

# SADDLEBAG

Winter 2016



we are  
**cycling**  
The cyclists' champion UK

## Ayrshire CTC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 7.30pm

**R.A.F.A. Club**  
10 Ardayre Rd. Prestwick KA9 1QL

## STOP PRESS National Recognition Again

Following on from our cup-winning success of last year we have just been invited to outline the secrets of our success at this year's Members' Conference in Manchester. Founder members Pat and Drew will head south to reveal that teamwork has led to our sustained growth over the years.

## WHO WILL WE BE NEXT YEAR ?

Come and air your  
views

See AGM column

The main business of our AGM is to review the activities of the past year, elect the committee and discuss suggestions for the future programme. However, this year we have a bigger matter to consider, our name. Now that our parent organisation has become Cycling UK we have a choice of changing to *Cycling UK Ayrshire* or adding the strapline "*part of Cycling UK*" to either *Ayrshire CTC* or *Cycle Ayrshire*, our website and facebook name.

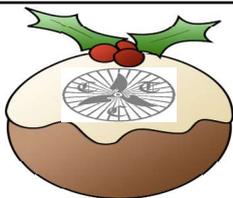
Please come to the AGM, join the discussion and share your views. Any issues you wish raised either formally as a motion or for general discussion please advise the Secretary before 10<sup>th</sup> October at [contact@cycleayrshire.co.uk](mailto:contact@cycleayrshire.co.uk)

2016 and has been another bumper year for the group and we've broken our records again with over 100 cycle rides and more than 1,000 attendances. (Can you guess which ride attracted over 40 people?) Come to the AGM to discover the answer and find out what else has been happening. We'll review the many successes and reflect on the less well attended events before initiating discussion on next year's calendar. 2017 is our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary so we want to make it a year of celebration - bring your suggestions!

## CYCLING ADVICE FOR THE COMING MONTHS

The RAC and Cycling UK have joined forces to create a helpful weather-related advice piece for drivers and cyclists. Saddlebag has edited it to look at it from the cyclists' perspective.

- If you're cycling in the earliest part of the day, or in the late afternoon and evening, consider the impact of the low autumn sun. Cyclists should consider their route if they are in line with a low sun and traffic is likely to pass.
- It can be difficult for eyes to adjust to differing light intensity, such as going from dense woodland to open fields or vice versa. Slow your speed and be particularly aware when turning across traffic. In these conditions lights can help with visibility.
- Days are getting shorter and the darker nights are creeping in. Cyclists should not be caught unawares of the failing daylight and carry a white front and red rear light.
- Cyclists should ride away from the kerb or gutter. As darker nights draw in you'll not only be able to avoid debris, drains and so on but it also makes you more visible to drivers.
- Pay more attention and slow down when the road is wet, particularly after a heavy downpour. Whilst cyclists need to try to avoid puddles that could be hiding potholes, drivers need to be more aware that cyclists may need to pull out to avoid obstacles.
- Fog presents a problem for all road users. Be extra cautious, remember that you may not be as visible as you think, and if you have lights make sure you use them.
- Consider fitting mudguards to your bike. These will not only help keep you dryer from water spraying up from the road, but it will help protect your bike and any companions cycling behind you!
- Blustery autumn days can result in fallen branches and leaves on the road that block drains and cause slippery surfaces. Cyclists may need to hold a more central road position and be prepared to avoid debris whilst drivers need to proceed with caution, giving good clearance to cyclists.



## Your invitation to our annual Christmas Lunch and Rides

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December  
2016**

**Kailyard Suite Black Bull**  
Montgomerie St Tarbolton KA5 5PR

### The Cycle Rides

There will be two rides both of which will depart from Tarbolton Community Centre at 10am. The longer will be run at Main Ride pace and around 20-25 miles in length. The shorter will be about 15 miles and led as an Easy Ride. Make your choice on the day. Rides may be altered to suit weather.

**Parking** at the Black Bull is limited so please park at Community Centre (200m)

**The Food** As a result of the number of us who participate in this gourmet gorge a menu has been agreed which should suit our tastes. The Kailyard will be open from noon and serving start at 12.30pm.

Our hosts have asked us to indicate numbers so we would be grateful to hear if you're coming by Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December. Phone Drew or Pat at 01290 550276, e-mail [contact@cycleayrshire.co.uk](mailto:contact@cycleayrshire.co.uk) - or just tell them on a ride.

**The Invitation** is open to all members, their friends/family and anyone who has ridden with us. And you don't have to come out on the morning ride !!

## ON THE ROAD

PART 2 OF LINDA'S THOUGHTS ON HER 1,500 MILE RIDE TO ITALY

Looking back on my cycle to Italy I realise that my poor route planning had a huge impact on the whole experience. Francesca and I set off without any maps and she soon took control of my new satnav as she didn't trust my navigational skills!

On three consecutive days we found ourselves going off road, through forest tracks and up to our ankles in mud! On the day we cycled from Michelen to Andaluz the challenge was when the satnav took us up the wrong side of a very busy junction which was the entrance to the motorway. We eventually got onto a B road and cycled through the countryside till we were confronted with a 'No Entry' sign AND we found ourselves on the wrong side of the dual carriageway! At this point we considered running across the dual carriageway with our bikes and panniers and going over the barrier in the middle but this did not seem like a wise choice!

We had no option but to do an about turn. An alternative route in the satnav took us along what seemed to be a nightmare of a mountain bike track. Our lovely clean bikes sank into the mud as did our feet ahhh! After many expletives we pushed our bikes through the forest as cycling was impossible. I tried to point out the beautiful bluebells to Francesca but she was having none of it! When we eventually got to Andaluz it was nearly 9pm and night was falling. We still hadn't eaten and we were exhausted! We were so glad to get to our beds that night!

When Joyce, Denis and I set off from Chaumont to Dijon, the sun was shining, there was hardly any wind and it was not too hot - a perfect cycling day! I asked for directions to get to the canal route to Dijon and the shop assistant exclaimed "C'est magnifique! C'est tres tres belle!" So off I set with high hopes. It was beautiful! The countryside was so green, the sprawling fields seemed to go on forever, the cattle were grazing. We continued cycling along the canal until the route became grassier and wetter underfoot making it impossible to cycle, we persevered, our feet sodden, hoping the path would improve but it suddenly came to an abrupt stop! We had to turn back which made us lose about 50 minutes. I then continually stopped to ask people for directions. The fact that everyone was so kind and helpful encouraged me to keep going. When I told them we were going to Dijon they were all saying "Ah mais c'est loin! Bon courage!" I lost count of the number of

times people said that to me. One wee man actually put his hands to his head in horror! Both of our Garmins had run out of battery! We cycled over the rolling hills appreciating the beauty around us until we began to weary. Luckily we found a little patisserie just before it was closing and the lady made us up a baguette with some pork pate' - delicious! That and a big bar of chocolate did the trick! It was getting dark and there were no street lights, Denis was aware that we had to get to Dijon as fast as we could. We arrived at 9.50 exhausted delighted that we had made it. 90 miles done, 12 hours on the road! It had been a long day but a lovely one. It was by asking that we finally got to Dijon!

The day we aimed to get to Aix-en-Provence was an eventful one. The satnav took us off road along a rough track which was full of potholes. We had to back track! Poor Joyce got five punctures, one in her front tyre and four in her back. By the time Denis was wearily repairing the fifth puncture the heavens opened and we got drenched! It was getting late and I was starving (yet again!) Further along when we thought we hadn't far to go we were abruptly stopped by the police as we were heading for the motorway! After another about-turn we stumbled across a lovely hotel which turned out to be the best accommodation of the trip, it was a suitable reward for our disastrous day! We didn't quite make it to Aix that day but we didn't care!

In hindsight perhaps I would have got to Italy a lot quicker if I had had a better idea of how to get there! However, being unsure of the route made it more of an adventure and I did get to meet a lot of lovely people along the way!

### FURTHER AFIELD



**It doesn't all happen in Ayrshire. Members do their own thing in new places or get together and go on tour. Going somewhere and like company? Ask around. use facebook or contact Saddlebag.**

Have you spotted the above rider's problem?

## LA VIE EN ROSE

A LA RONNIE THOMPSON

(Not Edith Piaff)

The long distance cycle route between Yorkshire and Lancashire, *The Way of the Roses*, is an 170 mile coast to coast cycle ride through picturesque (and hilly!!) countryside and pretty villages - if you can see through the blinding snow and hailstorms!! The weather angel had that in mind for the April week that Colin McKenzie and I set out. The route - Morecambe to Bridlington across the Pennines - seemed perfect. Last year Gerry and John Muir gave very favourable reports. The only downside seemed to be the difficulty of getting home by train from Bridlington. A bit of lateral thinking suggested that we do the awkward bit first so we'd start at Bridlington. The nice man at Ayr Station planned our itinerary with precision with bikes booked virtually the whole way. The plan worked flawlessly and we arrived in Scarborough then cycled south to Bridlington. There was a real chill in the air and we were happy to find our nice warm digs before frost bite set in, an omen for what was to come.

Next morning was a sunny and breezy day but bitterly cold at the start point on the Bridlington promenade. We had planned to do the whole trip in 4 days, averaging just over 40 miles a day. The route goes through Drifffield, Pocklington, York, Ripon, Settle, Lancaster and ends on the Morecambe seafront. It's well marked in the main by the white and red rose signs and those we did miss did not cause us too many problems as it was easy to pick them up again. The cycle-way largely follows quiet rural roads and some sections are traffic free.

Our first night was the Buddhist Retreat Centre in Pocklington, the Madhyamaka Kamaka Meditation Centre. For those like ourselves who were only doing bed and breakfast it operates a bit like a hostel with facilities for cooking and a communal dorm. There were regular meditation sessions over the course of the day but we were content to rest our weary legs and browse in their library. After a substantial buffet breakfast and the biggest choice of teas, we set off on day 2 of our journey, passing through York, on our way to Ripon. The weather was by turns sunny, cold, raining, hailstones and snow. We braved the weather and arrived at the Ship Inn in Ripon cold and wet. It was good to shower before heading out to an Italian restaurant adjacent to the cathedral. The next morning was sunny and frosty and we had a look at the market in the centre of town before heading off in the direction of Pateley Bridge and Settle. If the first 2 days were relatively flat and undulating, Day 3 saw us in hilly country

and the first real taste of the sharp hills of the Pennines. . Our first stop was for lunch at Pateley Bridge, a little jewel of a place full of tea rooms and gift shops which sits on the River Nidd. I was puzzled by all the bunting and streamers which festooned the main street. Was something about to happen here? The clue was all the decorated bikes displayed on buildings, pavements and in shop windows. The Tour de Yorkshire was starting the following day and the first stage was to pass through Pateley Bridge and finish at Settle, on our planned route. Yellow signs marked the way and warned of road closures. Had we been a day later we would have had to alter our route. The other issue was we had nothing booked in Settle and accommodation was going to be a problem because of this major cycle event. Fortunately Bob Gebbie, one of my pals, had taken time to take the train down and meet us. Having arrived early in Settle he, with his usual charm, had managed to persuade a landlady to accommodate us in her spare "emergency" room. By the time we arrived all had been sorted for us.

At Pateley Bridge two ladies in the tea room warned us about what lay ahead. The first was the hill out, Greenhow Hill, a 16% gradient. She also warned us about the weather which was turning to rain, snow and sleet. She had actually turned back in her car because of the adverse weather conditions!! This was the most challenging stage of our journey. The warning had been well founded. At one point I could hardly see in front of my nose. And there was the pain of horizontal hailstones ! It was bleak, wet, cold, painful and the only thought was eventually getting to Settle to dry off and restore heat to our limbs. We stopped at Stump Cross Caverns for a warming cup of coffee. There happened to be a big bus party in the restaurant. Our arrival caused much amusement. Our sanity was questioned. We were certainly a sight to behold. No longer the Way of the Roses, more like the Way of the Snottery Noses!!

## MOVING ON

Undaunted we proceeded relentlessly through the weather as finally our spirits began to lift seeing the signposts count down the miles to Settle. If Greenhow Hill was mega steep up out of Pateley Bridge, the descent into Settle was equally steep and needed to be treated with caution. Bob greeted our arrival and it was reassuring to know that we had digs arranged for us in advance. Our main concern was getting dry, warmed up and tucking into a hot meal. Our landlady Jackie in the King William guest house could not have done enough for us, taking away all our wet clothes and arranging to dry them off for the next day. Opening my eyes on Day 4, our final stage from Settle to Lancaster/Morecambe, I

could see light snow falling outside our bedroom window. This did not bode well. However after we had polished off our huge Yorkshire breakfast it was time to get on our way. I had assumed it would be mostly downhill to the coast. But no, it never is. However knowing it was our last day and that we were nearing our final destination on the west coast, the remaining hills were tackled with more enthusiasm.

As we descended towards the City of Lancaster we could see the shining waters of Morecambe Bay in the distance. A welcome sight. Along the River Lune is a cycle path which makes cycling in to the town centre an easy journey. The cycle path continues for a further 3 miles to Morecambe Promenade. After all the hills, the sleet and rain, the sweat and effort, the final stage of the journey was a doddle. Just enough time to get the obligatory selfie and get back to Lancaster Station for the train home. Bikes quickly on to the Virgin train and Colin and I were finally able to relax and Pendelino our way home to Scotland. Tired but happy. Looking back I think this is an excellent cycle route and I would recommend it to anyone who fancies a week's cycling across beautiful rural England. But do take a look at the long range weather forecast before you book!!!

# FRANKFURT

## THE PLACE TO START FOR GERRY'S GERMANY TOUR

It looks like becoming an annual event as this is the third year I have been to Germany to accompany our long term touring friend Thomas Lutz on one of his tours. This year the group was made up of myself, Davie Lawrie, John Muir, Willie Raphael and Alec Craig. We arrived at our Frankfurt hotel to be met by Thomas. After an evening meal and a few beers it was on to the serious issue of getting a bike that fits. He had provided five bikes and with a lot of moving of parts we fitted almost everyone.

Friday was spent doing a circular tour around Frankfurt in glorious sunshine to get acclimatised to our new steeds. Saturday and the tour started with an early ride to the main station to meet with the rest of the group bringing the total up to sixteen. With bikes loaded into the generous sized bike carriage we set off to Marburg where we bought our picnic lunch before heading out on cycle tracks to Bischoffen and the first night as a group. A bottle of whisky kindly donated by John soon had German/Scottish relationships sorted. The tour progressed through varied scenery on a mix of forest tracks, bike paths and an occasional footpath.

Unfortunately my bike kept ejecting me at every opportunity and I came off three times on the first ride. Despite cutting two inches off the seat post it was still uncomfortably big. Davie came to my rescue and we swapped bikes. Despite looking similar in height Davie is all leg and he managed to stay upright. We followed the river Lhan to Bad Ems and then on to the Rhine where we took the German equivalent of the Waverley downstream to Boppard. It was a mad dash to the rail station to catch the local two coach train to the summit of the Hundsruck plateau and our cycling area for the next four days.

By this time 'Ochiltree' Willie was our master of directions shouting out warnings for obstacles on the route using his new found German with a new warning word every day. He became known as 'Posten Wull' becoming expert at spotting the many barrier posts on cycle track junctions. We were now in wine country and stayed in a mix of hotels and wineries. A good bottle of wine at four Euros made for pleasant evenings in good company.

Weather wise we were fortunate in that while there were regular thunderstorms Thomas with his intuitive organisation seemed to manage to get us in a cafe or wine Stube to sit the storm out. It was usually over in half an hour and was followed by sunshine and a resumption of cycling. The cycle tracks ranged from fine old rail tracks to forest paths and footpaths which would be considered as mild roughstuff. E-bikes were to the fore with seven of the group using them. The final biking day saw us ride to Worms and, in late afternoon, catch the train back to Frankfurt followed by goodbyes to our new friends.

A final sunny ride through the lesser known bits of Frankfurt brought us back to our hotel prior to our Monday flight back. A walk round Frankfurt on Monday morning, a large sausage and a glass of wine and it was time for home. Next year it looks like the Black Forest and Austria calling.

# SADDLEBAG

is the newsletter of Ayrshire CTC

Send contributions to  
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e-mail: [realise@globalnet.co.uk](mailto: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](http://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

## October '16

|                  |   |   |  |  |
|------------------|---|---|--|--|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>  | <b>LADIES</b><br>11am   | <b>EGLINTON PARK</b><br>Visitor Centre  | Linda leads for the usual fifteen miles on quiet country roads taking in Bentslie and Torranyard then back to Irvine for lunch. Return via Town Moor.  | <b>LUNCH</b><br>The Puffer                                 |
| 9 <sup>th</sup>  | <b>MAIN</b><br>10am   | <b>STRATHAVEN</b><br>Station Road Car Park  | Gerry's created a 35-40 mile route with bad weather shortening if necessary. Lunch is at around 27 miles so there will be a re-group break around the 15 mile mark. (Station Road is off A71, 200m past Sainsburys)  | <b>LUNCH</b><br>Cafe - see text<br>Extra snack recommended |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> | <b>D-I-Y</b>  | A new venue to try - The Rest and be Thankful Cafe at OnYerBike Dirrans Terrace Kilwinning. Usual 12.30pm meet. It's just off the cycle route on east side of the Garnock - turn right at bridge if you're coming from Irvine |  |  |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> | <b>SPECIAL</b><br>10am  | <b>COYLTON</b><br>Games Hall on left in Hole Road   | Prompt start for a morning ride of 20 miles mostly on quiet roads with an optional lunch at Coalhall's Waterfront coffee shop - with only two miles to go you can carry on if you want to get home earlier. Explore linking roads we seldom use. Drew leads. |  |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> | <b>D-I-Y</b>  | Midday munch at an old favourite - The Balmoral Tea Room, Galston. Shall we say 12.30pm?  |  |  |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> | <b>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b> - see front page. Come along - what else do you do on a Monday evening? |   |  |  |
| 30 <sup>th</sup> | <b>EASY</b><br>10am   | <b>AYR</b><br>Blackburn Car Park  | Susi leads a ride of just under 25 miles at a gentle pace on easy gradients for lunch in a community cafe.   | <b>LUNCH</b><br>Kirkmichael Cafe                           |

## Pending Pedaling

## November '16

|                  |   |  |  |   |
|------------------|---|--|--|---|
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | <b>LADIES</b><br>11am                     | <b>AYR</b> Dobbie's Garden Centre      | Inland via a stretch of the Coylton cycle path turning left towards Stair then Trabboch and lunch. A return reversal of the route lets you see where you were earlier. Jackie leads for around 14 miles. | <b>LUNCH</b><br>Gemmell's Garden Centre |
| 7 <sup>th</sup>  | <b>RIDE LEADERS' MEETING</b> - see below. |  |  |   |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> | <b>MAIN</b><br>10am                       | <b>KILMARNOCK</b><br>John Finnie St PO | Dave L. leads what is the last real Main ride of the year using most of the classic 'Ronnie' November route with changes to suit the new lunch stop. 34 - 40 miles                                       | <b>LUNCH</b><br>Merito's Dunlop         |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> | <b>SPECIAL</b><br>Midweek Extra<br>10am   | <b>PRESTWICK</b><br>Railway Station    | Pat invites you to join her on a popular pedal to Dundonald for what will probably be a welcome soup or coffee. A 24 miles burst of winter cycling.  | <b>LUNCH</b><br>Fraser's Garden Centre  |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> | <b>EASY</b><br>10am                       | <b>TARBOLTON</b><br>Community Centre   | A 25-mile meander around the countryside between Tarbolton and Mauchline with John - and some of the roads have been resurfaced!   | <b>LUNCH</b><br>Gemmell's Garden Centre |

## Pending Pedaling

## December '16

|                  |   |   |   |  |
|------------------|---|---|---|--|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | <b>SPECIAL</b><br>Saturday Extra  | <b>AYR</b><br>Belleisle Car Park  | Launch the festive month with a cycle to Maybole - well, we don't have a closed season do we? Pat and Drew lead the 22-mile ride. | <b>LUNCH</b><br>Carrick Centre Maybole |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> | <b>CHRISTMAS RIDES &amp; LUNCH</b> - see front page. Remember to let Drew or Pat know that you're coming. |   |   |  |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> | <b>D-I-Y</b>  | Panniers on for a festive re-stock at Morrison's, Troon Lunch around 12.30pm. |   |  |

## Pending Pedaling

## January '17

|   |              |  |  |  |
|---|--------------|--|--|--|
| 4 <sup>th</sup>                                     | <b>D-I-Y</b> | Ayr's TKMaxx is open for a 12.30 lunch meet - and you can view the sales for that bargain. |  |  |
| <b>AND MORE TO COME IN OUR 30<sup>th</sup> YEAR</b> |              |  |  |  |

### LEAD ON KINDLY CYCLIST

Eisenhower said 'Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it'. This sums up the role of a leader on our rides. We all want to do a ride but to avoid chaos we appoint a leader who puts some structure into the day by offering a route and outlining our riding rules for the day.

Looking back over our history the more leaders we have the more rides we manage to programme. And the demand seems to be growing as new rides slotted into the programme always have takers.

So the equation is simple - become a leader and you can cycle in company more often! For the standard rides (Main, Easy and Ladies) there's distance expectations but a few years ago we created the all-embracing Special ride

category and anything goes. If you're going on a ride and think others would enjoy it book it into our calendar. You'll get full CyclingUK insurance cover for your ride if you register as a leader. The ideal way to find out more is to come to the -

### RIDE LEADERS MEETING

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016  
RAFA Club  
Ardayre Road Prestwick KA9 1QL

**7.30 Snack Buffet 8.00 Meeting**

All currently registered leaders are invited to attend.

Further information - Pat Standen at  
[contact@cycleyrshire.co.uk](mailto:contact@cycleyrshire.co.uk)  
or telephone 01290 550276

### The Wee Screen

For more than a year Drew and Pat have been inviting people to join them while they watch films on a broad cycling theme. They'll be resuming for the winter season shortly. Those who've dropped in previously will be contacted when the programme is available but, if you're interested, get more details from Drew at [realise@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:realise@globalnet.co.uk). The showings are at their home in Mauchline.

### Bike for Sale

RIDGEBACK METEOR 19" med 6061 aluminium frame gents tourer hybrid, triple chainset, 24 gears, shimano acer derailleurs, standard promax brakes. Bike is in good condition. I've upgraded so bike surplus to requirements - hence the sale. £50.  
Contact Alan at 07754745908