

DA News & Events



BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND

The Southern Family and Forty-Plus Section's New Year Lunch goes from strength to strength, this year attracting no fewer than 70 to lunch at the Bull's Head, Meriden, including many friends from the Sixty-Plus and the main Southern Sections.

South Worcestershire Section is organising a "Malvern Weekend" on April 23-24. On the Saturday there will be invitation Fun Rides, followed by tea, and then an illustrated talk 'Why Passports?' given by Jack and Grace Cotton of Bristol DA. An Invitation Club Run on the Sunday will also give those who so wish a chance to participate in the Kidderminster open map-reading competition. Details are available from George Milton, Linkwood, 9 Swinton Lane, Worcester WR2 4JT, (SAE please) 'Phone Worcester 424723.

On May 8, an Open Tourist Trial is being held by the Southern Family and Forty-Plus Section, starting at Studley. Details may be had from organiser J. G. Kelly, 72 Arundel Road, Bromsgrove, Worcs. B60 2HN. (SAE please) Bromsgrove 31180.

The Meriden Memorial Service Weekend, on May 21-22 follows its now customary pattern of two conducted rides on the Saturday, then a slide show in the evening - this year it's "Pyrenean Marathon", by Dave Pountney. The 62nd Memorial Service on the Sunday starts at 11am. After this, cups of tea etc. will be available in the Village Hall, before embarking on the now well-known 'Arden Rides' devised by Milford Blakelock, from whom fuller details may be obtained at 43 Coalway Avenue, Sheldon, Birmingham B26 3JX. (SAE please), 'phone 021-743-7332.

BEDFORDSHIRE

Clubroom: Methodist Church Hall, Marsh Road, Seagrove, Luton, weekly, Wednesday 8pm.

The new clubroom was started early in January, replacing the old High Town address. In general, the North Beds Family Section is thriving thanks to the work of Club DA president, Veronica Brown, although the sections based on Luton and Dunstable are going through a quiet period. But regular runs are in evidence by all sections.

The Christmas weekend was spent by General Section members at Ironbridge Y.H. The new year weekend was spent with former DA stalwart and secretary, Max Scott, at Rothwell, Northants, with a small contingent from Suffolk DA.

Main events:

April 29 to May 2 Home Counties Rally, Amptill, Beds, (Beds DA acting as hosts).

May 20-22 Meriden Weekend.

June 12 Bedfordshire Boundary. Reliability Ride.

SOUTH BUCKS

The winter season, despite its generally clement weather, was overshadowed for South Bucks members, by the loss of Faith Reason, joint editor with husband Les of the club's magazine, "The Beech Leaf". Everyone had hoped that following the serious operation she endured in 1982, Faith would be restored to full health. Sadly this was not to be, and a large number of DA friends attended the funeral at Amersham Crematorium on February 9. Wife and mother in a family of dedicated cyclists, Faith will be widely missed, and sympathy for Les, Heather and Jenny goes out from all in the DA.

The **Windsor & District** section is again closing its clubroom for the summer and arranging a programme of evening rides. These will start at 7.30pm on Fridays from the village centre car park. The first is on May 6 the last on August 25. Other clubroom nights are:-

Aylesbury: Queen's Park Centre (near Hazell's Roundabout), Aylesbury: 4th Tuesday in month from 7.30pm.

Chiltern Hills: Little Missenden Village Hall (opposite Crown Inn): Wednesdays 8pm.

Bracknell & District: Ring Andrew Perry: Ascot 21132.

CHESTER AND NORTH WALES

April 29-May 1 - Spring Reunion, Little Stretton. Bookings to Dennis Jones, 45, Tennyson Road, Ellesmere Port, Tel. 051-355-7963.

May 15: BCTC Heat.

May 22: 100 in 10. Details, Bob Cliff, 5, Meadowsway, Upton Heath, Chester.

DERBYSHIRE

DA Events for April and May 1983:-

April 24. Rough Stuff Ride. Start at Wetton Mill, 2pm.

May 8. Standard Rides. 100 and 50 mile start 9am Etwell. Finish for both events Hilton Village Hall. Entries to D. Loe, 29 Woodside, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, complete with SAE if route sheet required before day.

David Lambert has taken over as DA secretary following Graham Hind's move to a new job. Graham's enthusiastic approach to the Club will be greatly missed. David can be contacted at 43, Shady Grove, Hilton, Derbys.

Alfreton Section

Club runs from Watchhorn Church (on the A61), Alfreton at 10am.

Burton Section

April 30/May 1 Ludlow Bank Holiday Weekend.

May 21 Badby Y.H. and Meriden Service.

Derby Section

Clubroom: St Johns Social Centre, Mill Street, Derby. Wed 8pm.

April 9 Woodys Top Y.H.

DEVON

Nine Devon DA members travelled to Bristol for their annual dinner prize presentation. A new trophy, the Marjorie Baker Memorial Trophy, was given to Bristol DA by the Exeter 'B' section in memory of the many happy hours the section spent with Marjorie. The trophy, a silver tricycle on a wooden base was brought back from the 1979 Spanish CTC tour, and was given to Marjorie by some of her many friends. The first winner was Marion Smith of Bristol who was the oldest lady riding the Bristol Veterans' 100 mile event, an event which at 78 years, Marjorie was in training for when she met her death.

The 'B's' Easter tour is now booked at Bridport, West Lulworth and Street hosts.

The two new Devon sections, one at Plymouth and the other at Exeter have both been going for more than 12 months with great success. It is now hoped to start two more sections.

One is in Barnstaple where Jean and Paul Dixon, 21 Elmfield Road, Bickington, Barnstaple are holding their inaugural meeting at the beginning of March. Anyone interested should contact Jean and Paul.

Meanwhile in deepest Cornwall things are also stirring where Betty and Dave Pentecost, 33 Manor Close, St Austell, Tel. St Austell 5645, are keen to get a section going.

DUBLIN

Easter weekend: Hostelling in Fermanagh, contact P. Charlton.

April 16-17: Jim Murphy's annual Rough Stuff weekend, book for Glendalough.

April 9: Last of the slide shows for this season will be Club slides, so please bring along your best.

Despite bad weather, the year has started well for the DA with very high attendances. Thanks for this are due to such leaders as Des Duffy and Tom McCarthy who led excellent runs to Tipperkevin and Pilgrim's Path. Anyone with an original idea for a ride should contact Eamonn Doyle, hon sec, 47, Whitebarn Road, Churchtown, Dublin.

ESSEX

DA Secretary: Dot Sharp, 5 Hanging Hill Lane, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex. CM13 2HY.

Sections: Brentwood: As above, Danbury 4364, Colchester 61092, Romford 41256, Southend 511084.

April 10: '50' in 3 1/4/4 1/2 hrs. Details from Colchester section. **April 24:** Eastern Cycle Saunter - Details Brentwood 224110.

April 30/May 1/2: Home Counties Rally organised by Beds. DA.

May 8: '100' in 7/8/9 - details from Brentwood section.

June 19: Vets Triennial '100' - details Tony Parkins 972 48177.

FIFE AND TAYSIDE

Fife Section

April 16-17: Myrehaugh Hut weekend. Bookings to Huts Secretary Enid Brown, 48 Mackenzie Crescent, Lochgelly, Fife. Tel. No. 782413.

April 30-May 1. Stirling Y.H. weekend. Picnic at Dollar Glen 3pm Saturday then on to hostel. Self booking to Hostel Warden.

NORTH HAMPSHIRE

Sunday turnouts have been exceptionally good especially from the Basingstoke Section. Annual runs lists have been produced for Basingstoke, Newbury and Reading and are available from section organizers. Other sections in the district have informal runs.

The Hillclimb and Freewheeling Contest, the first Charlie Dearné Event of the year, was held on February 10 and despite the weather was well supported.

The champion of the Basingstoke Section was the overall winner, coming first in both parts. The next event is the 50m TRT on March 27 starting from Sheffield-on-Loddon Green followed by the BCTC heat on May 15. Details nearer this date from Roy Pruddah, DA Secretary. Tel Basingstoke 770048.

Special Events

May 17-22: Tour of Brittany. Contact John Hutton. Telephone Henley 4693.

May 22 Invitation Ride Basingstoke Section. Alresford and Winchester Hill (near Exton). Starting Fire Station 0900.

May 27-29. Isle of Wight Tour Totland Bay and Sandown.

June 11-12 Holmbury St Mary Y.H. Weekend meet with Southampton DA.

More of Your Letters

Dangerous gratings

In West Yorkshire cyclists have had considerable success in the campaign against gully gratings where the bars are parallel with the line of traffic. We ask for prompt attention to particularly awkward or dangerous gratings, and many have been altered, following representations either direct from the DA to the County Council, or through Road Safety Committees.

The West Yorkshire DA has suggested the general principle that whenever reconstruction or resurfacing takes place, all gully gratings with bars parallel with the highway should be replaced with the correct pattern. This has been accepted by the County Director of Engineering, who has recently reminded all five of the Area Engineers of this aspect of County policy.

Calderdale has very few such gratings, but there are hundreds in the Bradford district; the County has located over three hundred in one part of Bradford alone. - **Eric Brearley, Halifax, Yorkshire.**

Helmets

I was amazed to read in the February issue the comments by Simon Watkins on the wearing of cycle helmets. The attitude must indeed 'seem puzzling to newcomers', and the so-called philosophy of the Club seems to me absolute nonsense.

I do not at present wear a helmet myself, but I become more and more convinced that it is wise to do so and had been intending to write to the Club and ask for advice. Now I see that this advice will not be given on the ludicrous grounds that since any accident I have will be the fault of a motorist, he should take the precautions and not me. Is every safety measure to be denied to us on these grounds? I am sure it will be a great comfort to my relatives to know that my death was not my fault - especially if it could have been avoided by wearing a helmet. - **Michael Brooke, MA, Ph.D, Urmston, Manchester.** A number of similar letters have been received.

What do you think? We hope to publish a selection of letters on this subject in our June issue. - Editor.

Airline experience...

Much publicity has been given, and rightly so, to the issue of carrying bicycles on British Rail. However, much less publicity has been given to the carriage of cycles by plane. Though my experience is limited to internal UK flights, it may be of interest to others.

Owning a Wester Ross cycle, of which I am justly proud, I place great store by the care an airline lavishes on my machine. On this score British Caledonian, who remembered I had a choice, do very well. On a flight from Gatwick to Glasgow they charged a mere £4.50 for my cycle, and, without any protective wrapping, wheeled it out of my sight at Gatwick. One hour later I was in Glasgow, collecting it from 'Baggage Reclaim' without so much as a scratch on it. Bearing in mind the fact that it was transported without my having to remove wheels, pedals or make any such adjustments, I think British Caledonian get top marks.

A close second goes to British Midland

Airways. On a recent return flight between Glasgow and Heathrow they carried two Wester Ross Cycles (yes, my wife has one too!) each way, entirely free of charge. However, front wheels and pedals had to be removed (in the latter case we found it quicker to remove the cranks), and handlebars turned through 90 degrees. Also, one cycle was slightly scratched after the south-bound flight.

In short, two of our independent airlines seem to be offering cyclists an excellent service. Do other readers know how British Airways performs, or what the situation is like on international flights? - **James W. Hunter Johnston, Ayrshire.**

Flying Gate

I would like the opportunity of explaining the reasons for the remarks made by Aussie Gray in his report on the Flying Gate (October 1982 issue). The finishing of the frame was a disappointment, was his remarks and it was to me. It was in the polishing of the frame tubing before actual chrome plating where the error occurred; this was done badly, and since this matter I now have my chrome plating completed at another company whose chrome is first class. In fact the company which did the plating was only used because it was near to me and could do a quick job. The responsibility of the plating lies with the plating company, but if the work is found not to be satisfactory later, it is the cycle manufacturer who gets the blame, that is why a few manufacturers will not do chrome plating.

With regard to the transfers, this was due to the fact that there was not sufficient time to lacquer them before the frame was taken.

The finish on my frames is always of the highest standard and the utmost care is taken to give you, the Cyclist, a machine to be proud of, and I have many letters to prove this point. I hope this will put any doubtful minds at rest. - **Trevor Jarvis, Director, T.O. Cycles Ltd, Burton-on-Trent.**

Aussie Gray replies -

My article did not blame Trevor for the finish of the Flying Gate. I only reviewed the frame that was provided and as this was ordered on December 12 1981 and collected on April 28 1982 there was no need for a quick job.

Sounding the horn

I read with interest a letter written by a Nicholas Johnson of Saul, Gloucestershire relating to 'Sounding the Horn' (February '83 *Cycletouring*). I do wish Mr. Johnson had written to me first before writing to you, for I am head of the Accident Prevention Department here at Police Headquarters in Cheltenham. Part of my responsibility is to ensure that all Better Driving Courses that we conduct from Headquarters are conducted correctly and that only good, sound advice is ever given out by any one of our instructors. So please would you therefore give me the opportunity to put this matter to rights at once in print.

The horn should be sounded only when it is really necessary. No hard and fast rules can be laid down but there are certain occasions when the use of the horn is justified even though every other precaution has been taken:

1. To attract the attention of another road user who is obviously vulnerable, pedestrians and cyclists, particularly children are usually involved.

2. When approaching a hazard when the view is very limited, such as a blind bend.

3. Prior to overtaking, bearing in mind the following:-

(a) Is the driver in front aware he is about to be overtaken?

(b) Can he be given plenty of room in case he should deviate slightly?

(c) Will unexpected overtaking at speed be likely to disturb him?

Experience, intuition and the possibility of adopting an alternative driving plan must be the criteria upon which a driver decides to sound, or not to sound the horn. In heavy traffic, occasions for using the horn are rare, primarily because speeds are moderate and other action can be taken in good time.

So you can see that there is indeed discrepancy in what was actually said and what was alleged to have been said. I could not agree more with your writer that to be given a horn warning every time he was passed by a motorist would be most frustrating and indeed off-putting to say the least.

I do hope my letter will now clear up any ambiguity on the use of the horn. - **Brian Brazil, Inspector, County Police Headquarters, Gloucestershire Constabulary.**

In short

I would like the comments of other cyclists on having a cycleshed/lockup erected at Lochore Meadows country park. At present there is no such amenity for those cyclists who would like to go canoeing, birdwatching, fishing, windsurfing, or just walking around the loch. Would anyone within Fife and Tayside DA please write to me if they think this would be a good idea. - **Wm. Wilson, 39 Lindores Drive, Kirkcaldy, Fife KY2 6PQ**

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Mrs C. Powell of Derbyshire writes that she would welcome news from any member who remembers her father "Miner" Weeks or her uncle, William Weeks - both from Cardiff, South Wales. A long memory is required as Mrs Powell reckons her father's cycling career was in the period 1895-1916! Any news, please contact Joan Bennett, Manager, HQ.

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The Reform Group has again produced a Broadsheet of comment on the Club's affairs. It believes that the events of last year, notably at the AGM, showed the advantage to the Club of a body of organised comment (referring to the vehicle, not the substance) expressed independently of the "usual channels". Enquiries to Park End, Milford Rd. Elstead, Godalming GU8 6HZ. - **H. H. Willis, Surrey.**

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I recently bought a second-hand Chas Hill frame and am having it re-sprayed. Can anyone tell me where Chas Hill's bike shop was and when it closed? (Also has anyone got relevant transfers?) I will gladly pay postage and any other necessary costs. - **John Digance, 12 Fransfield Grove, London SE26**