

The Coaster



**EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT ASSOCIATION
CYCLIST TOURING CLUB**

No. 17

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"The Coaster"

Summer 1989 - Issue No.17

PRESIDENT MRS. ANN RIX

Secretary

& Editor: David Rix, c/o 3 Sutton Drove, Seaford, E. Sx., BN25 3EU.



Editorial

Here it is finally, the summer edition of "The Coaster". I apologise for its late arrival but I am dependant upon the receipt of contributions from members, which unfortunately have been rather thin on the ground, despite my requests in the News Letter. If you've got a story to tell, or an interest that you would like to share with other members, or a tour you want to write about, then don't hesitate, the length doesn't matter, it can be just a few lines up to a few pages. Think about it, especially if you have just been or are going on holiday, it would be nice to have a few new contributors. We will print (almost) anything - I don't think I have turned down anything yet. The magazine is only what you make it.

It's not as big as usual but there should still be plenty to interest you, from David Kiernan's epic London-Edinburgh-London Ride to Syd Richardson's brief report on a Mid-week Section ride.

David Rix

Veterans' Triennial Ride.

This was our first attempt at organising one of the regional Veterans Rides and, despite the low entry, I believe that Iris, who proposed it and did nearly all the organising, and all those who helped her on the day did an excellent job - leading was the easy part! But it doesn't do to blow your own trumpet, so let's let some of the away riders give their views; these are some of the letters received by Iris after the event.

F. Allan, Hampshire D.A.

Dear Iris,

Very many thanks to you and your team, for all the hard work you have all put into yesterdays Vets 100.

Thanks for letting me take part in the event. The weather, cycling and the food superb.

Thank you all,
Ruth & Frank Allan

E.W. Ashford, Surrey

Dear Iris,

I am writing to thank you for a lovely day yesterday; marvellous weather, perfect company, fascinating route and enjoyable nourishment when needed. What more could one want? Would you please convey my thanks to all concerned.

If we move to the Eastbourne area I shall know where to come.

Kind regards
Yours sincerely,

Eric

B. Castle, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Dear Iris, Ken, Heather & E. Sussex D.A.,

It was a great day for a bike ride. Many thanks to you all but particularly to Iris who, I believe, planned the route. It was so nice and easy going towards the end that one felt like going on and on.

After this I shall try to join more group rides, when I can get a pass!

Sincerely,

Brian Castle.

John Hunt, Purley, Surrey.

Dear Iris,

What a lovely day you gave us yesterday for the Vets' Triennial! Your organisation was perfect and everything went so smoothly. I have long regarded Sussex as a beautiful county and

your route kept us going for hours and hours on back roads often with the downs in sight. It was gorgeous. The food was most enjoyable, particularly the home made cakes and that apple pie.

Thank you and your members, especially the leaders and escorts for all the work that was put into a most successful day. I hope you will feel able to do it all again in three years time!

Yours sincerely,

John Hunt.

J.R. Hufton, Reigate, Surrey.

Dear Iris,

Many thanks for the enjoyable Sundays ride around Sussex, also everyone concerned. I've rode in 5 Triennial events and yours was in every way as well planned as the others.

Please thank the young members for looking after our welfare.

Thank you.

Cheerio,

Barry Hufton

(Barry Hufton at 81 was our oldest entrant and finished easily in 11 hours. Ed.)



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N.B. Jenny Slater tells us cyclists are always welcome and that although their normal hours are 12.00 - 5.30 they are always there in the morning - so even if it does say closed you are welcome to knock at the kitchen door.

Permanent Randonnees in France

by Dennis Jakeman.

The D.A. involvement in local randonnee events, coupled with recent correspondence received by David from France has reminded me of the usefulness of these events as the basis for a touring holiday and of the enjoyable time I had some years ago following one of them.

A wide network of these randonnees is available throughout France; they are aimed at the tourist and, as distinct from the standard randonnee you can ride them when you like, how you like and take as long as you like.

Routes and checkpoints, together with the brevet (check card) are issued in the usual way; apart from the freedom from time constraints, the other difference is that you only have to get your brevet stamped at the designated check points by any local representative e.g. Post Office Clerk, shop keeper, Mairie official, gendarme etc. The French seem to put stamps on everything and will be only too pleased to stamp your card and wish you "bon voyage". The return of a completed brevet to the event organiser will get you the usual recognition of your ride - an attractive banner, badge or certificate - to add to your present collection. On the other hand you may care only to make use of the route without using the check point controls.

Information about the permanent randonnees can be obtained from the magazine "cyclotourisme", the official journal of the Federation Francaise de Cyclotourisme (FFCT), whose address is, 8, rue Jean Marie Jego, 75013 Paris. "Le Cycle", the excellent French cycle touring magazine is also equally useful - you can pick one up on your next day trip to Dieppe.

The randonnee that I was invited to ride was based on Gisors in Normandy. The following account was originally serialised some years ago in the old Seaford Section news sheet.

Nouvelles Randonnees Permanente

When M. Jaques Roussel of the Cycling Club Gisors invited me to ride their randonnee "en Vexin Normand" and presented me with route details and control cards I'll admit to being a little apprehensive. Certainly the Vexin in the Bray area of Upper Normandy bordering on the Seine Valley was the area I had in mind for this short holiday but I had no intention of trying to compete with Bob Rix. I had planned to explore this area in my usual leisurely fashion, particularly since food and wine was allowed for in my itinerary. So I pocketed my pride and explained that while I may look the part?, plenty of stops to visit churches and abbeys and sampling the Bars was more in my line, and then it was explained - "non, non, le randonnee c'est permanente" (i.e. do it when you like, how you like and take as long as you like).

So with that settled I concentrated on enjoying my preliminary weekend with cycling friend Michel and Marie at Monceaux l'abbey, a small village about 50 km from Gisors the start of the Randonnee, which I was riding solo - and when I noticed the route details described as "cyclotouristique -----" I was far from apprehensive. Michel, a keen cyclotourist - who many of you may have met during his recent visit to Sussex, had gone to some lengths to ensure that I saw the best of Upper Normandy and with the help of Marie were the perfect cycling hosts.

Carefully thought out rides in the Bray Region were planned for the weekend - interrupted by sumptuous meals, and since he knew of my R.S.F. interests (Rough Stuff Fellowship, Ed.) had included a superb rough stuff ride, but with a difference - almost cyclo cross standard in places including one ploughed field (and he wasn't lost!) but rewarded by glorious views, hills and streams and valleys, followed at mid-day by a hot shower to remove the mud, a 2 hour lunch prepared by Marie and a 50 km evening ride back to Monceaux l'abbey - but not before dinner!!

It will take me some time to re-adjust to our usual more spartan approach, and given the opportunity I'm not sure I would want to. The remainder of my weekend was spent in similar fashion, excellent company, excellent scenery and excellent food to round off the days ride - and even without the equally excellent wine this very rural and pastoral countryside with its narrow traffic free lanes was beginning to grow on

me - did I really want to leave it for the Randonnee? Well I nearly didn't, after my bike fell over and I put my foot through the rear wheel, on a day that was a public holiday and only the churches and bars were open (and save the obvious comments - I had been on coffee all day!). However with the same thoroughness that Michel and Marie had planned my weekend the wheel was repaired the following day while I borrowed one of Michel's "15 speed jobs" and since I was now behind schedule my bike was "popped up" on the car cycle rack and I arrived at Gisors at 9.00am. in time to get my first control card stamped at the Tourist Information (Syndicat d'Initiative) Office in Gisors. I left here with a generous pile of literature and a "bon vacance monsieur" - so for those of you on a tight budget, don't buy guide books the "free issue" is excellent.

Gisors must have grown since 1964 when Chris Davies, in an article in "Cycletouring" described it as a sleepy village. I found it comparable to Brighton at the peak of the holiday season when trying to negotiate the one way streets and busy traffic, while attempting to find the start of the route that led to the Vallee de l'Epte. Although Gisors had much to interest me I soon became anxious to leave the hustle and bustle, so I put the map away and tried out my French! - it worked and I was soon enjoying the peace and quiet of those rural and traffic free lanes that had grown familiar during the previous weekend.

The randonnee took a roughly circular route starting and finishing at Gisors, bordering on the River Seine in the South and West, crossing through the Foret de Lyon in the North and finishing down the Vallee de la L'evriere. Not a route for breaking records and for a while I found the small scale of the Michelin maps somewhat difficult to adjust to after our comparatively massive 1:50,000 O.S. series.

However I soon adjusted and grew to trust their accuracy - but the sight of me riding with my reading glasses perched on the end of my nose when negotiating a tricky bit, was no doubt something our O.C.P. (Official Club Photographer, Ed.) would have relished!

The Vallee de l'Epte once formed the ancient frontier between Normandy and France and was the scene of many bloody battles during the Franco Norman Wars between the King of France and the Duchy of Normandy. I found the valley extremely beautiful; often deeply shaded, with prosperous small villages and only the fortress, now in ruins, as a reminder of its past history. At Gasny I stopped to stock up with food, to contemplate the River Epte and to get my second control card stamped by Madame at the Alimentation General, and was away, anxious to get to Giverny, one time the home of Claude Monet the artist. Monet lived in the village from 1883 until his death in 1926 and the well known paintings of his famous flower garden and the water garden had a special attraction for me. To my disappointment and that of a young American lady, who had made it on foot, it was not open yet. But we could peer through the iron gate way and as a consolation the workmen opened the gate to the water garden for a memorable glimpse of the bridge and water lily ponds. Although the flower garden, it is said, possessed many more flowers in Monet's lifetime it was still a blaze of colour in early June - a sight worth a detour even if you are not interested in Monet or gardening!

The river Epte enters the Seine on its north bank at Vernonnet and my route now lay along the north bank of the Seine. However across the river was Vernon and from the bridge you get a fine view of the town, the wooded islands on the Seine and the ruined piles on which the original 12th. Century bridge stood. I had a short ride round this pleasant residential town with its fine avenues and then back over the bridge to follow the Seine to Les Andelys; at Port Mort I decided to check my map reading with a party of climbers on bikes! The map indicated a stiff zig-zag climb up into the wooded heights of the Foret des Andelys and since it promised some magnificent views I wanted to get it "right first time". At this point along the winding river the north bank is topped by steep slopes and even by cliffs extraordinarily similar to those along the coast, and these relative heights with sheer drops to the river made for extensive and impressive views, and since a seat appeared near the top - I made the most of it before continuing to the top and enjoying a coffee in the sun. Les Andelys is dominated by the impressive ruins of the Chateau Gaillard perched high above the Seine, and the route led me to the best viewing point high above the "castle-like" ruins with the winding Seine and the cliff-like north bank as a back cloth - certainly one

of the loveliest settings along the Seine.

Les Andelys seemed an appropriate place to stop for the night, but the old town (Le Petit Andelys) on the banks of the river had nothing to offer - at least not to suit my pocket! I decided to continue along the Seine Valley to see what the village of Muids could offer - beyond being the next control point; but a look around Notre Dame Les Andelys first! From Les Andelys to Muids the road runs along the foot of strangely jagged chalk escarpments bordering the river, with one sufficiently prominent to be named, La Rogue Rock, since it had an almost human profile. I had forgotten my immediate problem of food and bed until I rounded a bend and found myself in Muids and facing the Mairie (town hall); the door opened so I decided to get my control card stamped. But it was not until I arrived at Louviets 15 km. on did I find a room and shelter for the bike - leaning up against the bar - while I did justice to the chef's plat du jour, a demi carafe and bed.

Apart from food, bed and shelter for the bike I had no further interest in Louviets, so a quick breakfast in the Bar (on coffee) and I was away with all the work-a-day traffic to retrace my steps back over the Seine and re-join the randonnee route at Herqueville. I continued along the east bank of the river to Amfrevilles Les Mont where finally, and a little regretfully, I had to leave the winding river and head towards the Foret de Lyons. But first yet another river to follow up the heavily wooded Vallee de l'Andelle to Fleury, on the western boundary of the forest proper. I had stocked up with food at the head of the valley at Pont St. Pierre and near the curious ruins of the 12th C. Abbaye de Fontaine-Guerard, on a bridge crossing a fast flowing stream I stopped for lunch with a solitary fisherman for company, until I felt the first tell tale spots of rain and found myself finishing my lunch in more familiar surroundings - under a cape and dripping trees "a la Angleterre" - where I stayed until the clouds cleared and the sun returned.

The Foret de Lyons was a favourite hunting ground of the Dukes of Normandy but although it has been considerably reduced over the centuries it still extends over an area of 40 square miles - of the most beautiful beech woods in France and, some guide books claim, in Europe. Tucked away in a hidden valley in the forest is the Abbaye de Mortimer representing a rich bygone era. The Abbey was founded by the Benedictines in 1134, it very quickly prospered and its lands increased to such an extent that the administrators themselves hardly knew where all the riches were coming from. Life was so sweet at Mortimer that the old monks who had graduated to high positions in the Church away from the old Priory, used to give them up so that they could return to end their days in the valley. I spent a pleasant hour, with a guide, strolling round the abbey ruins, its park and trout stream and one can still appreciate its charm and accept the "legend".

As I climbed out of the valley the rain returned and for the first time on this trip I rode caped-up through the tall dense beech woods that closed off the sky for the final few kilometres to the "capital" of the Forest - the village of Lyons. Lyons lay in the heart of the forest, a beautiful tranquil place dominated by an 18th C. covered market and well endowed with fine old timbered houses. Unfortunately it was not the weather for sight seeing, but the market was open so I sheltered from the rain and looked around the stalls hoping for a break in the clouds. The outlook was depressing so I decided to call it a day - look for a room and return the following day, hopefully in the sun. I got the latter part right but was optimistic I would find a bed - to suit my pocket! - and it was 7.00pm when I finally struck lucky at the first Bar Hotel (and garage) at la Feuillie on the fringe of the forest boundary and well off the randonnee route yet again.

La Feuillie just off the Route N30 is a small typical Normandy town and although on the fringe of the Foret de Lyons was off the "recognised" tourist route, and the Hotel where I stayed for the night catered only for the odd visitor, its main trade coming from the bar which served as the local, so naturally a stranger was the subject of polite enquiry - or so I gathered from frequent reference to "les Anglais". Although I regretted that my French was only up to exchanging the usual courtesy, I felt at home in this company - and even more so when I was invited to take a drink with Madame Godard, the patron, and her son, when the bar closed for the evening.

I was due to "check in" at Vascoeuil 10 km back down the N30, from where I could

re-join the randonnee route and since this meant re-tracing my steps anyway, I decided to add a few more kilometres and explore the "back lanes" fringing the forest and return to Lyons-la-Forêt for the promised "sight seeing walk round" in the sun that was slowly penetrating the heavy early morning mist. Vascoeuil is mainly noted for its castle which has a traditional Normandy setting since half the timbered cottages (prominent in all the guide books on Normandy) have been reconstructed around it.

Once again I was too early - in the season - to visit the castle so I had to settle for a photograph through the wrought iron gates. Anyway the post office was open and with my control card stamped I headed back through the middle of the forest to Lyons and coffee.

The last stage of the randonnee was to take me down the Vallée de la Levrière back to Gisors where Michel had arranged to meet me with the car to whisk me back to Formerie for the night so that I could make an early morning start for a trip to Rouen to visit the cathedral - on the last day of my holiday.

The river Levrière is a quiet stream linking the villages of Bezacourt, Mainneville - with its fine church - Hebecourt, and last but not least St. Denis le Ferment! by coincidence not only my namesake but also the home of M. Jacques Roussel the secretary of the Gisors Club that organised the Randonnée. I crossed the stream at St. Paer and joined the busy D 14 and threaded my way through all the Friday evening traffic to turn into the main square just before 6.00pm and just as Madame at the Syndicat D'Initiative was packing up for the day - a smile of recognition and out came the official stamp!

* * * * *

Midweek Section Run - August 2nd.
by Syd

Dennis had asked for runs with an interest! The Section arrived for 11's at our place; Thelma, Iris, Fred, Dennis, Frank, David, Tony, Paul and last but not least, Debbie. I was taking the run? Thelma was on her new bike, so she and Fred decided that was far enough - good thinking! Tony had left his ship and David had escaped from Susan!

Off we went through Heathfield towards Mayfield via Newick Lane, fast girl Debbie in front. Taking the back roads of Mayfield towards Coggins Mill, turning right onto the white road at Sharnden we had a road of concrete sleepers, easier than the New Forest Tracks, we kept right for Sharnden Old Manor Farm and arrived at the gates watched by a large herd of cows. We found the track was below us so Iris and Tony slid through the holly bush, whilst the rest of us took the easy way. There had to be a stream but no bridge, only bricks then a sandy track while some rode on. Grace said, "chain off", sure it was, laying on the track. Out came the spare link and chain tools, while we passed on the message to go on to lunch. Job soon done, catch the rest. With David leading he stayed on the track and stuck in the middle of a length of nettles, where they were beating down with sticks amidst yells of being stung, of course it took the leader to find another way through the farm of Merrieweather. Lunch was late at 1.30 pm. at 'The Kicking Donkey' - so an interesting ride!

* * * * *

Odd Cuts

A Kilchoan woman is shocked at the response she had to her complaints of an unemptied septic tank. Mrs. Elspeth MacKenzie is annoyed that when she complained that she could not get instant action over the problem local Councillor Dr Michael Foxley told her to put her guests on a low-fibre diet.

Police seized 1,500 rare birds eggs from a house in Mosborough, Sheffield. A man has been questioned about a suspected poaching operation.

City blames too much water for flooding.

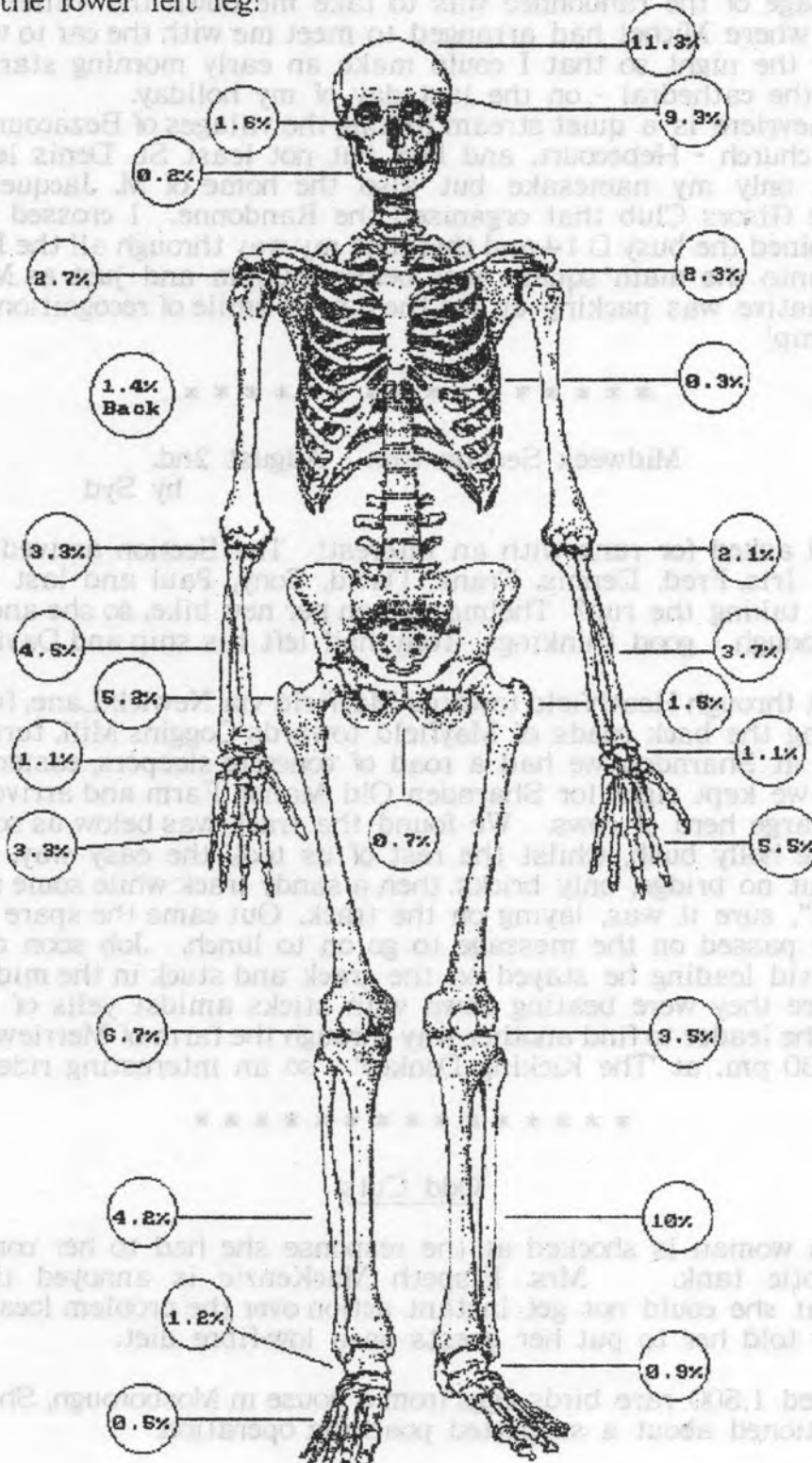
CHECK YOUR EQUIPMENT

sent in by John Bainbridge

I recently rediscovered this statistical skeleton who was produced in the early seventies as part of a Post Office safety campaign aimed at cycling postmen.

Postmen work a six day week and cycling duties mainly cover the outskirts of town areas. Typical mileage would be about 50 per week. Usually the only accidents that are reported are the ones involving injury, which thankfully are few. This diagram indicates the location of injuries to 192 Postmen.

Those of us who are in favour of helmets might also like to think about some form of armour for the lower left leg!



Railways, Cyclists & the Environment.

by Jonathan Dalton.

Once East Sussex was covered by a comprehensive network of railway lines, routes linking all towns and most villages, and no point being more than about 5 miles from a railway station. These stations dealt with all the traffic of the district, both passenger and freight, and, before the motor vehicle came into widespread use, everything that moved went by rail. The roads were thus peaceful and only used for light local traffic, the cyclist being King of the Road.

Not only was cycling much safer and more amenable under these conditions, but the cyclist living in a rural area and wishing to use the train generally had a much shorter distance to cycle to a station, from where he could reach all parts of the country. As the railways then provided local freight facilities, there was no need to use motor lorries to collect and deliver goods to the railhead, a horse and cart or battery powered vehicle being adequate and appropriate for the short distance even the remotest places were from a station.

With the decline of the railways during the present century, and with it the closure of most stations, many lines and the withdrawal of most freight facilities, much of the traffic once conveyed by rail is now moved by road, incurring a heavy cost to the community and the environment with some 6-7,000 people a year being killed, thousands more injured in road accidents, and terrible swathes being cut through the countryside for new roads, motorways and other destructive works associated with the motor vehicle. There is also considerable air pollution, contributing to smogs and the greenhouse effect, as well as acid rain.

By contrast years regularly pass without a single fatality to a passenger on the railways, which take far less land than equivalent roads, and only use a quarter of the energy to move freight needed by lorries. They can be electrified and so do not depend on fossil fuels, and are ideally compatible with the cycle and the small ecologically sound battery and horse drawn delivery vehicle. Many people are discouraged from cycling by the great danger from motor traffic, and a reduction of this would be particularly beneficial to the more nervous cyclist.

There is no doubt that in the future the use of oil must be constricted by increasing shortage and insecurity of supply as it is vulnerable to world events. A fraction of the resources and money poured into the destructive road programme would fund the reconstruction of a comprehensive and efficient railway system, with new links and closed lines and stations reopened. With the diversion of traffic onto the railways expenditure on road maintenance and repair could be drastically reduced, whilst the roads would become much safer for cyclists and pedestrians. Where road delivery of goods was necessary, transshipment problems could be considerably eased by the use of pallets, small containers, 'Brut' trolleys and small trailers carried 'piggyback' on tail waggons, whilst cycle storage facilities at local stations would take up much less room than car parks.

If the world is to survive it is essential that protection of the environment, and the conservation of resources, is given far greater priority than hitherto and the replacement of motor transport by cycles, railways, waterways and other ecologically sound modes has an important role to play in this.

* * * * *

Home Truth

After being retired for a couple of years and completing all the jobs my wife had lined up for me, I began to feel somewhat useless and decided to enrol for a couple of courses at the local adult education college. I noted, upon registration, that pensioners did not have to pay any fee. As I handed my laboriously filled-in papers to the secretary, I announced, "I'm 67". Then, pulling out my wallet, I asked if she wanted to see my birth certificate. She replied, "No, that's OK."

A little surprised, I asked, "Oh, do I look honest?"
"No," she answered, "You look 67." !!

Spring Camping in Pembrokeshire.

by David Rix

An early start on the Bank Holiday weekend found Susan & I in Newport by coffee time, and we reached the campsite at Penffordd, a small village in mid-Pembrokeshire, not long after lunch. The other car-assisted travellers, Ken, Iris & Heather who also brought Gerald and Mick & Rose who brought Pete, had all arrived just ahead of us and some tents were already up. Maurice, the tenth member of the party, was getting the train and riding the last part and arrived by late afternoon.

Mount Pleasant Farm is a very pleasant camp site with excellent views north to the Preseli Hills, and Peter & Pauline Bowen made us extremely welcome. The weather was good for the whole week except for some rain on the last Saturday morning and being plagued by a northerly wind blowing across the campsite.

Barbecues on several nights were successful (one held in Peter's barn due to the wind), though we decided a bit more practice might be needed with the Section barbecue which did not want to burn at all well.

Sunday saw us heading north towards and then round the eastern end of the Preseli Hills, with some excellent views both of the hills and from them. Our objective was Pentre Ifan, a burial chamber on the northern edge of the Preseli Hills. Pete wanted to take us there because, he said, it was one that not many people visited - when we got there we found brand new road signs directing us to it and, believe it or not, a family of Japanese tourists complete with video camera! This aside the burial chamber is impressive and its setting is magnificent. Lunch was eaten beside the river at Newport before a ride back via the delightful Gwaun Valley, managing to find tea at Penlan Uchaf Gardens - reached by a very steep drive, about 1:4 or even 1:3, but worth it for the breathtaking views of the valley and hills and the cheapness of the refreshments.

Eastwards on Monday to Haverfordwest for elevenses, with Maurice hoping to get us out to St. Ann's Head, but with our tendency to stop and look at things we only managed to get part of the way having lunch beside Sandyhaven Pill, an inlet off Milford Haven, then heading to the northern side of the peninsula and the bright lights of Little Haven & Broad Haven - packed with 'Grockles' on this bank holiday afternoon. The views from the cliffs above here, looking out over the bay and towards St. David's Head were magnificent.

It was already decided that Tuesday would be a walking day. Though actually 7 of us went out on the bikes all morning and walked in the afternoon, Maurice went out on his bike all day, and Mick & Rose went off by car to see if they could buy a new block for the tandem and then spent the afternoon trying it out. The morning ride was primarily to do some shopping in Narbeth, but Iris managed to take in three bits of rough stuff on the way. We went south following the Eastern Cleddau from Gelli via bridleway to Holgan where we crossed on the road bridge and turned south again on a track to Robeston Wathen. The track was low lying and the river not far to the right of us; comments were heard about the possibility of this being a water lane in wet weather when we started meeting a few wet patches. Next thing we know there is a full river in front of us - one of the tributaries of the Cleddau. What to do - turn back, wade across? We were discussing what to do when Pete pointed out a parallel footpath, which meant that there must be a bridge and we were soon across the water and safe as the track climbed from here to the road. The final piece of roughstuff was much better, being a tarmac most of the way. The first part - a steep descent - was concrete and very narrow, until we reached the ford at the bottom where the tarmac took over for the run into Narbeth for coffee.

Shopping over it was back to camp for lunch and then into the cars for a short drive to Rosebush. From here we walked up the side of the Pantmaenog Forest to the highest point of the Preseli Hills, 536 metres above sea level, where the views in all directions were outstanding. We then followed the tree line round to the north-west to pick up a bridleway that ran back through the forest and then out through the old quarry back to Rosebush where tea was had at the Old Post Office - well worth a visit. A short journey by car to look at the Llys-y-fran Reservoir before returning to camp for our evening meal.

I should mention that plenty of evening walking was on the agenda, and on one evening Peter (at the farm) dragged (?) us along to the Preselli Hotel at Rosebush - known locally as the 'Tin Shed' because the outer walls are corrugated iron - for a pint "from the jug" and a very enjoyable evening.

Wednesday found us abandoning camp for a night out at St. David's Youth Hostel. A couple of wrong turnings at the start by Pete, including one dead end, took us on a particularly roundabout route to Wolfe's Castle for (rather expensive) coffee at the pub. It was then a rather more direct route to the picturesque village and harbour of Solva, where, after lunch, we enjoyed a walk out onto the headland to enjoy the views of this beautiful area of coastland, much of which is National Trust property. Time for a cup of tea before the five miles into St. David's - the smallest city in Britain - and a visit to the cathedral. The hostel itself is two miles from the city, close to St. David's Head and under the summit of Carn Llidi - which we walked part way up in the evening for views of the coast and islands. The hostel accommodation was fairly simple and we felt that the evening meal was a bit sparse, but the special Pembrokeshire breakfast made up for it.

Somehow I ended up leading the ride back and we wound along quiet minor roads on the north of the peninsula via Trevine and Abercastle, with views of coastline and inlets, to Tregwynt for coffee and a look around at the woollen mill - good refreshments and its free to look around this working mill. Then it was on, with a slight detour for views of Strumble Head, to take on some rough stuff, the second section of which (due to a map reading error) turned out extremely rough as we descended what looked like a water gully to Goodwick for lunch in a local pub. After a look around Fishguard, on the other side of the bay, it was a climb up towards the start of the Gwaun Valley and then back via Puncteston where, thanks to Iris, we got tea in the local pub.

We weren't to know but Friday was the last cycling day of the holiday. Maurice was leading us once again and we headed south to where the A40 crossed the Eastern Cleddau, then following the estuary we stopped at the pub at Landshipping for coffee before continuing via Cresswell Quay to Carew for a visit to the tide mill and then, after lunch, a look around the ruins of the castle. An attempted crossing of a causeway was abandoned - due to a lack of causeway! So we continued to the southern coast and Manorbier (pronounced Manor-beer). With time against us we enjoyed the views of the castle but didn't go in, however on spotting a tea place as we were leaving we decided to stop for tea as there might not be another chance later on. Then it was a fairly straight route back via St. Florence (now the home of frame builder Harry Quinn - or so we are told) and then Narbeth in time to shower and change for dinner.

We had decided that a meal out at Rosebush would be nice to end the week, but the Old Post office had a wedding reception on Saturday so we decided to go on Friday night instead. We were slightly concerned when the owner showed us the seven page article about them in Country Life. But we needn't have worried, the food was excellent and plenty of it and - most important - not exorbitantly priced. Some people would have considered the starters a main course! Good home cooking with plenty of vegetables, and they also specialize in vegetarian dishes. If you're ever in the area you should go there - but book first!

Saturday dawned grey and very wet and the proposed ride to Newcastle Emlyn turned into a car journey. A visit to the falls at Cenarth first and then nearby Felin-Geri with its working water mill and craft shops. Lunch at Newcastle Emlyn and a wander round the town and castle was followed by a visit to the fascinating Museum of the Welsh Woollen Industry at Drefach.

The end of our week had come and soon we would be driving back home. We had had a good week, enjoying the quiet lanes and hills (well looking at them!) and Pete and Iris enthused over the abundance of wild flowers in the hedgerows. Not the same as the 'real' Wales (the mountains and valleys) according to Pete, but still well worth a visit.

The First East Sussex Firemans Randonnee

A most successful first year for this event arranged, by Geoff Boxall with help from Roger Bradgate and others, with the intention of forging better links with A.S.P.T.T. Dieppe Cyclo. The French cyclists had been met from the boat by Geoff and Roger who, together with Clifford, had spent the night in Newhaven sleeping on David & Susan's floor. Not a bad day weather wise, a bit of drizzle as we headed out of Newhaven, but this soon cleared and we were soon moving along quite well via Ditchling Beacon, Ditchling village, North Chailey, Nutley and on to Crowborough Fire Station and an excellent lunch, mainly prepared by Roger's wife - oh, and we mustn't forget Yub's marvellous beer! We then had to tear ourselves away for the ride back, slightly more straight forward and not too hilly. Jarvis Brook, Butcher's Cross, Cross in Hand, then through the lanes via Chiddingly and Ripe to the A27 at Firle, and back down to Newhaven Fire Station. The only drawback was the lack of tea and cakes at the finish, but otherwise a very enjoyable day out.

Following the ride Geoff Received the following letter and article from Jean Lecolier leader of the French riders. (Many thanks to Maggie Jakeman for the translation, Ed.)

A.S.P.T.T. Dieppe, Cyclo
Lecolier Jean Andre
76208 Dieppe Pa1

29.04.1989

To Geoffrey Boxall

Dear English Cycling Friends,
Despite the fatigue of the boat journey and your randonnee we had a magnificent day and we thank you sincerely, hoping that you will have as good a time when you come to Dieppe for the 6th Randonnee des Postiers.

We were taken aback by the warmth of your welcome; from the English breakfast, to the English lunch and your friendliness from our arrival to our departure.

A big kiss to the women who prepared the meal.

You will find enclosed an article from "Paris-Normandie" (150,000 readers) from Saturday 29th. [reprinted below, Ed.]. If you have any photos from the randonnee could you send them to us and we will pay you when you come to Dieppe.

In the same envelope there are some postcards for the firemen from Newhaven and Crowborough and for the man who gave us the beer.

As usual you can write to us - Post Paid, B7ASPTT, Dieppe.

Thank you again, till 17th September and next year, best sporting wishes.

J. A. Lecolier

A.S.P.T.T. Dieppe Cyclo in England (translated and reprinted from 'Paris-Normandie')

For this first group event, A.S.P.T.T. Dieppe Cyclo - Lewes Wanderers C.C., we left at mid-night, our bikes looking very small in the midst of lorries and cars. After a trouble-free crossing we were welcomed in Newhaven by a fireman from Crowborough. An unaccustomed English breakfast was very good.

Leaving the fire station at 8.15 am., 55 cyclists, including 8 from A.S.P.T.T. set off for the English countryside, rose covered thatched cottages, old farms, magnificent castles, all reminiscent of home and with horseriders, whom we had plenty of time to admire, everywhere.

Riding on the left we had to be careful, especially at the crossroads. Mid-way there was a welcome at Crowborough, and a large meal, typically English, prepared by the wives of the cyclists, was waiting for us. The cakes and the apple tarts were very good, we had to pedal hard to make up for eating so many. A delightful old couple, he with a round face covered with a white beard, she petite and rosy, gave us a beautifully coloured beer which he had made himself. After an hour and a half break we left on a long descent; it was cold and the first climb was a welcome chance to warm up. All along the route there were always English cyclists to guide us which meant we didn't have to get a map out. After a long descent we arrived back at the Newhaven Fire Station and a welcome shower. The club brought back a plaque and each participant had a medal. The day had been magnificent, we returned home very happy, we had done everything we had hoped for and this day, this first trip to England had been a great success. Taking part were: S. Sorel, A. Langlois, A. Bachelet, E. Lagauche, J. Lecolier, P. Maguerre, R. Beaurain, G. Boucher.

S & N Excursion Into the Wilds of West Sussex.
by Ann Rix

A change of plan on 29th January was not a good idea we found. The original ride was to have been to Cross in Hand, but it was suggested that we join the Tandem Club ride from Horsham. All agreed it would make a nice change and Ann was lured by the offer to stoke John Seviour's tandem.

An early start for David Kiernan and Lily & Stan Burke who arrived at Seaford at 8.15am to pick up Frank Drader, Robert Wimble and Ann. John went through to Lewes to pick up Steven and his tandem, it was as we were leaving Lewes that David realized "No Russell". Panic stations - much discussion - we'd all go back or wait. David said no, we were to carry on, so off we went through freezing fog to Horsham.

This was where the fun started, David was to have ridden the front of Steven's tandem and we were one solo short; this meant that Steven stoked John's tandem and Frank and Ann rode Steven's - never having been on it before - no time to practice either as the bunch moved off when we had fixed our bags on, with Robert on his solo and Stan & Lily on their 'Tommy Quick'.

Frank soon got the hang of the gears and all was well for several miles until near Southwater he changed the chainwheel and we slipped the chain. Telling the couple behind us we set about sorting it out which took a while. Carrying on we reached the main road, no-one in sight, we thought, funny where are they? Meanwhile Robert had stopped there to sort out his shoe and when he looked up, no-one in sight. He went up the road to try and find them which is when we must have come out and gone down the road. Neither of us found the bunch; Frank and Ann, not realizing that Robert was left as well tried the lanes in the area but in the end made for Bramber and lunch and met up with some of the group. John & Steven, Lily & Stan with the leader and the rest of the bunch came in later, some of them having had problems.

It was then that we realized that Robert was missing, the group thought he was with Frank & Ann and vice versa. We found out later that he had given up trying to find us and made his own way home.

The sun came out as the group made its way along the track below Chanctonbury then up to Partridge Green for more tracks to West Grinstead and the Little Chef for tea. As we left two pairs nearly went astray but managed to catch the bunch for the ride back through more fog to Horsham and the vehicles.

In the end it was Roy James who phoned in the morning when it was too late to join us, and David who collected Russell and headed east, who were the ones to have a good sunny day.

One thing it taught us, make sure there is time at the start to find out the route planned, as the rule we have in the D.A. of always waiting at junctions was not adhered to.



The LONG MAN of Wilmington



BARN NEAR HOAD HILL
WARTING.

On Sleeping In Country Churchyards.

by Roy James.

Cycling does not have to be only concerned with riding about the countryside and covering x number of miles in x number of hours, for now that summer is with us once again I can reveal a diversion that can be combined with it that enhances the act of riding to an astonishing degree. It is a pastime at once restful, healthy and cheap. It does not pollute the atmosphere and is one I sincerely hope to pursue into old age. In fact I would go as far as to say that as one gets older so it becomes easier to indulge in this particular inactivity. I refer of course to sleeping in country churchyards and for we Sussex folk, our own county probably offers the best opportunities for enjoying this facility anywhere in the British Isles. Of course a certain amount of subterfuge is necessary. After all, one cannot simply announce a day out by saying "I am just going for forty winks in a churchyard". However this is simply remedied. A sketch-book and pencil, a camera, a bird or wild flower book is enough to satisfy any curiosity about "What do you find to do out on your bike all day?".

The two pleasures compliment each other perfectly. Cycling can often induce a feeling of fatigue that automatically calls for 'a bit of a rest' after which one can set off with renewed energy. A flask of strong tea and half a dozen chocolate biscuits almost complete the requirements but there is one more vital piece of equipment, a waterproof cape or plastic sheet, for even on a summer's day the ground can often be deceptively damp. Nor is it a necessarily short season of pleasure. The end of March brings the occasional sunny period when a half hour rest at mid-day can often be enjoyed, (this year was quite exceptional, for on the 8th of February after leaving the Mid-week Section at noon, I enjoyed a perfect half hour in Chalvington churchyard, sleeping under an amazingly warm sun) while at the back end of the year, October is a much misjudged month and I have often snatched a pleasant 'shut eye' in the still autumn air.

Care must be taken however in choosing the site in spring or autumn. A quick survey of the church grounds can usually produce a protective wall or headstone where one can shelter from the sometimes chilly wind that can mar an otherwise pleasant day. Sacrilegious do I hear you say? Not a bit of it, for if there is a hereafter, those who have gone before may well find pleasure in sharing their last earthly plot.

There are no ground rules to follow. In fact it is probably better to let this recreation creep up on you than to actually pursue it. In my own case I have always found that country churchyards are ideal places for a spot of lunch and a seat in the sun. They nearly all have a south facing seat, often sheltered by the church from the possibility of a cold north wind. Then one day, cycling near Chanctonbury Ring and feeling ready for a spot of lunch, I caught a fleeting glimpse of a tiny church standing quite isolated in a field. I pushed the bike down a little wooded ravine, across a narrow wooden bridge and found myself in a daisy strewn field which served as the environs for All Saints Church, Buncton. Finding a spot on the dry, uncut grass and against the warm south wall of the church I was able to have lunch and look toward Chanctonbury Ring at the same time. Tiny figures were making what seemed to be an endless pilgrimage across the Downs to the 'Ring' hazy in the bright sunlight, but I had no reason to be envious, for my spot, chosen by chance, was remote enough to ensure a quiet half hour and I just 'dropped off'.

Since then it has been an almost deliberate policy to find somewhere for a nap and the Sussex churchyard can always be relied upon to fill the bill. Some indeed can present a dilemma of agonising proportions. Take the church of St. Simon & St. Jude at East Dean and that of St. Mary at nearby Friston. No more than a quarter mile apart the choice between them is a difficult one to make. However, St. Mary, Friston may just have the edge for the simple reason it lies at the top of fearsome East Dean hill and once having reached the top one can rest in the churchyard and then go for a most delightful 'whiz' in any one of three directions. A steady decline through downland towards Jevington, a thrilling drop on the main road and thence to Beachy Head or in the opposite way, over the crown of the Downs to the beautiful Cuckmere Valley and on to Alfriston.

It was at St. Mary, Friston that my cover was finally blown. Out with my two

grandsons for a day long walk, we stopped at Friston for our lunch and I had my inevitable sleep. The following year, passing in the car they wanted their parents to see the wooden cross with 'washed ashore' carved into it that I had shown them previously. "And that is where Grandad had his sleep", said one of them pointing to the spot.

So there we are... Think about it. Take your pick of the wealth of country churchyards that we have and one day when you are out on the bike and you feel a little drowsy just try my other recreation. You may be converted too.

Can You Help?

Several years ago while out for a ride in the Eastbourne - Lewes - Seaford - Heathfield area, I visited one of our country churches and discovered a roll of honour to the dead of the 1914-18, 1939-45 wars. Among the very English names was one obviously German one. Who was he? Why was he on the roll? I don't know but am curious to find out more. Truth to tell, I cannot even find the church now. Can anyone help? 'Church Crawler', Issue No. 2 perhaps.

Roy James.



The One Thousand Three Hundred Million Millimetre Event or The London - Edinburgh - London.

by David Kiernan.

This Year I decided to undertake a serious long distance event that would really test my endurance. It so happens that this year is the inaugural year for Britain's first 1300 kilometre ride, ridden under Audax rules, the London - Edinburgh - London. Preparation for this ride began in March and every weekend a randonnee was ridden somewhere in the U.K. to build up the 'miles in the legs'. I had qualified for the Paris - Brest - Paris in 1987 but I do not consider just the Super Randonneur Series (200, 300, 400 and 600 Km events ridden in the same season, Ed.) enough practice to undertake such a long journey, especially in a foreign country. So I did not enter, awaiting a long distance event in the U.K. With such an event it is much better to ride with a partner, some can ride without one, but I would find it extremely difficult to cope without the presence of another rider. As it turned out we motivated each other towards the end of the event.

The ride started on July 9th, at midday from the centre of Doncaster, the MENCAP centre, how appropriate, AUK had hired rooms for the duration. As usual a cavalry charge start from the 30 riders out of Doncaster to York. John Seviour, my riding partner, and I stayed with a bunch until York but decided the pace was too hot, 20 miles an hour, so we slowed and rode on our own, through Thirsk, Northallerton, gentle flat countryside flanked by the Dales to the West the Howardian Hills and the Moors to the East. Soon the first control, at the Little Chef at Scotch Corner, was reached and the easy part of the ride North was over.

After a good meal at Scotch Corner we pushed on to West Auckland to join the infamous A68 which we would not leave until Galashiels. We made good time along this nearly empty main road with its monstrous hills, Toft Hill, Tow Law, and numerous switch backs until the next control at Carterway Heads just short of

Corbridge. This lonely control on a high hill was reached as night fell and, due to our height and clarity of weather, we could see the lights of Tyneside and nearer to hand Consett. We enjoyed a pint of local beer across the road from the control and then pushed on, now in darkness. More huge hill climbs and high speed descents, through Hadrian's Wall and a rest at the roundabout above Corbridge, to be watched from the bedroom window of a pub by the licensee as we consumed Tracker bars. The ride was getting harder and the map showed more and more hills until we crested Carter Bar. On towards Otterburn along the switch back road. Breasting one rise we stopped for breath and to roundly curse the road, when from behind a derelict cottage a Randonneur cyclist emerged, leapt on his bike and shot of Northwards. He was taking a sleep and our arrival and invectives so startled him that he fled. We met him again later sleeping in a bus shelter in Jedburgh.

At Otterburn the Army was on night exercise, artillery, small arms and flares shaking the night. Very spectacular. Soon passing the edge of the giant forests of Wark and Kielder we reached Byrness control. A welcome caravan for food and drinks, it was now early Monday morning. Refreshed by the control we left Byrness to climb over Carter Bar as the sun came up. At the top of the 2 mile climb is Scotland and a much longer descent, almost 10 miles, at various steepnesses to Jedburgh. The view of lowland Scotland from the viewpoint at the top of Carter Bar was magnificent and the long high speed descent was invigorating, and almost made up for the hard ride up until then. We passed Jedburgh and Melrose before most people were up including some randonneurs who were asleep on the roadside verges and in bus shelters.

Soon we reached Galashiels and turned onto the gently climbing valley road to Edinburgh. The road surface was uncomfortable and the scenery ordinary and I was tired. Edinburgh was reached; the control was hard to find being in the suburbs and a filling station, most unsatisfactory for an event of this nature. We had to sit on sacks of coal on the forecourt eating sandwiches and trying to get some sleep surrounded by cars. It was now late morning on Monday 10th and it was starting to rain. We were tired, we had only just started on the event, things looked bad.

Halfway back to Galashiels we met the toad which changed the weather. We had been climbing out of Edinburgh to reach the valley road, the A7, to Galashiels, it was pouring, we were wet. We stopped at the entrance to a garden centre for more Trackers when John saw the toad crossing the road and in imminent danger of being squashed, and in all seriousness, born of tiredness, John said that if we rescued the toad the rain would stop. I thought, 'Try anything once', and lifted the toad to safety. Five minutes later the rain stopped and the clouds dispersed, we reached the watershed between Edinburgh and Galashiels and enjoyed miles of gentle down grade, things were looking up. A good meal in a cafe at a place called Stow, where we watched the proprietor eject about half a dozen Americans who were eating their own food on his premises. We enjoyed the richness and range of his vocabulary.

On to Galashiels where we overtook Evesham Wheeler Roy Goodbier who was at a low point and trying to cadge a lift with a Southbound lorry driver who did not think he looked tired enough. He joined us and stayed for the next 55 hours. Everything felt better, sun was up, well fed, bikes going well and we were heading South. Even the 10 miles of ever increasing steepness of the road from Jedburgh to the top of Carter Bar was enjoyable as the view slowly opened out. We were now catching other randonneurs and about 8 of us crossed back into England at the Bar together. A last look at Scotland and a 2 mile down hill to Byrness in the Wark and Kielder Forest to the control and food.

It is now late afternoon on Monday 10th. From Byrness we retraced our steps along the dreaded A68 to Carterway Heads. This time in daylight and the road does not seem so bad. Passed Otterburn, up and down, up and down, through Hadrian's Wall, down, down, down to Corbridge. Another stop for drinks and chocolate and then up, up, up, to climb over the North-eastern shoulder of the Pennines above Tyneside and on to the lonely control at Carterway Heads, more food and drink. It is now night time on Monday 10th. One last effort along the switch back to Tow Law, Toft Hill, West Auckland and the hills were finished. Down to Scotch Corner, we arrive at 2.00 am. Tuesday 11th. to find the all night food bar populated by sleeping randonneurs; lying on the floor, collapsed over tables or sitting red-eyed drinking coffee. 2.00 am. is a

rotten time to ride it ought to be abolished. Our new companion Roy, totally dishevelled and a bit bonked, rushed off to try and get a room for the remainder of the night at the local hotel, but the night porter would not open the door to the wild-eyed, weirdly dressed apparition on his doorstep. So we all slept on the floor until 5.00 am. Oh yes - other customers came in and sat at the tables and just ignored all the bodies all around them.

We set off from Doncaster at 5.00 am. and enjoyed the easy riding through Northallerton and Thirsk and we were just outside York before the traffic started. The lorries were a real problem on the A19, for H.G.V. class 1 drivers their driving was poor to say the least. After negotiating York we took the cycle path along the York to Selby railway line, slightly longer but no traffic. Doncaster never seemed to arrive, we needed a sleep and to sleep properly - not propped up in the corner of a cafe or shelter. We were just outside Doncaster when we had to take a massive detour to avoid some roadworks to replace a bridge. But after another slight deviation, as we could not remember how to get to the MENCAP centre, we arrived at last at 1.00 pm. Tuesday for a wash, food and sleep - wonderful!

At 4.30 pm. Tuesday we set off Southwards. The first control was not too far, near Newton-on-Trent, at the home of one of the riders, once again lashings of food and drink were consumed. We had met up with about 5 others at this control in various states of tiredness and despair, and it was a large group that set forth for the next control at Thurlby on the Fens some 50 miles South. The evening was closing in as we rode through the rolling Lincolnshire Wolds to the Fens at Bourne, then down the dead flat road to Thurlby. It was about midnight when we arrived at the Youth Hostel and again the control was well managed, with copious amounts of food and drink, and beds for those who wanted to rest their eyes. It was here that we met the returning lead rider, Graham Moulton, he had only 80 miles to go to the finish, we had 280.

After we had eaten we three set out for Potters Bar, 100 miles away. About one third would be riding the Fens until Huntingdon, when the ground would at least stop being featureless. At least this boring leg would be through the night. We cycled until about 4.00 am. Wednesday, when just short of Ramsey we were overcome by tiredness and lay by the roadside hedges on saddle bags and slept for 30 minutes. Then it was back on the bikes and off southwards. At Ramsey we refreshed at a newsagents that had just opened and tried to find out from an enquiring policeman where we could get a cup of tea, but as we were far from a main road there was no chance. Onwards we went through St. Ives, passing through Papworth Everard, now there's a name, to Baldock and the morning rush hour - the N.U.R. one day strike meant huge traffic jams, with exhausted cyclists weaving through the snarled up traffic. Total confusion in Stevenage, so we stop and take tea in a twee little cafe in old Stevenage. As this area was frequented by John Seviour in his youth he regaled us with tales of daring do and fast times on the Great North Road in the 50's - he never said whether it was the 1850's or 1950's.

From Stevenage the instructions for the route to Potters Bar could have been followed O.K. by cyclists who were not exhausted, but we were in no state for complications and a choice between the B1000 and the A1000 meant us choosing, yes you guessed it, the wrong route, still the wooded route to Hertford was pretty - pity we should have been going to Hatfield. We put this mistake right after a lot of cussing, by joining the race track dual carriageway from Hertford to Hatfield, an extra 12 miles, to rejoin the equally busy A1000 for the last 10 miles. After weaving through a host of suburban back streets in leafy Potters Bar, the Southern control was reached. It is now midday on Wednesday 12th., we have 26 hours to cover the last 180 miles, plenty of time - not when you are as weary as we are.

We took an hours break at Potters Bar, took on more food and drink and then remounted for the last Northwards leg to Doncaster, via Thurlby and Newton-on-Trent. Surprisingly the journey to Baldock was nowhere near as complicated going North, perhaps as we were on our way 'home' we felt more positive. Baldock was reached, the traffic had gone and we were soon on the quiet cross country roads to St. Ives and the dreaded miles of the Fens. The weather was as usual hot and windless, the countryside gently undulating but uninspiring. Soon we crossed the A604 Huntingdon arm of the M11, were round St. Ives and on to Ramsey and out on to the Fens. We bought fruit.

and drinks in Ramsey and set off. Roy Goodbier, who was fresher than John and I, left us to cycle on. John and I slowly pushed on and eventually reached Thurlby after getting confused at a simple junction in Market Deeping. My legs did not feel sore or aching they just did not have any strength, but they still kept going round. We were doing 12 - 13 miles an hour, although in that flat terrain with roads 8 - 10 miles long and dead straight it seemed as though we were stationary.

Thurlby was reached at 1.00 am. on Thursday morning. We had 13 hours for the next 80 miles. We decided as we were both dead tired to sleep for an hour. The sleep together with the meal and drink stop meant that we were not on the road until 3.00 am. and we must be in Doncaster by 2.30 pm. At least we would be off the Fens into good riding country. So we set off on the 50 miles to Newton-on-Trent, through sleeping Bourne, darkened Corby Glen to first light at Ancaster and to the shattering noise of R.A.F. Tornados practising landings and take offs from the airfield adjacent to the road - this was at 6.30 am.!

Nearing Newton-on-Trent the control position could be guessed at by the position of the cooling towers of the nearby power station. Towards these towers we crawled extremely slowly it seemed, and with a huge effort on our part - I was taking 'Nurofen' to deaden a sharp pain in my left knee that at one time, by the airfield at Ancaster, I thought would threaten my ability to finish. John and I have both agreed that short of an accident nothing would have stopped us at this stage. At Newton-on-Trent we had 30 miles to go and about 6 hours to do it in. Once again we ate and slept.

When we left we had 4 1/2 hours to our deadline. One big hill after Gainsborough to climb to the H.M. Prison at Gringley on the Hill. This seemed a massive hill, John punctured and a stiff wind got up, just what we needed. On to Bawtry and up into Doncaster. John's tyre starts to go down, I can see this, I cannot face another stop so say nothing hoping it will stay up for the few miles left. At last Doncaster centre, turn right to the MENCAP Centre, pull into forecourt, shake hands with John, up the stairs, give in brevet, done it! 94 1/2 hours - 1 1/2 hours to spare - Knackered - Really satisfied. John's computer shows 840 miles, Brevet card says 1302 kilometres, take your pick.

Next year the Great Eastern 1000 kilometres then 1991 P.B.P. - Happy cycling.

* * * * *

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE - NOVEMBER 18th