July '16

2nd	LADIES 11am	AYR College Car Park	Eunice explores the River Ayr to Auchincruive - then on for a garden centre lunch. Not a lot of hills.	Dobbie's Garden Centre
3rd	D-I-Y	It's not often Sunday's vacant at this time of year so after last week's big mileages a more relaxed DIY is on the cards. The Puffer in Irvine is the most central of our regular lunch venues - so see you there around 12.30pm.		
6th	SPECIAL 10am	GALSTON Co-op	Only 18 miles but 'short and sweet' doesn't do it. 'Short and steep' does - on both sides of Irvine Valley to Darvel and a little beyond. Drew leads.	Lunch at end Picnic Fuel stops en route
10th	MAIN 10am	CROSSHILL War Memorial	'It's a hilly route', says Pat as she leads round South Carrick. It's around 56 miles so might include morning coffee at Barr as a reward for first hill. Figure of eight but no short option.	Ballantrae Picnic or cafe
13th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	STRAITON Car Park	Dailly, Barr and the River Stinchar are the principal characters in Tim's 32-mile hilly drama.	Picnic Lunch
17th	SPECIAL 10.00am	MAYBOLE Railway Station	Cycle roon' some o' Carrick's hidden history. A hale 23 miles wi' a wee bit walkin' foreby. A wheen o' castles, forts, battles and an abbey (optional visit £4.50 - or less). Clive leads. Sign-up booklet £1	Picnic Lunch with wet weather option
19th	D-I-Y	Lunch at Prestwick Station Cafe (12.30pm) - where cycle route meets rail track. Annexe opened specially for us.		
24th	SPECIAL 10.00am	RIGSIDE E of M74 Douglas	Bike and Hike A 22 mile circular cycle with a hill on the way. At halfway it's off the bikes and up Tinto (1500' in 2 miles) Drew & Pat	Picnic Lunch
27th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	PRESTWICK Railway Station	'What is this life if, full of care, We haven't time to ride to Stair!' It's another 32 mile ride directly inland from the coast with Ronnie	Picnic Lunch at a pub!
31st	EASY 10.00am	GLENGARNOCK Railway Station	It's off to Gateside, Barcraig Reservoir, Johnstone and Kilbarchan with Dave L - then cycle path to Lochwinnoch. 25 miles.	Picnic or Cafe Lochwinnoch / Kilbarchan

More information at www.cycleayrshire.co.uk

Pending Pedaling

August '16

6th	LADIES 11am	PRESTWICK Railway Station	A coast and country scenic circuit via Monkton and Troon - to a popular lunch stop. Jackie leads.	Lindy's Hansel Village
7th	SPECIAL CTC Birthday	CUMNOCK Royal Hotel 10.15am	Last year, still excited by our CTC cup award, we enjoyed a morning coffee in Cumnock's Royal Hotel to celebrate the Club's birthday. We're repeating it this year and Walter's leading the 25 mile ride to justify a concluding lunch. (Park in Tanyard - beside bus station 10.00am)	
10th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	TARBOLTON Community Centre	Fenwick and Galston feature in Pat's ride of 36 miles	Picnic Lunch
14th	MAIN 9.15 am prompt (Note early start)	WEMYSS BAY Ferry terminal	The Annual 3 Ferry Hopper Allow time to buy <i>Hopscotch</i> 3 ticket before cycling to Western Ferry 10am sailing. Route is to Colintrave via Strachur for Bute and Rothesay for return ferry. Phillip leads for 55 miles.	Picnic Lunch
17th	D-I-Y	Whether you think you deserve it or not meet up at Doonfoot's Secret Garden for a social lunch around 12.30pm		
21st	SPECIAL 10.00am	BALLOCH Duck Bay Marina	Dave L. Leads on one of his favourites - Loch Lomond to Kilcreggan on the Forth of Clyde. Almost 3,000' of climbing with scenic downhill.	Picnic Lunch
24th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	WEMYSS BAY for ferry	Dave L. highlights the beauty of Bute - a whole 30 miles of it.	Picnic Lunch
28th	EASY 10.00am	FAIRLIE Opp. Bowling Club	Jean leads to Largs Ferry for a Cumbrae canter. She hopes for a clear day for the Firth of Clyde views. 25 miles.	Lunch Garrison, Millport

3 rd	LADIES 11.00am	AYR Uni. of West Scot	Meet at the classical Coila statue on the River Ayr frontage then follow Susi to find a viewpoint for the Air Show. Roads in and around Ayr will be busy.	Picnic Lunch
4 th	SPECIAL TBA	<i>Two for the Price of One</i> Cheer on the Tour of Britain as it flashes through East Ayrshire and visit a Doors Open Day venue or two. We're waiting for times and route details so watch out nearer the time.		
7 th	MIDWEEK 10.45am	MAYBOLE Railway Station	Susi says 'A pretty ride to Barr village at a leisurely pace.' Includes a 3-mile climb on a gentle gradient. Distance 30-35 miles.	Picnic Lunch or Tearoom
11 th	MAIN 10.00am	SANQUHAR Town Hall	Fifty miles in an area we should visit more often. Savour remote Polskeoch, pensive Penpont, cosmopolitan Closeburn and doughty Drumlanrig. It's all John M's doing.	Picnic Lunch with wet weather option
14 th	D-I-Y	Always a favourite for these self-motivated outings - The Rowantree north of Ardrossan around 12.30pm		
18 th	SPECIAL Ladies Only Kilwinning Station 10am	Adding more miles to the monthly ladies ride Pat explores 25 miles of North & East Ayrshire roads at the usual pace. Note start time !!		Stewarton Jack's
21 st	MIDWEEK 10.30 am	STEWARTON Railway Station	Good to have Peter H visit from Glasgow to lead a midweek ride. He's planned a lumpy 43 miles ! <i>Last midweek of the season.</i>	Picnic Lunch
25 th	EASY 10.00 am	TROON Walker Hall CP	Phillip shows us more of his local stamping grounds and re-samples a lunch stop we haven't used for a very long while.	Cafe Razelle South of Drybridge

The rides which take place on fixed dates each month include the following:

Ladies Only First Saturday of the month. Around 15 miles with a lunch stop.

Main Ride Second Sunday of the month. Ranging from 35 to 65 depending on time of year and terrain.

Easy Ride Last Sunday of the month. Usually about 25 miles.

Midweek Ride Fortnightly on Wednesday from late Spring to early Autumn. Varying from 30 to 45 miles.

Other categories :

D-I-Y The date, time and lunch venue is given and riders make their own way for a social meet - preferably by bike.

SPECIAL Anything that doesn't fit the other categories. The ride description should explain all.

Apart from the D-I-Y rides all rides have a leader and back-marker to ensure everyone gets around and enjoys the ride. Non-members are always welcome and can try up to three rides before they decide to join up - so look at the programme and take your pick.



Our Rides in a Nutshell



Programme Pointers

July notes The Prestwick Station Cafe is opening its unused annexe especially for us - 'Just the incentive to give it a belated Spring clean' says the owner..... the Galston special might be short but you'll be ready for lunch and it might be an idea to turn up early and have a breakfast before you start the history special on the 17th includes a couple of striking 15th century castles we don't even glimpse from the road a week later there's a bit more of a walk so a change of shoes might be useful.

August notes Why Cumnock for the celebration of the CTCs 138th birthday? Have a look on the Royal Hotel's wall and see the nearest we get to a blue plaque the Ferry Hopper becomes more casual as the day progresses with timing tight for first ferry then things relax (except for that hill) with the prospect of a beer at Colintrave and an ice-cream in Rothesay dominating - return group has been known to split on to three return ferries David's Duck Bay ride is 43 miles of fresh and inspiring scenery for those who enjoy a distance pedal at a steadier pace.

September notes A glimpse of the Tour of Britain is the main focus for a Special - coupled with an Open Doors visit or two so it'll be a gentle day John's rural ride from Sanquhar takes us back to an area we used to explore more often but that was when there were youth hostels and we made a weekend of it 40% more free is what is offered for a Ladies Only special just to show that the usual 15 miles isn't the height of a cycling glass ceiling.

Future notes The next issue of Saddlebag will be out around mid-September and will bring details of our October AGM and Christmas Lunch Ride As we move into Autumn the programme becomes a little lighter but we don't stop cycling so there's always openings for you to suggest a ride The recently added D-I-Ys make a contribution but there's still plenty of unfilled dates. If we can't get it into Saddlebag on time there's always facebook. Give a start point and time along with preferred distance and see what happens. Suggestions, offers, notions for **SPECIALS** can be offered and discussed with Drew at realise@globalnet.co.uk (or phone 01290 550276).



SADDLEBAG
is the newsletter of
Ayrshire CTC

It's the platform for longer cycling articles and discussion from our members.

Send contributions to
Saddlebag Editor
3 Glebe Avenue
Mauchline KA5 6AE
e-mail:
realise@globalnet.co.uk
Tel: 01290 550276

While Saddlebag also publishes our Pending Pedaling cycle runs list it can't always keep up with our flexible programme.

You can keep up to date by monitoring our website www.cycleayrshire.co.uk where you can also sign-up for the regular **KeepMePosted** e-newsletter or join our **facebook** group **Cycle Ayrshire**