

ANFIELD CIRCULAR

*JOURNAL OF THE ANFIELD BICYCLE CLUB
(formed March 1879)*

March 2005

No.912



The Anfield at Powerscourt, near Bray, Ireland - August 1912

~ CLUBRUNS ~

hic et ubique

Phone Captain Bill Graham ☎01244 660858
for meeting place (or arrive at venue for lunch at 1215hrs)

April	9	Carriages	Gatesheath	<u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>
	16	Grosvenor Arms	Aldford	<u>Club 10</u>
	23	Forest View	Norley	
	30	Red Lion	Northop	
May	7	Carriages	Gatesheath	<u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>
	14	Grosvenor Arms	Aldford	<u>Club 10</u>
	21	The Coppermine	Brown Knowl	(Organiser: Keith Orum)
	28	Cotton Arms	Wrenbury	
	30	<u>ANFIELD 100 HQ PREES</u>		
June	4	Carriages	Gatesheath	<u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>
	11	Hanmer Arms	Hanmer	(Organiser: Mark Livingstone)
	18	Dunham Arms	Dunham	
	25	The Antelope	Rhydydmyn	
July	2	Grosvenor Arms	Aldford	<u>Club 10</u>
	9	The Railway Inn	Meols	
	16	Carriages	Gatesheath	<u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>
	23	Calveley Arms	Handley	
	30	Goshawk	Mouldsworth	(Organiser: Brian Whitmarsh)

Membership lapses on 1st March 2005. Please make sure you've renewed

21 and over: £15.00; Junior (under 21): £7.50; Cadet: £3.50)

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CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT CIRCULAR: 4th June 2005

New Member: Graeme Small 4 Holm Street STRATHAVEN ML10 6NB
Tel: 01357 529304

Treasurer's Notes

There are still some of you who have forgotten to pay your subs for this and past years. I would rather send you a receipt than a letter requesting prompt payment.

The 100 is not far off and as always a donation to the funds is most acceptable.

Mike Twigg

Clubruns

As can be seen from the clubruns list, for some of our rides volunteer leaders have stepped forward. Please support by attending. For Brian Whitmarsh's, meet at Blaenon park / ride (Sealand Road, Chester); for Mark Livingstone's at Cefn-y-Bedd Railway Station, and for Keith Orum's at Christleton park / ride. For the Railway Inn, Meols meet at the Eureka Two Mills.

Meet at 1030hrs for 1045hrs prompt

Race Results

WCTTA 25: 12th September 2004: Geraint Catherall 1.15.07

Horseshoe Pass Hill Climb: 10th October 2004: Geraint Catherall 15.15; Ian Billington 13.16; Jayson Rees-Hughes and John Murray (tandem) 13.21.

WCTTCA Presentation Lunch

5th December 2004



Seventy-five Association members and friends were in attendance at this annual event to celebrate the achievements of Association event winners and the presentation of the 'Brooklyn Trophy' to the Senior Champion.

Alf Jones Life President of the Association conducted 'grace' prior to the usual excellent lunch at the Heatherlands Court, Thurstaston. The Association has to thank Phil Guy, John Mansley and their respective wives for the hard work in organising this annual event and the raffle.

Derek Hodgins from the National Clarion CC was the Guest of Honour: a mere seventy year old with a 56-55, 1-57-32 and a 4-18-51 during 2004. Alas, he could only manage a '10' in the Association '50'.with the excuse that he considered the Shropshire course to be a mountain event! Derek gave an excellent twenty-minute entertaining address before presenting the prizes to Association winners.

Miles Jenkins Chester RC was 2004 Senior Champion with times of 1-05-14, 2-17-02, 4-25-48 and 244.66 miles in the 12 hour (overall average speed 21.263 mph). Our very own Geraint Catherall was runner up. John Mansley gave praise to Miles and Geraint for their enthusiasm and tenacity. Sadly there were only two finishers in the Senior Championship.

Anfielders present: Peter and Geraint Catherall, Chris Edwards, John Futter, Bill Graham, Keith Orum, Tony Pickles, Geoff Sharp with three of the Anfield on bicycles.

Clubruns

The Raven, Llanarmon-yn-Ial

27th November 2004

Returning from my spring to autumn break in Devon where I managed to keep reasonably fit through sailing, pot hauling and fishing. I was determined to get bicycle fit again. Filled with enthusiasm I serviced the machine, which had lain redundant in the shed for three years, fully intending to ride to Shocklach but two inches of snow outside the door soon dampened my spirits! Promises to travel by cycle to future meets were made at the Bull.

Saturday dawned dry and bright but with a cool breeze, I loaded the cycle into my car and was driven by Liz to the top of the Horse Shoe Pass knowing that in cycling shoes I would be unable to walk the climb. Moving very quickly down towards Llandegla was an exhilarating feeling after such a long time, unfortunately the climb to the Ruthin roundabout proved my undoing, the legs and lungs felt ready to burst and I was reduced to staggering and taking breaks to admire the beautiful scenery and the remains of my last meal. A smooth but very laboured ride then ensued through to the Raven arriving surprisingly early. Rather than wait until opening time I then rode up to Offa's Dyke at Windy Gap, descended and took a route which brought me out to the Mold Road, turning right and returning to the pub with a thorn in the front wheel.

Sitting in the lounge were Ben, John, Geraint and Peter Catherall who were all amused by lack of cycle fitness, aching limbs and colourful attire. Also the mystery of the owner of the dark blue bicycle with toe clips had been solved. Tecwyn arrived later, surprised to see me in cycling clothing and stayed enjoying the ale until Liz arrived to take me home in the car.

Postscript: Three more club runs have since been completed on the cycle plus a number of rides around Llangollen and Worlds End the legs are at last responding! The bicycle has now been equipped with new pedals, tyres (replacing badly perished) and Urban Protection!

Dikki Bird

Farndon Arms, Farndon - **1st January 2004**

Geraint writes: I set out at 10 o'clock and headed to Wrexham into the wind all the way. Turning east towards Bangor-on-Dee made the riding far more pleasant. I then made for Worthenbury and Shocklach, and so reached Farndon. As I was early, there was time for a few more miles up the road to Churton and back. John Williamson was the only other braving the squally weather by bicycle, although father reported seeing Ben Griffiths a wheel.

The Buck, Bangor - on - Dee - **15th January 2005**

If we still recorded clubrun attendances (what has happened to the Pickles' log?), I would claim three today. Clubrun 1: Gatesheath for the committee meeting at 11 o'clock. Here I was greeted with surprise: "We were expecting you next week, not today" they said. The cup of tea was good though.

Back at base I tried again, this time phoning the Twigg household to put me right – "Mike's gone to Bangor" said Pat. 25 minutes later (by car) I was in the Buck for clubrun 2. Geraint and Bill were just about to leave, but Mike, Dikki and Peter Catherall were up for a chat about *Last Tango in Aberystwyth*.

Then in walked Vivienne Sharp and Pippa Orum: "Where are Geoff and Keith?" Not here yet – worrying as it was now past one. Happily they arrived safe and sound having been exploring the lanes around Malpas. So clubrun 3 sparked into life as we chatted for another hour. The moral of this tale: always check your Circular and don't trust gossip.

DDB

Carden Arms, Tilston - **29th January 2005**

My club run count has dropped right down in recent years and one of my new year's resolutions is to put that right. Perhaps in the summer I might just make one by pedal power, but on this occasion the train took me to Chester on the

Thursday night, and, after a day of mother's cooking, I set out on the run. I had arranged to ride out with Chris Edwards who warned me that he was 'very unfit', due in no small part to working in three countries each week, none of which is the UK. Understandably family duties usually take priority at the weekends, and before he set out he planned to take his son Sam to rugby, then drive to the Mills where we would meet.

With these complications there was no time to do anything but a straightforward route, though as we approached I realised we would be early so a short extra loop was needed. Chris claimed he did not know where Tilston was – a tease surely – but I got my map out to work out a detour for 20 minutes. This gave Chris the chance to phone in for the final score: 10-0 for his lad's team.

We arrived spot on at 12-15. There were no signs of bikes but we could make out the contented figure Brian Bird framed by the bay window and already set up with a pint. Just behind us David Birchall arrived, followed by Twiggs Mike and Stuart, and Tecwyn, and then three keen orange juice drinking young racing men: John Futter, Ben Griffiths and Billy Graham. Mike did a good trade in CTT handbooks. Every year this volume kindles new hopes. Apart from open events I was interested to learn who would be riding the re-established club events. If twenty of us all ride all the events, will we all qualify for the six bottles of ale?

All too soon it was time to go. Chris and I joined David Birchall and threaded our way to Bunbury where David had parked his car. Chris headed back westward while I made a sufficiently circuitous route to end up at Crewe for 4.00pm in time to pick up a train back to Bristol.

John Thompson

The Raven, Llanarmon-yn-Ial

-

5th February 2005

The Raven has been an ABC venue for over 50 years. Some will remember going there as cadets, when clubruns left the Eureka in the afternoons with the homeward ride in the evening (home by nine thirty). At the Raven, the menu was always gammon, egg and chips (with perhaps an illicit pint of Burtonwood bitter to follow). And what could have been better?

Today Geraint headed up the Denbigh road to Gwernafield then climbed through Cadole to the Ruthin road through Loggerheads and over the Bwlch. But the climbing wasn't over: turning south the route led up through Graigfechan to Nant-y-Garth and so to the Raven. Enjoying lunch and the conversation were Peter Catherall, Len Walls (what Len knows about Jack Salt!), Mike Twigg, Bill Graham, and David Birchall with Mary and her mum.

Despite providing, in best boy scout fashion, the grid reference for this venue, only Ben Griffiths, John Futter and Billy Graham found their way into the hills above Kelsall. That is a pity, because at Summertrees you can rely on there being homemade food and a good pot of tea. This was a day with the wind cold and strong. Scouring Cheshire from the west, it had wafted the cyclists speedily on their outward journey. However, there was a price to pay: and away from the warmth of the café, a tough homeward ride beckoned.

Geraint writes: I rode a triangular route to Rossett via Wrexham, Gresford and Holt. At the pub were Peter, Dikki Bird, Stuart and Mike Twigg. Ben Griffiths, Bill Graham and John Futter soon arrived. After lunch the cyclists headed back to Broughton and I to Sychdyn.

The Captain's Weekend: Black Lion Ellesmere, 5th - 6th March

Ellesmere is some 60 miles from its Port, but it could be 200 years distant in time. The town that Thomas Telford tried to link by canal with the Mersey has not changed much over the years; which by comparison is all to the good.

On this cold Saturday, the wintry gale from the North West did little to help the cyclists. It was a tough ride for those who met for lunch at the Bull, Shocklach. From here, John Futter, Ben Griffiths, and Geraint Catherall returned home. That left Captain Graham in charge of Keith Orum, Geoff Sharp, Alan Orme and David Birchall for the afternoon: 25 miles in the lanes of south Cheshire, north Shropshire and that curious bit of Wales detached. Mike Twigg and Tecwyn Williams were the bag carriers. With Dikki Bird, they reached Ellesmere early, and by the time the cyclists arrived could advise on the best beer and young maids. The hotel proved an enjoyable place to stay, even if the rooms ranged from the opulent to the spartan. Particularly good were the inexpensive and plentiful food, and cheap beer. Tecwyn is still talking about it. And the maids.

Sunday was one of those special late winter days when spring seemed just around the corner. But though the wind had eased it was still a hard ride home. So tough that Pippa Orum was unsure, when Keith staggered in, whether he was propping the door, or the door him. It was just as bad for Alan Orme, for whom a bowl of broccoli and stilton soup provided additional assistance with 15 miles to go, on the editor's back wheel fortunately. All together a weekend enjoyed by everyone, with thanks to Bill for the organisation, and to Mike Twigg for looking after our bags.

The photographic evidence is on pages 15 and 16.

e-clips

- From Chris Vessey: Luck came my way in August when I managed to win the age band award in the 12hr National Championships in Lancashire. For the effort I have been presented with the VTTA National Champion 2004 jersey and was also been invited to Champions' Night in Derby (my home town) 15th January to be presented with RTTC Medal. This is big stuff for me and doubt it will happen again.

Photo: Sean Kelly hands Chris his champion's medal: age category 60 – 64, National 12hr Lancashire Road Club, 15th August 2004



- From Phil Whitehead: I hope that all is very well with you. Can you help? I think that I may have some helpers for the '100' and need to contact Stuart or Keith. Can you give me their email addresses? Some of the guys with whom I ride said yesterday that they'll definitely sign up to ride the 2006 '100'. Me too!
- From George Elkington: I am well, and doing quite a bit of weight training which is making my boat go faster. Will probably want to lose 7-8 of my 97kg before I get on a bike in North Wales again though!
- From Chris Shorter: Hola Dave. How are you all? I'm afraid that I'm trapped back in to European commuting. I've been working in Spain for the last few weeks and expect to work in Portugal from the beginning of April until Christmas. It will be another TT season completed from a distance. I did stay out for a weekend recently and enjoyed riding the Airnimal around near-deserted roads in the hills near Chiva, about 40km to the west of Valencia, where American Standard have a ceramics factory.

The main point of my email is a response to the (provocative?) little piece in the Circular about the future of the 100. My belief is that it concentrated on the wrong problem. The Anfield currently have little difficulty attracting competitors for the 100; in fact, it has been pointed out that it had the second largest field of any event in the Liverpool District last year. Judging by feedback I have seen on cyclists' bulletin boards, the 100 is very well regarded for the challenge it provides and the way it is run. The "product" is OK for now and we risk trying to fix something that "ain't broke".

The immediate problem we need to debate is how, with diminishing resources, the Anfield can continue to operate the event in a manner worthy of its “classic” status. For sure, we shouldn’t neglect ways of continuing to attract entrants but, unless we address the more pressing issue, we won’t have anything to attract them to.

Editor’s note: It’s the manpower to run the event that’s the main problem. The course is also problematic - finding roads that are safe, free from traffic lights and roadworks is a headache that very nearly forced Stuart to cancel the event last year. And there were problems with HQ facilities - resolved by using the Raven cafe and car park - but with no changing or showering facilities – surely desirable these days? That the event was a success was entirely thanks to Stuart’s doggedness. And we owe him a debt of gratitude for taking on this year’s event too. But who will volunteer for 2006?

* * * * *

Travels with an Airnimal – Chris Shorter

I worked in the UK during the whole of the winter of 2003/04 and, although I still spent a lot of time travelling, most weeks allowed me 10 to 12 hours training, a substantial increase over the previous year. Due to this, I was hopeful my 2004 season would show a significant improvement over 2003 - my return to racing after an 18 year gap.

All winter miles were on a 63 fixed-gear. I had been disappointed with my strength in my first season back and viewed a winter on fixed as a remedy. I duly had Deeside Cycles supply me with a basic track bike, which arrived mid October. The next Friday, I managed to get back from work about 20 minutes before dark and couldn’t resist a short spin on the new Weigh. This was quite exciting as it had been supplied as a proper track bike, without a brake fitted, and I had never ridden fixed before. I thought my legs were going to get ripped off when I unwisely attacked the hill down out of our village and nearly crashed into a car at a junction when I couldn’t stop. Clearly we were destined for a lot of fun together! By mid-winter I decided that I would also race on fixed and had a very nice machine made for me by MDT.

The 2004 season started at the end of February with the YCF 10. I recorded a personal worst 26.40 on a revolting day but I was reasonably well placed and didn’t miss the gear lever. Some more 10s on bad days followed before the season’s first local 25, which, for once, enjoyed decent conditions. Having not beaten the hour at all during 2003, I was pleased to record 58.04 on a 91.5 gear. The next ride carved another two seconds off. Then came the news that defined the rest of the season: summer working in Spain!

The project team were staying in hotels in the middle of Barcelona, enjoying its nightlife. I obviously stood no chance of doing any training there, and so found a hotel in Mollet, on the edge of open country. Next, I needed a portable machine and, never one to do things by halves, ordered an Airnimal. They are perhaps the ultimate folding bike and collapse into an ordinary large suitcase; they have 24 inch wheels and handle well but are a little heavy at about 24lbs. First use was in a Walsall RC 10 recording 24:23, confirming that it would be suitable for fast training. A number of people on time-trial specials were a bit upset to be beaten by a guy on a “fold-up shopping bike”! Next week I took it to Spain and enjoyed the hotel receptionist’s amazed look when I emerged from the lift carrying a bike, having checked with just a suitcase.

In mid-summer it was too hot to speed train but there was enough daylight to escape Barcelona for the mountains. My favourite ride included a 15km descent, with a fantastic mix of fast and slow bends, all superbly surfaced. But the terrain wasn’t ideal - either all-out climbing or manic descending, so my form at weekends began to suffer. Later, I found a large but quiet industrial estate, with nice wide flat roads and plenty of shade. This was perfect for fast work but had the drawback of being the local centre for prostitution; the roadside scenery was often bizarre and I soon learned that the occupants of cars displaying hazard-warning lights didn’t require any assistance from me!

Back home I did 57:23 (my fastest of the season) in a 25 near Newark before the lack of speed training began to bite. The plan then was to ride two 50 mile events before tackling the YCF 100 in early July. I abandoned the first 50 after 10 miles when I couldn’t see where I was going in pouring rain. The next 50 was cancelled due to road-works, followed by one which was abandoned before I had chance to start. So, I started the YCF 100 without completing a 50. With last-minute course changes for the worse and a week fraught with travel difficulties, the omens were not good. However, the day was ok and I was well looked after by my wife and Derek Roe. Derek thought me mad to ride 90-fixed, and in the last miles, uphill into a stiff breeze, I had to concede he might just be right. I rode at an even but unambitious pace to 4:20:39.

After the three disappointing 50’s, the Pennine was run off in excellent conditions. I did 1:58:06 but it was really the low-point of my season. I was well beaten by riders that I had the measure of weeks before and it drove home that my life-style wasn’t helping. There was some consolation that I had won the handicap. In August the Spanish office shut for holidays and so I had some welcome time at home; during which I did 22:17 in a 10, only 20 secs off my 1982 PB. I wondered what I might have achieved if my working-life had been a bit more sensible.

The Vatternrundan Cycle Ride – Phil Whitehead

The ride, in June 2004, raised £902.00 for the Donna Louise Hospice Trust, established as a charity in 1999, and named after Donna Louise Hackney, a child from Stoke-on-Trent who suffered from cystic fibrosis and died at the age of 16. I was proud to wear the Anfield racing vest that the Club donated, though it was hidden under waterproofs for most the ride, and I made a donation equivalent to the cost of the vest.

The Vatternrundan is one of the largest long distance non-racing rides in the world. The first event was run in 1966 with some 300 riders and now attracts a huge following. I rode with a small group after a training programme - the longest ride being a 100k Audax ride at the end of May. We flew to Stockholm and hired a van to take the six team members and bikes.

The ride was fantastic: 193 miles round the second largest lake in Sweden, with a leg of about 75 miles down to the southern tip and then 100 miles or so up the other side, with the finish at Motala. We started at 11.00 on the Friday night and crossed the line at 4.10 on the Saturday afternoon. It rained most of the time and we had a headwind for the last fifty miles. Throughout there was positive support from people lining the roadside. It was strange to see huddles under gazebos, raising their glasses, as we passed by. There were regular feeding stations and our time 'in the saddle', was 11 hours and 23 minutes. Notwithstanding the wind and rain, we managed a good average speed. Inevitably, there were some 'professional' groups of riders who overtook us at great speeds in formidable trains; more memories for me of the Wednesday evening 'burn-ups' from the Eureka with the Birkenhead North End blokes.

The scenery was super and it was wonderful seeing the sunrise at 2.30 in the morning. The event was well organised with feeding stops, medical and breakdown back-up and electronic sensing at control points. I guess that the organisation has to be spot on with over 16,000 starters! I was reminded of the CTC rides that were popular when I was active in the ABC: 50 in 4, 100 in 8 etc. There were casualties – some riders started too fast and “hit the wall”. It was very sad to see three step into the “broom wagon” in the last 10 miles.

We had a rest morning in Stockholm to explore the city where I had spent time on a research project in 1975. Not a great deal had changed: not even the youth hostel, which is an old sea-going yacht harboured on the lake, where I had lodged. Our team managed a celebratory cocktail in the famous Ice Bar in the Nordic Ice Hotel; most unusual and unique.

I shall feel very proud when I hand over the cheque to the Trust, so I want to say “Thank You” again for supporting me. Finally, a friend tells me that there is a 300-mile event next year in Finland. Hmm!

An Anfield Weekend to Dublin in 1912

An envelope containing twenty old photographs was the starting point for this sortie into the archive. Only one was dated, faintly in pencil: *Bray 1912*. Knowing that the ABC regularly visited Ireland in those days, it was a short step to the September 1912 Circular and an article titled “*In Erin’s Isle*”. Described is an August weekend tour to the Irish Road Club’s 100 mile time trial near Dublin. The author evokes a wonderful atmosphere, which the photos augment. What was a surprise was how well the photos match the writing. Cycling photography was very much in its infancy in the years before WW1, and early snapshots like these are rare: cameras were still relatively big and awkward to carry when touring. Indeed the article refers to the exposure “of a large number of photographic plates”. With typical Anfield understatement, the author confesses to “*operating a very doubtful camera, which he appeared to know nothing at all about*”.

The weekend started on the overnight boat from Liverpool, arriving in Dublin on Saturday 4th August for breakfast: “*By 10.30am, we were outside the offices of the “Irish Cyclist”¹ where the party met the editor and Doyle of the IRC, whose arrival was “the signal for Murphy to expose the first of a large number of photographic plates”*”.



¹ The words can just be seen on the notice behind the cyclists.



After lunch at Collins' Hotel Enniskerry, *"and more photographs, a start was made for Powerscourt, and it was here that we met Mecredy and party, who were on a cycle camping expedition. They rode with us through the demesne to the waterfall, passing the back of the mansion which is said to contain the greatest and most valuable collection of art treasures in the Kingdom, the late Earl having practically beggared himself to enrich himself in that direction."*



"We finally bade goodbye at the foot of the hill to Tinnahinch. We very wisely walked this hill. Meanwhile Murphy had done a tremendous lot in the snapshot line, both going to, at and returning from the waterfall."



“Shortly after resuming the ride, Crow had the misfortune to burst a tyre ...; more photographs and a splendid opportunity to jeer at a wonderful brake fitment, which Crow said, was alright for a touring machine ..”.

There followed *“a wonderfully fast run”* through Kilmacanogue to Bray. After tea on the front at Lacy’s Hotel and a walk to Bray Head, the party returned to Dublin for dinner and an evening at the Empire Theatre where they *“witnessed quite a good bill, Maidie Scott being the principle attraction”*.

On Sunday it rained all day, so riding was abandoned for “*amusements indoors*”: “*The manageress of the hotel very kindly handed over the key of the billiards room to Crowcroft, who made a splendid saloon keeper, and, as the good lady herself said, he handed her more money than ever had been taken before on a Sunday for billiards*”.

The day ended with a visit to a “*Picture Palace, these places always being open on a Sunday in Dublin*”.

The race took place on Monday 6th August. Riding for the Anfield were Fred Lowcock, McCann, Bentley and Grimshaw, as far as can be ascertained from the article. The author grumbles comprehensively about the roads, the marshalling, the handicapping and the starting-order of the riders. Notwithstanding, “*as a competitor*”, he concludes: “*if anyone asks me to go to Ireland next August, even to try over these roads, for the honour of the ABC, I shall say ‘Cert’nly’.*”

* * * * *

From the Captain's weekend



Alan Orme treats the old maid at the Black Lion, Ellesmere



Whitewell, 5th March 2005: Geoff Sharp, Alan Orme, Billy Graham and Keith Orum: "Where did you say Ben is?"



Whitewell Whitsun weekend 1963: Keith Orum, Jon Vickers, Dave Bettaney, John Farrington, John Whelan, Peter Jones (with Jeff Mills and David Skillen)

ANFIELD CIRCULAR

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(formed March 1879)*

June 2005

No.913



President Tony Pickles awarding the Club Champion Cup to Chris Shorter

~ CLUBRUNS ~

hic et ubique

Phone Captain Bill Graham ☎01244 660858
for meeting place (or arrive at venue for lunch at 1215hrs)

June	18	Dunham Arms	Dunham	
	25	The Antelope	Rhydydmyn	
July	2	Grosvenor Arms	Aldford	<u>Club 10</u>
	9	The Railway Inn	Meols	
	16	Carriages	Gatesheath	<u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>
	23	Farndon Arms	Farndon	<i>MRC 24 start</i>
	30	Goshawk	Mouldsworth	
				<i>(Organiser: Brian Whitmarsh)</i>
August	6	Grosvenor Arms	Aldford	<u>Club 10</u>
	13	Loggerheads Café	Loggerheads	
	20	The Yew Tree	Spurstow	
	27	Carriages	Gatesheath	<u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>
September	3	Cock O'Barton	Barton	
	10	Stanley Arms	Anderton Boat Lift	
	17	Grosvenor Arms	Aldford	<u>Club 10</u>
	24	Abbey Arms	Delamere	
October	1	<u>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</u>		
		Carriages Gatesheath <u>1130hrs</u>		
	8	The Buck	Bangor on Dee	
	14 – 15	<u>Autumn Tints Weekend – Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfylllyn</u>		
	22	Calveley Arms	Handley	
	29	Old Town Vaults	Whitchurch	

Subscriptions

21 and over: £15.00; Junior (under 21): £7.50; Cadet: £3.50)

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CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT CIRCULAR: 3rd September 2005

Treasurer's Note

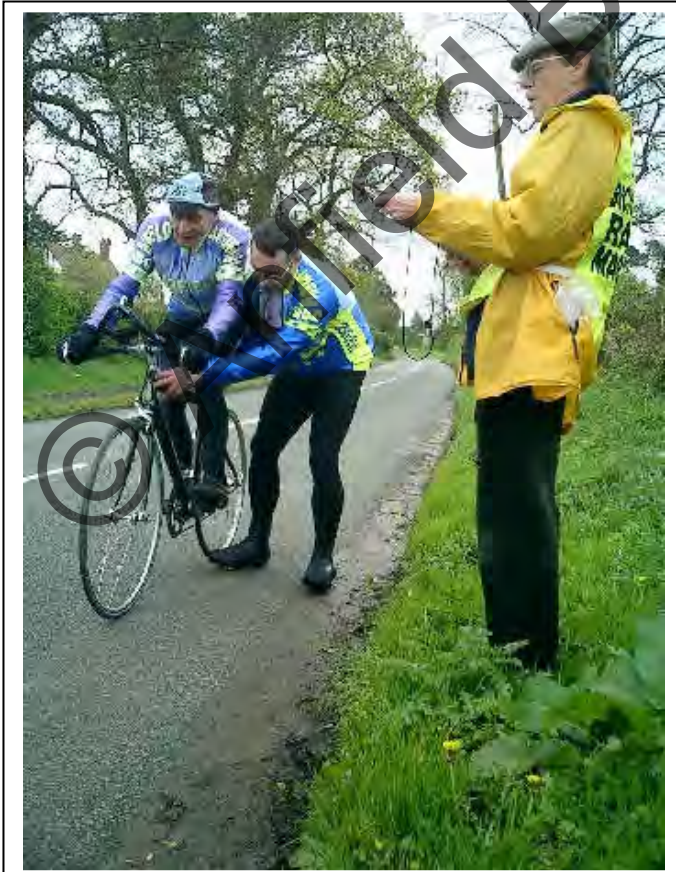
October the first draws near. Yes, it's subs time again. As your treasurer I would be most grateful to those of you who pay by cheque to pay on the due date.

CTT Handbooks: Please let me have your order by the end of October.

May I on behalf of the Club thank all cake-makers and Mary and Pat who dispensed the tea, coffee and cakes. Over 100 cups of tea or coffee were given FOC to the riders. The Club received £175.40 from the "canteen" with no cost to itself. Well done. My personal thanks to Duncan who took over when I wilted. His son and my grandson Alex helped a great deal. Again my thanks to you all.

Autumn Tints Weekend 14th - 15th October
We have reserved the Cain Valley Hotel again. Bed and breakfast £30. Booking to Teowyn Williams
01829 271091

Racing Secretary's Report



Cheshire Roads Club 14, 6th March:
Ben 41.04, Geraint 40.03

BNE22 25th March: Graham
Thompson 54.24, Ian Billington 57.04,
Ben 1.01.52, Geraint 1.02.11

WCTTA 25 3rd April: Ben 1.13.50,
Geraint 1.13.18

WRC MTT 24th April: Graham
Thompson 1.29.48

WCTTA 30 1st May: Ben 1.23.46,
Geraint 1.25.50, Ian Billington 1.20.29

South Pennine RC 25 15th May:
Geraint 1.04.41

Club 10 miles Events

12th March: Ben 29.19, Geraint
29.19

16th April: Ben 27.05, Geraint
28.11

14th May: Geraint 28.54

The Anfield and Liverpool Football Club

The Anfield Bicycle Club's second President was John Houlding, brewer, sometime Mayor of Liverpool, consul to Istanbul, and founder of Liverpool Football Club. So it gives us the greatest pleasure to announce that our link with Liverpool FC for so long broken, has now been re-forged, thanks to John Houlding's great grandson Glynn Stockdale. We are also delighted to congratulate the Anfield team on winning the European Cup, and bringing it back to Liverpool permanently. A better home we cannot imagine. For those interested the cup is on display at Liverpool Football Club's Museum at Anfield, via Stephen Done, LFC's museum curator.



*Football matches were a feature of the Anfield's winter programme in the 1880s and 1890s: In this photo from the W M Owens collection the ABC team poses with ball and mascot in front of goal at Hunt's Cross, November 1899. The magazine **British Sport** (surprisingly confused about the game) recorded the arrangements for the December 1893 match:*

"The Anfield Bicycle Club annual game of football is down for decision next month, and being eagerly looked forward to by the club's champion "leather hunters". Alf Deakin spends all his spare time practicing drop kicks, whilst "Doctor" Carlisle "collars" everybody he comes across. Fred Bath is perpetually keeping imaginary goals, and Dave Fell holds a nightly scrummage with his little dawg. After the ball (football) is over tea and a social will probably be held at Knotty Ash."

Clubruns

Lockgate Café, Tiverton

-

19th March 2005

A lovely spring day. Warm sunshine, blue skies and light wind, ideal for cycling. John Futter and Ben Griffiths supported the run together with Alan Orme riding from Knutsford, and John Williamson who pedalled over from Chester. The Lockgate Café serves decent snacks in basic surroundings, and is popular with lots of cyclists wanting calories. But like Summertrees Café, which we visited in February, the venue received limited support from the Anfield.

Britannia Inn, Halkyn

-

25th March 2005

Peter Catherall writes: It was Easter and, whilst the sun wasn't exactly shining, it wasn't raining either. That is until the moment I wheeled my bike out into the open. Just a few spots, but I'd better wear my jacket. So in I went and got into cycling gear. Just putting my jacket on when I noticed through the window that the sun was shining. With politically incorrect mutterings, I put my jacket away, leapt on the bike, and sped off before the weather could change its mind again.

The first stage of my journey took me from Buckley to Sychdyn and then on to Northop and along the old A55. This is now quite a pleasant, quiet stretch of road until one is forced onto the new A55 by the Little Chef. I cycled on with holiday traffic whizzing past my right ear and ignored the turning off up to the Britannia (well, it was a trifle early for imbibing). At the Casino junction by the Springfield hotel, I did leave the A55 and rejoined the original road.

Then it was on through Holywell and the Holway on route for Lloc. However, just before the hill up to Lloc, I shot off left and climbed up into Gorsedd. At the church, I turned left for Babell and then left again just before the Babell road crossed the A55. This road takes you through Pantasaph and past the monastery. In view of the weather I was to experience later in the day, perhaps I should have stopped at the monastery for a quick prayer.

Soon, I was entering Brynford and passing gangs of men viciously attacking poor little white balls with metal sticks. Perhaps this is a way of expressing their bloodthirsty instincts now that foxhunting has been banned. Straight across at the crossroads and on into Pentre Halkyn and thence to the Britannia.

Geraint, Ben and John Futter were already in residence, Geraint having arrived via Bodfari, Tremeirchion, the (old) Rhualt hill and various other byways. Shortly afterwards, we were joined by Billy Graham, who arrived by car. Billy had, apparently, taken the most devious route of all of us. He had left

Kinnerton and joined the A55 but had inadvertently come off at the Mold turning. Realising his error, he had turned around and rejoined the A55. Unfortunately, he realised that he was now travelling eastwards when he should have been travelling westwards and had to leave at the first junction and resume travelling in the correct direction.

Whilst we were enjoying our conversation, we suddenly realised that it had started raining but, fortunately, it had stopped by the time that we took our leave. I climbed up towards Rhosesmore and then cut through the back lanes to Sychdyn. I thought that all was well. Then the heavens opened. I knew that I should have put that jacket on.

The Bull, Clotton

-

2nd April 2005

In October there was no food because the new landlord had only just moved in. But six months on, there was still no food, so we won't be here again. Still it was a pleasant spring day for Dikki Bird, Mike Twigg, Peter and Geraint Catherall sitting in the beer garden. A determined Mary Birchall asked for baked beans on toast: "Surely you can do that?" Her WI training paid off, and baked beans on toast were duly served. Followed by a coffee. Ben, saving his strength for racing, was reported to be in the café at Holt. Tecwyn meanwhile had turned up at Gatesheath very early for next week's committee meeting.

Gateheath Committee Meeting

-

9th April 2005

Tecwyn, Geraint, Mike Twigg, Keith Orum, Geoff Sharp, Peter Catherall and David Birchall were the minimal quorum for this committee meeting, even though the start time had been reinstated to 1130 to suit those who complained that 1100 was too early. We were in competition with the TV, a royal wedding and the run up to the Grand National, so business was completed speedily, lunch taken promptly for those who wanted it, and then away.

Club 10 and the Grosvenor Arms, Aldford-

16th April

This was very much a repeat of the first 10: cold and uninviting. With a layer of snow on the Welsh Hills gleaming white it was not a good morning for racing.

However Ben and Geraint gamely placed themselves under starter Keith Orum's orders together with three guest riders from the Chester Road Club. Stuart Twigg sent the riders on their way with a helpful push towards Huntington where Bill Graham and John Futter directed. Then it was down to Aldford where Mike Twigg officiated.

Ben Griffiths, Bill Graham, Geraint Catherall and John Futter braved the climb from the Cheshire plain to the hills of Delamere Forest on this bright spring day. And they all looked very lean and fit as they swept up to Forest View. John Williamson also joined the party, and we talked about music and his Johnny Berry (and Ida who regularly attended ABC clubruns in the 1970s and early 1980s).

Proving a point Mary Birchall ordered beans on toast (never on the menu but easily provided anywhere is the theory under test).

But it was Bill at the centre of attention with his tale of condominiums in Thailand, an abandoned lady, and his role in the affair. A well placed bar of soap on the stairs was Mary's proposed retaliation should she ever get the chance to advise the lady. So beware.

Red Lion Northop

-

30th April 2005

Peter Catherall writes: the Bank Holiday weekend, so the weather was bound to be wet. Therefore it was four wheels rather than two. I drove over to Sychdyn, picked up Geraint and on to the Celyn garden centre where I bought several plants. There was still time to kill, so we shot off to Holywell to have a look at what the bike shop by Hillcrest garage had to offer. Mainly lower end mountain bikes, but there was some serious machinery on display. Then a quick sprint down the A55 and on to the Red Lion. The first thing to note was that the kitchens were closed because of a lack of a chef. I had not been inside the Red Lion for many, many years and the place had obviously gone down hill in that time.

Geraint and I were the only customers, and we sat in the squalor, slowly sipping our pints of orange squash awaiting the arrival of other Anfielders. Drinks finished, and no sign of an Anfielder (or any other customer come to that) we decided to make our way home.

We had just left the car park and were on our way up to Sychdyn when Billy Graham and bicycle loomed into view. There was just time to shout a greeting to Billy before we had to move on with the traffic. I dropped Geraint off and, the weather having improved considerably, I believe that he did get his bike out and get a few miles in.

Also in attendance were a trio of Birchalls (David, Adam and Liz) and Mike Twigg. But with no food at the Red Lion, these four retreated to the Boot, just round the corner, where we were well looked after. Despite asking the barmaid at the Red Lion to direct anyone who even remotely looked like a

cyclist to the Boot, the two groups failed to meet. What a let down all round - and yet another venue is off the list. At least Liz was able to practice her skills as a campanologist by “ringing down” the bells in the parish church with some visiting ringers to whom she offered her help. After lunch it was a walk to the top of Moel Famau from the Old Bwlch. The Vale of Clwyd with all its little villages and the towns of Ruthin and Denbigh looked delightful, with distant views to Liverpool Bay northwards and Cadair Idris south west.

Club 10 and the Grosvenor Arms, Aldford-

14th May

Confusion reigned today about whether the event would or would not take place as a result of the closure of the Huntington – Saughton road. In the end (thanks to last minute checks by Mike Twigg) marshals, two ABC riders and three guests were on station at the appointed time. But no timekeeper, so Ben kindly swapped his competitor’s number for the official watch, and Geraint was thus our only man. With the race over, down at the Grosvenor, our hungry Captain fancied corned beef hash served with poached egg and salad. It sounded filling and tasty. The actuality however did not live up to the image, and he was visibly dismayed at the creation placed before him (and the price).



“I ordered corned beef hash not pudding.”

Cheshire today was swept by a gale, wreaking a fair amount of damage to the summer trees and hedgerows. It was also playing havoc with my average speed – 6mph and struggling. Outward the route led from Bunbury along narrow and traffic free lanes in the south of the county.

Dikki was first to arrive. John Futter and Geraint, who were next, had ridden on ahead of Peter Catherall and Bill Graham, so as to arrive on time and thereby humour the editor (for which thank you and much appreciated). Mike and Pat Twigg with Stuart and Debbie completed the party. The talk was mostly about the final arrangements for the 100. We also enjoyed Dikki's stories about his summer days in Devon lobster fishing and messing about in boats.

For the homeward ride, the wind was on the left shoulder to start with, but from Bickerton, for the editor at least, it was dead behind. I glanced at the computer: 25s maintained easily all the way back to Bunbury. What a contrast from the morning.

The second organised ride sadly went the way of the first (to the Coppermine, Brown Knowl), with the "volunteer" not available on the day. There was also confusion at the Cefn-y-Bedd rendez-vous which led to the Catheralls (father and son) riding five minutes ahead on the road of Bill Graham, Geoff Sharp and Karl Nelson (on holiday from his base in Germany). What a shame.

These difficulties did not affect the editor who enjoyed bowling along the lanes of south Cheshire and north Shropshire from Bunbury. The hedgerows and banks are prolific this year, and with the sun warming may blossom and fresh cut hay, the cycling was very pleasant via Peckforton, Malpas and the Wyches.

It's some years since last we had a clubrun to Hanmer, and the pub (now refurbished) serves good food. On my arrival Mike Twigg was at the bar, so my timing was exactly right to have a pint offered me. Sandwiches, omelettes and gammon and egg were on the menu. There followed a brief look around the old church which overlooks the mere, before the retracing of outward journeys.

* * * * *

The 106th 100

Just 17 seconds separated the fastest three riders, prompting the *Daily Telegraph* to report “last year’s winner Nik Gardiner was edged into second place in the closest top-three finish on record in the classic Anfield BC (Liverpool) 100-mile time trial first held in 1889”. The resulting times were:

- 1: Malcolm Cox (VC St Raphael) 3.54.13
- 2: N Gardiner (Timetrial.co.uk RT) 3.54.24
- 3: M Broadwith (Agiskoviner.com) 3.54.30



Winner Malcolm Cox collecting the winner’s trophy from organiser Stuart Twigg

Judging by the crowds in Shawbury Community Hall the 106th Anfield 100 was a great success. And that was thanks to the support, adaptability and co-operation of all involved in an 11th hour change of course. Every year seems to conspire against us and 2005 was especially vengeful. As the Spring Bank holiday weekend arrived so did temporary traffic lights on the intended course. Addressing this nightmare fell on Stuart Twigg. He had the daunting task of finding, measuring and agreeing an alternative course: then contacting the riders (all 117), and all the marshals. With the holiday weekend under way this was not easy, and thanks are due to all who shared the burden. Our friends Bob Williams, Phil Guy and Cliff Ash helped with the course, and Mike and Pat Twigg rallied round with much fetching and carrying and fielding of phone calls. Riders and marshals likewise all willingly adapted to the changes and work. To secure the event’s success.

We were fortunate with the day, although it was a little too cool and the wind a little too unhelpful for some. Nevertheless when no.20 finished ahead of the field (catching us by surprise) with a time of 3 hours 54 minutes off a 6 minute handicap expectations were raised that Dave Lloyd's 1982 record might fall to the scratchmen.

Shawbury Community Hall proved an inspired choice for headquarters and we hope that we left it in a fit state to be invited back again. Mary Birchall and Pat Twigg (with help from Mike) staffed the canteen, and dispensed excellent homemade cakes (for which our thanks go to the Anfield ladies and gentlemen who made them). In the hall, Alan Orme was our man in the firing line entering the times on the results board.

We spread a pile of back numbers of the Circular around the hall. When we packed up, none were left, and we take that as a compliment. On the other hand it reinforces the scurrilous opinion that the Circular is more avidly read by non-members than members.

The 100 is a great social opportunity to re-affirm friendships and to meet fellow clubmates not otherwise seen from one year to the next (or longer). Anfielders that I saw: Tony Pickles, Nigel Fellows, Dave Eaton, Brian Whitmarsh, Chris Shorter, Chris Edwards, Dave Jones, Mike Hallgarth, John Thompson, Mike Twigg, Duncan Rees, Tom Sherman, Glynn Stockdale, Keith Orum, Geoff Sharp, Geraint and Peter Catherall, Ben Griffiths, Bill Graham, Phil Whitehead, John Williamson, Hugh Dauncey, and Graeme Small. Dikki Bird, Tecwyn Williams, John Whelan, and John Futter were also out and about. Apologies if any else has been missed.



How many are needed to check the winning time?



Pat Twigg extols the ABC cakemakers



Malcolm Cox hopes he'll be first again in 2006

ANFIELD CIRCULAR

*JOURNAL OF THE ANFIELD BICYCLE CLUB
(formed March 1879)*

September 2005

No.914



Anfield tandem teams in Cornwall

~ CLUBRUNS ~

hic et ubique

Phone Captain Bill Graham ☎01244 660858

for meeting place (or arrive at venue for lunch at 1215hrs)

October	1	<u>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</u>	
		Carriages Gatesheath <u>1100hrs</u>	
	8	The Buck	Bangor on Dee
	14 – 15	<u>Autumn Tints Weekend – Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin</u>	
	22	Calveley Arms	Handley
	29	Old Town Vaults	Whitchurch
November	5	Raven	Llanarmon yn Ial Hill Climb (1130hrs)
	12	Old Fire Station	Malpas
	19	T'Ouse at Top	Kelsall
	26	The Liver	Rhyd Talog
December	3	Carden Arms	Tilston
	10	Dunham Arms	Dunham
	17	Lockgate Café	Tiverton
	24	Calveley Arms	Handley
	31	Copper Mine	Brown Knowl
January	7	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>
	14	Britannia	Halkyn
	21	Plassey Café	Eyton
	28	The Buck	Bangor-on-Dee

Subscriptions

21 and over: £15.00; Junior (under 21): £7.50; Cadet: £3.50

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CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT CIRCULAR: 26th November 2005

Treasurer's Note

October the first draws near. Yes, it's subs time again. As your treasurer I would be most grateful to those of you who pay by cheque to pay on the due date.

Mike Twigg

Autumn Tints Weekend 14th - 15th October

We have reserved the Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin.

Bed and breakfast £30.

£10 deposit (cheque to Anfield BC) NOW

Contact Tecwyn Williams 01829 271091.

AGM Proposals

Enclosed with this issue is the notice for the AGM. There are two propositions. First that we reduce the number of Committee meetings from eight to a minimum of four per year with the option to call more if needed. The reason for this change is that with modern communications we need fewer meetings, and we hope the change will also help improve attendance.

The second proposes that we re-affiliate to the CTC. The aim is to protect the Club's officers and membership as a whole from third party claims. CTC affiliation means the Club will be covered for third party claims. We see affiliation as a more effective means of protecting the Club than through a new rule. Most if not all of us are covered either as individual members of the CTC, or via household insurance. It makes sense these days to have third party insurance when cycling. If you are not otherwise covered, you can for £12 per annum opt for the wider benefits of CTC individual membership, thanks to affiliation.

Racing Secretary's Report

WCTTA 50 8th May: G Catherall 2.37.40

BBC 25 5th June: G Catherall 1.07.39

CRC 25 13th June: G Catherall 1.10.58

BNE 25 17th July: G Catherall 1.04.28; I Billington 1.02.06

MRC 24hr 23rd-24th July G Catherall 341.49 miles

SCSA 100 31st July G Catherall 5.13.53

NSW 25 7th August B Griffiths 1.08.43; G Catherall 1.11.15

ELW 50 28th August G Catherall 2.23.48; B Griffiths 2.34.42.

The 2005 Mersey Roads Club 24Hrs by Peter Catherall



It was that time of the year again: the weekend my car does most of its annual mileage. Yes! Geraint was riding the 24. Saturday dawned cloudy but dry as I departed for the race HQ in Farndon where Stuart Twigg appeared, hot from the continent and full of some nasty bug. He offered profuse apologies for not being able to help and beat a hasty retreat. Ben also arrived, and was persuaded to replace an inner tube for one of the competitors - very noble as this chap had once beaten him into 2nd place in a 100, and Ben has hated him ever since. Mind you,

I did see Ben filing away at the spokes when he thought no-one was looking. The start had been relocated because of road works, and possibly accounted for smaller crowds than usual. Geraint was off no.13, but did not appear alarmed or worried by this. The main circuit was Prees - Tern Hill – Hodnet – Shawbirch – Hodnet – Tern Hill – Prees.

The night was very dark and it was not easy to identify riders, especially along the Shawbirch road. Some riders just had the bare minimum of lights, particularly at the front, whilst others were like Blackpool illuminations. Nor was it easy for riders to identify their helpers in the darkness. I was especially impressed by one bunch who had a revolving light on the top of their car. This was no ordinary light, it was a swirling kaleidoscope of colours, and instantly identifiable. Another group had a home made warning triangle with red flashing LEDs around the edges and the rider's name lit up in the middle. 6.00 a.m. at lay-by on Shawbirch road and Geraint had just passed on his way to Shawbirch when Tony Pickles rang to announce his imminent arrival, and I transferred Geraint's wellbeing into the capable hands of Tony.

With a wide load closing the A41, riders did extra laps of the finishing circuit, further rerouted because of the road works at Barton. Geraint's 24hrs were up at timekeeper no. 2, Keith Orum. In the nick of time too - the heavens opened, while Geraint gently nodded off to sleep on the way home. Unloading the car at Sychdyn in the torrential rain woke him up though. Then for me it was the pub for a well earned drink. The only problem was that the barmaid kept telling me to go home as sleeping wasn't allowed in the bar. Ah well, I don't know about Geraint and his 341.49 miles, but I enjoyed it. So here's to next year. I would also like to thank Tony Pickles for his support.

e-Clips

- The Anfield Circular will be 100 years old next March. How to celebrate? Ideas to the editorial office please. Can anyone provide photos from the 1970s and 1980s please?
- Google “Anfield+Bicycle+Club” and you will be surprised by what you find: a couple of dozen entries, including links to the National Cycling Archive, Bootle Harriers and John Thompson’s and Chris Shorter’s winning times in recent events.

Clubruns

Roseland Inn, Cornwall

-

21st May 2005

John and I finally took advantage of a postponed Cornish mini-break just before leaving on our main tour abroad, which served to refresh my memory of the pain involved in hill-climbing, even on the back of a tandem. We alighted from the train at St.Erth late on the Thursday night and cycled the few miles to our B and B in St.Ives which was at the top of a short but emphatic 1 in 3. After “doing a bit of art” (John) i.e. visiting Tate St.Ives and Barbara Hepworth's house and fantastic garden, full of giant-size versions of the plants we have at home, we used Friday to explore the tiny coastal roads towards Land's End, which John was keen to visit. I managed to dissuade him, not wanting the peace and beauty of this still quiet corner to be marred by what has become a blot on the landscape. We followed the cycle track along by St.Michael's Mount and then went to find my childhood home in the little village of St.Hilary. Fifty six years later the same person lives next door and remembers the 4 year-old me! We stayed that evening with old friends near Helston, who prepared us a magnificent crab and lobster salad.

We had arranged to meet Adam and Liz Birchall next day on the Roseland peninsula, and by happy coincidence Dave and Mary were visiting them then, so we reckoned we had enough of a quorum to warrant a write-up, and claim the most southerly clubrun. As we raced down the slope to catch the docked King Harry ferry we found Adam, Liz and Dave about to embark, and Mary on board in the car, so - no need to search for the pub. After a good lunch and catch-up of news we cycled together till our ways parted.

Our tour then took us via the Eden Project where we missed some rain, which thundered on the dome roofs, over Bodmin, along cycleways near the Camel estuary to Port Isaac for our final night. We had hoped to take in Tintagel too, but with a train to catch in Plymouth that evening, we decided it must be left for another tour.

Maggie White

It had been a week of very hot, sunny weather. Then it was Glastonbury and we all know what that means. Actually, we got off very lightly here in north Wales: no thunder and lightning, or rain until Friday evening.

But Saturday dawned dry though overcast and miserable. I rode from Buckley, through New Brighton to Sychdyn, Blackbrook and Rhydygoleu. Here I made for the Mold - Gwernaffield road, and the single track lane that runs along the tops of the hills before dropping down into Rhydymywyn.

With time to kill I cycled to Hendre and back before pulling up outside the Antelope. Bill Graham arrived next. He had cycled through Northop and along the old and new A55. Meanwhile Geraint was mile-eating: climbing through Gwernaffield and Cadole and over the Bwlch to Llanbedr D C. There, he continued through Llandyrnog to Bodfari, Tremeirchion, and, by a series of virtually uncharted lanes, somehow made his way to Rhydymywyn.

The most famous visitor to Rhydymywyn was Felix Mendelssohn, who visited the village in 1829 and it is alleged that his composition *The Rivulet* was inspired by the river Alun. The village was also visited on a regular basis by the English novelist and clergyman, Charles Kingsley (1819-75) who enjoyed walking along the Leete (a path along the tops of the hills that runs from Rhydymywyn to Loggerheads). I have childhood memories of a small motor racing circuit near the Antelope. It was mainly used for motorcycle racing and I had a friend who used to race Velocettes and Nortons at the circuit.

During the WW2 and for many years thereafter, Rhydymywyn was the site of a major MOD storage depot. There are vast underground caverns in the hills overlooking the village. Many a stranger was bemused by the sight of gleaming metal chimneys rising up out of the ground in the middle of empty meadows. They were in fact ventilation shafts for the caverns below.

There have been numerous rumours over the years that nuclear, chemical and biological weapons were stored at the site. Certainly, when Beeching axed the Chester-Mold-Denbigh railway line, the only section of the line to be retained was the section between Penyffordd and the site, thus giving the depot access to the national rail network. Several trains a week would visit the site right up till the final closure of the depot several years ago. I gather that the site is now leased to an Arab gentleman, a certain Mr S Hussein I believe. Back to the main plot: having been fed and watered, Bill, Geraint and I set off towards Mold. Geraint took a left up Blackbrook to Sychdyn whilst Billy and I skirted Mold and through to Padeswood. There, we parted company, Billy continuing on to Kinnerton whilst I turned left for the climb up into Buckley.

Peter Catherall

Buckley is located on the top of a hill of clay. This means that when we experience torrential rain of unprecedented ferocity, the water simply runs away and floods someone else. It also means, however, that whenever I venture forth on my bicycle, the return journey involves the ascent of a steep hill. The pleasurable prospect of a journey to the Cheshire plain is tempered by trepidation at the thought of the climb home. To me, it is the route back, not the route there that is important.

Careful study of the map convinced me that the easiest way to the far side of Chester and the A56 was to drop down to Deeside and use the cycle path that follows the old railway (NCN route 5). I had not used this before and must confess that I was most impressed. Crossing the Dee at Shotton, it goes through Sealand, Blacon, and Chester to Hoole. Though Saturday and gloriously sunny there were few cyclists on the path.

At the end, I entered the streets of Hoole and headed for the A56. Suddenly, up ahead, at the one major road that had to be crossed, I spotted a figure in blue and yellow, and on a bicycle. Another Anfielder? Yes, it was Bill Graham. Together, we cycled under the M53 and down the lane to Mickle Trafford where we joined the A56. With time in hand, we made for Barrow and Mouldsworth. Soon we were passing the Windsurfing Centre. Perhaps I am naïve, but the idea of a windsurfing centre in the middle of the Cheshire plain strikes me as being about as logical as siting a refuge for distressed polar bears in the middle of the Sahara. But the lane does exactly what it says on the signpost, and before we knew it, we were just outside of Mouldsworth.

At the Dunham Arms, there to greet us was Mike Twigg. After a chat and refuelling, Billy and I retraced our steps back along the A56 and Mickle Trafford to Hoole where we joined the cycle path. Together, we cycled along the path to Saughall where Bill left to make a detour to the Eureka. I continued along the path to Shotton where I left and climbed up the old Shotton lane to Ewloe. The upper reaches of this lane are exactly as I remember them from 45 or so years ago. Fond memories of summer Sunday evenings, when a pack of testosterone fuelled, pubescent, teenage lads would emerge from Chapel into the lane in pursuit of anything that wore a skirt.

Ewloe is only a staging post, a mere ledge halfway up the climb. And, the second part of the climb is just as hard as the first part. At least at the end of the climb, I have to pass my local (a 5 minute walk from home), so I park my bike in its specially reserved spot inside the pub whilst the landlord pulls me an ice cold beer. Now, I can look back on the day and say with satisfaction "Yes, it was a great day".

Peter Catherall

Stephen Marriott (son of the late Frank Marriott) and John Thompson were rare visitors today. And we were pleased to welcome Stephen again on 3rd September at the Cock O' Barton (and later at the Editor's). Ben commented he's certainly a chip off the old block, riding a lanes route from Audlem, with his dad's enthusiasm for exploring the highways and byways.

The Railway Inn, Meols -**9th July 2005**

It was a bright and sunny day that found me destined to play tennis with my youngest son Sam, a budding Wimbledon finalist. We took the bikes from our house to the local "free for all" municipal tennis courts and took our turn at waiting to play. After a while the blistering heat ensured that we got a court. A quick game ensued and victory for Dad, well that's the way I saw it anyway. As we prepared to leave, a knot of Anfield Cyclists sped by so we followed them at a sedate pace to the Railway Inn. It is not often that I get to do a club run and something else in the same morning!

At the Railway Inn we met up with Graham Thomson, Geoff Sharp and Bill Graham. They were very pleased with the route that Graham had brought them along from Two Mills. They had taken the "missing link" (Ledsham – Willaston), then onto the Wirral way, off at Parkgate where there was a perilous ride along the sea wall to Heswall. They then linked in with Wirral Way to West Kirby to arrive at Meols, having ridden along the Hoylake Promenade. They all seemed happy with the weather and the venue and a good day was made perfect by the arrival of Elaine.

It was nice for a change to have a club run on my doorstep and I think that everyone that came on the run enjoyed themselves, and that includes Sam who is more interested in Tennis and Rugby.

Chris Edwards

Geoff Sharp adds: After lunch we returned to West Kirby where we picked up a tarmac cycle path to Newton and the Wirral Way to Neston. The homeward ride was much more leisurely than the outward, which, following Graham along the seawall, bridleways and Wirral Way, had been more like riding the Paris-Roubaix.

Carriages, Tattenhall -**16th July 2005**

Seven attended the Committee meeting on this hot and sunny summer's day. Business done, Lance Armstrong's domination of Le Tour was one topic of conversation and the golf at St Andrews another. As for Armstrong, the conclusion was he had all but won, despite the mountains ahead, and another

week's racing to Paris. Present were Mike Twigg, Bill Graham, David Birchall, Ben Griffiths, John Futter, Geraint and Peter Catherall.

The Goshawk, Mouldsworth

-

30th July 2005

It looks like the Goshawk's move to upmarket bistro has been tempered by the practical consideration of making ends meet. Posh it remains inside, but with reasonably priced good food and beer and friendly service, a very pleasant hour slipped by. On a summer's day lunch on the veranda watching a bowling match is certainly something to recommend.

For Alan Orme and David Birchall, the route from east Cheshire led through Great Budworth, Comberbach, Acton Bridge and Delamere Forest. Half way up the hill to Acton Bridge is the Allan Littlemore Memorial Bench. Since Allan was a long time member of the ABC it is always fitting to pay respects when passing and sit on the bench. So today having cleared the bracken and nettles swamping it, we sipped our drinks there while recovering for the last hundred yards of the climb. Thanks Allan.

At the Goshawk, Bill Graham and Peter Catherall led by Brian Whitmarsh rolled up from the west. John Stinton also put in an appearance, and we were pleased to see him, though regret that he now rides under Wrexham's colours. This was the last of the summer rides with a nominated leader, and it is a shame that so few supported Brian today. Not that the others were successes either, and it must be admitted that members have not responded to what promised to be a very good idea. Alas, time for cycling seems to be in short supply on Saturdays.

Back on the veranda, we remembered the weather forecast threatened downpours after lunch. And judging by the gathering thunderclouds every homeward mile without a drenching was likely to be a bonus. The heavens did open, but, for the Knutsford two, happily not until after reaching home dry.

DDB

The Yew Tree, Spurstow

-

20th August 2005

The forecast for Saturday was good, so I was not impressed at being woken up by rain in the middle of the night. Still, at 07.00 it was dry, even if the clouds were threatening. The radio and the paper both predicted good weather, so I set forth at 10.00 clad only for a bright summer day.

My route took me from Buckley, via Kinnerton, Chester, Waverton, Huxley, Beeston Castle and Bunbury to Spurstow. Apart from Chester City centre, this was a very peaceful, traffic free journey. Bunbury and Spurstow are new

territories to me and I reckon that I wouldn't even be able to afford a dog kennel in this neck of the woods.

I arrived early, and not wishing to hang around giving the impression that I was a scally, from Liverpool, casing properties (well I did have Anfield printed all over my vest), I rode to Peckforton to kill time. On the way back, I met Geraint and we rode together to the pub where Billy Graham joined us. Bill proceeded to devour the thickest beef sandwich I have ever seen. He attacked it with the ferocity of an Islamic piranha celebrating the end of Ramadan. There must have been half a cow between the slices of bread and Billy did complain that the horns got stuck in his teeth.

Our return journey took us to Peckforton, the Bickerton Poacher, Broxton, Farndon and Holt. Then it was the well ridden road to Lavister and the lane to Burton Green. Normally I would then have climbed up to Caer Estyn and made my way to Buckley via Hope and Penyffordd, but Bill suggested that we travel to Penyffordd via Golly, (a real place and not just an expression of surprise). So, Geraint and I allowed the 'Evangelist' to lead us into pastures new. I must confess that this will be my preferred route in future. It embraces quiet country lanes and involves far less climbing. From Penyffordd it was on to Penymynydd where Bill departed for Kinnerton and Geraint and I rode on to Buckley and Geraint then on to Sychdyn. A most enjoyable day.

Peter Catherall

Anderton Boat Lift

10th September 2005

During our summer stay with Rosemary Farrington, we visited the now famous Falkirk Wheel boat lift. It is a stunning piece of engineering and on that hot and sunny day the place was crowded. In contrast, the ABC run to Cheshire's own boat lift at Anderton drew far fewer crowds and those of us who did turn out managed to make it a run of two halves.

We were determined to be there as we had heard from Stephen Marriott that Alison and Nigel Fellows would also be attending, and Bill Graham had promised to hand over an article for this issue.

And we did all attend as planned, though in Bill's case at the cost of a tumble when his chain snapped on the last hill before lunch. Unfortunately while the Editor and Mary were (wrongly) in the boat lift café, Bill, Nigel and Alison were in the far more comfortable Stanley Arms nearby, all of us wondering where the others had got to. So instead of Bill's round up of the summer, it's mine of today. Ho hum and the Editor's sincere apologies.

Mary Birchall

Santander to St Malo and the World Trike Championships

1981 was our first continental tandem tour, taking the ferry from Plymouth to Santander and pedalling up through northern Spain, over the Pyrenees, through France to Brittany and back home. This year we decided to do it again.

The reason? In June the little town of St Marsault hosts the trike world championship time trial. Past years had seen TV coverage and the atmosphere is unlike anything in the UK. I had long hankered after taking part, and this year I had an offer of a 'trike delivery' to the start, so I began to think about tour routes that would fit around it. A rerun of the 1981 fitted the bill.

That “other couple” with their five speed derailleur and pre-war tandem did seem to have the edge on us in the opening stages, but I put that down to the much hotter weather we experienced, especially on the climb out of Santander over the 1350 metre Portilla de Lunda pass. In France we took a rather different route and direct comparisons were not possible. Maggie is a force for moderation, and I did not want to arrive at St Marsault completely spent. I had no illusions about being competitive - it takes me a good three weeks to recover from a tour - but I did not want to “creep” given that there would be spectators all round the course.

We arrived at the TA HQ on Thursday, allowing for a rest day on Friday before the event on Saturday afternoon. My dead meat touring legs were the least of my worries, the mercury was climbing higher and higher, with the temperature forecast to be over 35 degrees for the event and, of course, there would be no shade. It was so hot it was decided not to hold the pre-event parade and I spent the last hour sitting in the changing rooms. With 20 minutes to go I had a cold shower, with 2 minutes to go I poured a bottle of water over myself.

Cinq, quatre, trois . . . , the countdown went, with seconds to go spelt out with fingers of the timekeeper's left hand - just like Le Tour. Off I went with the usually adrenaline rush through the first quarter mile, but at the point where I might catch my breath there was no privacy. As Alan Rogerson warned, with so many onlookers you have to keep trying. I came in with 41:21 for the 25 km in third place. Much better than I had hoped, due, no doubt, to the acclimatisation to the hot conditions during the previous two weeks. With the racing out of the way we had four days to reach St Malo, but the promise of a day at the seaside turned Maggie into a mile-eating maniac, and we made it in three. Planning another rerun in 2029!

John Thompson

Ed's note – when John described the race, he commented that a section of high speed dual carriageway was used. Sweeping down the slip road, he kept well in to avoid traffic – then realised there was none, the road having been closed for the race. The whole road was his. That's what's called getting your priorities right.

From the archive



From the 1960s; the Wayfarer Memorial, September 1962: David Barker and John Farrington (standing); John Thompson, Phil Edwards and Peter Jones (sitting)

Return to Jura 2005



An adventurous ride on Jura in 1999 whetted appetites for a return visit this summer to view the Corrieveckan whirlpool. These photos from 1999 show the landing at Kinnuachdrach at the north end of the island, and the track from the landing point.

ANFIELD CIRCULAR

*JOURNAL OF THE ANFIELD BICYCLE CLUB
(formed March 1879)*

December 2005

No.915



Anfielders at Betws-y-Coed 1888

~ CLUBRUNS ~

hic et ubique

Phone Captain Bill Graham for rendez-vous (lunch at 1215hrs)

December	24	Calveley Arms	Handley
	31	Copper Mine	Brown Knowl
January	7	Carriages	Gatesheath
	<u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs followed by Special General Meeting</u>		
	14	Britannia	Halkyn
	21	Plassey Café	Eyton
	28	Forester's Arms	Tarporley *NOTE CHANGE*
February	4	Miners' Arms	Maeshafn
	11	The Bull	Shocklach
	18	Cock O'Barton	Barton
	25	Ponderosa Café	Horseshoe Pass
March	4	The Buck	Bangor on Dee
	11	Grosvenor Arms	Aldford <u>Club 7 1130hrs Huntington</u>
	18	Carden Arms	Tilston
	25	The Raven	Llanarmon-yn-Ial
April	1	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>

Subscriptions

21 and over: £15.00; Junior (under 21): £7.50; Cadet: £3.50

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CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT CIRCULAR: 25th February 2006

Change of Address: Len Walls, Garreg Lwyd, Berth Ddu, Rhosesmor,
Mold, CH7 6PS ☎ 01342 780605

Treasurer's Note

Would those of you still to pay your subs (which were due on the 1st October) please do so as I do not wish to have to write to you asking for payment.

Once again I hold out the begging bowl for 100 donations. With prize list and timekeepers fees we have to find £500. This is without HQ costs, printing and postage – and not forgetting the £2 per rider CTT levy. It looks like the 2006 100 will not be as well supported as SPOCO's competition has folded due to lack of support, and the VTTA Championship, which we have run in our event for the past two years, has not been allocated to us this year. Which, summing up, means that we can expect a smaller field, hence a potential heavy loss.

Third party insurance via the CTC can be obtained for £12. If you require this service please let me know by not later than 31st January. The CTC require a block booking not piecemeal applications. This would not apply to new members joining the Anfield. Renewal of insurance would be 1st October and last a full year.

Mike Twigg

AGM Report

The current membership is 59 – a drop of 10 in the last five years. Regrettably three members have resigned during the past year. An aging membership, also widespread in club cycling generally, means that most of us don't ride bicycles regularly and renders us more unlikely to attract new members. The problem is not helped by the way our membership is geographically dispersed. Clubruns attendances have been disappointing but two successful and enjoyable weekends away did take place at Llanfyllin and Ellesmere.

The Anfield promotes the most famous Open 100 in the calendar. Stuart Twigg's promotion was very successful despite difficult problems before during and after the event. Members gave excellent support as did those of other clubs, notably Cliff Ash, Phil Guy and Ruth Williams. Our grateful thanks are heartily extended to all for a job well done.

Finally, on behalf of the membership thanks were offered to the Committee Members for their part in running the Club.

[This report is from Bill Graham who with Mike Twigg shared Hon Secretary responsibilities from last March.]

New Kit

Graham Thompson has created a new look to replace the current design (now over fifteen years old). Details are as in the enclosed leaflet, or you can opt for a much wider range by visiting the tiscali.com website. Tony Pickles (22 Llys-y-Wern, Sychdyn, MOLD CH7 6BJ tel 01352 759463) is our Marketing Manager. **Please let him know what you want – size and material - by 7th January. We need to know before orders are placed.**



Special General Meeting 7th January

“It must be made clear that the Anfield of today is an all-male club as it has been right down the ages. Strangely enough the Rules of the Club, whilst laying stress on the amateur status of members, say nothing regarding the exclusion of the fair sex from membership. He would however be a very bold Anfielder who so far outraged convention by proposing his lady-love for election, and while customary Anfield toleration of those in the toils would possibly save him, the probable fate of the seconder is too terrible to contemplate.”

So says *The Black Anfielders*, and, with these words in mind, though fifty years on from the first edition, the subject remains one to be approached with the greatest caution. I have often wondered about a committee discussion reported in the minute book for 12th January 1903 that amongst other things sought to discourage ladies from attending club functions. Whatever prompted the discussion nothing came of it, there being neither a proposer or seconder for the idea.

Looking even further back, in the 1880s, are recorded the names of several family members – listed as Miss A Beazley, the Misses Fletcher and Mrs Johnston (wife of the Rev C Johnston). We conclude, in the light of the evidence, that *The Black Anfielders* misleads.

All this is by way of background for the Special General Meeting at Carriages, Gatesheath (by Tattenhall) on 7th January at which we will consider the proposal to introduce a new category of membership, allowing us to offer third party insurance via the CTC to family members.

David Birchall

Club Events 2006

**Dates for club events are proposed (subject to approval) as follows:
11th March, 15th April, 13th May, 1st July, 5th August (Course D2-7 based on
the Huntington circuit) and 17th September (hill climb)**

Captain's Notes

What a wonderful summer we've had – I can't remember many better. Most Saturdays have provided ideal cycling weather. I think I've only missed four or five Clubruns this year. Three because of being on holiday in April and another to the Britannia was abandoned after about 3 miles at Pen-y-mynydd owing to very strong winds I simply couldn't cope with (being only 9st isn't always an advantage). Loggerheads was the venue for the other, but I doubt anyone completed that journey - even John Futter and Ben Griffiths didn't survive the prolonged torrential rain that day.

Weather permitting of course cycling is usually enjoyable but some recent rides have been an extra delight. I'm thinking in particular of the rides to Hanmer, Meols and Mouldsworth. For me the ride to Hanmer with Karl Nelson and Geoff Sharp was very special. The route through a couple of Flintshire's country parks and the myriad quiet lanes between Bangor on Dee and Hanmer was perfection. We enjoyed a nice meal in the company of Geraint and Peter Catherall and David Birchall. The journey back through Tallarn Green, Threapwood, Shocklach and Farndon was just as lovely as the outward ride. We are really lucky to have such wonderful countryside and quiet lanes to ride in. What more could one ask for?

The prospect of the ride to Meols was heightened by the news that Graham Thompson was able to join Geoff Sharp and me – and what a roller coaster it turned out to be. Graham through his knowledge of the roads and paths took the initiative to lead us along the Wirral Way with a few sections of what used to be known as "roughstuff". I found the pace a little swift and suspect that Geoff did too, not to mention the demands on our bike handling skills. Even so it was pretty good and exciting and in any case neither of us would admit we couldn't cope. On the day the views across the Dee were splendid and the colourful boats near West Kirby reminded me of what a nice part of the world that area is too.

We arrived at the Railway Inn spot on midday to be informed by Graham that he couldn't stop for lunch as he had to be on "shift" at the hospital where he works by 2pm. So he dashed off to Irby where he now lives. Could this have been the reason why we arrived so early at our destination? No matter we look

forward to seeing the “big fellow” again as soon as possible. Hardly settled in, we were pleasantly surprised to be joined by Chris Edwards and family all on bikes who joined us outside in the bright sunshine. They were off to New Zealand on holiday in the near future announced Chris. The journey back on much the same route at a more sedate pace was just as pleasing as the ride out, and Bill Page (ex-ABC) joined us en route for Two Mills. Another good day.

The ride to The Goshawk with Brian Whitmarsh was also a run to remember. I met Brian and with Peter Catherall and Geraint as arranged at the Blacon P+R from where we made our way via the old Mickle Trafford Railway (now a path) arriving at Mouldsworth as Alan Orme and David Birchall also arrived. We hadn't seen Brian for some time and so the conversation was even more lively than usual. And just before leaving we were joined by John Stinton. I should report that Brian is cycling fit and looking well. I know this because on the return journey I was taking pace behind Brian and John who were having a non stop conversation about old times while averaging 18mph. We look forward to seeing Brian again when he can manage the time.

Peter Catherall is another member who has taken part in most of the runs recently and as a result is starting to ride very strongly. Mind you I think I'm getting stronger too struggling to stay with Geraint on clubruns.

These are just a few personal highlights and thoughts on the club scene and no doubt those able to do some cycling will have similar thoughts and experiences. Hope to see more of you along the way.

Bill Graham

e-Clips

- We are delighted to congratulate John and Mary Futter on their Golden Wedding Anniversary. Our spies tell us that the event was enjoyably celebrated in Anglesey in mid October.
- Commiserations to Geraint who we understand did a cartwheel over a car that turned across his path recently. Geraint was taken to hospital for a check-up. Luckily it was nothing worse than bruising, and we are very glad it was not worse. With Geraint's record for bending telegraph poles, we would like to think that the offending car was a write-off, but it was only Geraint's bike, unfortunately, that suffered that fate.
- From Chris Shorter: I was interested to see the Anfield tandem pictures in the recent Circular, as Ruth and I have just acquired one too. Ours is a full-on racing model and was obtained at a bargain price; the only problem was that it was in Hastings and it cost more than half the purchase price to retrieve it! Here is a picture:



We have raced it once in a 10 and did 22:23 in a desperate crosswind. It was Ruth's first event for 16 years. The weather forecast must have put off the other five tandems because they all DNS'd and so we were gifted an open victory, Ruth's first ever!

I've also partnered Geoff Robinson on his touring tandem a number of times. Geoff was 4th in the BBAR a couple of years ago and, although he has been concentrating on building up his business, he is still monumentally strong. We always win but that hasn't got much to do with me!

Is the Anfield still a member of the Northern RRA? *(Yes – ed)* I have seen that one of the records is York to Berwick and we wondered what the mixed-tandem record stands at currently; the RRA website just lists the records (places to places and fixed distances etc) that each region keeps, without saying what they actually are.

Captain's Weekend

Enquiries are ongoing in the area of Market Drayton, Hodnet and Hinstock for the weekend which is proposed for 22nd - 23rd April 2006. I will need a deposit of £10 (payable to Anfield BC) soon and before the end of January.

Bill Graham

Clubruns

The Abbey Arms Delamere

-

24th September 2005

The day dawned crisp and clear and whilst it was necessary to wear arm warmers I decided to let my legs enjoy the sunshine. Shortly after 10.00 I set off for Broughton where I awaited the arrival of Geraint. He arrived about 5 minutes later and together we called at *Chez Futter* only to learn that John had already departed for a short ride.

Geraint and I headed off through Bretton and Gorstella to join the A55 at the Post House roundabout and followed this road to the Sainsbury's island. I loath this stretch of road, but it is either this or travel via the centre of Chester (which I tend to do if I am on my own). Then, it was up through Christleton, Waverton and on to Duddon.

Here, we crossed the extremely busy A51 and followed the lane through Duddon Common to just below Utkinton and then to Cotebrook. This is a very quiet, tranquil route that climbs steadily, but gently, to Utkinton before dropping down to Cotebrook. At Cotebrook we turned left onto the B5162 and followed this road across the A54 and on to the Abbey Arms at the junction of the road with the A56.

We were early and although the pub was open, we sat down outside until midday before going in for refreshment. A drink was not a problem, but they do not do sandwiches at a weekend, you can only have a full meal. So, orange juice it was with a bag of crisps and two energy bars. We had almost given up hope of seeing another Anfielder when Dave and Mary Birchall arrived by car. They went inside to order before joining us at our table outside. Mary appeared less than delighted with the service that she had received inside.

They had just sat down when Dave Edwards arrived by car, with his bike in the back and was going to do some riding after lunch. Although it was sunny, it was cool sitting outside so Geraint and I decided to make our way home before the colour of our exposed flesh matched the blue of our vests. I have since been informed that, as Geraint and I left from the front of the car park, Billy Graham cycled in via the rear entrance.

We crossed the A56 and rode up to Hatchmere and then through Delamere Forest to Manley, Dunham Heath, Mickle Trafford and Hoole Bank. Here, we joined the cycle path, coming off at Blacon and down to the Sealand Park & Ride and the River Dee and across the footbridge to Saltney Ferry. Then, it was round the back of the Aerospace factory, to Pentre and up through Mancot and the lower reaches of Hawarden to Penarlag and Hawarden High School.

This school is famous for two of its former pupils, a certain Michael Owen and me. Actually, it was at this school that I developed my love of cycling and first encountered the Anfield. One of my classmates and good friend, Dave Bennett, was a cycling fanatic and regularly rode to school on his light blue Holdsworth. This machine was the most beautiful thing that I had ever seen. I could think only of gliding through the countryside astride a similar bike.

His father was a member of the Anfield and encouraged my increasing interest in cycling. He once took a group of us young lads on a 2 day expedition during midweek (and school term time). We rode through Mold to Ruthin, Cerrigydrudion and up the A5. We turned off left before reaching Betws-y-Coed though I cannot remember where because it was dark by this time. The night was spent at a hostel before returning back to the A5, down the Conwy valley to Llandudno Junction and back home along the coast. All this on a fixed wheel!!! I was young, fit, and my brain had not yet fully developed.

From Penarlag, it was on to Ewloe, past Ewloe Green Primary School (yes, I was a pupil here and one of my classmates is now Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons), past the house where I was born and spent the first 18 years of my life, and up to Alltami. Geraint and I parted company here, Geraint going on to New Brighton and Sychdyn whilst I turned left up over the common to Buckley, my head full of reminiscences.

Peter Catherall

The Calveley Arms, Handley - 22nd October 2005

Ben, John Futter and Billy were on bikes. We were pleased to see Dikki Bird, with his dog, home from Devon. David Birchall also put in a brief appearance en route to collect Adam and Liz from Crewe station. And that was it.

The Old Town Vaults, Whitchurch - 29th October 2005

I rode down to Broughton and met up with John Futter and we met Billy Graham at Holt. From Holt we crossed the Dee and headed through Farndon to Tilston through the lanes to Malpas. The ride out was very hard against a headwind all the way. From Malpas we went through the lanes to Whitchurch. After stopping for Billy to get his bearings we arrived at the pub - apparently the birthplace of Gershwin the renowned composer. Dikki and Tecwyn later arrived on foot having had a lift from Dikki's wife. A family who had moved from Liverpool chatted with us. After eating we set off for home onto the A41 before turning off through Malpas then Tilston, Farndon and back to Broughton where I left Billy and John to ride back up to Sychdyn. Thankfully the ride home was tail wind assisted.

Geraint Catherall

This was the day of the hill climb, with Ben Griffiths timing the start, assisted by Peter Catherall in the role of pusher-off, and David and Mary Birchall timing the top. This is usually an opportunity for Chris Edwards to test his fitness against the clock and the contours, but he was conspicuous by his absence, as also was Keith Orum. So Graham Thompson and Geraint Catherall were left to fight it out. They reached the finish line together, which meant that Graham was the winner having started a minute after Geraint. For the record Graham Thompson completed the climb in 4 minutes and 2 seconds, with Geraint at 1 minute and 3 seconds.

We were lucky with the weather: back in Llanarmon the village basked in autumnal sunshine while all around there was rain. Waiting for the Raven to open, it was pleasant enough to sit outside. Ten was the complement, with Nigel and Alison Fellows, Dikki Bird, and Mike Twigg completing the party.

The Old Fire Station, Malpas

-

12th November 2005

Saturday dawned dry and bright after a week of torrential rain and gale force winds. I set off for Malpas via Kinnerton and Doddleston. As I cycled between Trevalyn and Holt, I could see that the fields on my left had been turned into a vast lake. The Dee was well over its banks at Farndon and had flooded all the surrounding low-lying ground.

From Farndon it was on to Tilston and then up the steady climb to Malpas. The last time I had come through Malpas (Wrenbury club run) there had been a vicious headwind and I had suffered a 1000 deaths on this climb. Today, I ascended like a true "grimpeur". I arrived with time to spare, so rode on towards Grindley Brook before turning around and heading back into Malpas.

I parked my bike at the front of the Old Fire Station café and entered. The café was full of tiny tots. A kiddies' tea party was being held and the café was full. I ordered a coffee and said that I would be quite happy to sit outside at the small table at the front of the café. Making myself comfortable, I settled down to observe the traffic mayhem that is Malpas. On a Saturday, Malpas makes the M25 look like Brands Hatch.

I had only been sitting for a couple of minutes when 5 or 6 lads from the Ellesmere Port club arrived, followed shortly by Ben. The Port lads were cycling to get away from kids so they decided to seek refreshment elsewhere (the local chippy I later learnt). Ben joined me, and we were sitting, drinking our coffees when David Birchall cycled into view.

We spent a pleasant 20 minutes or so, eating, drinking and conversing before we set off in the direction of Tilston. On the descent from Malpas we encountered the Charge of the Light Brigade. The local hunt was thundering down the road to meet us. Those horses are big. Seriously big. One of them would feed the average Belgian for 3 – 4 days at least.

Actually, the horses and the rural nobility astride them were not a problem. The main hazard was the occasional foxhound lolloping all over the road vainly trying to locate the now protected Reynard. After this excitement it was on through Tilston and shortly I bid farewell to Ben and David and turned left for Farndon and home.

Peter Catherall

T'Ouse at Top, Kelsall

-

19th November 2005

Saturday dawned clear and freezing cold. It was the perfect day for the Association of Eskimo Nudists annual charity cycle ride. Lesser mortals, such as myself, swathed ourselves in layer after layer of clothing until we resembled Bibendum (Who? Answers on a postcard to the editor). I donned my bright red, silk balaclava. This keeps my head and face lovely and warm but scares the hell out of young children and old ladies.

I descended rapidly down to Kinnerton arriving in a state of acute hypothermia. Gradually, I warmed up as I pedaled towards Chester. Then, it was on through Chester, Christleton, Waverton and Oscroft and up into Kelsall. Here I enquired as to the exact whereabouts of our venue as I had not been there before. I followed the instructions precisely and found myself cycling up the old Kelsall hill. However, I was a little concerned when I arrived at the junction with the new by-pass without having seen the pub.

I turned right onto the A54 and set off towards Northwich. After a further mile or two, my doubts increased. A phantom figure on a trike approached from the opposite direction so I flagged him down and requested further directions. "Follow me" he said, and we set off back towards Kelsall. We turned left at the lights at the top of the by-pass, back onto the old Kelsall hill and, indicating the pub on our left, he said "here we are". So why did nobody tell me the pub is now called the Farmer's Arms? Apparently it used to be the Farmer's Arms and has now reverted back to its original name.

I pulled in round the back of the pub, parked my bike and went in. My drink was still being poured when Ben arrived. We sat down and were joined shortly by Dave Edwards, Mike and Stuart Twigg, and Dave and Mary Birchall. Last to arrive was Billy Graham wearing a fetching blue balaclava. Geraint had toyed with the idea of riding out but decided that his knees were still too sore after his argument with a car the previous Sunday.

As we chatted, the landlord approached us with a left crank and pedal and requested our expert assistance in attaching them to his bicycle. Stuart played the role of the Samaritan mechanic and rapidly fitted the crank. Ben and I were the first to make a move, both of us wanting to return home during the warmest part of the day. I basically retraced my inward route whilst Ben headed up for Mouldsworth to pick up the cycleway in Chester through to Shotton and then up the old Shotton lane.

Peter Catherall

Autumn Tints Weekend

Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin - 14th – 16th October 2005

As we were lucky in 2004 so we were fortunate in 2005 that the weather was calm and dry for our autumn exploration of this delightful corner of Wales. The weekend began on Friday for Peter and Geraint Catherall who rode out from Mold. For Bill Graham, Chris Edwards and David Birchall the weekend also began on Friday, with a circular ride from the hotel into the Tanat Valley and back in the twilight of early evening.

On Saturday morning, the mist was burned off by warm sunshine and with blue skies and no wind we had perfect conditions for cycling. The roadmen and off-roaders joined forces from the hotel for the first long climb towards Llangynog. The routes then diverged, with Geoff Sharp, Keith Orum, Graeme Small, Bill Graham, Geraint and Peter Catherall (with Hugh Dauncey in the support vehicle) taking the Bala road over the Milltir Cerrig.



After lunch under autumnal trees the ride followed the lane to Llanuchllyn at the far end of the lake. Then it was the long climb to the Bwlch-y-Groes, in

late sunshine, followed by an exhilarating descent of Cwm Eunant, a cup of tea at Vrynwy and so back to base by dusk.



Off-roaders (Stuart Twigg, Chris Edwards, Mike Hallgarth and David Birchall) pottered in the hills and forests around Vrynwy. They arrived at the Vrynwy Hotel at just the right time for lunch, as did Mike Twigg and Tecwyn Williams.

Winners of the long distance award for the weekend were John Thompson and his clubmates from the Severn Valley Road Club who we were very pleased to welcome as our guests. They had set off from Bristol before the crack of dawn on Saturday morning. Their route had taken them through Monmouth to the Golden Valley, then Knighton and Welshpool: 140 miles of glorious border country but what fiendish hills; then back on Sunday.

The Cain Valley Hotel has consistently looked after us in an unassuming and friendly manner, despite the comings and going of owners, over the 15 or so years that we have regularly been there. This year was no exception with sixteen of us sitting down to dinner on Saturday evening and very pleasant too.

A circuit of Vyrnwy on Sunday morning rounded off the weekend. But this year we didn't manage to co-ordinate the ride – with three or four ahead (by a minute or two), and another one a minute or two off the back. Such was the pace that never the groups did meet, until the ride was over.



Of Autumn Tints and Houyhnhms

Friday was a dull, dry, but not unpleasant day as Geraint and I cycled the 46 miles to Llanfyllin for the Autumn Tints weekend. We were the first to arrive at the hotel and we awaited the arrival of our fellow Anfielders, particularly Mike Twigg who was transporting our weekend bags.

Saturday dawned dry with low cloud covering the mountain tops. The forecast though, was for the sun to break through and burn the cloud off. We split into roadies and off-roaders and the roadies, accompanied by Hugh Dauncey in his car, headed for Bala. Our route took us over the top of the Berwyns before the fast descent into Bala where we stopped for lunch. When the café owner saw our Anfield jerseys her face lit up and she proudly announced that the special of the day was lob-scouse.

Fed and watered, we resumed our ride around the back of the lake and started the ascent of the Bwlch-y-groes. Within a couple of minutes I was on my own as the rest of the party cycled smoothly away from me up the hill. It is a little known fact that I have this rare affliction whereby my bones are based on lead rather than calcium thus rendering me gravitationally challenged. I am one of the world's foremost exponents of going up hills slowly.

About two thirds of the way up I stopped to admire the view and take a photograph (well that's my excuse) when I was suddenly aware that I had been joined by a Houyhnhm. We looked at each other, nodded to each other and stood in silence together for several minutes just taking in the scenery unfolding below us.

When we did speak, it was about parallel universes and the possibility of using nanobots to pass through wormholes and thus travel between universes. The Houyhnhm fully understood my desire to locate a universe in which planet Earth is completely flat. But, the time had come for us to go our separate ways. There was no spoken farewell, just a simple nod. I cycled slowly towards the top, walking the last few yards (yes, Hugh was there to photograph the event).

Then it was off across the tops before dropping down to Vyrnwy and a short break before the last lap of our circular tour back to the hotel. A very pleasant evening and dinner ensued. When I woke up on Sunday morning, my right knee was starting to lock up with gout and instead of riding back home, as intended, I was forced to seek a lift back with Keith Orum.

Geraint rode back home going over the Berwyns towards Bala and then dropping down via Llandrillo to Corwen and across to Llandegla. The others went for a Sunday morning ride around Vyrnwy before returning home. Whilst waiting for Keith, I went for a slow hobble around Llanfyllin and was intrigued by a large box on the wall at the gateway to a large house. The box contained jars of pickled eggs and cartons of eggs with a note showing their prices and a request to put payment in the tin provided. I never did learn the name of the Houyhnhm, but I shall always think of him as Lemuel.

Peter Catherall





The Anfield at Betws-y-Coed 1888

This remarkable photograph shows the Anfield at Glan Aber in 1888. Note the bicycles: on the right can be seen an “ordinary” but to the left is a solid tyred tricycle. Was it a Humber? For a lady? How did it reach the hotel? By train? With what would have been a bulky tripod mounted plate-camera to record the event there can be no doubt that this tour was a major occasion.

As for the members, the picture is also special because it includes George Pilkington Mills (middle row, hand on lapel), with Artie Bennett, Lawrence Fletcher and “Doc” Carlisle around him (see also the enlargement on our front cover). These Anfield riders were among the best British long-distance racing men of their day. Indeed, Serge Laget (of *L'Equipe*) writing in *The Official Tour de France Centennial* comments that G P Mills (and the manufacturers Dunlop and Humber) dominated cycle racing in France. He argues that the Tour de France was born out of a wish to counter this domination and to develop French cycling muscle. With these thoughts in mind, is it too fanciful that perhaps an equivalent group today would include Lance Armstrong and his team?

The photograph is also of interest because amongst the men are the same self-confident young ladies as in the informal group on our front page. In all probability both pictures show Lawrence Fletcher’s sisters who were members. And how they seem to relish such illustrious company

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