

Saddlebag

NEW YEAR 2017
the newsletter of Cycle Ayrshire



we are
cycling
The cyclists' champion
UK

We're now Cycle Ayrshire !

That's how we'll be known locally but our formal title is *Cycle Ayrshire - a part of Cycling UK*. Although our parent body is still legally the CTC, a decision was made to adopt Cycling UK as its public face and it was necessary for us to drop 'CTC' from our name.

The AGM in October was the ideal opportunity to ask our membership to help in selecting a new 'nom-de-club'. Attendance was higher than it has been for some years so people were obviously engaged. Three proposals were considered at the meeting and votes taken. The lowest - 'Ayrshire CTC' - was eliminated and the second vote chose *Cycle Ayrshire - a part of Cycling UK* in preference to *Cycling UK Ayrshire*. (*Cycle Ayrshire* is acceptable for local use and the CTC logos can still be used as long as Cycling UK is dominant elsewhere.)

OTHER NOTES FROM THE AGM

As Ayrshire CTC/Cycle Ayrshire approaches its 30th anniversary it was encouraging to see old and new faces representing this time span. The Chairman's overview reflected the growth of the programme and the events and achievements particular to the past year - the Troon Festival and its espousal of a West of Scotland Tri-vets 100 mile and 100km, Linda's remarkable Italian ride and the high attendance on the increasing number of rides.

The Treasurer's Report confirmed that we were comfortably positioned for the foreseeable future with a balance of £1,600. This has been assisted by the Troon Festival showing a small profit when an allowed budget had anticipated a loss. The annual grant to local groups from our parent body has been a reliable help.

On the election of the Committee the Secretary reported that there were no new nominations and that the existing members were willing to continue with one exception. Ronnie Thompson intimated his wish to retire from both the Chair and the committee. Nominations were sought. Clive Stacey was proposed and, unopposed, was elected to the committee and to the Chair. Further voting confirmed the previous committee in their posts.

The Secretary pointed out that Gift Aid was now eligible on membership which can now be paid monthly by direct debit. The formal AGM was closed with a vote of thanks to retiring Chair Ronnie Thompson.

There followed a general discussion on club activities. Some of the issues are covered elsewhere in Saddlebag and others will be examined at the next committee meeting.



Chairman Clive Arrives

- and wishes the best for Cycle Ayrshire

'As recently appointed Chairman, my first thoughts are to reflect on the year that has just finished. It saw high numbers meeting regularly to enjoy Cycle Ayrshire's variety of rides. The DIY format has proved very successful. I know that a fuller programme is being constructed for 2017 with several interesting and challenging inclusions. I hope to see you on your favourite rides during 2017.'

On behalf of the committee of Cycle Ayrshire, I wish you all the best for a happy and prosperous 2017.'

In this issue :

AGM summary
New rides
More rides
Traveller's tales
Club discount
Coming soon

Cycle Ayrshire Committee 2017 and their responsibilities

Clive Stacey
Chairman

Pat Standen

Secretary

EasyRides Co-ordinator

Registration Officer

Phillip Richardson

Treasurer

Mid-week Rides Co-ordinator

Dave Lawrie

Web master

Main Rides Co-ordinator

Jackie Stacey

Ladies' Rides Co-ordinator

Muriel Downie

KMP Editor

Drew Moyes

Special Rides Co-ordinator

Saddlebag Editor Welfare officer

Membership Local Benefits

Local cycle shops are our friends in encouraging cycling in Ayrshire. They recognise what we do and make our cycling cheaper by offering discounts on a variety of their services. A recent up-date by Saddlebag shows that a 10% discount may be available on parts, accessories, repairs and clothing. All you need to do is show your Cycling UK membership card and ask if a discount applies - whatever the purchase.

Signed-up shops - Carrick Cycles Ayr, Sprockets Kilmarnock, Irvine Cycles Irvine, Bike Box Troon, Walker's Cycles Kilmaurs.

Christmas

Tarbolton Tuck-In



The new venue for the Christmas lunch, in Tarbolton, was well received by the thirty-nine diners. Sole occupancy of the Black Bull's Kailyard Suite, a reasonably priced and well presented meal made sure of that. Around half had participated in the two short morning rides and got a little damp.

A slide show of previous rides ran during dining at the end of which new chairman Clive presented his retiring predecessor Ronnie Thompson with a bottle of Spanish brandy on the Club's behalf

Secretary Pat presented Linda Edge with a water bottle embellished by a miniature pink Giro d'Italia jersey to mark her monumental journey. The winner of Drew's *Finish a Limerick* competition was Anne Smillie who went off with two bottles of wine thanks to John Muir and the Black Bull. Another three runners-up benefited from John's generosity.



"So, you'd like to change your name from John to David?... Okay, that shouldn't be a problem Mr. Plonker."

Saddlebag wishes you plentiful pedaling in 2017

- and the ride programme has been extended to help it happen

ON THE ROAD

The third and final part of Linda's
1,500 mile ride to Italy.

If you have a dream and you really want it to come true I'd say to you "make it happen". Don't let fear stop you. My journey to Italy has to be my journey of a lifetime. There were challenges but the highs I experienced far outweighed them. It's difficult to say which part of the trip was the most beautiful as there were so many 'wow' moments but cycling along the Cote d'Azur from Frejus to Nice has to rank up there. The sun was shining and there was a lovely breeze. Seeing the ochre hills and the incredible blue of the sea was spectacular. Cycling close to the mighty Highland cattle that were roaming freely in the national park in Holland, seeing all the beautiful scenery, free wheeling with the wind behind us to Le Luc, crossing that narrow bridge on the Rhone with the water visible down below, getting to the top of all those hills or simple things like arriving at our "planned" destination for the night, eating when I was ravenous, having a warm shower and getting into bed when I was exhausted, the camaraderie of Francesca, Joyce and Denis who kindly navigated, the almost wetting myself with laughter moments, the wonderful people I met en route, the unexpected praise and disbelief from everyone who asked "and where have you cycled from?" A guy I stopped in Lyon to ask where we could sleep for the night, when hearing I was cycling from Scotland to Italy, looked me in the eye and exclaimed "Do you realise that what you're doing is 'merveilleux?'" The texts of support and hearing my friends cheer down the phone . . . the list goes on.

Stopping at traffic lights a good looking Alessandro in his Lycra cycled up next to me and asked where we were heading. When I told him he said the road ahead was closed due to a landslide and we would have to take the train if we wanted to continue. This was a definite low. To have cycled over a thousand miles and to be given this blow! I explained I had to cycle all the way, the train wasn't an option for me. He could see the look of despair on my face and he then explained there was a possible alternative route which the police had blocked and which was up a very steep incline and gravelly path. 'Yes we would try it!' He kindly accompanied us as far as the barricade. What a high I

felt getting to the other side of the landslide. Alessandro saved the day! The whole journey was like that - if difficulties/challenges appeared they always resolved themselves.

Another great high was when I saw the sign which read **Italy 1000 meters**. I started to cry! I couldn't believe I was almost there! I felt so happy when I crossed the border and was cycling in the streets of Italy with the crazy drivers and the sound of the motorini speeding by! When I opened the bedroom door of the little family run hotel in Bordighera I could smell the familiar Italian smells of my past. Joyce bought a bottle of prosecco and after tea we had a celebratory drink!

But the greatest high had to be arriving at Castelvecchio. I'll never forget cycling up the incline as fast as I could. My first stop had to be at the little cemetery to say "Hello" to my mum and dad, "I'm here! I've made it! Thanks for watching over me".

Friends had come running down to tell me to hurry up the road as everyone was waiting! I started crying again. I hadn't expected my friends and neighbours in Italy to be there since I didn't know myself when I'd arrive. They had been waiting all afternoon! The warm welcome with clapping and cheering, the banners and Italian flag were flying, there was champagne, sandwiches and cakes - I hadn't expected any of it!

I'm so lucky and privileged to have had this experience. I am well aware of the kindness and love of my family and friends both here and in Italy and I'll always be grateful to them and to all who helped, encouraged, inspired, donated. I couldn't have done it without you! I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

This concludes Linda's epic Troon to Italy 1,500 mile cycle. You can find the preceding episodes on our website - or e-mail the Editor for her complete story.

***I've cycled in
'Republika e Shqiperise'
says Malcolm
while his companions cycled in Albania***

***"Just your overall impressions", said the Ed. "Not a day-to-day log."
"Well I'll try", said I.***

Albania is a land of contrasts, mainly agricultural but with relics of industrialisation during the communist years prominent by the roadside. In many ways it's like Scotland but roughly half the size and population. It has a flattish central belt

around the capital Tirana but is more mountainous to the border with Greece and even more so in the north, near Montenegro and Kosovo. It lies between the richer Christian democracies of western Europe, and the less affluent areas to the east. Despite resistance to Ottoman rule in the 16th century, Albania was under Turkish domination into the 20thc. Now it is a secular country, with 55% identifying as Muslim and 40% Eastern Orthodox or Catholic. The only sign I saw of this religious division is the number of mosques being built, often sponsored by countries in Arabia.

This CTC cycling adventure was organised by Peter and Linda Cox and started and finished in the town of Ohrid, on the Macedonian side of Lake Ohrid. Horrid, it was not! It is a lively, UNESCO listed, historic town. Now a lakeside resort, with many hotels, restaurants and street vendors it is reputedly a town of 300 churches of all sorts. I was most impressed by the iconic murals in the medieval Orthodox churches and also more ancient cave churches. Departing south along the lake we entered Albania without any problems, much to the relief of our young Albanian driver and translator, Geisi, who feared the more bureaucratic approach of the communist era. In fact we encountered nothing but friendliness from the police and other officials. Cycling in Albania proved to be truly an adventure. We headed south on perfect roads from Pogradec to near Korce. But then meandered west for two days along totally deserted dirt roads as we followed the course of the River Devolit most of the way across the country to Berat, another fascinating and historic UNESCO town. After a week we saw the sea near Shengjin on the Adriatic, with Italy less than 100 miles away! By now we knew a bit about Albania: making concrete is an obsession, in the communist years the land was filled with half a million pill boxes. Now dam building is everywhere. We even slept in a hostel underneath the concrete base of a dam! Food is great and cheap; with an emphasis on soups, colourful vegetables and salads, highlighted by barbecued meats or fish. People are friendly and hospitable. English is widely spoken. But beware the roads! Surfaces of all types: treacherous homemade speed bumps, deep and deadly ditches and drains, and surprisingly well camouflaged tortoises wandering out of the shadows. Vigilance was an absolute requirement.

In the second week we cycled north, east and ever up through magnificent mountains and along beautiful lakes into very isolated lands where subsistence farming and developing tourism are the only ways of life. We reached very close to the borders of Kosovo and Montenegro in the remote Valbona National Park, where the locals are fighting a plan to flood the valley with yet another damn dam. As we headed back to the southeast towards Kukes and Peshkopi the weather changed from perfect sunny cycling days to wet and wintery. With four very hard days of mountainous country to pass over, almost everyone was glad to use the support car at some point. On the last two days we flew downhill to flatter lands and around the north of Lake Ohrid back to Macedonia.

Truly an adventure but we almost all survived uninjured, fitter if not slimmer for the experience.

This collection of 'Traveller's Tales' shows our members using the Club as a springboard for more ambitious cycle trips. It is a resource that you might find useful - look for like-minded companions, pick up tips or simply follow in the tyre tracks of a described journey.

WHITBY 2 WALNEY

- 'or the other way around' says Gerry Minjery

A SEPTEMBER RIDE IN TWO PARTS

For a while John Muir had planned to do this coast to coast ride in the traditional west to east way. However the logistics of moving the bikes by train made an east to west choice more realistic.

We travelled down to Whitby in glorious sunshine and no hitches with train connections. An evening wander round the town in short sleeves, a meal with a couple of beers then bed and sleep with thoughts of tomorrow. The frequent loud horns through the night should have prepared us for the pea-soup fog and constant drizzle in which we set out at 8am. We found the cycle track to lead us north except it headed south. Signs had been moved or hidden but it took us four miles to recognise this. Retracing we started on the proper route which turned out to be very mixed with some 'on-road' and some 'off-road' on steep and difficult tracks. The road sections were comparably hilly! By noon we had only done twenty of that day's proposed seventy-six miles but it had dried out and, more welcome, we were able to alter the route to make up time.

It was still late when we arrived at Barnard Castle for our first overnight stop. At this point it should be said that we had allowed three days to complete the route due to other demands on our time - a major error as you will see later. Believing we could do it in two and a half days cycling was a rather arrogant misapprehension.

The next day saw us heading ever-upwards towards the high point of Tan Hill with another 'off-road' stretch which slowed us with only thirty miles done in four hours. But we were in Kirkby Stephen and faced with the truth that we wouldn't finish in the anticipated time. We decided to cut our losses and headed for Carlisle and home.

.....

But Mr. Muir does not give up and a week later you would have found us on a train to Barrow-in-Furness from where we cycled east. Again signage proved less than helpful and we lost time searching for the correct route among the many small lanes.

We overnighted in the Hare and Hounds in the hamlet of Levens. The next day the aim was to reach the point we'd abandoned the challenge on the previous week then take the train from Penrith to Carlisle then home. However, a hard and fast ride of forty-three miles saw us having tea and scones at noon with a wait

of over two hours for our train. A quick decision to ride to Carlisle was made and, aided by a tail wind, we added another twenty-two miles to the day. The day's total of sixty-five restored some of our lost dignity from the previous week. In future we will be less ambitious and take the time to enjoy the route.

A few words of advice to those who may follow - the route is very scenic but difficult in places. I'd advise missing the Tan Hill 'off-road' section and skirt to Bowes. Allow a full day for the North York Moors as it's hard work with a loaded bike - and the 'off-road' bits should be avoided too.

There's a wealth of information about this route and its variations on the internet. It includes an alternative east coast start/finish.

A Scottish Coast to Coast October 2016

Anne Smillie tells the story -

The idea of cycling the Scottish C2C was suggested by my friend Jan with whom I've had outdoor adventures. She'd spotted a CTC forum posting about the then new Scottish C2C route from the Solway to the Forth. I fancied doing it but she couldn't be coaxed to come. Since then, I've collected newspaper cuttings, maps and the C2C booklet and had almost resigned myself to going it alone. I didn't bank on the enthusiasm of the Ayrshire CTC ladies!

Pat came on board in August and soon after, Jackie, Eunice, Muriel and Susi were committed. I couldn't believe my luck! Not one, but 5 more enthusiastic, positive and keen ladies were on the team! Our diaries showed a small window in October and, despite less daylight and potential bad weather we decided to go for it.

The day we set off we were anxious about boarding our various trains with panniers and bikes but we needn't have been. With Drew's and a fellow traveller's help at Kilmarnock we developed an efficient production line! Kilmarnock to Annan went by quickly and we were off! Enthusiasm was high as we pedaled down to the Old Annan Viaduct for the start photo. Pat produced a bottle of fizz and plastic glasses so that we could toast to our good fortune. As the camera clicked, the rain came on and over a cuppa in the cafe at Annan Station we watched the rain but there was no going back. It was into waterproofs and on the road. Soon we passed landmarks which we had only read about - commonwealth war graves, Brydekirk, Hoddomcross, St Mungos, all passed by in a flash - and still the rain came down. We arrived at Applegarthtown

Church which was a perfect place for a break and a snack - and the sun came out!

The first day's ride saw us roll into Moffat in the afternoon to a warm welcome at the Buchan BB. We all liked this stop and the bike storage was excellent as was the opportunity to have our washing done and returned by bed-time. The Star Hotel was our choice for dinner, not least because it appears in the Guinness Book of Records for being the skinniest free standing building in Britain. We toasted to the success of our adventure and discussed the challenges to follow.

The Devil's Beef Tub marked the high point of the ride and, with an off-road section, we knew it would be hard. As we cycled along the Old Edinburgh Road, the high A701 was in sight but it was a beautiful morning which simply glowed with the colours of autumn and we were ready for the climb. The views were simply stunning. Sadly, the "glorious sweeping descent for 14 miles" was against a blooming headwind and we had to work hard going down! The miles rolled by and sometimes we chatted or just watched the scenery. Peebles was our next overnight stop and again provided good bike storage.

Our last day was a bit of an unknown although we knew we had a huge summit to cross in the Moorfoot Hills. We cycled the picturesque Tweed Valley Railway Path alongside the river and through little estates and a golf course before a ten mile gradual climb. We patted each other on the back as we had reached the last peak of the tour and technically it should have been all downhill, but this is cycling, and there were a few more ups and downs! As we descended, the views across the Forth and Edinburgh opened out and we took a moment to take it all in. A stop for lunch in the hamlet of Carrington and a detour to the Mining Museum for a convenience stop saw us on the last few miles.

We soon arrived in Musselburgh where Muriel treated us all to a lovely malt whisky to celebrate the end of our cycle. A fish supper finished off the day. Everyone was absolutely elated at our sense of achievement. We had made it! What a team!



CYCLING TRAILERS



- coming soon

TROON FESTIVAL - we learned a lot from our first two day Festival in Troon last June. We are currently looking at a revised format for this year. Pencil 10/11th June into your diary and watch for the news in the next Saddlebag. The focus will be on cycling so there should be something to inspire you to take a Festival pedal.

DRUM-UP - the traditional drum-up at the Davie Bell Memorial at Rowantree Toll saw the complete range of cycle camping stoves and a real brew-up fire employed to heat up sausage and bacon for an al fresco lunch. The number who arrived and the mood of the meet are unlikely to be recaptured but we are going to try a same-but-different event this year. Drew is currently researching other drum-up sites from Ayrshire's cycling past. This year may include a barbecue so he'd be interested to hear from anyone who can help with a suitable grill.

KIRKPATRICK MACMILLAN RALLY which takes place over the weekend of 26-29th May provides a weekend with the opportunity to camp and enjoy the social activity as well as the cycling. Get full details at www.dandgcycling.org.uk. It's just over the county border so look it up and give it a try.

The Tour of Ayrshire takes place on fully closed roads in an around Kilmarnock over 29th/30th April. It will be the biggest cycle event undertaken in East Ayrshire. Both days play host to a highly produced mass participation events over closed roads open to anybody who wants to experience what it's like to be a pro. Google *Tour of Ayrshire* for details.

(I'll be on Cumbrae with Cycle Ayrshire in case I get carried away the excitement and join in Ed.)

Saddlebag

The newsletter of **Cycle Ayrshire**
- a part of Cycling UK

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While Saddlebag 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**

Pending Pedaling notes and notions

Twenty's Plenty

- the latest addition to our programme

Get in some brisk miles in the morning and have the rest of the day to yourself - that's the theory behind our new twenty mile programme.

Starting promptly at 10am the ride will set off and only stop briefly if regrouping is necessary. Even then there won't be time to have a blether. As soon as we're all together it's back in the saddle.

It is expected that the cycling will take around an hour and a half and routes have been designed to finish at or near a tea-room or cafe where you can re-fuel or head for home.

With at least one a month it's the nearest we get to a training programme !

Note that they are entitled **20s PLENTY** in the Pending Pedaling pages.

Who knows - by summer the slogan might be 'Feel Alive with Twenty-five'.

D - I - Y Change

- a change for the better

The numbers for our get there by your own route D-I-Y rides have remained consistently high. It was expected that the number would dwindle to around half-a-dozen or so but this has not been the case. The minimum figure has averaged over twice that.

Up till now we suggested the arrival time of 12.30pm with the result that a horde of cyclists appeared and put pressure on the venue to take orders and serve. By staggering the arrival time we feel that we reduce the pressure on staff and our food and drink be in front of us without too much delay.

So the **D-I-Y** recommendation for 2017 is that you drop in to the prescribed venue anytime between noon and 1pm.

This may also allow us to draw from a bigger range of venues as we have had to consider the amount of seating and the efficiency of service.

Ladies Longer

Throughout their life the ladies' rides have limited themselves to around fifteen miles. There's a feeling that it might be time to put aside this arbitrary limit and offer some longer rides. From April we're going to fit in a few extra outings with varying longer lengths to see how popular they are. The start will be earlier (10am) but the ride will still be leisurely and have a lunch stop.

We've launched them under the title *Ladies Longer* but would welcome your ideas for an alternative title.

Ronnie and Gerry's Birthday D-I-Y Special



The 19th of March sees a D-I-Y with a difference - a lunch *and* a ceilidh. The Fenwick Hotel has been booked and a special menu prepared to celebrate Ronnie and Gerry's Seventieth Birthdays which occur a few weeks apart.

Doors open at 1pm and you are invited to come along. The lunch of soup, sandwiches and coffee costs £7.95. The Hotel would like an idea of numbers so phone or text Ronnie at 07792931208 to book by 12th March.

ANTRIM ANTICS 2017

Following on the acclaimed success of the visit to Cushendall last year organised by Clive S we're pleased to say his shoulder's to the metaphorical wheel and he's doing it again. No sooner had he mentioned this when the requests for a place came pouring in.

The current position is that the main accommodation is fully booked so while you're still welcome to come you'll have to arrange your own accommodation. Clive has a good knowledge of the area and is happy to give you more information. Contact him at hasac1@aol.com

STANDARD RIDES - Easy, Main, Ladies and Mid-week

Easy rides are approximately 25 miles in length while Main can be from 30 to 60□ depending on season and terrain. Ladies rides are normally 15 miles but this year sees some longer outings - see above. Mid-week rides are generally on a Wednesday and can be anything between 25 and 45 miles. The series has been extended commencing in April and continuing to October. The pace of rides takes all ride participants into account - and makes it enjoyable.

Pending Pedaling

January '17

4 th	D-I-Y	The first D-I-Y of 2017 - TKMaxx River Street Ayr A New Year meet-up Note increased time range - Noon till 1pm.		
8 th	MAIN 10am	KILWINNING Railway Station	Drew K leads a route that covers 33-35 miles and takes in Beith, Lochwinnoch, Kilbirnie and Saltcoats.	Lunch Castle Semple Cafe
15 th	20s PLENTY 10am prompt	IRVINE The Puffer	Our first programmed Twenty's Plenty - a continuous 20 mile ride. Optional lunch at the end. See description on page four.	Lunch optional The Puffer
25 th	SPECIAL 10am	MAUCHLINE Loudoun St Car Park	<i>Wee Sleekit Tour de Burns</i> - a not-too-demanding ride of around 17 miles passing sites associated with the poet on his anniversary. Drew and Pat lead.	Lunch optional Many Thanks Cafe Mauchline
29 th	EASY 10am	EGLINTON PARK Visitor's Centre	Join Gerry and work off seasonal excesses on a route of about 27 miles - or as dictated by the weather.	Lunch Rendezvous Cafe Kilmaurs

Pending Pedaling

February '17

4 th	LADIES 11am	PRESTWICK Railway Station	Susi leads to a popular lunch stop - mostly on quiet roads with a little bit of climbing over the 15 mile ride.	Lunch Hayes - Bogend Toll
5 th	20s PLENTY 10am prompt	AYR Belleisle Car Park	Clockwise ride round the Pennyglen circuit with a couple of extra loops (and hills) to make up a vigorous Twenty's Plenty.	Lunch optional Golf Club House
12 th	MAIN 10am	STEWARTON Railway Station	A Two-Distance Figure of Eight First loop to lunch is 22 miles heading north and the after-lunch option, adding another 18 miles, loops east. Dave L. invites you to choose.	Lunch Jack's, Stewarton
15 th	D-I-Y	The friendly - and inexpensive - cafe at Prestwick Station will welcome us. After mid-day is a good time to get there to meet your fellow cyclists.		
19 th	20s PLENTY 10am prompt	MOSCOW A719	Using most roads in a triangle north of the River Irvine between Waterside, Galston and Fenwick. Optional lunch near end of ride.	Lunch optional Sunnyside Nursery
26 th	EASY 10am	PRESTWICK Railway Station	We'll go inland from Prestwick' says Clive S. to start his circuitous 25 mile route. Coastal views on return.	Lunch Langholm's By Symington

Pending Pedaling

March '17

4 th	LADIES 11am	KILWINNING Railway Station	Flat country roads and cycle tracks are a feature of Jean's ride, plus opportunity to take in Ardrossan Castle. 15 miles.	Lunch Lauriston Hotel
5 th	D-I-Y	Gemmell's is today's meet (12-1pm) Get there via Stair, Coalhall or Mauchline - by bike, of course.		
8 th	20s PLENTY 10am prompt	AYR Belleisle Car Park	Another Ayr start for this focused ride - heading inland this time.	Lunch optional Golf Club House
12 th	MAIN 10am	KIRKOSWALD North end A77	At 34 miles it's shortish for a Main Ride - hills will explain why ! Barr is only settlement on ride so bring food. Drew M. Leads.	Picnic Lunch Hot drinks at Barr
15 th	D-I-Y	Shall we say between noon and 1pm for this meet at Fraser's Garden Centre, Dundonald?		
19 th	Ronnie & Gerry's Invitation D-I-Y - your special ride to a celebratory hooley - see previous page for further details - and don't forget to book by 12 th March Fenwick Hotel			
26 th	EASY 10am	MAUCHLINE Loudoun St Car Park	Walter knows the area well so devising his 25 miler was no problem - and he introduces a new food stop for lunch.	Lunch Factory Outlet Cafe Cumnock
29 th	20s PLENTY 10am prompt	EGLINTON PARK Visitor's Centre	A 20 mile route with some good long stretches on quiet roads. North skirting Dalry but turning before Beith. A rural ride.	Lunch optional Tournament Cafe

Pending Pedaling		Midweek Rides Start		April '17
1 st	LADIES 11am	OCHILTREE A-Frame	Start point is opposite the Egger Factory 1.5 miles east of Ochiltree on the B7036 Auchinleck road. Muriel says her ride is the usual 15 miles - and a genuine Cycle Ayrshire ride - despite the date!	Lunch Gemmel's Gdn Ctr
5 th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	PRESTWICK Railway Station	Clive S. calls this outing 'East Ayrshire Villages'. How many will he pack in?	Picnic Lunch
9 th	MAIN 10am	CARSPHAIRN Main St (North)	The first real biggy of the year at a hilly 51 miles in Galloway. Route developed by Gerry M and John M.	Picnic Lunch
12 th	D-I-Y	Our North Ayrshire favourite rallying point for lunch - Rowantree Garden Centre north of Ardrossan.		
17 th	SPECIAL 10am	MAUCHLINE Loudoun St Car Park	Easter Monday Special Three Funerals and a Wedding Drew takes us on a 'not-too-serious' exploration with some verse thrown in - but not as good as Auden. Around 25 miles.	Lunch Riverbank Cafe Sorn
19 th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	EGLINTON PARK Visitor's Centre	Have you done these roads between Kilwinning and Kilbirnie asks Dave L. ?	Picnic Lunch
22 nd	LADIES Longer 10am	AYR Blackburn Car Park (Sea Front)	A new challenge for ladies only with an earlier start and an increase in miles Pat leads this inaugural 27 mile ride. Note earlier start. See page four.	Lunch Kirkmichael
23 rd	20s PLENTY 10am prompt	DUNDONALD Frasers Garden Centre	Never mind the route just follow the person in front. No time for sight-seeing to get back for lunch well before noon.	Lunch optional Frasers
30 th	EASY 10am	FAIRLIE Car Park at south end of village	Jean takes on our first sail of the year with the 'must-do' Cumbrae trip with its flat circuit and optional 'mountain climb'. 'Blood, sweat and views sum up the high bit' Wm Shakeylegs	Lunch Cafe or picnic Millport Your choice

Next Saddlebag due mid April. Watch include more specials and events from May onwards.

Pending Pedaling		More Specials and events news to come		May '17
3 rd	MIDWEEK 10.30am	GALSTON Co-op A71	A seasonal shorter ride above both sides of the Irvine Valley to the Drumclog Covenanter's Monument. Drew M leads and is mildly apologetic about the hills. 27 miles.	Picnic Lunch
6 th	LADIES 11am	EGLINTON PARK Visitor's Centre	Linda's annual meander round quiet roads and cycle paths including some of Irvine's Town Trail.	Lunch The Puffer Irvine
7 th	SPECIAL 10am	NEW GALLOWAY Lower Car Park	Clatteringshaws and the Raider's Road are the main ingredients of Gerry and John's Galloway adventure in Galloway. (We used to visit this area a lot - nice to return. Ed)	Picnic Lunch
14 th	MAIN 10am	MAYBOLE Railway Station	Alan R tackles a commendable 50-mile ride on his inaugural role as leader. He heads for Colmonell as his return point.	Picnic Lunch Lendalfoot
17 th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	IRVINE The Puffer	Gerry M heads north towards Renfrewshire to clock up around 36 miles.	Picnic Lunch
19 th to 22 nd	Cycle Ayrshire Irish Trip Full details on previous page			
28 th	EASY 10am	TROON Walker Hall Car Park	Join Phillip with your picnic lunch for a general tour including the hidden Laigh Milton Viaduct. It's the normal 'Easy' 25 miles.	Picnic Lunch
31 st	MIDWEEK 10.30am	TROON Walker Hall Car Park	Phillip calculates that a circular tour through Mossblown Drongan and Dalrymple means cycling 36 miles.	Picnic Lunch