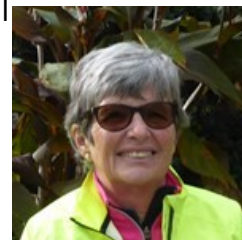


Hallo Everybody

Here we are with a new edition of Winged Wheel which I hope you will enjoy. Grateful thanks to everyone who has contributed. Have you all had a good Summer of cycling? We certainly have enjoyed the weather but have managed to get very wet a couple of times!

If you have had a cycle tour this year, please write a piece about it. I will be happy to receive it any time!



Judy

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Presidents Ramblings

As I begin yet another ramble for Winged Wheel, foremost in my mind is that our editor will be standing down at the next AGM. So, the club will be looking for somebody to take on this role. It would be a good idea for anyone who might be interested to chat to Judy and perhaps shadow her for the 2026 Jan Feb Mar & Apr May June issues.



The Editor is not the only post that will become vacant, as several long serving club officials are looking to hand over their role to others to steer the future of the club. The club will be looking for a new Secretary, Minute sec, President and Sunday rides coordinator all of whom are essential to the continuation of the Suffolk group. Please contact me or the current incumbent as soon as possible if you are interest, so that shadowing arrangements can be put in place.

Regarding Sunday rides, these seem to have settled to a small number of riders and therefore results in the burden of leadership falling on just a few. The groups committee have discussed this issue along with the comments made after this year's AGM. It is felt that since the current coordinator is handing over to "A N Other" at the next AGM it would be better to involve any successor in any revised format. To this end, the sooner a new coordinator come forward the better.

Please have a look at our Facebook page and make use of it for cycling related matters. By the time you read this, significant efforts will have been made to clear it of posts by non-members for unrelated advertising, sales etc.

Club Trophies will no longer be awarded. The committee, after extensive consultation have concluded that there is little interest any more. If any member has a particular interest in acquiring a particular trophy, then this can be arranged, free of charge. The Trophies will be Photographed, and these will be kept as a record, along with details of those they were awarded to. As much of the history of the award as can be gleaned from members will also be recorded. I would like to do as comprehensive a record as possible so if anyone has a trophy from years back, long since forgotten, then please contact me so it can be included.

As I write the committee is still looking for worthy cycling charitable causes to support, so if anybody has any suggestions please get in touch. As a group although our ride structure is centred around Ipswich, we do cover all of Suffolk. I am sure there are many members/riders out there that never take part/join us on our rides, however we would welcome any suggestions you may have for supporting Cycling causes.

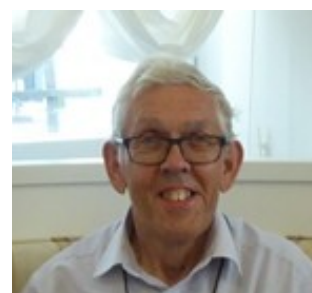
If you are interested in getting a more local group organised in your area, there are members in the Ipswich area who would be willing to help. Cycling UK gives advice on how to form a group, but the simplest way would be to become a subgroup or section of CTC Suffolk. I don't think I am speaking out of turn when I say some funds could be made available for an initial start up open meeting, and we could help in other way, under the premise of promotion of Cycling.

Maurie Parish.

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Sunday Rides Ramblings

In my piece in the last Winged Wheel I painted a rather gloomy picture of falling attendances on Sunday rides which in hindsight was perhaps a little premature. Average attendances are now very much on a par with last year. Maybe my comments encouraged some less regular riders to join us more frequently but there has been a steady trickle of new members on rides. I hope the trend continues and newcomers find the rides enjoyable and keep riding with us.



Autumn is gradually creeping up on us with chilly nights leading to heavy dew on the grass in the morning, and the leaves are beginning to fall. I remember a ride last Autumn when we stopped to eat our lunch in Chelsworth churchyard. All was still and quiet, with not a breath

of wind, and we caught the fluttering sound of leaves falling from the trees. When you are out on the bike every season has its magical moments. Perhaps we will; have an Indian Summer.

Speaking of Autumn the Rides committee have just compiled the Sunday Rides list for the last quarter of the year. Where has the year gone! We have one or two earlier starts to compensate for the shorter afternoons and the usual Bank Holiday morning rides on Boxing Day and New Year's Day. I am hoping we will be able to have our regular pre-Christmas gathering at Campsea Ashe Station but this is yet to be confirmed. It will probably be sorted one way or another before you read this.

As has been reported before, it has been decided that trophies would no longer be presented for attendances but a "league table" of the most regular riders would be published in the Winged Wheel each quarter. The top five most regular Sunday Riders for the period April to September are

- | | | | | | |
|----|------------|----|---------------------------------|----|---------------|
| 1. | Judy Scott | 2. | Derek Worrall | 3. | Michael Scott |
| 4. | Andy Terry | 5= | David Caston and Philip Hancock | | |

Keep the pedals turning

Michael Scott

Sunday Rides Coordinator

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Looking Back and Forwards

Depending on when you read this we will have only about 3 years until 11th November 2028 when we should be able to celebrate CTC Suffolk's centenary and the National Club's 150th year. Not bad for a small group of keen cyclists who decided they enjoyed touring by bicycle in company with others all those years ago (1878).

I would like to reference a recent article in the July edition of Winged Wheel when Tim Edmunds expressed the view that "Winged Wheel" a history of the first 100 years of the CTC by William Oakley was dry and having read this book myself I would describe it as dry as a camel's foot print on a hot day in midsummer. As a suggestion for easier reading could be "The Romance of the Cyclists' Touring Club" by James Lightwood 1928, "Fifty Years a Cyclist" by A.W Rumney 1927 or "This Great Club of Ours" 1953 by George Green.

One of the problems of growing older and still having a few brain cells working one cannot help but look back sometimes with rose tinted glasses. Maureen and I remember the CTC Centenary Celebration and our 50th year in Suffolk. We both attended the Grand National

Dinner in London and our own Celebration here in Ipswich. One of the highlights in Suffolk was a large flower bed set out in the Arboretum in Christchurch Park in Ipswich, planted out by the Ipswich Parks Department with hundreds of small plants with a design of a bicycle and CTC 100 years.

Another problem of getting older is that you take a long time to get to the point which is how can we celebrate our own Centenary in a fitting way? The Web, a Lunch, Radio, TV, Newspapers, a special ride the list is endless but I hope to be celebrating with you.

Ken Nichols

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This Mysterious cycle was seen by Nicola at the Mid Suffolk Light Railway!



Youth Hostels from my Youth

By Michael Scott

First I need to cover the back story as to how I was introduced to cycling then youth hostelling with the CTC. At the tender age of 14 I was encouraged (or do I mean coerced) into taking up cycling by my older brother Max and sister Maureen (Nichols). Initially I rode on the back of a tandem with Max up front but, the following Christmas I was presented with a brand spanking new Claude Butler frame with assorted bits and pieces. By shameless begging, stealing and borrowing I eventually had a proper "racing" bike. In those days, to the layman, any cycle with dropped handlebars and derailleur gears was a racing bike. This was the start of my cycling passion. My racing days came later in 1961 when I was one of the founder members of the Wolsey Road Club, the racing offshoot of the Cyclists' Touring Club, Suffolk District Association.

Now to get on to the real subject of my article, in my early days of cycling with the Suffolk CTC the club organised regular youth hostel weekends and mini tours over Bank Holiday weekends. Some of the more memorable that spring to mind:

Houghton Mill – an old water mill with the mill wheel still intact.

Subsequently restored by the National Trust and opened to the public.

Naughton Mill (pictured right) – a Victorian mill was the scene of a number of Christmas parties joined by members of the CTC West Kent DA.

Blaxhall – an old school building where I disgraced myself one Christmas after overindulging (rum was my tipple at the time) at the Ship just down the road.

High Roding (pictured below) – an old thatched barn with the thatch definitely past its best. One memorable occasion, when we sitting having breakfast, my sister Maureen insisted that a rat had scampered across her bunk during the night.

Cambridge – in the early sixties a state of the art hostel with central heating of all things. I

remember annual visits for the University Rag Week, with students in outrageous attire up to all sorts of antics around the city centre to raise money for local charities. We would round off the evening with a curry in an Indian restaurant, unheard of in Ipswich at the time.

Moving on to CTC mini tours, my first was to Kent in about 1960ish via the Tilbury to Gravesend Ferry, pre Dartford Tunnel. On later occasions we used the special bus which transported bikes

and riders through the tunnel. Our first night was spent in **Doddington**, a sympathetically



HIGH RODING YOUTH HOSTEL, ESSEX. PETER PORTER

converted oast house with, I seem to recall, splendid gardens. Then on to **Dover** where the hostel was on the edge of the town at the base of the White Cliffs. I was kept awake all night with the noise of gulls roosting on the cliffs.

Back in the day when very few people had more than two weeks holiday a year it was important to make full use of those two weeks. In my case this was a cycling tour, leaving home after work on Friday or very early Saturday morning and returning two weeks later on the Sunday afternoon or evening to be ready for work on Monday morning. No time wasted!

My first tour was with my brother Max to North Wales in 1962. Max worked in Luton at that time and I recall we met up somewhere west of Cambridge. On our cross country route was **Copt Oak**, an old school, and **Rudyard Lake** (pictured right). This was a Grade II listed ornate Gothic mansion on the shores of the reservoir along a long unsurfaced drive. I don't remember much about the hostel itself in **Chester** but my abiding memory, or nightmare, was being given a ride into the



city by two lads on scooters. Exhilarating and scary in equal measure, no helmets back then, these lads were totally oblivious to speed limits and one way streets. We took the safer option and walked back.

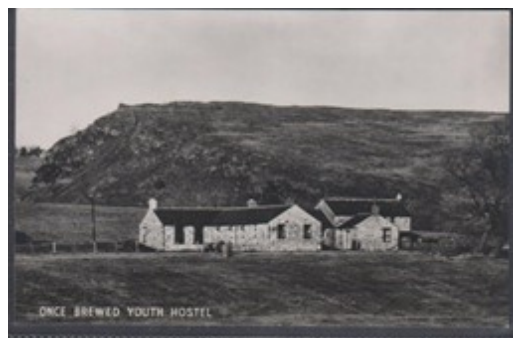
Rowen (pictured right) was, even by YHA standards at the time, very basic with no mains services whatsoever. There was running water – the stream outside! However the location made up for any shortcomings in facilities. It was situated up a long gravel track with fantastic views over the Conwy Valley.



Another hostel with fantastic views and also very basic was **Tintagel** (pictured left), on a “family” tour of the West Country with Max, Maureen and Ken in 1963. This was an old slate miner's cottage on a clifftop on the North Cornwall coast, a stone's throw away from Tintagel Castle. There was a school of thought at that time that this could be the site of King Arthur's Camelot. Also on the North

Cornwall coast, but facing west is **Land's End** hostel, actually about 4 miles north of Land's End itself. I remember walking about half a mile to the beach to catch a wonderful sunset over Cape Cornwall.

My brother Max and I stayed at some interesting places on a tour of the Scottish Borders in 1965. I still have Max's diary that he wrote at the time, which makes interesting reading sixty years on. **Edmundbyers** was once an inn, the Miners Arms dating back to the 1600's, so called because it was surrounded by pits and mineral workings. In the common room was a very old huge black round table. It was originally the factor's payment table used for collecting rents and payments to workers. In the centre was a removable disc where the clerk would sit to oversee transactions. The huge Derwent Reservoir was under construction at the time. **Once Brewed** (pictured right) was originally a cow byre that was converted and extended, situated on the old military road alongside Hadrian's Wall. It has since been replaced by a modern building and a visitor centre.



Just over the border into Scotland was **Ferniehurst Castle** a 16C castle, once the home of the Kerr Clan and base for many cross border conflicts. The interior was still very much a castle with bare stone walls. One unusual feature was a left handed spiral staircase, as opposed to the more usual right handed spiral. One of the early Kerrs was left handed so the staircase was built to allow a left handed swordsman to defend the staircase against any attack.



For various reasons I lost my enthusiasm for cycling and didn't so much as look at a bike, let alone ride one for 30 years. I will finish this article as I started. At the not so tender age of 64 I was encouraged (or do I mean coerced) into taking up cycling again by Max, Maureen and Ken and I am still going strong. One of the better decisions of my life.

(Note – the pictures in this article are not mine)

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Autumn Cycling

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3-1")

The whole countryside and our spirits are saying 'time to relax'. The clamour and energy of Spring and Summer is waning now. We look back more than forward., reflect more than plan. The land and our bodies tell us 'prepare for recuperation'. Every season has it's time. Autumn is the season of *'mists and mellow fruitfulness'* (John Keats). Harvests have been

gathered and the fields are brown. Hedgerow berries are full, and seed heads brittle. Gulls follow the plough, and earthy aromas drift from the freshly turned soil. Village allotment shows boast the largess of supreme leeks, polished veg and enormous marrows. Church alters give praise and thanks to our abundant harvests at Festival time. The glistening golden crusted loaf is the centre-piece yet again.

Us cyclists reflect on the years rides and adventures and give thanks for friendships, joys, adventures and revelations. We turn more to our local lanes. Shorts give way to full leggings, sleeves or arm-warmers become the norm. Our whole approach becomes more relaxed, destinations a little closer, rides a little shorter. But all is not downward looking. Spirits are lifted as sun burns through early mists, and there is always a short spell of 'Indian Summer' most years. Log fires provide welcome sources of warmth as we rediscover the joys of village pub interiors.

Fogs, fewer it seems these days, enclose us in a mysterious land. Droplets of condensation form on our bikes and ourselves and for those with spectacles an added hazard. The fog traveller becomes an adventurer – the way less certain. Our bearings become a little vague and confused. Buildings and trees defined by the shadowy outlines loom up at us as we glide by and pass into the thickness behind. We press on into a dreamy world.

Skies – the other half of our 'landscape' provide us with late drama. Often the morning air is crystal clear after a storm – we can see for miles! Cumulus clouds tower and billow with often pearlescent colour. We see more sunsets as we near the Autumn equinox. The harvest dusts giving us a last hurrah as we pedal home. Often the last few miles require lights and once again we share the joys of a little night riding, when riding down that disc of light on the road has its own magic and we share in a special sense of freedom: To quote Ronald Blythe, ('Next to Nature') *"How can anyone own anything at night"*.

The dedicated among us check over and clean up and service our best machines prior to the winter lay-up, and prepare the 'winter iron' for another season of rough treatment. For the lanes so welcoming and bucolic from May to August become veins of mud and holes as winter traffic and agriculture bashes them into submission. Undeterred we soldier on! For *"are we human, or are we dancers"* – (*The Killers* – 'Human'). The more we scratch – the more we itch.

Paul Fenton

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Suffolk Churches by cycle: Huntingfield

Huntingfield is in a fairly remote location in north Suffolk, a few miles north of Peasenhall.

On entering the churchyard of St Mary's you will be facing a grand entrance porch with quality flushwork in flint and stone. This is a "modern" fifteenth century addition (There is a list of Rectors going back to 1311 and there are earlier Saxon remnants). A more modern stone statue of Mary with Jesus dating from 1907 sits in a niche above the doorway.

St Mary's church is famous for its' remarkable ceiling paintings that were completed in the Victorian era.

The Rector from 1848 to 1891 was the Reverend William Holland (a keen supporter of the Oxford Movement) and he married his cousin Mildred.

William was a man of means and spent a considerable sum in restoring and furnishing the church over the 43 years in the parish.



Mildred set about painting a series of angels on the ceiling of the chancel and it took her eight months. The angels have a bold blue background.

Not content with that, she soon took up the paints again and boldly painted the substantial nave, including a good number of carved angels that protrude from the roof hammer beams. This additional work took three years, which is not surprising

when you consider the detail involved. A very significant achievement. There are decorative panels with apostles and saints all in a variety of bright colours. In recent times the paintings have been conserved with minor restoration. This took place in 2005. A £1 coin will provide illumination for a few minutes in order to better view the marvel. Interestingly, there is no known photograph of Mildred despite her local celebrity. William also provided a notable font cover which stretches up to the ceiling. This was in memory of his wife. In the chancel is a slab memorial which refers to “.....the seelie needye soule.....”. The old English word “seelie” means holy. So the phrase “Silly Suffolk” actually refers to Holy Suffolk. William and Mildred are buried in the churchyard, just to the left on entering the churchyard.

Suggestions for nearby cyclists refreshments. Just down the road is the Huntingfield Arms. The Weavers Tearoom is at Peasenhall and there are two pubs in Laxfield, The King’s Head (“Low House”) and The Royal Oak.

Derek Worrall



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Michael (Mick) Pepper passed away on Sunday 27th July aged 92 years

In the early 1950's Mick was a member of the Ipswich Bicycle Club before locating to London where he had success with the Upton Manor CC. Returning to Suffolk he and his wife Pat joined the Colchester Rovers CC where they became one of the power couples of cycling in East Anglia and further afield. The Rovers were one of the top East Anglian Clubs at the time but in 1972 both Mick and Pat joined the Wolsey Road Club and with the addition of a few other local fast men brought the Club up to an even higher standard and promoting top events. At this time they also enjoyed being members of CTC Suffolk.

Mick's great love was Time Trialling particularly the longer distances such as 50mile, 100 mile and 12 hour events. One of his peak performances was to lead the Wolsey RC team of with Colin Kindred and Morrie Bachelor for the Team Award in the National 12 Hour Championship Time Trial in 1981.

Mick not only enjoyed racing but was involved in the Club Committees serving as Chairman from 1975 to 2008, then becoming President, organising the Club Annual Dinner and Prize Presentation.

Always meticulous with checking times and rules and keeping the committee in order, he kept his cycling mileage his whole life and passed the 500,000 miles point before he had give up riding. As a member of the VTTA for a long time he maintained the Club archives with care for many years.

He was always ready with support for new riders and particularly helpful with lady members with advice and encouragement. A master of not saying too much about his achievements, his cycling record will be hard to match.

He also loved collecting (some would say hoarding) all types of vintage bikes, and cycling collectables. His garage, not used for his car was packed to the roof with his collections.

I first came across Mick and Pat in the 1960's. He would power by me in the local Time Trial on the A140 (known as the goat course), never to be seen again.

I would like to say thanks Mick for your dry wit and correcting me when I got a rule or time wrong you will be missed in the cycling Community.

Ken Nichols

Some of us attended a live streaming of of Mick's Funeral where this poem was read by his son Sean. It is rather beautiful and we felt that other members would enjoy reading it.

The Cyclist/The Soldier

If I should Die, think only this of me:

That there is a road beyond this world where I

May ride for ever – healthy, whole and free;

A whisper on the wind, one with the sky.

A sacred, silken road: no cars are there

With all their noise and hazard: I may roam

In perfect safety, breathing God's clean air;

And no rain – just the sun to lead me home.

Don't think of me in sorrow: all is well;
And in your sweet remembering of me
Give somewhere back the joy the bike has given;
Recall and share the tales I used to tell
Of beauty, nature, camaraderie,
And know my heart's at peace in cycling heaven.
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CTC Birthday Rides Again!

It was our President, Maurie that started me off. In the last September issue of Winged Wheel he promoted the idea of CTC Suffolk running our own version of the 'Birthday Rides' in Suffolk – a 'stripped down' version of the national CTC gathering held annually prior to Covid organised by CTC Holidays & Tours (now defunct) which had been popular for many years with CTC members. We can be proud that we held/organised the national rides in Suffolk in 2011 and 2016 from a base at Framlingham College, for which we received many accolades from satisfied customers across the country.

For those that don't know, the 'Birthday Rides' were an annual week-long programme of cycle rides and entertainments arranged from a single base. The concept was to celebrate the formation of the CTC by bringing members together for rides of varying lengths from 20 to 90 miles to show visitors the various landscapes and tourist attractions of an area. There was also a programme of entertainment/talks/films to enjoy in the evenings and usually very good catering. Accommodation options were usually a University, or college campus with always a camping option. The event was usually held in late July/early August.

Being of similar mind to Maurie, and local lead organiser of the national 'Rides' at Framlingham in 2011, I was quite taken up by this idea and set about planning for a 'stripped down' version to be held in Suffolk mid-Summer 2025. I know the County, and adjoining Counties, well, and considered a very good camp site near Beccles, within easy reach of the Broads, the Waveney Valley, north Suffolk Coast, and places of tourist interest, and, a good place to base a short week of rides.

The camp site '*Three Rivers Pitch and Paddle*', and the Geldeston Lock Inn are particularly attractive settings at mid-Summer, so I took the plunge with dates and set 16 – 19 June as the dates. In accordance with the initial idea of a 'local' version, initially invitations went to members of the CTC Suffolk Group and when initial response was a little disappointing – we

have so many Suffolk summer sailors, I extended it to our neighbouring CUK groups in Colchester and Bury St Edmunds.

I took confirmations that interested persons had actually booked their own accommodation at either the camp site at Geldeston, or elsewhere nearby, as a firm commitment that they were coming, and set about plotting 8 routes of from 29 to 55 miles and distributing GPX files and map prints to the eventually 22 joiners. The routes included the southern Broads, the Yare and Ant valleys, Reedham chain Ferry crossings, Somerleyton Hall and Gardens, Raveningham Hall gardens, Carlton Colville Nature Reserve and the East Anglian Transport Museum, also at Carlton Colville.

In the event I could not have wished for more perfect weather. The sun shone ceaselessly, the wind was calm throughout, the cuckoos sang relentlessly, the evenings were a balmy bliss, and evenings at the Lock Inn were a timeless rural experience, perhaps unchanged for centuries. The Lock Inn is a Community run pub on the banks of the river approached by water and via a long track from the centre of the village, a few yards from the camp site. The track passes between grazing meadows where the lowering sun in mid summer creates a constantly changing hue of pastel shades. Village Youth come together on warm evenings to swim and court. Village folk and visitors arrive by kayak, walk, or car, to enjoy the ambiance of the pub green beside the lock and river and a meal. At least once a week there is 'home spun' musical entertainment. Over our two evenings we enjoyed together a Ukulele band sing-along, and an evening of Norfolk 'Mardles' – look it up. The band couldn't sing, neither could we, they could just about play, but it didn't matter to them or us. Boy did they have fun and so did we!

Days were spent in small groups of 4 to 8 person rides taking time out to visit the various attractions along the way. All rides were as relaxed as the weather and, to my joy, in spite of a mix of strangers to each other in some cases, group cohesion and bonhomie was very high. Some had never met before but enjoyed riding and sharing together like old friends. Early evening entertainment comprised lawn games of 'Kub' and Boules; 'Kub' a new one for most with a King to defeat and spies to root out before attacks can commence!

Three days was certainly not enough. For most it was not possible to extend the stay to the 4th day as their pitch had been booked onwards by others. Nevertheless 3 of us ventured south on the Thursday to join 4 on the Thursday group Away Day which I led from Halesworth to Southwold returning via Covehithe and Sotterley. This prove to be another relaxing day with low mileage (29), convivial conversations, and the finding of new friends.

Prior to dispersing on the Wednesday we shared happy memories posing for the group picture under the club flag, with lots of requests for more please next year. Happy Days indeed!

Paul Fenton.

Hello there from Wolsey

Where has the summer gone? We have had some lovely cycling weather and I hope you have all managed to enjoy getting out on your bikes for some of it?

As I write this, the weather has turned and there is a definite autumnal feel, cool, windy and misty mornings. I have started to dig out my colder weather cycling clothing in preparation.

This summer Wolsey Road Club members have been busy: 2 members, David Sawyer and Keith Sparkes; tussled it out in the Ipswich & District cycling association evening TT series, finishing 9th and 10th respectively, in the Open Vets league. Well done. The Saturday club ride had a consistent attendance as well.

The main event of the summer season was Wolsey RC sadly lost Mick Pepper, a long time Wolsey member, long standing chairman then President. Mick was a true gentleman but also a keen racer. We will miss his quiet voice and wry smile.

Due to the funeral being held a significant distance from Ipswich, Wolsey RC hired the Pavilion on Martlesham Heath so that people could gather together and 'attend' the funeral virtually.

This turned out to be a true pan-cycling clubs and associations event. Past and present Wolsey RC members, CTC, IBC, and individuals attended, some in cycling attire. I like to think Mick would have approved of this united, cross club approach.

We would like to thank everyone who attended and made it such a fitting afternoon. Special thanks to Margaret Hancock and Nicola Halton for doing such a sterling job with the washing up afterwards. The event was a true joint effort.

Now we need to look forward to the winter and Wolsey would like to again invite CTC to elevenths when we hold our Reliability Ride in February (provisional date Sunday 22nd) at Bredfield Village Hall. We love hosting this and it allows us to catch up with old friends. Hoping to see you all again soon and that we get to go out in the winter without too much disruption due to snow and ice.

Happy cycling and stay safe

Karen

Chair of Wolsey RC

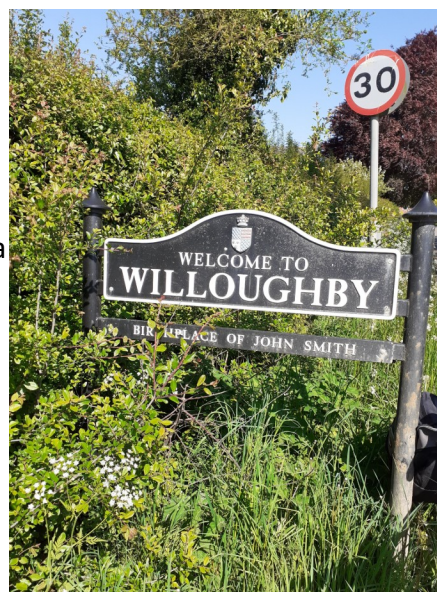
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Lincolnshire Wolds, Part 3

I pondered whether to title this account of another Lincolnshire Wolds visit, Part 4, for the logical reason it was my fourth trip.

I didn't submit an account of my third visit because I felt it would read much the same as the account of my second visit. On balance, I've decided to use the logic that it's the third article.

It's ironic such a relatively small area (216 square miles) has made me make four visits, but perhaps it makes the point about what a nice (in my opinion, underrated) area it is. Seeing it thoroughly still involves quite long distances, with a lot of climbing and time-consuming map checks. In short, there is a time factor. That was especially so because my favoured Skegness accommodation (Clumber House Hotel) serves evening meal at 6.00 pm and it's too good a meal, to miss, especially at £12.50! Another point is that the 216 square miles is just the area of the Wolds that is a Designated Landscape (the new term for Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). The total area is bigger. I've tried various wordings in Google, but can't ascertain the actual full size.



The one frustration of my second and third visits was not achieving my aim of visiting the 'far north' of the Wolds, especially Caistor Roman town. The most direct route would have been a round trip of about 80 miles, creating that time factor. Also, using the same route out and back, is not seeing an area fully. I was determined to resolve it.

On the previous trips, I based myself at Skegness for the three nights. This time, I stayed at Skegness on Friday May 9th, after travelling there by train, then rode to Barnetby Le Wold on Saturday, returning to Skegness, via a different route on Sunday.

Saturday May 10th: Skegness – Barnetby Le Wold (58.46 miles)

You might remember the weather on this May weekend was superb. Pretty much complete blue skies and very warm. Before starting today, it seemed wise to apply sun cream. Leaving Skegness, I initially followed my usual route, north along the A52 for a short distance to Winthorpe, then turning left along the lanes to Welton Le Marsh and Alford. Now you can laugh at my expense! En-route, I passed through picturesque Willoughby. The village boundary sign explains it was the birthplace of John Smith. Assuming it was the John Smith who invented a certain beer, I felt I had to take a photo. Googling on return home, I discovered it was John Smith, the explorer, born in 1580. The namesake brewer was born in Leeds in 1824.

Although the lanes to Alford are flat, the greenery along them makes them picturesque. North of Alford is where the hills start. I had a lovely lanes ride, overlooking rolling hills, through picturesque villages, first to Aby, then passing the picturesque Watermill and Wildfowl Gardens to Claythorpe, then through Belleau, to Muckton, from where there is a nice long descent through Little Cawthorpe to the junction with the A157 just east of Louth, the Wolds' capital. It's just a 'splash along the main road to then take the B1200 into the town. It might not be the most idyllic place for a lunch stop, but needs must and I figured there would be several places to choose from. That said, I decided on a quickie lunch when I spotted a convenience store with a bench seat nearby.

The afternoon ride initially involved finding my way through the town, which I managed reasonably easily. It included passing through the centre, which with some old world buildings, is quite attractive. The negative was that in order to reach the A635, to then reach the lanes I wanted, I had to use part of the busy A157 bypass. However, it was short and the A635 for the short distance I followed it to South Elkington was not uncomfortably busy. I then turned right onto the lane to North Elkington, which was the start of lanes even more picturesque, offering typical Wolds' views and more pretty villages. From North Elkington, I rode via Binbrook, Brookenby, Thoresway and Rothwell, to cross the A46 into Caistor Roman town. It's worth seeing and I spent some time, looking around and taking photos. I also had some refreshment from the Tesco.

I had initially looked for accommodation in Caistor, but discovered there was something significantly cheaper (£49, albeit excluding breakfast), just 7¼ miles further on at Barnetby Le Wold. It turned out to be a good choice for three reasons. First, it enabled me to see more of the north Wolds. Despite much of it being on a main road (A1084), the views are still good (the second and third reasons are coming). It was a testing, up and down final 7 miles. It included a 1 in 10, but mercifully in that direction it was a descent. The bottom was immediately before turning right off the A1084 onto the lane through Bigby (a recorded Norman village) to Barnetby Le Wold. There is a nice descent into the village, but it wasn't lost on me that it probably meant I would have a stingy start tomorrow.



With guesswork and help from a local, I found my accommodation, The Whistle and Flute pub, reasonably easily, which leads to the second reason it was a good choice, which was yet again because I'm a rail geek. I was delighted it's right alongside the station! I took to the pub immediately, feeling pleased with my choice. Before going to my room, I drank two pints of cold Guinness. After a testing ride on a very warm day, it was bliss!

I now come to the third reason - it was the food! After a day's riding, I usually have no difficulty finishing three courses. On this occasion, however, I couldn't finish my main (second) course, never mind a dessert!. Carbonara is very filling, but it 'had never before defeated me. That said, my starter of Brie melts on wedges, might not sound like something big, but it was exceptionally so. I can only say there's a first time for everything!

Sunday May 11th: Barnetby Le Wold - Skegness (57.16 miles)

The food defeated me again, albeit only the toast – the full English was exceptionally big. I asked the lady who served me for directions back to Bigby. She directed me back the way I had come, saying "...up the hill..." and confirmed there was no other way out. It had me in the 28 ring, but as usual, wasn't as bad as feared once 'gritting my teeth' and getting on with it.

Today's route initially involved retracing toward Caistor, but skirting it via lanes. The map indicates that just right of the t-junction with the A1094 there is a lane left to Somerby, from which a right turn is possible to take you along lanes to the B1434, to start going south-east, to Skegness. When I reached the t-junction, the sign gave me a blunt reminder it's at the bottom of a 1 on 10. Today, I would have had to climb it, so I was pleased I had a way of avoiding it. I did hesitate a bit when seeing the sign states, "Somerby village only." However, I figured it was to discourage cars along narrow lanes. The lane descends and then bends left and a sharp hill starts (28 ring again) Imagine my exasperation when I found myself back at the A1094!. I have re-studied the map and it does indicate it's possible to turn right at the left-hand bend. Thinking back, I might have seen a right turn at the bend but it didn't look like a road, but more like a driveway to a farmhouse or whatever. Perhaps the small scale map didn't distinguish what type of road it is – yes, I'm trying to blame the map!. You might argue that although the bit I did north-west of Caistor is small, it's not an excuse for being too mean to spend a little money getting the appropriate Ordnance Survey Landranger map. Whatever, the compensation was that it's a picturesque lane so the detour was worthwhile. I also got a sense the climb isn't as severe as that on the main road.

After another map check, I rode a little further east along the A1094 to turn right again, with my fingers crossed (metaphorically speaking) the map wasn't misleading again.. This time, all was good and they are picturesque lanes, albeit with some short, sharp hills, through the picturesque villages of Searby and Owmbly, to junction with the B1434 at Howsham. It's after joining the B1434 that I'm now not clear what route I took. I got confused in a little lane that involved a brute of a hill, and this time did curse not having the appropriate Landranger map. What I can say is that at some point I crossed the A46 to eventually join the B1225 and enjoyed a brief respite along a flat lane. I followed the B1225 to South Willingham, where I turned left onto the lane, involving a steep descent, to Donnington on Bain. It was a good place to arrive at lunchtime because it has a good store and bench seats.

Leaving the village, I thought. I might have to pay for the descent. However, while my road out did climb, it was just a very slight, hardly noticeable, rise. I rode through Steingot and Asterby, to junction with the A153, where it was left for a 'splash' to take first right into Scamblesby. From there, it was the start of a gentle but very long climb, that offers great Wolds views. Once at the top and having descended to South Ormsby, more navigation 'fun' started. I turned left onto the lane to South Thoresby to avoid riding on the A16 and to enable a route to Skegness predominantly on quiet(ish) roads. Suffice to say on this occasion, I think it was my bad map reading that brought me back to the A16. I decided I wasn't going to waste time trying to figure out how I went wrong and would put up with the A16 for the short distance to Ulceby Cross, from where I would follow the A1028 and A158 back to Skegness. The positive was being able to use the Spar at Ulceby Cross Services for refreshment. Also, I wasn't missing anything new by not using the quieter roads because I had ridden them on the previous trips. It was just the frustration. At least, as the two main roads are pancake flat, I was able to set a fair pace. That is until about 4 miles to go, when the wind got up and was against me. On such a flat and open road it made those final few miles quite hard, probably not helped by the climbing in my legs. Of course, at that stage I was close to the coast. The other guests at the Clumber House Hotel commented that although it had been sunny in Skegness, there had been a cool breeze. In conclusion, it was one of my most pleasing trips for some time, perhaps even better than I expected. The weather, of course, helped.

However, I was wrong in thinking it would be my last trip to the Lincolnshire Wolds. I enjoyed the Whistle and Flute at Barnetby Le Wold tremendously, and tried to think of an excuse for a long weekend there. Initially, I couldn't, but after googling, I realised there is still a little of the Wolds, outside of the Designated Landscape area, I still haven't seen. The Wolds' northern boundary at South Ferreby is nicely close to Barnetby Le Wold. If the jobs worth doing, it's worth doing well. I leave you to judge whether that is my real reason, or whether it's being able to 'fall off' the train into the bar and have two days of pretty easy riding, both finishing with good food and beer.

Oh yes, I will get the Landranger map!

John Thompson

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