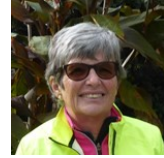


Hallo Everyone

Here we are again with another edition of Winged Wheel. As I sit typing this, it is pouring with rain and not very warm but on, a brighter note, the Spring bulbs are coming up and the blossom is looking beautiful so, perhaps by the time you read this, it will feel like Spring! It hasn't really been a bad Winter and we have had some really good rides. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition and to anyone who would like to contribute next time, please send articles to me at [editor.ctcsuffolk@gmail.com](mailto:editor.ctcsuffolk@gmail.com) Perhaps you have a holiday on the horizon and you would like to tell us all about it on your return.



Happy cycling.

Judy

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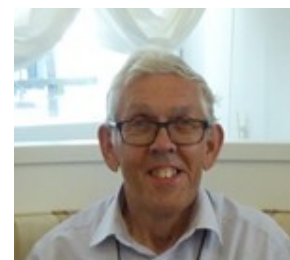
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### **PRESIDENT'S PIECE**

**MARCH 2023**

I can't quite believe that my three year term as President is coming to an end and this is my last President's Piece. Because of the change to our financial year end and the consequent move of our AGM from November to May my period of office has extended to three and a half years. For over half that time we were in the throes of the pandemic so my time has certainly had its challenges. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our officers and committee members for all their help and support through very difficult times with a particular mention for our outgoing Secretary. I couldn't have done it without you John!



On the subject of "help and support", we have some of our Committee roles becoming vacant as from the forthcoming AGM. If you feel you could contribute a small amount of your time to help our club thrive and progress please consider volunteering for one of the vacant roles. Contact myself, John Bryant or any one of the Committee if you are interested.

I had to drive out in a snowstorm this morning and, as I write, it's snowing again so I think a grumble about the weather is appropriate. Some years we have consistently had good

weather on Thursdays and Sundays adding to the enjoyment of club rides but in recent weeks it seems the worst of the weather has come on my cycling days. My ageing limbs seem to suffer from the cold and damp more and more so on several occasions this year I have either cut short my ride or not ventured out at all.

It's not all doom and gloom though. Along our quiet lanes the snowdrop population seems to increase year on year and we have seen banks of white where they have never been before and primroses are beginning to appear. Also our garden is full of colour with spring bulbs in flower so there is hope of better weather to come.

Happy cycling in 2023

*Michael*

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### Secretary's Notes

By now you will have received notification of our AGM, to be held at 7:30pm on Tuesday 2nd May (originally set for the 8<sup>th</sup>, but moved after that day became a Bank Holiday). It will be in Ipswich Sports Club (Henley Road), which has a bar serving a good pint of Adnams, so I'm hoping this might encourage a few more of you to come along this year. More details will be sent closer to the time.

I occasionally receive requests by members to change their email address. However the personal details of CTC Suffolk members are not maintained by us but by Cycling UK. When we wish to send out information, we use their software to create an email which they then issue.

Hence if you want to change your email address you need to let Cycling UK know. There is an explanation of how to do this here : <https://www.cyclinguk.org/user> (this is normally the page you see when you log into your account). It seems they are still working with an old system which doesn't allow online changes of email address, but you can tell them by sending a message to [membership@cyclinguk.org](mailto:membership@cyclinguk.org).



Those of you who take an active part in our Sunday/Thursday rides and want to receive information about them (about 10% of our membership) will need to inform CTC Suffolk as well as Cycling UK. CUK's current database doesn't allow them to distinguish between our Sunday and Thursday riders, so we maintain a list of email addresses with your permission. Emails about rides, e.g. concerning change of café or cancellation, are sent out directly by the Sunday or Thursday Ride Coordinators.

The sun is shining (just) as I write this, so roll on summer.

John.

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Pete Smith, who many of you will know has decided that the time has come to give up cycling and he has a bike for sale the details are as follows:-

Orbit Ventura Classic steeled framed British touring bike. 27 Shimano 'Tiagra' gears, Tekro centre pull brakes, Cytronex electric conversion, tools, lock etc.

Maintained by Martin Nichols.

Looking for £500, Phone 078 179 63334 or 01728 723032.

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### CTC Suffolk Safeguarding Officer Role

Cycling UK require all local groups to appoint a Safeguarding Officer, and at the last CTC Suffolk AGM I was elected to carry out this role once more, the role having previously been known as Welfare Officer.

I'm in place to help our group to create a welcoming and safe environment with a culture and atmosphere of inclusion and respect. The Safeguarding Officer is also the person appointed by a group to resolve, informally in the first instance, any issues that may arise, such as a complaint about a member's behaviour or concerns over an individual's ability to ride safely with the group.

The full aims of the Safeguarding Officer are to:-

- Offer advice and support for members of the group
- Raise awareness of Cycling UK's safeguarding policies and procedures
- Ensure everyone in the group is treated fairly and with respect
- Work with others in the group to ensure the welfare of all members and participants
- Work with the group committee to resolve issues and problems within the group

- Act as the first point of contact where concerns about welfare, discrimination, poor practice or abuse are raised
- Report such concerns immediately and in confidence in line with Cycling UK's safeguarding policies and reporting guidelines
- Promote awareness of the Cycling UK Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Attend regular obligatory safeguarding training as directed by Cycling UK
- Be accessible to members to help them in addressing issues such as a complaint against individuals, the protection of 'adults at risk' and children, and issues of discrimination; and
- Monitor compliance with policies related to this area, such as the Cycling UK Safeguarding Adults and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

I'm sure we all like to think that CTC Suffolk seeks to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for all our participants, but if you do need advice or may have concerns regarding any of these issues, do contact me at email address [jrgbrown@aol.com](mailto:jrgbrown@aol.com) or speak to me in person.

Jan Brown

CTC Suffolk Safeguarding Officer

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### **Suffolk Churches By Cycle: Badley**

You may have travelled through Badley without even noticing it. The main "village" is a string of houses along the B1113 just north-west of Needham Market.

St. Mary's church is found down a mile-long track. Look for the "Ancient Church" signpost after leaving Needham. It is on the left, pointing into the field. The What3words location for the church is: left.bulletins.landmark.

Cycling down the track is surprisingly comfortable. It is well compacted and easy to navigate around the potholes with decent touring tyres.





The Grade 1 listed medieval church is in a tranquil setting, amongst the Suffolk fields. It is now redundant and cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust and is usually open to visitors.

Upon entering the churchyard you will see the unique drop-down gate, preventing animals getting into the south porch. The ancient oak door has a metal viewing grille in it.

The rectangular church tower has at the top red Tudor bricks and it contains three bells. The earliest dating back to 1530 and all cast in Suffolk foundries.

Inside it is largely untouched for 300 years, having not been Victorianised.

A straightforward country church interior with some interesting features.

There is a brick floor, containing 21 burial slabs of great age.

Stained glass windows (“superstitious pictures”) were destroyed following a visit by local puritan William Dowsing in 1644.

The replacement clear glass windows let the light stream in, causing the box-pews and benches to be bleached white over the centuries. There is some quality Jacobean carving.

Box-pews were rented for the sole use of, for example the lord of the manor and his family.

After the peace and quiet of your visit you can reverse your steps, back to the main road.

However, if you are on foot or bicycle you may choose to proceed onward along tracks, emerging at Little London, near Combs.

It is well worth the effort to hunt out this historic church.

by Derek Worrall



## Childhood Cycling Memories

by Judy Scott

Some years ago, my brother Paul was clearing out some slides which belonged to our late parents when he came across this picture of all of us on the tandem.

I do remember riding on it and I seem to feel that it was all good fun so, some things never change do they? I have to say that whilst I wasn't actually born on a bicycle, I understand that I was only a few months old when Mum and Dad acquired a sidecar and took me to



meet their cycling club friends. When I was a bit older, I graduated to a seat on the tandem and then, when Paul was born, he used the sidecar. Later still, I had the 'Rand' trailer (the forerunner of today's tag-along) so I was a bit of a trail blazer really as there weren't many of them about then. I do remember that Paul kept turning round so that we could chat which made the whole thing rather unstable so Dad turned the seat round to face backwards!

Back in the day, Mum and Dad were good friends with some late club members that some of you may have known. (George and Mabel Fuller, Cyril and Joyce Amner and Dick and Doreen Leech)

Not long after the picture was taken, Dad began to find coping with the tandem a bit much and he bought a car and eventually sold the tandem. In those days cycling wasn't really 'cool' and you were certainly thought to be a bit odd if you cycled when you had a car. Dad did, however, continue to cycle to work right up to his retirement.

As most of you know, I still cycle regularly. Paul has taken to cycling much more and my son Julian is a keen cyclist so it's in the blood I guess!

## Hooked on Thursday Rides with CTC Suffolk? by Jan Brown

How about you sending in a fun picture for the next edition (Ed)



### Obituary – Peter Finch

It is with much sadness that we record the passing of our dear friend Peter Finch on 19 January, after suffering lung cancer. Peter was simply one of our closest friends and cycling buddies. It will take a long time to come to terms with him not being there on our regular days out into the countryside or the memorable cycle tours to more distant parts we shared.



Peter's cycling was at the core of him.

Many will remember his attendance on our Suffolk Sunday rides, gathering a troupe of faithful cyclists in Colchester and leading them to an early breakfast at the Sunshine café in Ipswich prior to joining the weekly club run. When our daily mileage tally was in the 70's his was frequently nearer the 100 as he rode home to Stanway after spending the day with us. Peter also set up and led a small group on Thursday evening rides from Colchester for the CTC group and for many years was a frequent attendee and staunch supporter of the Essex contingent of the 40+ Cycling Club and the Colchester CTC/CUK group.

Peter was also well known amongst the Long Distance Cycling Association of AUDAX completing distant rides of up to 600 km over a weekend obtaining the status of 'Super Randonneur', and tours with friends in the Maldon and Braintree Clubs. It is fair to say he was well known and respected by cyclists across much of East Anglia

Peter had a quiet but often caustic amusing sense of humour. Often offering 'observations' as we went along on traffic behaviour, 'authority', and 'bodged' infrastructure. We all knew he never meant it but somehow he spoke for many of us! He was also 'the King of faff'. almost always the last to get on the bike or start off after a stop. I knew always to check behind when setting off. An annoying foible but we readily forgave him and loved him for it.

Peter developed a love of France founded through his blossoming partnership and marriage to Martine. He became our local 'Francophile' with a developed passion for French food, language and the French 'savoir faire'. He was always a smart dresser, a sign of the calibre of the man; always smartly turned-out in cycling kit and evening wear for the evening strolls around town on tour.

Peter was one of the best cyclists I have known over 50 years of club cycling; a good steady rider, reliable navigator, excellent mechanic, and always ready and willing to solve those difficult 'get you home' fixes that bug us from time to time. He was a tall chap so a good



wheel to get behind into the wind. A true mark of the man was his willingness and strong ability to take his share of the graft on the front when the wind was strong. Peter had a generally calm disposition, and a reassuring manner when things got a bit tough or anxious on tour, or when roadside repairs were running into problems. That is probably why he was always a reassuring presence to newcomers and the ladies within the group.

I had the great pleasure of doing four extended tours with Peter; a weeks tour through Wales, a week in the Yorkshire Dales, a tour of the Ardennes through Belgium and Luxembourg, and a French end-to-end from Calais to the Med. In time spent off the bike, Peter was a real gent and a stalwart companion. These and other numerous tours in Norfolk and Rutland are amongst my happiest memories, and I am sure there are similar experiences with Pete shared with many of us.

Rest in Peace Pete.

**Paul Fenton**

### **Peter Finch**

25+ years ago..... Cycling home from work, Anne stopped for a cuppa and met Christine. A few weeks later we had decided to ride 'Land's End to John O'Groats' but how to get fit? The local cycling clubs were too near so we opted to join the CTC Suffolk rides. On our first outing, the puncture fairy paid Anne a visit so we stopped to do the repair when over the top of the hill came this blazing pink man. Pink top, hat and bike. So having introduced ourselves to this guy, he was immediately nicknamed Pink Pete!

We used to wait in Manningtree for him on Sundays, cycle to the Neptune Café, Ipswich for breakfast, before going out with the CTC.

Soon afterwards we embarked on Audax rides, gradually getting fitter with ever increasing distances. Pete was always alert and many a time when one was flagging, a big hand was on the back to whizz us along for a while. Mind you, sometimes he would hang on to ones pannier for the return favour.

We've cycled literally 1000's of miles with him as many of you have, had help, encouragement and enjoyed his cheeky sense of humour. He never seemed to be miserable but he'd always take the hilliest route home (gotta keep you fit haven't I).

What a lovely guy and what a privilege to have known him. So thank you Pete, for helping to make some amazing memories.

Christine and Anne

### MONEWDEN CAFÉ

This is a plug for an excellent refreshment stop, which, based on the lack of fellow cyclists I encounter there, has remained a secret for long enough. On the third Saturday of each month, for many years now, the village hall at Monewden has run a café for two hours from 10am (last orders for refreshments at 11.45am), with delicious breakfast (sausage, bacon and egg) or bacon rolls plus tea or coffee, all very reasonably priced.

The lanes around Monewden are quiet as far as traffic is concerned, and as the village is at one of the higher points of Suffolk, standing above the Deben valley, are pleasantly undulating. For that reason alone, a visit to “Monewden Café” is a regular on my cycling calendar, and the same for my two friends who normally join me. Leaving Debenham around 10am, we enjoy a nice ride to Monewden via Cretingham before enjoying a late breakfast amongst the buzz of conversation and the sound of laughter, something which is just as enjoyable as the cycling. Suitably refreshed in body and spirit, we return home via more peaceful lanes, sometimes riding for miles without seeing a motorised vehicle.

What always surprises me is that we don't meet other cyclists at the café. What I judge a cycle ride by are things like the standard of the route (is it largely traffic free and through appealing countryside), the quality of the refreshments, and the chance to spend time in the company of friends. For cyclists who use the same criteria, a visit to Monewden Café should certainly be on your bicycling bucket list.

Francis Whitbread

Debenham Suffolk

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### A Wolsey Road Club Update

So after a break of quite a few editions of Winged Wheels (too many to count) we thought it would be good to restart submitting a small piece on Wolsey Road Club. For those of you who don't know me I used to ride with CTC Suffolk on a Sunday and then got suckered into joining Wolsey Road Club and racing a few timetrials.

This will be a bit of déjà vu for most of you (feel free to have a few minutes kip and skip this article if you've heard it all before) but I thought for the few of you who are not aware, Wolsey Road Club was set up as the racing spur of CTC Suffolk 61 years ago. Some of the founders of Wolsey RC are still active in CTC Suffolk, namely Ken and Maureen Nichols (Maureen Scott at the time) and Michael Scott.

The club hosts an Open timetrial each year which has just moved from the traditional home of Waveney valley, 25 miles of purgatory, to more local grounds of Tunstall/Rendlesham, 10miles of hell. (There's no escaping that although 10miles takes less time a higher effort is required so still very hard work!)

The club also hosts 4 events in the season long evening club timetrial competition in conjunction with Plomesgate Cycling Club, Ipswich Bicycle Club, Stowmarket District Cycle Club and Ipswich Triathlon Club. These are primarily 10 miles in distance and usually on a Tuesday at 18.00. All are welcome to give it a try. Challenge your mate to see who's fastest, pay your £5 and have a go. You just need a working front and back light and cycle helmet.

In addition we also host a reliability ride which has just happened, a choice of 3 distances, 55km, 75km and 105km. The numbers participating in this last one matched pre-Covid which was pleasing to see.

In the last 3 years during and since Covid we have seen our weekly Saturday club ride stop, restart with "make your own way to a destination" that was chosen so you could sit outside, club rides where we cycled to a café as a group and now back to normal with a club ride, but with reduced numbers, which alternates in direction each week culminating with an optional stop at either Wild Blackberry café or Camargue Café depending on the direction of the ride. Though we do seem to have several turn up at the café stop even if bicycles weren't used to get there!

The joint Annual lunch and presentation in February that Wolsey Road Club and CTC Suffolk co-host celebrates the winners of the awards from both clubs and is also a really nice way of catching up with each other. It was a shame to see this event not so well attended this year so if you can suggest something that more people would find appealing which can be a social event and also a way to celebrate our friends/colleagues achievements please send in an email or give us a call. It would be such a shame to lose the close links between the 2 clubs. I have thought about challenging CTC Suffolk to a friendly competition of Ten pin bowling or something?

Sorry for telling most of you what you already know but next WW edition we will update you with more on what we have been doing but in the meantime if you want to contact us just email [Secretary@wolseyroadclub.co.uk](mailto:Secretary@wolseyroadclub.co.uk)

The days are getting longer and hopefully the temperature will get warmer so have fun out on your wheels and take care. You never know I might find myself at the same place and time as you all on a Sunday at 11am, it would be good to catch up with you all.

Karen Eaton

Chairman of Wolsey Road Club

## Just another cycle ride?

London Edinburgh London 2022 - Part 2 The challenge to return South  
by Ian Lovelock

Do you get that strange feeling in your stomach when you know that you are about to do something exciting that will REALLY challenge you, pushing you beyond what you think you are capable of? That is exactly how I was feeling as Andrew, and I departed



the Dunfermline Control as we experienced a Tequila Sunrise heading towards the Forth Road Bridge. We had travelled over 750km conquering the route north extending Andrew's longest single ride and we now faced a further 800km homeward bound.

FIGURE 1 LONELY BREAKFAST BEFORE DEPARTING  
HOMEWARD

We'd both imagined an easy run through Edinburgh. Heck, what a hilly route on to Princess Street and then a plunge down to circumnavigate Arthurs Seat. We're then beaten up by the temperature soaring as the morning rush hour builds. Relief is at hand on the Capitals outskirts in the form of Greggs coffee, sausage rolls, doughnuts and coke. As we contemplated our situation a list of issues develops which will be wrestled with and need conquering:

- It's a long way to go still (ok, we're past halfway)
- We're both tired, actually I am very tired. Better get used to being tired as sleep is going to be less likely now
- It's hot, very hot and the forecast is for hotter still
- Things are hurting. I have sore knees when I rest, they don't need pain killers (yet) but take 10 minutes to spin out. Andrew has painful feet; numb fingers and the saddle is creating considerable discomfort.

Well, it's amazing what a coke and a sugary doughnut does for you, after a few more moments in the shade we've recovered and off on our way. The landscape takes a dramatic change with a quiet country road weaving through rolling hills. We ride into Innerleithen to be treated to warm but uncooked inedible baked potato only rescued by copious amounts of baked beans and tuna.

Back on the road we to cross the beautiful River Tweed imagining the Salmon migrating up the crystal-clear flow. The temperature rises into the high 30C's, the road opens out to moorland and, very unfairly, there is a 15km/h headwind gusting to 30km/h. Andrew starts to suffer very badly, heat and tiredness overwhelms him, at last finding some shade he decided to sleep on the roadside. We scheme a plan to meet at Eskdalemuir, he removes his shoes and helmet settling down while I head off to happen upon a campsite shop selling Fanta. Being kind-hearted, I buy two chilled cans, one I drink and with the other I head back to find Andrew.

With the tailwind I start enjoying the quest to seek out my ride buddy. After 10km, when all shade has disappeared, I decide I must have missed him probably because he's headed deeper into the undergrowth to avoid being disturbed by other riders. I turn back, struggle into the wind, looking deeper into scrub find no signs of Andrew. Never mind, he's a grown up and he'll turn up I think, as I set an ever-onward pace.



One of the most unexpected sights along LEL is Kaquu Samue Ling, a Tibetan Buddhist Monastery and Centre for World Peace and Health. The Centre is in a remote, beautiful and peaceful valley on the banks of the

FIGURE 2 KARMA RESTORED AT TIBETAN  
LIVE! L&N. I CANE A

few moments, stopping to absorb the ambience of the site, taking in the temple, the statues and Britain's first Stupa dedicated to Healing the Environment and overcoming obstacles to World Peace. Karma topped up to overflowing I am overcome with happiness when I arrive at Eskdalemuir to find Lucy, my daughter. Imagine my further surprise to discover my ride buddy Andrew ensconced, feet up, enjoying the controls hospitality and Lucy's waitress service while observing my progress through my satellite tracker wondering why I was heading in the wrong direction. Lucy signed up as a Volunteer and had been partnered up with Hans-Peter & Hendrick who have come over from Germany to help. As a Trio, they had become an "International Rescue Team" travelling the country to rescue stranded German's. There just happened to be a fellow with a broken bike at the Control who was their target. I sat drinking litres of squash and tea absorbing how Andrew had passed me, the tales of the *International Rescue Team* and Lucy's concern for her dad (that's me!). This is one such moment that starts to explain why folk take on such endurance challenges.



Full of Buddhist Karma, camaraderie, and spurred on by Lucy's pride (and her concern to how knackered I appear) I head out inspired. Unfortunately, Andrew was not topped up with the same motivation. The oppressive heat is reflected up from the tarmac. Tiredness is overwhelming. The

aches and pains earlier in the day had become extreme and all his fingers become numb. I try my best to lift his spirits, we all go through what appear to be insurmountable issues. Sometimes ride problems are unassailable, other times it's a mental wrestling match. We turn a corner; the road rises steeply. Andrew's knees have gone forcing him to walk. He turns his bike and heads back to Eskdalemuir to retire.

I'm now alone. My Garmin is not providing navigation. I am very tired. The heat is sapping my willpower. Most of all, I am feeling awful that I've let Andrew down. Turning these to a positive is a tad difficult but .... Ridding alone in beautiful countryside with the hills receding into horizon behind provides mindfulness moments; the Garmin has a purple line and "squarks at me if diverge; yes, I am tired, but not exhausted; it's a fine sunny day with no rain in the forecast, plus the head wind is dropping; Andrew will be fine and is sure to have adventures in returning home. I regain a cheerful spirit to arrive in Brampton where I am reunited with Derek & David who I rode with up the Moffat Hills and into Edinburgh.

Tomorrow is Wednesday, the forecast is hot (35C) and sunny. I may be tired with 1,000km behind me, but two 600m climbs with 18% slopes could be ride ending in such heat where a moonless night ascent would be enjoyably under dynamo lights. I head out declining yet another opportunity to sleep.

A few other have had the same thoughts as me. Where the first hill steepens the switchback ahead are dimly lit with flashing red taillights. I manage the 18% slope to the first corner and decide there is no shame in walking. I progress to the summit remount cautiously descending around treacherous bends to tackle the second slope. The second hill seems just as hard climb, but I don't have the same issue on the decent. I come across another rider whose chain has jammed into his carbon frame. I try to help but the issue needs more skill than any of us possess, and the rider faces a 15 mile walk to retirement at the next control.

03:00 sees me arrive at Barnard Castle. I decide to find a bed for a sleep. Awake and eating breakfast, Lucy appears to cheer me on as I hit the road at 07:00 with Derek. What I did not realise, as I regained my bicycle, was this would be my last sleep before I arrive home in Dedham some 40 hours later. I head towards Howard Castle with a rising realisation that I must cross the Humber Bridge before 21:00. 220km to the Bridge in 12 hours seemed very achievable, it had better be else I face a 100km detour.

As the morning progresses the forecast comes to fruition. As the temperature rises the heat is amplified reflecting up from the never-ending black tarmac, I am cooked and heading towards heat stroke. I pass through village after village in Yorkshire running out of water. Nowhere is water to be found, there are no shops, no pubs, no cafes and no churchyard taps. We head along some sheltered lanes, and I crack. I seek out the deepest shade, climb off the bike and lay flat on the road attempting to cool down drinking the remained of my water. Then, out of the sun, riding in the opposite direction, arrives an AUDAXer. He knows the route, lives locally and tells of a pub a mere 3 miles down the lanes. Refreshed, motivated, I leap to onto the saddle to speed down the road. 10 miles further on, down a hill, around a corner appeared Kilburn, North Yorkshire and an open pub.

Using the facilities, I strip wash and clean my teeth before sitting, very comfortably, in the pub drinking and awaiting my lunch of Beetroot & Avocado sandwich with a side of fries. David pipes up

with a tale of a visit to his doctor earlier in the year suffering a shortness of breath and tightening of his chest. A referral to a Cardiologist follows and after various test he was diagnosed with restricted arteries causing angina. Pills were prescribed, advice against LEL was handed out (and duly ignored). As he tells the tale he pops a pill under his tongue as he's got "a bit of a tight chest". Great, I pull out my phone and with the help of YouTube brush up on my CPR.

Ever onward we head out towards the Humber Bridge, but first we visit the Hessle again. There is no further time allowed for rest at this control, so with David & Derek we head out to cross the Bridge with an hour to spare before its overnight closure to cyclist. Rewarding ourselves, we pull in for a large takeaway Pizza to be eaten kerb side and then into the night. I now have one target, London.

I find a nice rhythm and somewhere on route during the later evening I hatch a plan to get Derek to the finish line within his cut off time by riding through the night and non-stop to the finish. As we continue to ride rural back roads, I keep wondering why Derek & David are lagging so far behind and slow, or stop, to allow them to catch up. The night temperature is still over 20C and it's a pleasure to pedal on eventually arriving in Louth.

Another fruitless search for Brian Mann determines that he's sleeping, so I miss him yet again. Removing my salt encrusted kit, I take a brief shower and dress in a fresh outfit. On my first visit to Louth, I was treated to Cauliflower soup, on the return the Chef has surpassed himself with uncooked porridge or Weetabix both served with water. I try the porridge; the second spoonful defeats me. Trying to take pleasure on water-soaked Weetabix, we discussed the last leg. Derek confessed that he'd been experiencing micro-sleeps on the bike and David indicated he was so tired he needs now to sleep.

Derek recounts meeting two American Doctor's on a previous ride who'd given him a *magic potion* to keep him awake. He popped two of these pills and we set off. A couple of kilometres later it was clear that the *magic potion* was having a great effect as the fellow was wide awake, eyes popping and legs spinning wildly. Almost 2 hours of madness then started as we increased our speed taking turns on the front until 60km later I could no longer maintain the pace.

Here we hatched a plan. Derek could carry on at speed by off-loading all his kit with my cycle to become the beast of burden. The terrain for the next 120km would be pretty much flat and the last leg into London had a few bumps but nothing serious. I had 15 hours for 200km so was in no real rush so with Derek's kit now loaded onto my rack we shake hands wishing each other safe pedalling we set off, Derek at full pelt & me at a more relaxed pace.

Confident in my ability the weather then throws out a challenge. The temperature climbs as I make my progress across the Fens, in the inevitable strengthening headwind, to Whittlesey. Stopping here for fluid and a packet of doughnuts I seek out shade and start to fall apart as I recognise I am facing exhaustion. During my adventure I had been using WhatsApp to manage my time while keeping my family and friend abreast of my progress. I had not realised how 40 people were following me so closely until Whittlesey. I post a picture



of “an exhausted `Lovelock” and within minutes I was flooded with hugely uplifting responses. Inspired by my Followers I regain my saddle and head on to St Ives any thought of failure dispelled.

As I pull into this penultimate Check Point at St Ives my friend, John Seton, was there to greet me. It’s all too much for me, I’m exhausted, dehydrated, severely overheated and manically excited. I burst into uncontrolled tears and take several minutes to regain some form of composure. I head into the Hall begin consuming water, then squash and then tea. Out of the sun, I start to cool and am able recount my adventure to John who has decided that he’ll escort me for the next 30km and navigate me through Cambridge.

We set off together. With his encouragement I lift my pace again, am thoroughly enjoying the company while passing the Cambridge Colleges. Then something bizarre happens, a Ferrari decides that cycles should not be on the Cambridge roads taking a distinct dislike to me especially. He cruises up and down past me shouting indistinguishable expletives that I am completely unable to hear. John & I have a giggle whereas the Ferrari Drivers day seems to have been ruined.

John wishes me well with a pint of coke and I am off alone to Gt Easton. The sun is unrelenting, and I overheat again. On arrival I am overwhelmed to meet Tom Deakins & Chris Regan both of whom are real *mile munchers* who have retired from LEL and are now volunteers at this final control. I am told by the Control that I am not allowed to continue in my current state. I eat half a packet of dextrose tablets and drink a few litres of squash. I take a bucket of cold water and a sponge, strip wash in the middle of the field and dunk my head in the bucket. Andrew and George Hoppit arrive at the control as they have been following my satellite trace. I am persuaded to rest, to eat and to drink. Andrew recounts the story of his adventures since his retirement (which is another article for *Spindle*). I stick my head into another bucket of cold water and together we approach the Controller where Andrew is instrumental in persuading her to allow me to continue.

I have 7 hours to ride 50km so am relaxed with the knowledge my task is almost done. However, I am anxious about darkness depending before I finish as I fear that my body will decide that it’s time to shut down to sleep. What I failed to realise was just how exhausted I really was. I always felt in control of both myself and my bike handling skills but with about 20km left to ride hallucinations start. I did start to hallucinate lightly with things appearing briefly to realise they did not exist. The hallucinations became strong with everything around me moving, bicycles without riders, riders repairing punctures and most concerningly an 8’ angry Swan chasing me down the road. These strange incidents continued but understanding that I was hallucinating caused me some considerable amusement and comfort.



FIGURE 5 GREETED BY A FRIEND AT ST IVES



I pass a chap; his head is held up by a water bottle tucked under his chin. LEL involves extended periods where the neck is hyperextended (tilted backwards). This causes the neck muscles to become fatigued and stiff as the support of the head and the rider's helmet. And then the problem can become acute as the rider develops *Shermer's neck* as your neck muscles collapse and you can no longer hold your head up. I chat to him providing encouragement but there is nothing I can do, so selfishly leave him alone to his suffering.

I sense that my ride is concluding. I cross the M25 and track along the M11 into Residential areas. I turn a corner and there is the finish line. Waiting to welcome me home and present me my finishers medal is Lucy having finished her Volunteering duties. I could not have wished for a greater welcome.

### A Sense of Ending

Tiredness is forgotten as I am congratulated by everyone. I meet with people whom I have shared the road with. I share a beer with Hans Peter & Hendrick who have been with Lucy for the week. Derek appears, he managed to finish with 18 minutes to spare and his wife hugs me explaining that this ride has been his ambition. I am feeling euphoric, not really wanting the ride to have ended.

Each time I participate in an endurance event I learn a lot about myself and LEL2022 is no exception. I learnt a lot about how to organise myself both on and off the bike. I probably waste too much time at controls, but this is also a holiday for me, and the fabulous volunteers deserve my thanks so spending some time with them is the least I can offer. On the ride I really tried not to set any expectations, to go with the flow, as the ride tests you mentally as much as physically. I don't pay attention to how far I have ridden or how fast I am riding leaving that analysis to the Control Points where I rest and assess what I need to do on the next 100km. However, I have trialled my equipment, my bike set-up and my fuelling during the 5,000km AUDAX training rides before the start line. At the start of the ride,



FIGURE 6 ONE LAST PEDAL TURN; 1,552KM & 14,044M CLIMBED OVER 5 DAYS AND 5 HOURS



FIGURE 7 LUCY PRESENTS THE FINISHERS MEDAL

I did feel quite confident that I had whatever was in my control, under control. Would I ride any another long-distance endurance event again? yes and I am sure I'll be tempted into an event soon.

ooo000ooo

### My Story

By Richard Button

I am just wondering how many readers have, like me, several bicycles stored in their sheds or attics.

Judging by the number of Facebook groups dedicated to particular genres and bicycles, quite a few I guess.

Being nearly 75 years of age, and having enjoyed riding bikes, more or less continuously since a very young age, I seem to have acquired, almost by default, a collection of bicycles which cover almost

every decade since the 1930s. It now amounts to a slightly embarrassing 18. It leads the uninitiated to ask why do I need so many bikes when I can only ride one at a time.



In my defence, I never set out to assemble such a collection. It just sort of happened. It all began following a promotion at work in 1974. To reward myself for the promotion and missing my Sun Alpine racer, which I had not been using, and had sold to a friend 2 years earlier, I went to my local bike shop and bought a metallic silver grey Viking. It was nothing special, but it set me back on the road to cycling, I have never looked back.

In 1984 I exchanged the Viking for a midnight blue Dawes Galaxy. I also inherited my mum's 1949 three speed Humber Ladies Sports bike with its curious Beeston duplex forks which I quickly set about restoring.

A few years later the proprietor of the local Raleigh main dealership offered me a Raleigh Corsa Reynolds 501 road bike that he'd bought at a trade show. Today the bike is attached to my Takx turbo trainer.

Next up in 1991 came a Reynolds framed Fat Chance mountain bike. I have used this for several touring here and abroad, travelling through Ireland, Denmark and the Netherlands.

In quick succession came a Brompton folding bike and, seduced by it's display in a shop window, a beautiful dark green traditional three speed Pashley Prospero, complete with dynamo lights and chromium plated handlebars, rod brakes and wheels.

By now, 1993, I had acquired 6 bicycles. My next bike had an interesting story attached to it. An elderly friend who had been using the same bike since his youth some 50 years earlier decided it was time to get a new cycle. He, rather unwisely in my opinion, bought a cheap mountain bike. His old bike was admittedly completely worn out. He explained that had originally belonged to his sister's boyfriend and when they split up just after WW2 he left the bike in my friend's parent's hallway and never returned for it. My friend had been using it ever since. He was planning to take it to the tip but gave it to me instead. On closer examination it turned out to be a very rare Hobbs and Barbican dating back to the late 1930s. It was professionally restored by Chris Hewitt Cycles at Harpenden and repainted by Bob Jackson.

On visiting a new bike shop 53:12 opened in Colchester in 2002 by a friend, I spotted a titanium frame hanging on the wall. My friend built it up for me with a Campag groupset. It is super light very comfortable and speedy and it remains my best bike.

Shortly after this I was tempted by a rather nice bike being advertised outside a house. It was a hand built Reynolds 531 Mike Kowal touring bike in very poor shape. First ride out on it I got a puncture. On removing the tube I found it had already got at least 20 patches. I sent the frame away to Bob Jackson for a respray and my bike shop friend built it up with new components.

This was followed by several donations including a Royal Enfield, a Hercules and a Dawes Fox touring bike. Just before retiring in 2008 I bought a Marin Point Reyes City bike for riding to work.

Always wanting to ride a single speed bike I bought a Genesis Flyer and converted it to a fixie a few years later.

Soon after that I was given a Claud Butler Olympic Road bike circa 1978 that had been stored in a barn for 25 years and this was followed by an Elswick Hopper which I bought for £15 and is great for popping down to the shops or the pub.

One of my favourite bikes is a Giant hybrid that was advertised on Facebook marketplace for £50 in 2018. The owner had bought it to ride to his allotment 10 years previously, used it twice before he got a health problem that meant he wasn't able to ride any more. He had stored it in his garage ever since and it was just like new. I rode this bike throughout the Covid pandemic and must have covered over 1000 miles on it.

My last acquisition was a touring bike also advertised on Facebook. It had a lovely Reynolds 531 frame, but I haven't a clue what the make is as there are no name badges or transfers. Think I'll leave that decision for another day.

Oh! Just remembered two others, a Raleigh Equipe sports racer that was given to me by my son after he outgrew it and a bike that the cycling officer of a local council gave me when I retired. I had used this bike at work for several years to do my site inspections and by the time I retired I'd replaced virtually everything on it at my own expense. Only the frame and handle bars were original when it was passed on to me.

I should of course add that I still ride all my bikes.

Happy cycling.

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