

Saddlebag

Summer 2017

The Newsletter of Cycle Ayrshire



Our cycling programme is one of the most varied nationally. It has grown to meet the needs of members who want social rides to suit their abilities - and it seems we are succeeding.

Behind this is the belief that the rides should also be easily accessible to non-members. It is one of our functions to recruit but getting more people to adopt the cycling habit is important whether they sign-up with Cycling UK or not.

Troon Festival Focus

Applying the critical mass argument the more people who take to the roads on a bike the safer it becomes for all. Motorists learn to consider cyclists when they regularly meet them on their journey and it strengthens us as a lobby when it comes to securing improvements in the road infrastructure. That's why we want to encourage more people to cycle.

When you get on a bike you join a special community and the way to demonstrate its breadth and growing strength is to get cyclists of all ages, aspirations and abilities together. Nothing does this better than a Festival where the cycling tribe can gather and share experiences.

If you get your Saddlebag by post you'll also have received some Festival programmes and publicity. All we ask is that you pass them on to cycling friends and relatives - thanks.

And don't forget to keep one for yourself!



If you don't but could distribute programmes for us contact Drew at realise@globalnet.co.uk with your postal address and he'll get some to you.



Gie's a Hand o' Thine

You've probably guessed that we are looking for your assistance at our Cycling Festival in Troon. The tasks are many and varied and can be on the bike or off the bike. You can help register people for the rides, assist with catering or just socialise and talk 'bike'. If you want to do one of the rides turn up early and help set it up or stay on after your outing and there'll be things for you o do.

AYRSHIRE Cycling Festival EDITION



Cycle Ayrshire and the Challenge Rides

It came as a surprise to many that we included a 100 mile ride in last year's festival - and that we are repeating it this year. It would have been less of a surprise if you'd been watching club activities in the 1990s. Back then we annually ran a 150km ride to Keir Mill in Dumfries and Galloway. It was our contribution to KM150, the festival marking 150 years from Kirkpatrick Macmillan's invention of his crank-operated pedal bike. Over its ten years or so the numbers gradually declined. One reason seemed to be that it was the same route each year. The challenge was still there but it was the same challenge and if you'd done it before would you really want to do it again?



On the first two or three we saw club members demonstrate their tenacity. One rider tackled the ninety-six miles on a tandem - solo. Another couple who had

never done any more than sixty miles completed the route, signed off at the finish then proceeded to do another four mile circuit to bring their total to the 'ton'.

We believe that there are similar spirited cyclists in our midst - but we can't be sure until we have presented them with a not- so-metaphorical hill to climb and watch them succeed.

This year we are aiming higher with a signed route for both the hundred mile and the hundred kilometre rides and generous time limits which allow average speeds of about 8 mph for route completion - and with no winners or time classification your medal is as merited as any who cycle faster. We had a commendable turn out for last year's but if there were any 'heroics' we never got to hear the tale. Perhaps this year will be different as more legs are stretched and self-esteem tested. Sign up now.

How many times this year are you going to complete a cycle ride, earn a medal and have sandwich stuffed in your hand.

If you're one of our ride leaders you'll be an asset on a ride and if you're a member who has never been out with us this is a good way of seeing how we do things and meet your Ayrshire colleagues

Perhaps you have a special skill you'd like to offer or you can reward the returning Challenge riders with some home-baking. They love it!

E-mail Drew with your offers of help or for more details at realise@globalnet.co.uk.

Oh, and come on a bike if you can!

At the Festival there will be an opportunity to try an Electric Bike and learn a bit more about how they work and handle from owners.

E-bikes and us

The first e-bike joined our rides about six years ago and as the numbers have grown they have even led a few of our standard rides. We recently heard member Anne Miller extol their attraction and asked her to put her experience in words. She enthusiastically wrote :

My E-bike has transformed my cycling.

I bought it last September after a final attempt at hills which left me walking and cross and with aching parts.

I am an recreational cyclist with plans to cycle to lots of hilly bits of Scotland with people who generally go further and faster than I can. I loved my bike - a lightweight cross bike - and hated pushing it up hills especially after a knee replacement. When I collected the E-bike - a Focus Aventura - I loved it from the moment I sat on it and rode for miles and miles. It has a wonderful motor and battery which has yet to run out on me! I can manage all gradients and no longer avoid the hillier outings. A bonus is that more miles mean stronger muscles and I now find going back to riding the cross bike is also easier even on the odd (gentle) hill.

Riding and e-bike is easy - add as much power as you need at the touch of a switch just like changing gear. It only boosts when you pedal so you still get a work out. Try one they are fun.



Saddlebag

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

Send contributions to
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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

RIDE EXTRA additional notes

MAY 21st - note that a 20s plenty has been added for those not off for the Irish trip.

JUNE 7th - the annual 5 and 10 mile beginner and family challenge has been integrated with the Festival this year.

24th - Heels to Wheels

A date for your diary - keep up to date via our website or facebook

HEELS to WHEELS

A jamboree of ladies' cycling

Bling Your Bike, Dr Bike, Try Electric Bikes, Cycle Rides, Tea and Cake, Cycling Chat and lots more.

Part of Cycling UK's Women's Festival of Cycling

Saturday 24th June
from 12.30 - 3.00pm
Kilmarnock Station Village

organised by Cycle Ayrshire, Kilmarnock Active Travel Hub and Killie Blue Belles

www.cycleayrshire.co.uk

DESCRIBING THE RIDES

LADIES The monthly ladies' ride is on the first Saturday of the month. It is about 15 miles in length and has a lunch stop. The pace is leisurely and takes account of all participants. Usual start is 11am.

LADIES LONGER A new addition to the programme to give ladies the opportunity to extend their cycling. Dates and routes vary. Watch programmes and select the ones that fit your aspirations. Lunch can be cafe or picnic. Note that they start at 10am.

EASY These rides are on the last Sunday of the month and are usual around 25 miles. They are moderately paced and vary in terrain but regular regrouping ensures that everyone stays on course. Lunch can be cafe or picnic depending on season and weather. Start 10am unless otherwise publicised.

MAIN Usually on the second Sunday of the month, these rides are more challenging and can be from 30 to over 60 miles. You can judge from the programme whether it is within your capabilities. Lunch or picnic as noted. Normally a 10am start.

MIDWEEK Fortnightly on Wednesday from mid-Spring to mid-Autumn. Ride length is between 25 and 45 miles and is usually a picnic lunch. Rides normally start at 10.30am.

D-I-Y Make your own way to the published lunch-stop and endeavour to arrive between noon and 1pm to meet fellow cyclists. The distance is, of course, your choice.

20s PLENTY A brisk morning ride of 20 miles (or just over) which starts and finishes near a cafe. Regrouping stops are short and ride is intended to flow. As we said elsewhere it's the nearest we get to a training ride.

Note - we have amalgamated the latter two categories into the same day during the summer.

SPECIAL Covers everything else. They include longer rides with starts outside Ayrshire, rides with themes (usually history) and rides which do not fit into the categories above.

JULY 19th Art Special Biggar

LITTLE SPARTA Little Sparta is a garden at Dunsyre in the Pentland Hills near Edinburgh, created by artist and poet Ian Hamilton Finlay and his wife Sue Finlay. The 5-acre Arcadian garden includes poetry in sculptural form, sculptures and two temples. Altogether it includes over 275 artworks by the artist, created in collaboration with numerous craftsmen and women.

Some of you may remember the late artist's battles with the local authority over how his property was valued for rates.

NOTE - The admission charge is £12.50 but you are supporting a private open-air museum. There are **no** catering facilities hence bring a picnic. The ride will be led by Cycling UK's West of Scotland Development Officer Jeff Frew.

We are always open to suggestions for future rides whether it be a single outing, a weekend away or a series of rides. If you have an idea and want to discuss it contact Drew who is Special Rides Co-ordinator and we'll try to fit it in. Contact details as Saddlebag Editor at bottom of first column. Between us we can keep the programme alive with a variety of rides.

FIVE FERRY OPTIONS

Clive is still assessing the feasibility of a five ferries trip over one or two days. Keep an eye the website, KMP and facebook when details will be given in due course

Pending Pedaling			May '17	
3 rd	MIDWEEK 10.30am	GALSTON Co-op A71	A 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. Around 30 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 John M's Galloway adventure. (We used to visit this area a lot - nice to return. Ed)	Picnic Lunch
10 th	D-I-Y	Arrive at Lindy's, Hansel Village between 12 and 1 and see if you know anyone. Clue - they may have a bike !		
14 th	MAIN 10am	MAYBOLE Railway Station	Dave L tackles a 50-mile ride entirely in Carrick He heads for Colmonell as his turn point.	Picnic Lunch Lendalfoot
17 th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	IRVINE The Puffer	A Wednesday outing heading north towards Renfrewshire to clock up around 36 miles.	Picnic Lunch
19 th to 22 nd	Cycle Ayrshire Irish Trip - fully booked and preparing to go			
21 st	20s Plenty 10am prompt	TARBOLTON Community Centre	Phillip is the task master on this non-stop ride to an optional lunch.	
24 th	D-I-Y	Make your way to a new venue - the Toffee Co - which opened in April. Find them at Overton Farm near Springside at the junction of Southhook Road and Overtoun Road KA2 0EE. (Off either the B7081 Irvine Road or the B769 Irvine to Stewarton Road.)		
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

Pending Pedaling			June '17	
3 rd	LADIES 11am	MAYBOLE Railway Station	Fifteen miles or so of cycling an undulating route on quiet country roads following Eunice	Lunch Kirkmichael Community Shop
4 th	MAIN 10am	MAUCLINE Loudoun St Car Park	Note - the Main Ride is early this month Pat promises the usual ups and downs as she loops round Mauchline in a 45-mile circle.	Picnic Lunch
7th, 10th, 11th JUNE				
Ayrshire Cycling Festival Troon - see programme leaflet or www.cycleayrshire.co.uk				
14 th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	AYR Blackburn Car Park	Ben heads for Maidens with a thirty-five mile route up his sleeve.	Picnic Lunch
18 th	20s Plenty 10am prompt	SALTCOATS Car park next to Aldi	Drew K leads this crisp pre-lunch twenty-miler.	Lunch venue decided on day
19 th	LADIES Longer 10am	LOCH-WINNOCH Castle Semple Loch Car Park	Anne S. leads along the cycle path to Kilmacolm for lunch at The Willow Cafe within the Cargill Centre or bring a picnic. Return along the same path. Mileage is approx. 28 miles on flat cycle path.	Lunch Kilmacolm
21 st	D-I-Y	Back to Balmoral - the Galston one, of course. See you between 12 and 1		
24 th	Heels to Wheels - part of Cycling UK's Women's Cycling Festival See page 2 Rides and events in and around Kilmarnock's Station Village Includes a ride from Kilwinning			
25 th	EASY 10am	KILMARNOCK John Finnie St	Join Ronnie on an uphill pedal to Whitelee Wind Farm to enjoy a fine downhill return.	Whitelee Cafe
28 th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	EGLINTON PARK Visitor's Centre	Gus heads to Dalry and across the county boundary to Neilston.	Picnic Lunch

Pending Pedaling				July '17
1 st	LADIES 11am	TROON Walker Hall Car Park	Anne S ambles through Drybridge and Dundonald to lunch then past Corraith on the way back.	Lunch Langholm's
2 nd	SPECIAL 10am	SANQUHAR Old Town Hall	John M. leads this southern 'away' ride through Crawfordjohn Leadhills and Elvanfoot plus a few other places 50 miles (with shorter return option)	Picnic Lunch
5 th	20s Plenty 10am prompt	AYR Belleisle Car Park	Ben leads this continuous ride at the usual steady pace - and get's back well in time lunch at golf club cafe.	
	D-I-Y	Arrive by your own route and meet the 20-milers for lunch at the Belleisle Golf Club cafe		
9 th	MAIN 10am	PRESTWICK Railway Station	A figure-of-eight ride. Those doing the full distance of 46 miles will start as normal. Shorter distance (27 miles) riders can join the group at 10.45am at Tarbolton War Memorial.	Lunch Riverside Cafe, Sorn
12 th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	MAUCLINE Loudoun St Car Park	Walter W. leads a long midweek ride in East Ayrshire. Lunch will be at 26 miles. If you can't go that long then bring something to eat.	Lunch Factory Outlet, Cumnock
16 th	20s Plenty 10am prompt	AYR Rozelle Park	Clive D leads inland turning at Trabboch to return to Rozelle for an optional lunch - and more cycling? Suppose it depends on the weather.	
	D-I-Y	If 20s Plenty's not your thing go for a ride and see who turns up at Morrison's Cafe in Troon		
19 th	ART SPECIAL 10.30am	BIGGAR Town Hall	A visit to Little Sparta - the open-air gallery of work by Ian Hamilton Finlay 25 miles max More details on Page 2 Please note there is a charge.	Picnic Lunch
22 nd	LADIES Longer 10am	TROON North Beach Car Park	Jackie S. Heads inland towards Kilmarnock for a 30 mile wander. All cycling ladies welcome.	Picnic Lunch
23 rd	SPECIAL 10am	PORTENCROSS Car Park	Drew K introduces a new choice of a 35 mile ride which he honestly describes as hilly.	Picnic Lunch or Greenock Cut Visitor's Centre
26 th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	MAUCLINE Loudoun St Car Park	Mauchline again with Clive S. at the front leading in a 48 mile ride which turns at Strathaven. He says 'It's a bit lumpy'.	Picnic Lunch
30 th	EASY 10am	AYR Belleisle Car Park	Support Clive D on his ride leader first taking us south of Ayr to Maidens and Culzean.	Picnic Lunch

Pending Pedaling				August '17
2 nd	SPECIAL 10.00am	EGLINTON PARK Visitor's Centre	Gus M's ageist special for over 65s Now's the time to tell the truth when you sign-up for this 35 mile ride into Renfrewshire.	Picnic Lunch or Castle Semple Visitor Centre
5 th	LADIES 11am	KILMARNOCK Kay Park Lower Car Park	A gentle pedal to a new lunch stop for Cycle Ayrshire ladies.	Lunch Sunnyside Nursery Moscow
6 th	SPECIAL 9.30am	CUMNOCK Tanyard Car Park (at Bus Stance)	The Dead-end Tour. Three roads near New Cumnock that you'll probably never do again. 35 miles some of it out and back.	Picnic Lunch
9 th	MIDWEEK 10.30am	PRESTWICK Railway Station	It's Ronnie leading so it must be Stair on a thirty-three mile route which we all know and love.	Picnic Lunch
13 th	MAIN 9.15am prompt	WEMYSS BAY Railway Station	Phillip's Annual Ferry Hopper Ride Be in time to purchase a Hopscotch 3 ticket there. Cycle to Western Ferries, Gourrock for 10.00am ferry. Loch Striven route this year - 45 miles.	
16 th	20s Plenty 11.00 prompt	KIRKMICHAEL Community Cafe	Dave L leads a flowing route in the Water of Girvan valley. <u>Note start time!</u> Optional lunch after ride at Community cafe and shop. Park considerably.	
19 th	LADIES Longer 10am	KILWINNING Railway Station	Free extra miles as Pat makes a contribution to the ladies' longer series bringing it up to twenty-five.	Lunch Dunlop Dairy
20 th	SPECIAL 10am	ABERFOYLE Main Car Park	A while since we've done the Loch Katrine circuit. Highland terrain with a significant climb (Duke's Pass) We'll go clockwise this time. 32 miles	Picnic Lunch
23 rd	MIDWEEK 10.30am	JOHNSTONE Railway Station	Phillip to the fore again with his unique Renfrew Ferry, Forth and Clyde Canal and Erskine Bridge route. 30 miles	Picnic Lunch
27 th	EASY 10am	KILWINNING Railway Station	A bit longer but Gus M promises time to look round Portencross Castle, eat lunch and blether.	Picnic Lunch
30 th	20s Plenty 10am prompt	DUMFRIES HOUSE	Starts from Dumfries House main car park - enter from A70 (Ayr - Cumnock) Optional lunch at tea room and meet up with D-I-Y riders.	After Lunch Explore the Estate, visit the House (charge) or be guided by Pat and Drew to interesting bits.
	D-I-Y		Meet up with 20s Plenty riders for lunch 12-1	