

CYCLE LETTERS

Write to: Cycle Letters, CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 9JX, or email cycleletters@ctc.org.uk



POSTIES KEEP CYCLING

You may be interested in this photo of a postman delivering mail on 20th December in West Hill in East Devon. The mail is delivered from an office in Ottery St Mary, but for the previous week the post vans were unable to access the hilly, icy roads around West Hill. Only the postman on a bike was able to get through!

Kirby James

Short sleeves and shorts in December!

GRASS-ROOTS GOODNESS

My wife and I had heard about a couple of cycle routes in the Bristol/Bath area. Not knowing the region or having a computer, I phoned Jane Chapman of Cycle Bristol CTC, getting her number from Cycle magazine's Local Group Contacts.

She sent us lots of ride suggestions and maps – terrific! Too much for just our short visit and so we shall be returning. We were very impressed with the variety of routes offered.

Many thanks to Jane for her help and enthusiastic advice.

Paul & Ann Chapman
(not related!)

WOMEN'S TOURERS

I would like to respond to Clare Isherwood's letter, Bikes For Women (Dec-Jan, 2010/11). I am 5ft 1in, and last year purchased a Thorn Club Tour from SJS cycles. After a consultation over the phone, I emailed my measurements to

them and they carefully put together a bike that is comfortable to ride and looks the biz too.

One of their team is a small woman rider, which gave me confidence that all the issues of being small were understood. Their stock range of frames includes sizes that accommodate riders who are less than five feet in height. It didn't matter that the frame isn't women's-specific as they put it together to accommodate my step-over height, reach (their top tubes are in the shorter range), and hand size.

I couldn't be more pleased with the bike. It's a gem.

Kati Cullaigh

TOURING END TO END

I really enjoyed your article 'End to End Journeys'. I first did LEJOG with a friend in 2000 when I was 40, in eight days. Last summer I did it again but this time on a tandem with my 12-year-old son, Luke.

We completed the journey in nine days. The Land's End to John o' Groats' Club has no knowledge or record of a 12-year-old bettering this. So a bit of a record, but more importantly, a great father-and-son journey.

My son had a friend who at the age of 11 was diagnosed with a cancerous brain tumour. He was successfully treated at the Royal Marsden, who were raising money to build a ward for teenage cancer patients. We took up the challenge and raised £15,000 from friends for the Cancer Appeal. We set up a blog: jimandlukecycle.blogspot.com.

James Tanner



ESCAPE THE TRAFFIC

I felt I had to reply to Dr Heathcote's letter about the National Cycle Network. The whole purpose of the NCN is to provide quiet, country lane riding. If people want to use sections of main road or B-road, then they can. Maps clearly show the terrain, hills and distances involved, and all roads other than country lanes have signposting and distance markers.

On the NCN, the bad sections are clearly marked on Sustrans' maps, available free at sustrans.org.uk. You simply look up the area you want, and transfer or print off the info.

The NCN cannot be all things to all people. It is a wonderful asset, which I am planning to use large sections of to ride the coast of the UK next year. Even then, I have chosen to not follow it blindly but to depart from it as needed on my own routes to stick to the coast.

Graeme Willgress

VIS À VIS HI-VIZ

I agree with Andy Mulley's comments in the latest edition of Cycle regarding the visibility of cyclists and the use of high-visibility gear. We have surely all had the experience, when driving, of seeing a poorly visible cyclist at the last moment. I therefore find Roger Geffen's comment in a recent CycleClips disappointing:

'Whilst we would obviously not recommend wearing dark colours at night on an unlit road, the limited evidence on the effect of fluorescent



OBITUARIES

JEAN EVANS: 1929-2010

Died peacefully in hospital after a long illness. Jean was a CTC member for over 60 years, riding first with the Pathfinders of the old Mitcham and Tooting section of the SW London DA. Here she met and married Barry – still a member. They toured extensively for many years in the European mountains, and Jean said her best holiday was the time they cycled over the Tourmalet pass in the Pyrenees. Moving to the Lake District in 1990 they walked extensively on the high fells. *Barry Evans*

AMBROSE (BURT) BURTON: 1914-2010

Ambrose was introduced to cycling when his father returned from the First World War. He bought Ambrose a bicycle for his 5th birthday. All leisure and holiday times were spent cycling around the Kent countryside, then the British Isles and France. Later he worked overseas but returned 'home' in 2005. One of his first purchases – a bicycle. He died in his 96th year with few grey hairs, no spectacles or hearing aids and remarkable mobility. Why? Lots of pedalling, of course! *Pamela Burton*

GEORGE MAY: 9/7/31-21/11/10

Died in hospital following declining health. George started cycling in East London in his teens, becoming a keen and successful time triallist. He and wife Nora moved to Essex and later Four Marks, and George was a member of the Eastern Counties Cycling Association, the Pedal Club, the Alton CC, and Northants CTC DA. In retirement, he and Nora campaigned for cycling and were instrumental in producing a scenic cycle route near Petersfield. They also took part in many tours abroad and attended many international cycling events. *Campbell Scotland*

HENRY MORRIS ('HRM')

I first met HRM at the Walthamstow shop owned by FJ Sanders, where Henry took over frame building after the death of Fred Sanders. Mine is the oldest frame made and sold under Henry's name. Often when I visited he would be building wheels on the counter. He was generous with his time and his talents, and after retiring would carry out any repair asked for. He had many stories of club life before WWII, and had a passion for classical music, opera, model making and painting. *George Arnot*

clothing is that it makes at best only a marginal difference to cyclists' safety. The police should spend their time tackling the root causes of the hazards cyclists face, notably bad driving.'

Whilst agreeing with the comments about bad driving, it seems to me that it is simply commonsense to be as visible as possible even if the hard evidence is not available, particularly in view of the SMIDSY campaign. What is the disadvantage?

David South

There's no disadvantage in you choosing to wear it. But if law or policy required it, it could then be inferred that any cyclist involved in a crash and *not* wearing hi-viz could be partly to blame.

In 'The trouble with you cyclists...' (Dec-Jan 2010/11) you suggest as a possible riposte: 'Should all pedestrians have to wear hi-viz too?' Might a better response be: 'Should not all cars be luminous yellow?' The currently popular metallic grey (i.e. silver) car is fairly hard to spot against tarmac on an overcast, rainy or misty morning.

Michael Firbank

I couldn't find much research on this topic either. A Swedish study apparently suggested that pink cars were involved in the fewest accidents and black cars the most, while a study in New Zealand found that brown, black and green cars were involved in most accidents and silver cars the fewest.

CYCLISTS UNWELCOME

I was touring on Anglesey recently and wanted a leaflet on the Lôn Las Cefni cycle route. At the Tourist Information Centre at Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, I could find no information and so asked at the enquiry desk. Yes, there was such a leaflet but they were kept in the back room as they had been given only a few and they didn't want people to take them away!

The leaflet details five routes, of which the Lôn Las Cefni is the most dramatic. It is almost entirely off-road and passes for some 21km through

superb scenery. It is perfect for families.

The leaflet also has a 'Do's and Don'ts' list. The first two bullet points threaten cyclists with a £2,500 fine and then demand that on meeting a vehicle on a public road, we must dismount immediately and stand out of the way in order to avoid an accident caused by frustration (for which we would be held responsible!).

Why go to the trouble of creating cycle routes if cyclists are not welcome?

Colin Hubbard

ICE IN YOUR MOBILE

I'm a cycling paramedic as well as a CTC member and I recommend everyone put ICE in their mobile phones. ICE stands for 'In Case of Emergency'. It's the person you would want the hospital or emergency services to contact if you were badly injured or unconscious.

On the phone's contacts list, write in 'ICE', then the person's name, their relationship to you, and their phone number. It's really useful for nurses and paramedics after an accident that leaves someone unable to give their details.

Steve Evans

FALLING ON ICE

I have fallen off my bike a few times and scarcely been hurt, but on two occasions I have fractured or broken a femur. These two incidents had something in common, apart from the fact that both occurred on ice: there was a hard object in a pocket by the thigh that hit the ground.

While recovering from the second incident, I have adopted the practice of carrying lumpy objects, notably keys, on the bicycle instead of pockets. This is natural when wearing cycling clothing, but not for local utility travel. I use a bag that is carried in a pannier on a step-through bicycle. What I will do when I get back to normal cycling I don't know. A handlebar bag is designed for the job, but for shopping it can be an awkward additional load.

I wonder how many other members have had a similar experience, and how they now deal with their small valuables?

Roland Graham

