

# ANFIELD CIRCULAR

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

*1906 - Centenary issue - 2006*

---

March 2006

No.916

---



---

Anfielders on the Llanberis Pass, Snowdonia, Easter Tour 1911

# 100 years of the Anfield Circular

Our newsletter, the *Anfield Circular*, celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in March 2006. This centenary issue therefore is a personal exploration through photographs of the Anfield Bicycle Club as its life has unfolded in the pages of the Circular month by month, year by year through the decades. Though there are other cycling magazines that are older and grander, none capture character and personalities quite like the Circular: with gentle humour, irony and wry observation, through the words of the members. What makes the Circular so special is that you can follow the fortunes of individuals – as well as the club and the countryside we cycle in - through all the turbulence of the twentieth century.

We did not set out to create a detailed account of club life – the Circulars were not meant to be kept. But some members did keep theirs, and a century later we have a complete record - some six million words - and a unique social history in the tradition of English diary literature.

What surprises is that for the first twenty-seven years, from 1879 when the Anfield Bicycle Club was formed, we managed without a regular newsletter, relying on runs cards and notices to inform members where and when rides would take place. We thought it enough to summarise each year's touring and racing events in annual reports. Even in 1906 when the first monthly Circular was published its purpose and worth were questioned. But by 1910 it was an accepted part of club life. Descriptions of club runs, tours and racing successes have formed the basis of the Circular's reporting, enriched with irreverent banter and gossip, and respect, comradeship and mutual support.

David Birchall

## 1906 to 1914



Edwin Buckley with C H Turnor before the start of the 1911 Anfield 24. The Circular celebrates many successful record attempts by Anfielders including place to place rides (Liverpool – London) and for standard distances on all sorts of machines from singles to tandems and tricycles.



There were regular visits to Ireland in the years before the First World War, usually arranged to coincide with a racing event. In the September 1912 Circular an article *In Erin's Isle* by E A Bentley, describes an August weekend to the Irish Road Club's 100 miles time trial near Dublin. The author, who also rode in the event, evokes a wonderful atmosphere of a cycling weekend exploring the Wicklow hills (top photo). The race took place on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> August. Riding for the Anfield were Lowcock, McCann, Bentley and Grimshaw. While Grimshaw won by a margin of 15 minutes, Bentley grumbled about the roads, the marshalling, the handicapping and the starting-order of the riders. But "As a competitor" he concluded, "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'". Whether, through gritted teeth, he then added "not" is unrecorded. The war ended all this, and sadly, Bentley was one of our casualties. While serving with the Cheshire Regiment in France in October 1916 he was severely wounded, and, the Circular records, he died in hospital from his injuries.

# ANFIELD BICYCLE CLUB.

FORMED MARCH 1879.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

## MONTHLY CIRCULAR.

### FIXTURES FOR JANUARY, 1916.

		Light up at
Jan. 1.—	Moreton (Farmers' Arms) .....	5-5 p.m.
.. 8.—	Hunts Cross (Hunts Cross Hotel) .....	5-14 p.m.
.. 10.—	Annual General Meeting, St. George's Restaurant, 6-30 p.m. ...	
.. 15.—	Chester (Bull and Stirrup) .....	4.55 p.m.
.. 17.—	Committee Meeting, St. George's Restaurant, 7 p.m. ....	
.. 22.—	Halewood (Derby Arms) .....	5.7 p.m.
.. 29.—	Warrington (Patten Arms) .....	5.18 p.m.
Alternative Run for Manchester Members.		
Jan. 22.—	Knutsford (Lord Eldon) .....	5.7 p.m.

#### Committee Notes.

16, Croxteth Grove,  
Liverpool.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on MONDAY, the 10th January, at the St. George's Restaurant, Redcross Street, LIVERPOOL, at 6.30 p.m. prompt. Members having any subjects to bring before the Meeting must send me particulars not later than the 1st day of January, 1916, so that I may enter same upon the Agenda. It is hoped that the attendance will be a large one.

The response to the Special Circular asking for Donations to a Fund to provide Tokens of Remembrance for those of the Members On Service was a good one—the sum of £7 15/6 was subscribed. The first parcels sent were three in number—to those serving with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force (Williamson, Hodges and Mahon), and they consisted of articles of food and tobacco, etc. Owing to the time taken in transit the acknowledgments have not yet come to hand. The next parcels, four in number, and somewhat similar in nature, were sent to the four members (Cohen, Hubert Roskell, Rudd and Warburton) with the Forces in France, and up to the time of going to press one acknowledgment, from Rudd, has come to hand. Rudd writes:—"I received your parcel to-day. I thank you very much. I often think about the Good Old Club and old times. I

During the First World War the club sent parcels containing small luxuries like chocolate, tobacco and writing materials to serving members. A steady stream of news from the recipients and first hand accounts of the war were the Anfield's unique reward, all published in the Circular, under the outstanding editorship of Arthur Simpson.

## 1918 – 1930



Halewood was the setting for the annual club photograph on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1918. Amongst the forty-five members attending were several in uniform. Membership rapidly grew after the First World War to over 200. At one point so popular were club runs that we set limits on the numbers attending. Recurring themes in the Circular included the great controversy over compulsory rear lights, grumbles about road hogs driving “mechanical honk chattering annoyances”, and damage to roads by motors.



Two personalities dominated the decade: W P Cook and W M Robinson: W P Cook (left) was regarded as one of the greatest cyclists of his generation. Few if any knew the countryside of Cheshire and Wales better. And he was adventurous, memorably hauling a tandem, with the help of climbing ropes, over the Berwyns in 1916.

Among his achievements is the Cyclists' War Memorial at Meriden. He was a national figure in the higher politics of cycling, and a vice president of the CTC. A tireless fundraiser and advocate on behalf of the sport, but the Anfield was at the heart of his life. Indeed for three decades his fearsomely strong personality dominated the club.

Cook was an Anfielder from 1887 until his death in 1936 following an accident while riding from his home in Birkenhead to preside at the AGM of the RRA in London. A keen tricyclist he is thought to have ridden some half a million miles during his lifetime.

Walter MacGregor Robinson was best known by his pen name “Wayfarer”. For cyclists emerging from the dark years of war, he was inspirational. His special place in cycling history stems from the articles he wrote in the 1920s and 30s for cycling magazines. He packed in the crowds up and down the country for his lanternslide lectures. His name is still remembered 50 years after his death, thanks to the memorial to him on the Berwyn rough stuff crossing, better known now as the Wayfarer track. Wayfarer drew on his experiences of riding with fellow Anfielders for his articles, and was an enthusiastic contributor to the Circular in which his generosity and preference for buttermilk were teased mercilessly. That there is now a bar named after him in the West Arms Hotel, Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog, would have been a source of great merriment.



This image from a glass slide now in the CTC archive shows Wayfarer and Cook on the Pen Bwlch Llandrillo, above Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog, on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1919. It was this adventure that established Wayfarer’s reputation and inspired generations of cyclists to explore off the beaten track. The Circular (probably Cook writing in the third person) reported: *The snow was deep – in places of drift many feet – but so hard that it was easily negotiable and only once did the old gentleman (Cook) drop into a crevice up to his waist.*

## The 1930s



Frank Marriott, George Connor, Syd Jonas, Dick Ryalls, C Randall, Jack Salt, Arthur Birkby, Syd del Banco and Bill Scarff after the Club 12 at Chester in 1932



A young generation of Anfielders in the 1930s brought new ideas but also continued the traditions of hard riding and record breaking. Among the new blood was Frank Marriott (left) who joined in 1930. Like Wayfarer he was a brilliant penman, delighting thousands of readers in the world of cycling and beyond with his accounts of the countryside he so enjoyed exploring. Frank was one of our most talented contributors. He was also editor, holding that office with distinction for some 40 years.

*In the 1930s the Anfield 100 drew big crowds. This photograph of the 1930 event shows timekeeper W P Cook assisted by W M Robinson with Bren Orrell on the starting line.*



As for racing, with Jack Salt, Bren Orrell and Jack Pitchford the leading riders, in the 1930s we nurtured our most powerful team since the 1890s. Salt (right) joined in 1931 already a crack racing man. His performance at the historic Brooklands circuit in 1933 led to his selection for the English team in the World's Championship and he was in the BAR top 12 from its inception in 1930 to 1934.

In addition to his prolific time trialling successes, he captured RRA and NRRA records. Great racing man though he was, he was also an enthusiastic clubman until his death in 1960. The Circular was the beneficiary of his writing skills, recording his delight at riding in the countryside and lanes of Cheshire and the Welsh Borders.



Bren Orrell (left) was the first Anfielder for 35 years to win the 100, in 1930 and 1933. The two photos show Orrell in the Manchester Grosvenor 100 during the 1930s. He was the winner of this event for six consecutive years from 1927 to 1932, and third in 1934. Like Jack Salt, Orrell rode in the Worlds Championship (1930) and notched up many RRA and NRRA records.



A characteristic of cycling is that sons often follow fathers into the sport. So it was with Bren and his son. Success must have been in the genes, because Bren junior's ride in the 1953 Manchester Wheelers 12 hours set a club record of 245.11 miles that has stood for 52 years.



ANFIELD MONTHLY CIRCULAR

---

**COMMITTEE NOTES.**

4 THE LAUND,  
WALLASEY, CHESHIRE.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS. Mr. F. Perkins, 11 Everest  
Road, Birkenhead.

H. W. POWELL,  
*Hon. General Secretary.*

**TREASURY NOTES.**

A poor bag this month. Only six names on the Roll.  
My thanks are due to these for their subscriptions and/or  
donations\* to the Comforts Fund.

W. D. Band (1940).	A. Lucas.
C. F. Elias.*	W. T. Venables.*
W. H. Elias.	E. Haynes. *

W. H. KETTLE,  
*Hon. Treasurer.*

**EDITORIAL.**

For some hours on the night of 12/13th March we  
wondered fairly frequently whether this *Circular* would  
see the light, edited by our pen or not. In quieter moments  
we hoped it would, but when Jerry's landmines and bombs  
came too near, which they did, and far too often, we were  
sure that if we did see the dawn of another day we would  
be lucky. Well, we were lucky, and this *Circular* comes  
from Carlton Road.

Others were not so fortunate. The landmine which  
damaged your Editor's establishment landed on the front  
doorstep of Cotter's home, to its utter ruin. We are pleased  
to state that our member for Albert Road escaped and was  
able to travel to Pulford a little later, and where he will stay  
for the duration if he has a modicum of sense. Perkins has  
been bombed out, and we hear that Snowden also has had to  
move. Connor, after having had his home damaged three  
times, has left it. As we write little more is known, as

Anfielder George Stephenson's publishing company in Prescot had subsidised the cost of the typeset Circular from its earliest years. Even during the war, despite the disruption graphically described in Frank Marriott's editorial (above), and scarcities, paper was always found for printing. The Circular was published with no break in continuity. But by 1962, costs proved too big a burden for the Stephensons and there followed a change to much less expensive duplicated printing.

## The 1950s



This photograph was taken at Highwayside on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1953. With membership dropping (135 in 1953), the need to recruit new and young blood had been a central concern post-war. The question was succinctly put in the October 1949 issue of the Circular: “*Can some modernisation be carried out without spoiling the work of those who built better than they knew?*”

New recruits trickled in. They included John Futter (below left) and Peter Stephenson (below right under starter's orders in 1946). John Futter continues to turn a nifty pedal, a skill (together with the ability to spell “Bluemels”) he learned on Jack Salt's back wheel. Peter Stephenson was another Anfielder following the family tradition, and we have him to thank for publishing both editions of *The Black Anfielders*, the history of the Club.



## The Cadets' Scheme



Hatchmere 1962

“Modernisation” did not come until 1958 with the far-sighted Cadets’ Scheme: “*Every effort will be made to introduce the Cadets fully to cycling and club life and it is hoped that most will wish to join the club when no longer eligible as Cadets*” said the Circular. Among the first were David Barker, John Farrington, David Bennett and Rod France, and scores followed. In charge were Guy Pullan, Les Bennett and John France, with support from many including Ken Barker (whose editorship of the Circular at this time set the highest standards), Frank Marriott, Reg Wilson, Jeff Mills and Allan Littlemore. Cadets and mentors too were under the wise counsel of President Rex Austin. The scheme flourished and without doubt is the main reason for the Anfield’s survival into the twenty-first century.



Club 25 Highwayside, 5<sup>th</sup> September 1959. David Bennett on the line with Jimmy Long timing, and (l-r) John Parr, Dave Ryan, Don Birchall, Dave Bettaney, Reg Wilson and Peter Jones

## The 1960s



Joe Dodd, John Thompson, Geoff Sharp and David Birchall at the Wayfarer Memorial, December 1963



John Whelan, 1968



John Moss and Keith Orum in the 1968 Anfield 100 (above), and Ben Griffiths, 1972 (below)



From our earliest years a Saturday evening meal served at six o'clock was the focus of clubruns. But in the 1960s lunchtime fixtures became the norm. We continued to make our way to them by choice, either singly or in company, as we still do. And we adopted Guy Pullan's maxim "*that for cycling to retain its interest indefinitely, routes should be chosen adventurously, spontaneously and always with variety*". Touring holidays in the Scottish Highlands led by Les Bennett and Youth Hostelling weekends introduced the new generation to another Anfield tradition – roughstuff, as in December 1963 to Wayfarer's memorial on Nant Rhyd Wilym in the Berwyns. We were good at road sport too. John Parr won and then defended the Edinburgh – York trike record, and we were fortunate in riders like John Whelan, John Moss, Keith Orum, and John Thompson who have contributed to the sport in the best tradition of the all round clubman. Outstanding in this tradition is Ben Griffiths: his racing career spanning seven decades, and counting.

**The 1970s:** The Circular records a revival of All-Night Rides that led us to the Long Mynd one year and a midnight crossing of the Berwyns another to see the dawn from Moel Sych. Easter Tours took us to Mid Wales where we explored drove roads across Plynlimmon and the Cambrian hills.



(Above and right): The Easter Tour, 1973 started at the Eureka Café, Two Mills on the Wirral. Fords (like this one at Glan Alwen Corwen) and wild moorland tracks were features of these weekends; in the same year the Autumn Tints tour led to the summit of Cadair Berwyn on a wonderful October Saturday (lower right).



The 70s also saw a renaissance of the 100 under the stewardship of John Whelan and President Len Hill after a decade of declining fields. Here Len Hill is seen with a (very) young Jonny Sharp at the finish of the 1975 event.

## The 1980s



Above: Mike Hallgarth, Ben Griffiths, Mike Twigg, John Moss, Chris Edwards, Keith Orum, Rod Anderson, George Elkington and Simon Cogan at Bangor on Dee, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1980. Left and below: the Roman Steps, Autumnal Tints 1980. The Circular recorded that 16 were in the party and “at least one hour elapsed between the first arrival on the Trawsfynydd road, and the last”.

## 1990s



With the innovation of the mountain bike this was the decade when the rest of the cycling world discovered roughstuff but called it “off-roading”. The Circular records expeditions to mid-Wales, Snowdonia, the Lakes and the Derbyshire Peaks. And road sport flourished too under the enthusiastic leadership of Racing Sec Mark Livingstone. *Clockwise from top: The Cain Valley Hotel Llanfyllin - base for many weekends since 1991; Geraint Catherall in the 2003 Mersey Road Club 24; Jonny Sharp and Graham Thompson in club events*





## Knutsford Great Race 2000



*Riding the Knutsford Great Race on penny farthings was one of the most remarkable ABC exploits since the legendary 100 miles scorches of Artie Bennett, GP Mills, and Lawrence Fletcher in the 1880s. Afterwards we all could see why the "safety" was named, and so quickly replaced the "ordinary" bicycle.*

On, 24<sup>th</sup> September 2000, President Tony Pickles, Martin Cartwright, Mark Livingtone, and Chris Edwards acquitted the Anfield with honour and great style in atrocious conditions around Knutsford Moor, riding a penny farthing loaned by fellow Anfielder Glynn Stockdale. The race was not without hazard: Tony and Martin both came to grief. We were most concerned about Martin, brought off by another rider. He ended up in casualty with a cracked elbow and nasty black eye. What worried us was that he had a very important appointment a fortnight later -his wedding. Rumour was that another black eye awaited him if the first was not gone by the ceremony. So we sent in Stuart Twigg as Martin's witness just in case. We were pleased to report all went well. Among the crowds, Alan Orme, Dave Edwards, Keith Orum, Geoff Sharp, Bill Graham and Phil Looby helped David Birchall with marshalling and crowd control.

## *e-Clips*

- ***Website***

You will see from this issue that our website is now up and running. At present it is only a dry-run, and should hopefully get better as time goes on. We've got Jonny Sharp to thank for arranging the technicalities of domain name and host. And as we celebrate the centenary of the Circular, the timing could not be more appropriate.
- ***Captain's Weekend***

Bill Graham has a few more places available for the Captain's Weekend to the Bear Hotel Hodnet. The cyclists will be meeting at The Cotton Arms, Wrenbury for lunch so that there can follow a group ride in the afternoon.
- ***John Moss***

We are delighted that John Moss will be making a visit from South Africa to Anfieldland in May and June. A photo run has been arranged for Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May to coincide with the visit. John would like to see as many of his old friends as possible – so please put a note in your diary and support the day.
- ***Help for the 100 is needed***

Despite the problems of last year's 100, Stuart Twigg has gallantly undertaken to organise the event this year. But he needs your help for marshalling, cake making and support. Please don't wait to be asked – volunteer by giving him a ring 01442 260334 (or via Mike Twigg 01244 326399).
- ***Family Membership***

The resolution to introduce a new category of Family Membership was approved unanimously at the Special General Meeting in January. This now means that all members of a household can take advantage of ABC membership and most importantly, for everyday cycling, CTC insurance at a competitive rate. Otherwise there is no change to the basic Club Membership subscription of £15. Contact Mike Twigg for details.
- ***New club tops***

A minimum order is needed before we can give the go ahead – we're close, and it would be good to have the new kit for the racing season now upon us. If you haven't ordered yours, phone Tony Pickles now on 01352 759463.

# ~ CLUBRUNS ~

website: <http://www.anfieldbc.co.uk>

March 2006

No.916

*(lunch at 1215hrs – contact: Bill Graham)*

March	4	The Buck	Bangor on Dee
	11	Farndon Arms	Farndon <u>Club 10 Saughton 1130hrs</u>
	18	Carden Arms	Tilston
	25	The Raven	Llanarmon-yn-Ial
April	1	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>
	8	The Rainbow	Gwernymynydd (by Loggerheads)
	15 (Easter )	Farndon Arms	Farndon <u>Club 10 Saughton 1130hrs</u>
	22	Cotton Arms	Wrenbury followed by: The Bear Hodnet <u>Captain's Weekend</u>
	29	Dunham Arms	Dunham
May	6	Loggerhead's Café	Loggerheads
	13	Grosvenor Arms	Aldford <u>Club10 Saughton 1130hrs</u> <u>and John Moss's photo run</u>
	20	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>
	27	Farndon Arms	Farndon
	29	<b>Anfield 100:</b>	<b>Shawbury (Event HQ)</b>
June	3	The Buck	Bangor-on-Dee
	10	Waterway's Garden Centre,	Borras
	17	Castle Hotel	Tiverton
	24	Eureka Café	Two Mills
July	1	Farndon Arms	Farndon <u>Club10 Saughton 1130hrs</u>

## Subscriptions

21 and over: £15.00; Junior (under 21): £7.50; Cadet: £3.50; Family £1  
CTC 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance £12

Hon Treasurer: Mike Twigg 14 Barkhill Road CHESTER CH3 5JQ ☎01244 326399

President: David Birchall

Captain: Bill Graham, 47 Main Road Kinnerton CHESTER, CH4 9AJ ☎01244 660858

Hon Secretary: Chris Edwards, 4 Beach Road, Hoylake, Wirral CH47 1HT

☎0151 632 3462 e-mail: [cge@delcam.com](mailto:cge@delcam.com)

Editor: David Birchall, 53 Beggarman's Lane, KNUTSFORD, WA16 9BA

☎/fax: 01565 651593; e-mail: [david@birchall39.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:david@birchall39.freeserve.co.uk)

CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT CIRCULAR: 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2006



As we had done for the Easter tour of 1911 (illustrated on our front cover), we stayed at the Glan Aber Hotel in Betws-y-Coed for our Autumn Tints weekend in 1998. On a day that was spectacularly clear, with Snowdon at its shimmering best, the “Muddy Brigade”, the Circular reported, headed for Llanberis and tracks over the northern slopes of Snowdon.

# ANFIELD CIRCULAR

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

---

June 2006

No.917

---



---

*Mossy abroad: top – in Chester; below – at Bangor on Dee*

---

# ~ CLUBRUNS ~

*hic et ubique*

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

July	1	Farndon Arms	Farndon	<u>Club 10 1130hrs Saughton</u>
	8	Carriages	Gatesheath	<u>Committee Meeting 1130hrs</u>
	15	Cross Foxes	Overton Bridge	
	22	The Bull	Shocklach	<u>MRC24 Start</u>
	29	Hanmer Arms	Hanmer	
August	5	Farndon Arms	Farndon	<u>Club 10 1130hrs Saughton</u>
	12	The Antelope	Rhydymwyn	
	19	The Carriers	Delamere	
	26	Old Town Vaults	Whitchurch	
September	2	Coppermine	Brown Knowl	
	9	Nags Head	Haughton Moss	
	16	The Raven	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	<u>Hill Climb 1130hrs</u>
	23	Calveley Arms	Handley	
	30	Farmer's Arms	Kelsall	
October	7	Carriages	Gatesheath	<u>AGM 1130hrs</u>
	13 - 15	Autumn Tints Weekend: Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin		

## **Subscriptions**

*21 and over: £15.00; Junior (under 21): £7.50; Cadet: £3.50 Family £1*

*CTC 3<sup>rd</sup> part insurance £12*

**Hon Treasurer:** Mike Twigg 14 Barkhill Road CHESTER CH3 5JQ ☎01244 326399

**President:** David Birchall

**Captain:** Bill Graham, 47 Main Road Kinnerton CHESTER, CH4 9AJ ☎01244 660858

**Hon Secretary:** Chris Edwards, 4 Beach Road, Hoylake, Wirral CH47 1HT  
☎0151 632 3462 e-mail: [cge@delcam.com](mailto:cge@delcam.com)

**Editor:** David Birchall, 53 Beggarmans Lane, KNUTSFORD, WA16 9BA  
☎/fax: 01565 651593; e-mail: [david@birchall39.freemove.co.uk](mailto:david@birchall39.freemove.co.uk)

**CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT CIRCULAR: 26<sup>th</sup> August 2006**

## Change of Address

H D Dauncey: 41 Ferndale Avenue, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear, NE28 7NE.

## New Members

Mary Birchall, Elizabeth Birchall, and Michael and Mark Mason have all been elected as Family Members.

## Treasurer's Note

Many thanks to Alison, Anne, Mary, Pat, Alex and Duncan for their sterling services which made the final of the 100 a success. With all the supplies donated, the takings were £189.32. Also thanks to Mary and Nigel who did the final cleaning of the main hall.

*Autumn Tints 13th - 15th October*

*The Cain valley Hotel, Llanfyllin is the venue: bookings to Tecwyn Williams  
01829 271091*

## Race Results



*John Thompson on the line with Peter Catherall pondering his trike pushing-off technique, Ben Griffiths timing, and John Moss who's seen it all before.*

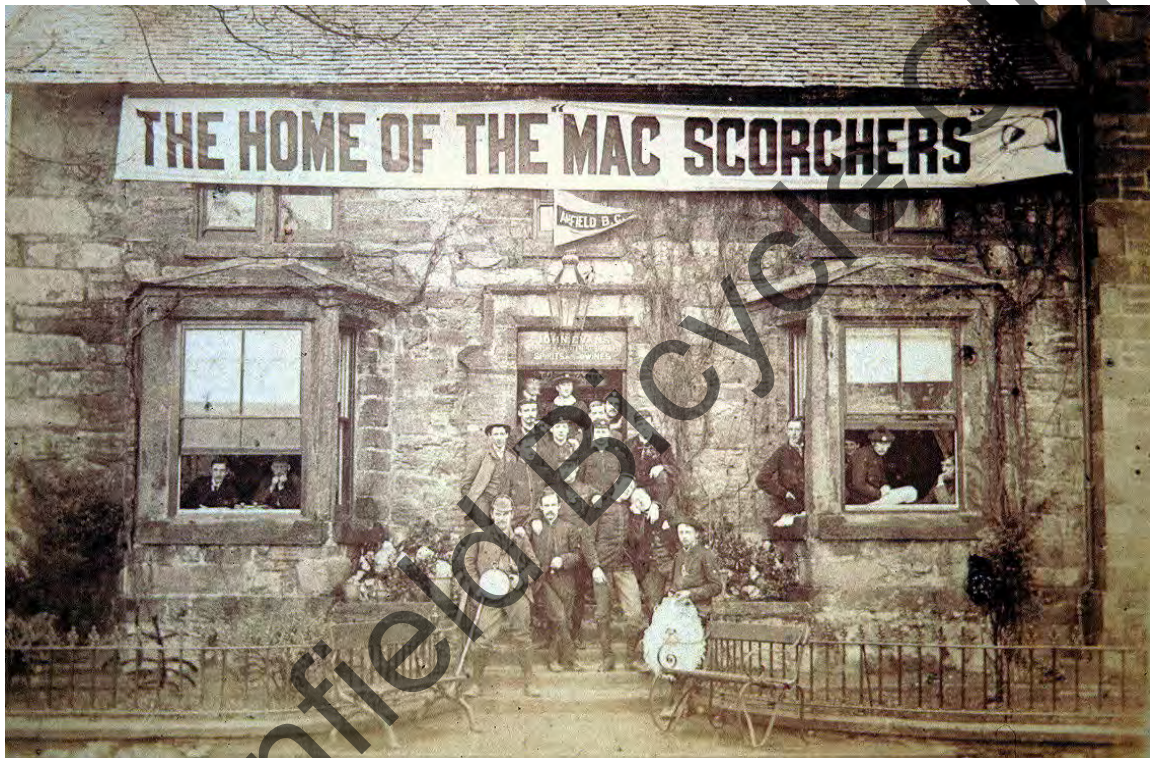
WCTTA 25, 9<sup>th</sup> April:

G Thompson 1.04.19 G Catherall 1.12.58 B Griffiths 1.13.23

## Back to our roots

In April, Glynn Stockdale and David Birchall spent a day behind the scenes at Anfield with Liverpool Football Club's museum curator Stephen Done. The two club's roots are shared thanks to Glynn's grandfather John Houlding who was our second President. He was also the founder of Liverpool FC in 1892 having been left with a ground and no team after evicting Everton from Anfield over a rent dispute.

Recruiting a Scottish manager (who in turn recruited a team of mostly Scottish players) the new club was promptly nicknamed "the Macs". Scouse humour, I guess, - and a wonderful explanation for this photo from our archive, taken at the Glan Aber Hotel, Betws-y-Coed in the 1890s.



It shows the Anfield BC pennant and above it a banner: "*The home of the Mac Scorchers*". While "scorcher" was the name for a racing cyclist in those days, we were at a loss to explain "Mac" – but the mystery now seems explained. Were we making a territorial point that as cyclists we could range far from Anfield – in line with our motto "*hic et ubique*" (here and everywhere)?

While at Anfield we also saw an early team photo with John Houlding and a little dog in the foreground - amazing because in our archive is a photo dating from about the same time with ABC men and a similar dog. So copies have been scanned and sent to LFC for their website history pages. If you've visited [www.anfieldbc.co.uk](http://www.anfieldbc.co.uk) you will see we have a link to Liverpool FC's website, who will reciprocate with a link from theirs to ours.





(left) The portrait of John Houlding in his mayoral robes at Liverpool FC  
(right) The Sandon Hotel: the ABC's first home, next to the Anfield stadium.



(left) 8 Lower Breck Road (on the left) –the ABC's first headquarters, where members relaxed and played billiards. (right) Changing times: Anfield now



- On behalf of the Anfield BC "Mac Scorchers" – we sent our congratulations to Liverpool FC after their FA Cup win, with the comment:  
“John Houlding would certainly be proud of the club he created.”  
By return we received this photo of the Cup (still in its carrying case) on its arrival at Anfield, with the reply: “Awesome!”  
Zooming in on the plinth, engraved among the names is: “**2006 – Liverpool**”.

You can't get much closer.

## e-Clips

- It seems a long time ago, but among Christmas cards was one from Rod Anderson, who lives south of Reading, with a resolution “to put down the paint brush, hedge-cutter and screw-drivers and start cycling again (a busy year getting the new house in shape!)”. Well Rod, George Elkington lives in Rotherfield Peppard just to the north of Reading and so is not too far away if you would like some company getting the Sunday morning miles in....



- When our Captain Bill Graham took his bike for three weeks of early training in Majorca in the March, he very nicely escaped the ice and snow blanketing Anfield and built up a very useful level of fitness. Bill must have impressed one fan – indeed no lesser rider than Shaun Kelly, for it is he shaking Bill’s hand. Shaun obviously recognises a fellow iron man in Bill.

### Captain's Report

How lucky are Anfielders living in the Chester area! Delightful single day rides are possible into several neighbouring counties.

On a personal level I've missed some of the early season runs, but I must say this month of May always glorious for me has given immense pleasure out on the road. Elsewhere in the Circular is a list of proposed Clubruns. I estimate that we have about 12 members cycling regularly and it would be a pleasure to see more out on the rides. If any one has ideas on a different format let me know. Also it would be good to hear from members willing to lead an occasional ride, even if only once a year.

By the time you read this we should be in the middle of a splendid summer and if you haven't cycled for a while it would be an excellent time to make that talked about “comeback”. If you do it will be one of the best decisions you ever make. Hope to see you up the road

Bill Graham

# Clubruns

## **A Cheshire Cycling Weekend - Stephen Marriott** **Cock O'Barton, Barton** - **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2006**

An early start in a charity cycle ride out of Manchester on the Sunday morning made coming up to Cheshire on the Saturday a necessity, so what better idea than to make a weekend of it and do, for the first time in over 20 years, the club run.

Fortified by a hearty farmhouse breakfast, I set off from my B&B in Audlem, heading west on the Whitchurch road for just a mile before turning right onto Cheshire's network of lanes. With a following wind and, just as importantly, knowing the way (I would be following the same route as on a two day epic from Leighton Buzzard to Mold just two months earlier), I was able to make good progress. Past Wrenbury, unhindered by canal traffic at the lifting bridge, Bicton Heath and through Tilston to the Cock O'Barton Barton where the Anfielders, in the form of Bill Graham, Ben Griffiths, Tecwyn and Mike Twigg were already assembled.

Bill, Ben Griffiths and John Futter had cycled out, whilst Mike Twigg and Tecwyn had driven.

It was a day at home for David Birchall, but a quick phone call re-established contact for the first time in many years and a kind invitation to dinner that evening. After an hour or so of pleasant reminiscences in the late summer sunshine, it was time to head off. Bill and Ben had put on the miles on the outward leg and were heading back home direct, and so I set off back to base past Cholmondeley Castle.

Booked into another B&B in Mobberley for the Saturday evening, and after a pleasant evening of hospitality at the Birchall's, it was a case of having to be up very early on the Sunday morning for the warm-up ride to the 8am start of the charity event in Wythenshawe Park. I failed to make contact with my friends from the Manchester office – and so ended up doing the ride on my own – if that is possible in a field of over 3000 starters. The original idea had been to do the 60 mile loop, but the opportunity of riding more of Cheshire's lanes proved too good to miss, and so I “upgraded” myself to the 100 mile route. Through Delamere Forest, under the ramparts of Beeston Castle and onto Nantwich for the refreshment stop.

The return leg led us back to Wythenshawe via the outskirts of Winsford and Middlewich to Wilmslow and ultimately to the finish line. The weather had been on the hot side of warm, the forecast thunder showers had stayed at bay and the ride, indeed the whole weekend, demonstrated what pleasant cycling can be done in Cheshire's lanes.

The Boxing Day gathering having been regretfully abandoned in recent years, I decided, as a VERY infrequent attender, to ride some way at least to the chosen venue this New Year's Eve at the Copper Mine near Brown Knowl in search of some seasonable company and cheer.

Having left my car at Tarvin outside an old friend's house, my ride of about 12 miles took me by way of Huxley, Tattenhall and Harthill. Chris Edwards overtook me on the Harthill road, and I, taking the wrong lane just before the rise to Harthill, mistakenly advised him to do likewise.

My map is so old that even the A55/M56 Chester by-pass is not shown, so I mistook the pub for another PH, one mile up the road towards Broxton; in fact the Copper Mine is not shown on my Chester Ordnance Survey with price £1.15 on the cover!!

Anyway, the good company and cheer was eventually found, and I, being the last to arrive, cast my eyes on a group of 7, sat round a small circular table, including Dikki Bird, Mike Twigg, Bill Graham, Chris Edwards, Geraint Catherall, Tony Pickles and son Chris.

Various refreshments of food and drinks were being partaken of, together with lively topics of conversation, including a reminder from Mike Twigg that my sub was overdue, which matter was soon resolved. Within perhaps half an hour, we had all dissipated, all to motor transport, with the exception of Chris Edwards and myself

John Williamson

I set out from Sychdyn just after 10 o'clock and rode through Loggerheads towards Llanarmon. Then it was up the Nant y Garth for a short distance before turning right to the Horseshoe Pass. As I started to climb up to the Ponderosa the fields and grass verges were covered in snow. There were many families out with young children enjoying the sledging and making snowmen.

Arriving early I descended towards Llangollen to take in the views of the snow, before retracing to the café. The car park was icy so I carefully walked across to the café where Billy Graham joined me having ridden up from Llandegla. We sat eating and chatting taking in the snowy views outside, but with no one else showing up it was just the two of us for the homeward ride.

GC

**The Buck, Bangor - on - Dee** -

**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2006**

I was unfortunately unable to attend the club run on Saturday as Blackbrook Lane was impassable by bike due to snow and ice. I was also due to ride the Chester RC hilly 28 on Sunday. I arrived at Broxton early but no one was there. After a while Peter Vagg – Oswestry Paragon turned up – he had heard nothing of the event being cancelled and thought we were just early. A few minutes later though another rider turned up and announced the event had been cancelled – due to ice on the stretch through Beuera.

GC

**The Raven Llanarmon yn Ial** -

**25<sup>th</sup> March 2006**

*Len Wall writes .....*

I managed to get to the venue which is one of my favoured pubs and found that it had changed hands on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> and is now closed so we cannot know what sort of people now own it, but I was not very impressed. I did take with me a batch of prints from the 1950s for the archive (*thanks- Ed*). I did see one rider, who I didn't know coming away from the village as I was going in, I thought that was odd at the time!

*and Geraint .....*

I left Sychdyn at 10 o'clock and rode out to Gwernafield then through Cadole before climbing up through Llanferes and descending down the Bwlch. I then climbed up the Nant y Garth and back towards Llanarmon yn Ial. When I arrived at the Raven the landlady informed me that they were unfortunately closing down and moving out. I decided to ride across towards Graianrhyd as I might see Ben, John and Billy Graham on their way, but I did not. I then descended down through Eryrys to Mold and back to Sychdyn.

**The Rainbow Inn, Gwernafield** -

**8<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

I rode out through Gwernafield and Cadole then descended the bwlch to Ruthin before climbing back up the Nant y Garth, turning at the top to come through Llanarmon yn Ial and so to the Rainbow Inn. Peter (dad) had already arrived we sat and chatted while waiting for others to arrive but no one did. After eating we set out, me heading down the Rainbow to Mold before climbing to Sychdyn. Within an hour of arriving home the heavens opened with hail stones and rain!

GC

**Farndon Arms, Farndon** -

**15<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

Before the start of our second 10, Ben commented that organisers of open 10s are struggling for riders these days. Tens were traditionally for young riders, but start cards now show the all too familiar story of aging and dwindling

fields – with riders not in their teens and twenties but in their seventies and eighties with not many under forty.

Support for our club ten was down to Geraint Catherall with Ben timing, and David Birchall, Peter Catherall and Mike Twigg round the course. Later, at the Farndon Arms, Adam and Liz Birchall joined us at the end of a walk along the river bank from Aldford. Dave Edwards was also in the party, and, last but not least, Bill Graham fresh from his cycling holiday in Marjorca.

DDB

*Peter Catherall adds:*

For many years, I have cycled quite happily without a cycle computer. This followed the premature death of my last (expensive) wireless computer. You may therefore be forgiven if you think that I had a bout of madness, on learning that I recently went out and bought two computers – one for each bike. Well, they were only £4.00 each and guaranteed for three years.

I bought them from the local Aldi store. They have all the usual functions plus they also tell you the number of calories you used up during the ride and the amount of body fat that you have burnt off. A further benefit is the ability to give a 15 minute warning of the arrival, through hyperspace, of a Vogon Destructor Fleet hell bent on the demolition of Earth in preparation for the construction of a hyperspatial highway.

You will not be surprised therefore, to learn that, as I made my way to Saughton, I was keen to notch up the miles on my shiny new computer. As I rode from Farndon towards Churton I decided, as I had plenty of time, to turn right into Pump Lane and go via Handley. As the crow flies, it is about three miles from Churton to Handley. By way of Pump Lane it is nearer six miles.

It was just on 11.00 a.m. as I arrived in Handley and as I was transporting the race numbers for the Club 10 it was imperative that I arrive in Saughton a.s.a.p. I went into time-trial mode and sped down the A41 arriving in Saughton at 11.15 a.m. Geraint, Mike Twigg and Dave Birchall were awaiting my arrival. Ben had shot off towards Farndon, in his car, in search for me.

Geraint, David and I ambled round to the start whilst Mike went off to marshal. Just in time, Ben reappeared (he was the timekeeper) to start Geraint on his way. Ben then went off to the finish, David cycled off to Aldford, followed several minutes later by myself. I then went on to join Ben at the finish just before Geraint came in with a time of 28-20.

Geraint and I then cycled to the Farndon Arms where we found Mike, David and Dave Edwards awaiting our arrival. A quick drink and Geraint and I left to make our way home.

The sun was peeping through so it was leg exposure time again. In fact, we had experienced several days of sunshine so my legs had received 170 miles of exposure in the past few days. I rode over to Sychdyn, met Geraint, and together we set forth.

Our route took us to Northop, Connah's Quay, Shotton and the cycle path which we followed through Chester to Hoole and then on to Mickle Trafford. With plenty of time to spare, we took to the lanes, past the windsurfing centre, and up the climb to the top of Mouldsworth, and turned left onto the B5393.

I was now in virgin territory, but, so long as we followed the road to Frodsham, I could find the way to Dunham. As we followed the road sharp right in Alvanley I saw that the road off to the left was sign-posted Helsby. "This will save a mile or two" methinks. So, we stopped, turned around, and took the aforementioned road. It seemed to go on for a very long way, but eventually, we found ourselves on the A56 between Helsby and Frodsham.

On looking at the OS map when I got home, I found that we had travelled all the way around the base of Helsby Hill. If, after turning left at Alvanley, we had turned left again in a few hundred yards, we would have saved ourselves several miles. However, our extra mileage meant that we arrived at the Dunham Arms one minute after opening time.

Geraint and I entered and ordered refreshments. As we sat there, I wondered if anyone else would turn up. On my last visit, my sole companion was Tecwyn. But my faith in Anfielders was restored when David Birchall arrived, and confidence was further boosted by the arrival of Billy Graham.

During a pleasant conversation, Billy admitted that on the 8<sup>th</sup> April, he had gone to the Loggerheads Café instead of the Rainbow Inn. It confirmed my remark to Geraint (in the Rainbow) that I had just seen Billy go past. I had begun to think that it was his Doppelganger.

Refreshments over, Billy, Geraint and I headed for Hoole and the cycle-path. We rode through to Blacon, where we left the path and crossed over the Dee on the footpath. Here, we parted company. Billy kept left to join the main road to Broughton and so to Kinnerton. Geraint and I travelled around the back of the Airbus factory, up into Mancot and Penarlag. I then turned left for Drury and Buckley whilst Geraint carried on for Ewloe and Sychdyn.

Good company but wouldn't it be better if more members supported runs.

PC

As I was going to be riding the WCTTA50 on Sunday I decided to take a gentle ride out. I set off from Sychdyn along the Denbigh road through Rhydymwyn. At Star Crossing I turned left and headed through Cilcain and so to Loggerheads. Being early I rode up towards Moel Fammau, before returning to the café and met up with dad on the way. We sat outside in the sun waiting for others to turn up 12.30. When no one came, we both set off, me for Sychdyn and dad for Buckley.

GC

**A Day At The Races**

-

**23<sup>rd</sup> April 2006**

As I drove from Buckley to the Horseshoe Pass, I felt increasingly like Frodo attempting to cross the Misty Mountains. The higher the altitude, the darker and bleaker it became. At any moment I expected a Cave Troll to appear and issue me with a summons for driving in wild and dangerous territory. This was not the morning for a hilly time trial.

Ben was already at the Ponderosa (as was Geraint) when I arrived. Conditions were grim. There was a fierce north wind blowing and visibility was poor due to the low cloud and mist. Indeed, some twenty minutes earlier, the race had been in doubt because visibility had been virtually nil.

The Wrexham Hilly is usually a well attended race with plenty of competitors and spectators. Today, numbers were dramatically reduced with only about 40 riders and several of these did not appear. The race begins by the Valle Crucis Abbey and goes up the Horseshoe, down the Nant-y-Garth Pass to Ruthin, then back up the Nant-y-Garth and the Horseshoe to finish at the Ponderosa.

There is a prime, near the Ponderosa, for the fastest rider on the initial ascent of the Horseshoe. The fastest rider must also complete the course in order to win the prize. Ben was the timekeeper at this prime. His main concern was that he could park his car, off the road, by the prime. Thus, he could carry out his duties within the comfort and shelter of his car. I am younger than Ben, so it fell to me to stand by his car and call out the rider's number as they passed. Well that's how it was explained to me!!!

The first rider off was number 21, but the first rider to appear was number 23, Anfield's own Graham Thompson. Geraint was off 29 and he duly appeared and sped past. I use the word 'sped' advisedly. The north wind meant that the riders had to pedal hard to even go downhill.

There were several Kamikaze riders, bare arms and legs in sub-zero temperatures. They passed and slowly faded into the gloom like the ghost of



Captain Oates. Actually, as time went on, the conditions did improve. The cloud lifted and the sun appeared (later that day I was gardening in just shorts and sandals) but the north wind was still bitter.

Graham was the first man home and it was not too long before Geraint hove into view (their times will be reported elsewhere). The return journey from Ruthin was wind assisted and the riders seemed to be travelling a lot faster than during the outward journey. I can only express my admiration for all the riders for their heroic efforts in such conditions.

PC

## Captain's Weekend

**Saracens at Hadnall**

-

**22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2006**

It was a hard morning with an unrelenting southeasterly slowing the outward ride. Notwithstanding, the Wrenbury lunchtime rendezvous was well supported – by Peter Catherall, Geoff Sharp, Alan Orme, David Birchall, John Futter, Ben Griffiths, Stuart and Mike Twigg, Keith Orum and Bill Graham. Keith's was the toughest ride with 43 miles in his legs by the Cotton Arms. Meanwhile Mary Birchall and Ann Orme were exploring Hawkstone Park on their way to Hadnall by car.

The afternoon was easier for all, the five cycling weekenders included. By now the sun was shining and it felt like spring had finally arrived. Even the lanes were quiet and well surfaced. We followed National Cycling Route 45 at least in part (the signposting fizzled out in Whitchurch) as far as the hamlet of Whixall on the edge of Fenn's Moss. Our route then led through a maze of



Captain Bill Graham, Keith Orum (note new Carradice Nelson Longflap Saddlebag and support), David Birchall, and Alan Orme. But where were Geoff Sharp and Ms Satnav?

lanes to Wem and Clive. But we were never in any real danger of becoming lost - thanks to Geoff Sharp's exotic friend, who constantly whispered messages in his ear. She however proved somewhat sensitive, and when ignored was liable to go into a huff of silence.

Our plan originally had been to stay at the Bear Hotel, Hodnet, but they let us down, and so we had had to find an alternative. The Saracen's Head at Hadnall on the A49 north of Battlefield has been well known to cyclists for many years. After a makeover it is now called "Saracens" and is more a gastro-pub with incidental b+b than hotel. Proprietors

Caroline from Austen Texas (no, she didn't know Lance Armstrong) and Ben were friendly and looked after us well. Nouvelle cuisine and the cyclist's imperative of carbo-loading don't always sit easily together. However here the food was imaginatively prepared and presented. In particular the Old Spot sausages (from their own farm) at breakfast went down very well.

For Sunday's ride home, the wind unsportingly moved to the north-west. But the day improved, and by lunchtime the sun was warm enough for the Knutsford two to eat outside at the Farmer's Arms at Ravensmoor, Nantwich. All in all it was a successful weekend, and our thanks are due to Bill Graham for the organisation.

DDB

**Cotton Arms Wrenbury**

-

**22<sup>nd</sup> April 2006**

The memory of my last visit to Wrenbury when I battled with horrendous head-winds, both on the way there and the way back, still haunts me. With this in mind, I made an early start, allowing myself plenty of time. The weather forecast was good, with the promise of plenty of sunshine. Heartened by this prospect, I exposed my legs to the elements for the first time this year.

My route took me through Farndon, Shocklach and Horton Green to No Mans Heath. Over the A41 and I rode through Bickley to cross the A49 and on to Norbury Common. Then, it was on through Gaunton Bank and finally alongside the canal and into Wrenbury. I was the first to arrive, but the Cotton Arms was open (just) so I went in and ordered a drink. After about five minutes I was joined by Geoff Sharp and then in rapid succession by David Birchall and Alan Orme, Mike and Stuart Twigg, and Ben and John Futter.

Several of the group were going on from Wrenbury to celebrate the Captain's Weekend and were awaiting the arrival of Keith Orum and Billy Graham. I was the first to leave and headed for Cholmondley Castle. En route, there was a blur of blue and yellow speeding towards Wrenbury and there was only a split second to wave to Keith as he flashed by.

Halfway around the perimeter of the castle, I turned left down to the crossroads at Hampton Post where I turned right, then straight across at Ashtons cross and left down to Duckington and the A41. From here, I rode through Tilston to Farndon and on to Buckley. The promised sun did not really materialise, but it was not unpleasant and there was a slight tail-wind on the way home. A 60 mile round trip and a most enjoyable day.

PC

## Mossy's Return



*Back row: Dave Eaton, Mike Twigg, Phil Mason, Dave Edwards, Ben Griffiths, Bill Graham  
Middle: Chris Edwards, Dave Bettaney, John Moss, Graham and Matthew Thompson  
Front: Maggie White, Geraint Catherall, David Birchall, Peter Catherall, John Thompson*

With John Moss “home” from South Africa, clubruns have been a bit like old times recently, supported by familiar faces and most welcome too, and rain. The Grosvenor Arms Alford was the venue on 13<sup>th</sup> May after the 10 and the opportunity for a club photo. During his stay John managed to find time for a trip to America, for day rides and a short tour to Llangollen, Lake Vyrnwy and the 100. A mid-week ride from Heswall to the Plough at Christleton used the cycle paths between Deeside and Chester – the Northgate railway route outward, and the Shropshire Union towpath and River Dee path for the return: smooth tarmac surfaces.



*Napping like a lamb after lunch at the Plough, Christleton*

For John’s last clubrun before returning to Jo’burg the day could not have been lovelier: warm sunshine and blue skies with the lanes of South Cheshire at their greenest and leafiest best. Ben Griffiths and David Birchall met by happy chance at Threapwood and arrived at the Buck exactly as John, Dave Bettaney and Peter Catherall wheeled into the yard. Then came Dave Eaton and the Mason clan namely Phil and sons Mark and Michael. Keith and Pippa Orum were next followed by Brian Whitmarsh, Mike Twigg, and last but not least Bill Graham.

On such a summer's day it would have been a sin to sit indoors – and an enjoyable couple of hours followed with John on good form with the banter flowing like beer. It's clear that SA's gain has been very much the ABC's loss, but whether we could now stand John's pace, especially behind the pint pots, is another matter. Here's to the next time John, and hopefully that will be less than the thirteen years since last we saw you.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **The 107<sup>th</sup> Anfield 100 – 29<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

1.	N Gardiner (John's Bikes)	3.54.31
2.	H Davies (Planet X)	4.00.26
3.	M Cox (VC St Raphael)	4.03.40

98 riders were down to start, but not all reached the line. Those who did were lucky, although probably they didn't think so, considering the forecast, suffering nothing worse than a sleety shower and biting north wind on an otherwise bright morning round the course. The marshals had a tough job too in the cold conditions, ensuring that their riders did not go astray, and I think most appreciated their cup of tea at event HQ when their stint finished.

It's a long day for all, and especially for Stuart Twigg who as Event Secretary starts first and finishes last. That the day was a great success is as much due to his attention to detail for every facet of the event, as the support given by so many of our own members and other clubs. We are lucky that the Anfield 100 is a much loved event and that the hard work is generously given and appreciated by all involved.

Shawbury Community Hall was packed – there must have been several hundred in the crowd. Here the Twigg family caterers were in charge: Duncan Rees and Alex, and Mike and Pat, with assistance from Nigel and Alison Fellows, Mary Birchall and Anne Orme. Among the Anfield faces that I saw were our former elite racing team – Messrs Whelan, Bettaney, Whitmarsh, Dave Jones and Mossy himself. Ben Griffiths manned the results board with Stuart, David Birchall and Alan Orme co-ordinating the times relayed by Tony Pickles from Keith Orum and Bob McNamee in the timekeeper's car.

Also looking in were Peter and Geraint Catherall, John Thompson, Hugh Dauncey, Mike Hallgarth, Geoff Sharp, Bill Graham and John Williamson (and apologies to other members who I did not see at HQ or round the course). Among the regulars in the sea of faces we were delighted to see Elaine Hancock all the way from Penzance, with son Syd. Those with long memories will recall that her husband (Syd Hancock) for many years was our starting steward, who always provided Cornish daffodils for the ladies.

# ANFIELD CIRCULAR

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

September 2006

No.918



“Round the World on a Penny Farthing” - Steve Stevens (4<sup>th</sup> from left) received an Anfield send off on at the start of the European stage of his marathon – see p4

# ~ CLUBRUNS ~

*hic et ubique*

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

September	16	The Raven	Llanarmon-yn-Ial <u>Hill Climb 1130hrs</u>
	23	Calveley Arms	Handley
	30	Farmer's Arms	Kelsall
October	7	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>AGM 1130hrs</u>
	13 - 15	Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin	<u>Autumn Tints Weekend:</u>
	21	Farndon Arms	Farndon
	28	The Buck	Bangor on Dee
November	4	Yew Tree	Spurstow
	11	The Liver	Rhydtalog
	18	Goshawk	Mouldsworth
	25	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee 1130hrs</u>
December	2	Carden Arms	Tilston
	9	Britannia	Halkyn
	16	The Buck	Bangor on Dee
	23	Castle Hotel	Tiverton
	30	Farndon Arms	Farndon
January	6	Calveley Arms	Handley

## **Subscriptions**

*21 and over: £15.00; Junior (under 21): £7.50; Cadet: £3.50) Family £1*

*CTC 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance £12*

**Hon Treasurer:** Mike Twigg 14 Barkhill Road CHESTER CH3 5JQ ☎01244 326399

**President:** David Birchall

**Captain:** Bill Graham, 47 Main Road Kinnerton CHESTER, CH4 9AJ ☎01244 660858

**Hon Secretary:** Chris Edwards, 4 Beach Road, Hoylake, Wirral CH47 1HT  
☎0151 632 3462 e-mail: [cge@delcam.com](mailto:cge@delcam.com)

**Editor:** David Birchall, 53 Beggarmans Lane, KNUTSFORD, WA16 9BA

☎/fax: 01565 651593; e-mail: [david@birchall39.freemove.co.uk](mailto:david@birchall39.freemove.co.uk)

**CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT CIRCULAR: 25<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

## **Notice of A.G.M.2006 - Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October,**

The Annual General Meeting will take place at 'Carriages' New Russia Hall Gateshead on **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October, commencing promptly at 11.30am.** Please make every effort to attend and note the new time.

*Chris Edwards*

### **Agenda**

- 1) Apologies for absence.
- 2) Minutes of the last A.G.M.
- 3) Matters arising.
- 4) Hon. Sec's. Report.
- 5) Hon Treasurer's Report.
- 6) Election of Officers & Committee Members for 2006 / 2007.

### **\* MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL \***

*The AGM is an ideal time to pay your subs (see opposite for rates). If you cannot attend, please post your cheque (Anfield B.C.) to:  
Mike Twigg, 14 Barkhill Road, CHESTER CH3 5JQ.*

### *Autumn Tints 13th - 15th October*

*The Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin is the venue: bookings to  
Teewyn Williams 01829 271091*

*On Saturday the roadmen will ride to Bala (lunch) via the Bwlch -y-Groes returning over the Milltir Cerrig. There will also be a gentle off-road ride on Saturday to the Vyrnwy Hotel. Or plan your own route, hard or easy ....*

### *Birthday lunch - Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2007*

*A friendly and informal hotpot lunch is planned at Carriages, Gateshead by Tattenhall to celebrate our birthday. We hope that members who we don't often see will be able to join us - all are welcome. Contact Keith Orum and make a note in your diary - more information in the next issue*

## Race Results



*Geraint Catherall starting the  
MRC 24*

Chester RC 25 (11<sup>th</sup> June): G Catherall 1.11.49;  
B Griffiths 1.12.58

WCTTA 10 (21<sup>st</sup> June): G Catherall 25.50 (PB);  
B Griffiths 28.00

Burton and District CA 100 (24<sup>th</sup> June): G  
Catherall 4.46.27 (PB); J Thompson DNF

Club 10s:

13<sup>th</sup> May: J Thompson (Trike) 28.03; G Catherall  
28.13

1<sup>st</sup> July: G Catherall 28.40

5<sup>th</sup> August: Geraint Catherall 28.55

MRC 24 (22<sup>nd</sup> July): G Catherall 355.46 (PB)  
(Winner was N Gardiner 504.02)

SCCA & WCTTA 100 (30<sup>th</sup> July): Geraint Catherall 5.13.28

East Liverpool Wheelers 50 (20 August): After driving out to Broxton through torrential rain I was uncertain whether I would start, Ben and a number of other riders gave their apologies. Thankfully by the time I was due to start the rain had stopped. I completed the race with 2.22.50 a personal best.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **The leaving of Liverpool**

Round-the-world penny farthing cyclists are rare indeed. So when we were invited to escort Steve Stevens at the start of his European stage, we were pleased to accept - and to give him a copy of *The Black Anfielders* and an Anfield top to help him on his way. Stephens is re-enacting a ride undertaken in the 1880s by his namesake Thomas Stevens. Then, 250 Liverpool riders turned out, with the Anfield Bicycle Club providing a 25 strong escort from St Mary's, Edge Hill into Cheshire. What a sight that must have been.

This time Liverpool's cyclists were conspicuous by their absence, as were the press. And the roads that Thomas Stevens used are far too dangerous now for penny-farthings (particularly on Friday afternoons), so we rode the Trans-Pennine Trail via Otterspool, Speke, and the St Helens Canal, which, like the curate's egg, was good in parts. Penny-farthings are elegant machines. Riding them looks very graceful and attracts a lot of interest. But you can't tell in advance whether it will be friendly or abusive. At times the choice was between feral youths (curious and noisy but friendly) on the cycle track or drivers on the road cutting you up, or hurling abuse, or worse - a plastic bag



aimed at spokes from a passing car in Garston. Later, a cheery wave from a Rolls Royce evened things up – so obviously it’s a class thing.

Having already completed the trans-US stage, Steve’s plan was to reach Teheran. But things didn’t quite go according to plan ... and, wisely, a halt was called at Istanbul. Follow the adventure at [www.crazyguyonabike.com](http://www.crazyguyonabike.com) (via the links to Steve’s journal) where you will find wonderful photos and “blog”. It all looked deceptively easy - pack your saddlebag, credit card, change of clothing, camera, then just hop on your bike and ride ....

DDB

\* \* \* \* \*

## Clubruns

**The Farndon Arms**

-

**27<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

“It will be a grey start to the day, but skies will clear rapidly and it will be a beautiful sunny day in north Wales.” So said the weather forecaster on the radio. With this in mind, I set off at 10.00a.m. clad only for a summer’s day. It was grey, and there was the odd spot of rain in the wind. But it was going to be a glorious day wasn’t it?

I cycled on through the outskirts of Wrexham, past Cartrefle and the industrial estate, and up past Cluttons. The stench of death emanating from the slaughterhouse prompted me into a Herculean sprint that would have made Cipollini green with envy. By now, the occasional drop of rain had become an incessant torrent and clear skies were not a prospect. The weather forecaster had now become a prime candidate for the slaughterhouse.

I rode on, through Bangor-on-Dee, Worthenbury and into Shocklach. It was only 11.30a.m., so I turned right and proceeded through Horton, Tilston, Stretton and Barton and on to Farndon. There was already one bike parked at the back of the pub when I arrived, Ben had ridden directly to Farndon.

I squelched into the pub and ordered a pint of their excellent (but very expensive) bitter and set about drying out. Ben and I were soon joined by Stuart Twigg (on bicycle), Dave Birchall, Mike Twigg and Dave Edwards. Last to arrive was Bill Graham on his bike.

After a conversation mainly concerning the ‘100’, Ben was the first to leave, followed shortly afterwards by Bill and I. It was still raining, but not as heavily. As we approached Pulford, the sun appeared and the roads were rapidly drying out. At Kinnerton, we parted company, Bill going straight on for his home just up the road whilst I turned right for the climb up to Buckley.

PC

I set off from Buckley, down past the golf courses at Padeswood and on to Pontblyddin to begin the long ascent to Llandegla. At the cross roads I turned right onto the A542 and headed towards Ruthin, turning right off this road at the top of the Nant-y-Garth. Instead of immediately turning sharp right for Llanarmon-yn-Ial, I went straight on along the lane for Graigfechan and then going left on the single track lane for Pentre Celyn. I then kept going right to end up back on the original lane to Graigfechan. The views from this point were spectacular with the Vale of Clwyd stretching out below and the peaks of Snowdonia in the distance.

I made my way back to the B5431 and rode on through Llanarmon and down to Llanferres where I met Geraint coming the other way. He had come from Sychdyn via Cilcain and a quick trip up the lane to Moel Famau. We proceeded on to the Loggerheads and parked ourselves at a table on the lawns outside the café.

Plenty of cyclists arrived, but no other Anfielders. After half an hour we decided to leave and made our respective ways home. It is rumoured that a certain Anfielder mistakenly went to the Rainbow Inn instead. This same Anfielder also went to the Loggerheads' Café when the venue **was** the Rainbow Inn!!!

PC

**Waterways Café, Borras****10<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

Fine warm weather – so I set out from Sychdyn through Mold following the main road out towards Wrexham. Before arriving at Wrexham I turned left and headed towards Borras Park. I then joined the A543 and headed for the industrial park. Arriving at the garden centre too early, I took a detour around the Industrial Park, and, on return, Peter was waiting outside. Bill Gaham arrived and we all ventured through the garden centre to the café.

We sat outside enjoying ice cream, Bill telling us about his forthcoming trip to America and how he begrudged having to pay £300 for his medical insurance – and was thinking of foregoing this! Peter and I both convinced him that this would be very foolish and if he were to need medical assistance and did not have insurance the cost would be considerably higher.

After eating we set off together heading towards Gresford then through Lavister and Burton Green and back to Kinnerton, then climbed up to Penymynydd and Buckley and myself on to Sychdyn.

Geraint

I was really looking forward to this run. So much so that on the Tuesday before the run, I rode out to Tiverton via Waverton and Huxley. The return journey was via Beeston, Gatesheath, and the Farndon - Rossett trail.

On the day of the run, I set out early, and met up with Geraint at Sychdyn. We rode down to Shotton and picked up the cycleway to Chester. It was a beautiful morning until we reached Blacon. My rear tyre suddenly made an alarming noise and then instantly deflated. My immediate annoyance turned to despair when I saw what had happened. Whatever was picked up in the tyre, it had not only punctured the tube but had also had a determined attempt to shred the tyre. Tiverton was now out of the question.

Fitting a new inner tube was not a problem, but I was not carrying a spare tyre. A patch was quickly stuck on the inside of the tyre at the point of greatest damage, tyre and tube placed on the wheel, and tyre inflated.

Geraint then continued solo for Tiverton whilst I left the cycleway and rode gingerly down through Blacon, over the Dee footbridge and home. I did make it home without further incident though I don't think that I have ever ridden so far standing on the pedals.

### ***Ben and the Peahen***

*No! Not a children's tale but a story of two chance encounters. On the Tuesday following Mission Impossible, and having acquired a new tyre, I set out to test my new band of rubber. Down through Broughton I cycled, past the Retail Park and into Bretton.*

*As I dropped down towards the Water Laboratories I saw a cyclist emerge from the lane that I was about to turn into and turn left towards Kinnerton. That looks like Ben I thought and instead of turning left, as intended, I gave chase. To my surprise I actually caught up with the cyclist and it was Ben.*

*We rode along together to the Kinnerton – Chester road where we turned left towards Chester. At Gorstella, we bade our farewells, Ben turning left to go back to the Water Labs. whilst I turned right for Dodleston.*

*As I was riding along, I spotted a peacock and peahen on the immaculately manicured grass verge to my right. I was enchanted by this scene until I spotted a movement out of the corner of my left eye. A second peahen was emerging from underneath the hedge on my left.*

*There was no grass verge to my left, only a low vertical bank. The peahen and I seemed destined for an imminent collision. In my 62 (by the time that you read this) years, I can honestly say that I have never given one moment's consideration as to whether or not these birds can fly.*

*I am happy to report that they (or at least this one) can. It took off vertically like a Saturn V rocket bound for the moon. As it ascended, I could feel the feathers on its breast brushing past me and its wings beating against me. It all happened so fast that I didn't have time to feel alarmed or panic stricken though I did proceed very carefully for the next mile or two in case it had any other relatives in the vicinity.*

*A couple of weeks later, I was cycling along the narrow lanes between Hoseley and Trevalyn, in the middle of nowhere, when I espied a fellow cyclist coming to meet me. It was Ben. We really will have to stop meeting like this or there will be talk!!*

PC

**Farndon Arms**

**1<sup>st</sup> July 2006**



*Geraint and Peter Catherall at the starting line. Ben Griffiths timing*

It was officially a heat wave. The Meteorological Office had declared it was, so it must be true. I left Buckley for Ewloe dropping down the old Shotton Lane to Deeside. I was followed down the lane by the one vehicle per day that uses the lane. It is a matter of conjecture as to which of the driver and myself was the most bemused by the presence of the other. From Shotton, I took the Cycleway through Chester to Hoole, then various side roads and cycle paths to the Sainsbury roundabout and then along the A41 through Waverton before turning off for Saughton. I was the first to arrive so I stretched out on the grass, in the glorious hot sunshine to await the arrival of fellow Anfielders.

Ben was the next to arrive (in his car but with bike in the back) followed in quick succession by Dave Birchall, Geraint and Mike Twigg. Geraint was sent on his way, Ben and David set off for The Rake and the finish (Mike had already set off) whilst I made my way to Aldford.

En route I observed Little & Large on bicycles coming towards me. The two redoubtable cyclists were Tony and Christopher Pickles making their way around the course. I informed them that the race had started and that they were likely to be passed by Geraint in the near future.

I did not have to wait long at Aldford before Geraint came into view and, after urging him on, I made way to join David and Ben at the finish. Geraint finished in 28-40 and the four of us then rode to the Farndon Arms. Mike was already there and Tony and Christopher joined us shortly after. It is to be hoped that the Pickles duo will now be a regular feature of our Saturday runs.

After refreshments, Geraint and I crossed the Dee into Holt and took the road for Rossett. Foolishly, I suggested to Geraint that we take a different way home. Instead of turning right for Trevalyn and Rossett, we carried straight on for Borrass and Gresford. I had quite forgotten what a delightful village Gresford is (Captain take note) and the village pond looked most inviting in the intense heat. We started the descent of the 14% hill and as we approached the sharp right bend under the railway bridge I suddenly realised that Geraint was braking far harder than I was. It was anchors full on, back wheel locked up and skipped several inches to the left.

Fortunately I learned to drive in the days when (virtually) all cars were rear wheel drive and the rear end breaking away was an every day fact of life. So, I survived the descent and then it was the steep ascent up the other side of the valley to Llay. Then it was on to Hope, Penyffordd and Buckley, Geraint continuing on to Sychdyn.

PC

**Eureka Café**

-

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

I can remember that when Geraint first started riding with the Anfield the Eureka Café seemed to feature in most Saturday runs. Many of them seemed to entail a visit to the café on the way back home. Now, alas, the direct route home via the 'Welsh Corner' and Queensferry resembles a multilane Californian highway and is no place to be riding a bicycle.

My route took me from Buckley, across the Common to Alltami and along the lane from the Tavern (now called The Goldmine) towards Northop. Rounding a bend whilst climbing uphill, I came face to face with a juggernaut, which completely filled the lane. The driver appeared somewhat taken aback when I informed him; in fluent Anglo Saxon; that a tiny country lane was not the place to be driving such a huge vehicle.

The journey then took me on to Northop and down to Deeside and onto the Cycleway. I followed this to Blacon where I left and took the road through to

Saughall and up to the A540. As I approached my destination, I decided to take a diversion around the lanes of Capenhurst as I was running early.

Even so, it was still only 11.50 when I arrived at the café. I ordered a coffee and flapjack and settled down at a table outside. Over the next 20 minutes or so, several cyclists arrived but no Anfielders. Refreshments consumed, I decided to make my way home.

I followed the A540 straight across at Two Mills and then turned left down through Puddington to Burton. Here, I took the road across the marshes, cursing at the locked gates and having to heave my bike over fences. I did eventually reach the outskirts of Shotton Paper and took the road over the new bridge towards Flint. At Oakenholt I turned left up Papermill Lane and climbed up to Northop and on to Sychdyn and Buckley.

PC

## The Cross Foxes Overton Bridge -

15<sup>th</sup> July 2006



*Bill Graham, Ben Griffiths, Alison and Nigel Fellows and John Futter*

At 10.15 a.m., I met Geraint outside the Bridge Inn at Pontblyddyn and together we cycled to the outskirts of Wrexham. We took a slight diversion to admire the Bianchi and Scott cycles in the windows of the Bike Shop before heading on to Bersham and Rhostyllen. Here we took a left turn down Corkscrew Lane (very aptly named) before turning right and following the lane past the Dennis (Ruabon) brickworks.

My home town of Buckley was founded on the brick industry and, as a child, I can remember there being numerous brickworks (including a Catherall's Brickworks) in and around Buckley. Now they are all gone, the last one closing about three years ago. The brickworks at Ruabon is the last remaining one in this part of north Wales.

We crossed the B5426 and cycled on into the centre of Ruabon where we turned left along the A539 for Overton Bridge. About two thirds of the way along this road we turned right into the narrow lane and followed this through to the village of Erbistock and the Boat Inn. Though tempted, we did not go in for a drink but contented ourselves with admiring the views of the River Dee before cycling on to the Cross Foxes.

This really is an idyllic location on a hot summer's day. It was still not quite midday, but already quite a number of people were eagerly waiting for the doors to open. We were joined by Dave Birchall just before opening and in due course took our drinks down to one of the tables on the terrace overlooking the river.

Over the next few minutes, we were joined by Alison and Nigel Fellows, Mike Twigg, Ben, John Futter and Billy Graham. It was with great reluctance that Geraint and I finally tore ourselves away for the journey home. This took us through Cross Lanes, the Industrial Estate, Borras, Hoseley and Rosset.

PC

### **The Bull Shocklach**

-

**22<sup>nd</sup> July 2006**

On the weekend of the MRC 24, only one at the Bull is not really satisfactory. A solitary lunch is, I'm sorry to say, no advert for club-life. Still the ride from Bunbury to Shocklach was delightful on this hot sultry day, and was all the more enjoyable with a stop at Tilston's old sandstone church. Like so many rural churches that are not open these days, it was locked. What a shame. But find a chink in a cracked window pane and with a tiny camera you can still see inside:-



*Tilston church*

However ... on to the start of the 24 and there were Ben, John Futter, Bill Graham and Peter Catherall (the latter helping Geraint who was riding). Chris Vessey (who trials under Middlesex RC's colours) was also down to start but had sent in his apologies to the organisers. Out and about the course over the 24 hours were other Anfielders, with Keith Orum assisting the timekeeping.

DDB

Alan Orme and David Birchall started this ride from Bunbury in brooding weather. You could sense the end of the heatwave was close, but it was still a hot day. From Bunbury our route edged round the Peckforton Hills. Hedge fringed lanes then led to Malpas, and then we were in to that quiet borderland of south Cheshire in which nestle the Wyches. The lanes are maze-like in this sleepy countryside, and it's easy to take a wrong turn, as we did (not helped by a misleading direction sign), which added a few miles.

However had we not gone out of our way we would not have met Geraint as he rode away from Hanmer. Why? The Hanmer Arms is closed, permanently, came the reply. The loss of rural pubs is a problem, but the saga of the Hanmer Arms is exceptional. By chance, a couple of weeks later, the story of its demise was set out in gory detail in a TV programme that followed the hotel's downward spiral (losing the owners a million pounds) over the last three years.

So ... a change of plan was called for. We retraced to the Fire Station Café in Malpas, for home made cakes and sandwiches. But even there, the unexpected happens – last time it was a children's party, very noisy, that had swamped the place. Today it was prison reform. A very earnest lady (who, ahem, had been eyeing Alan as we sat minding our own business in the otherwise empty café) appeared by our table, and began quizzing us about whether we had read today's *Independent* newspaper (her own copy in hand in case we hadn't) in which was printed her letter to the editor. The lead letter no less. "What's it about?" we asked, innocently. Then having instructed us to read it (even loaning Alan a pair of specs), she tested our media awareness generally. Alan was completely sunk when he owned up to having sung in the Terry Waite Wing of Styal Prison (there was a plausible explanation), much to the fascination of the young waitresses, whose chatter had by now fallen silent .....

When we escaped, there was another surprise – the heat wave was over: it was drizzling steadily. Still, with warmth radiating from the damp roads, it was not unpleasant riding back to Bunbury.

DDB

*(Peter Catherall and Bill Graham also cycled to Hanmer, but with the pub closed, our paths did not cross.)*

The start of the holidays – destination a barn near Abergynolwyn – coincided with the clubrun to Farndon. With a phone call from John Williamson to say he'd be there, so, with the car packed (including a bike), we made the Farndon Arms our first stop.



Ben Griffiths, John Futter, Peter and Geraint Catherall, Mike Twigg, Tecwyn Williams and Captain Bill Graham sat down for lunch. For John Williamson there was lots of advice on bicycle adjustment – especially about the secrets of Campag brake adjustment on his machine that has now been more than a few years in his stable.

Then for Mary and me it was off to west Wales and a week's exploration of hill tracks around Cadair Idris, the Mawddach and the Dovey, in company with Adam and Liz.



The old drove road from Towyn to Machynlleth

**The Copper Mine, Brown Knowl - 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2006**

The morning broke grey with low clouds, and persistent heavy rain, driven on a blustery westerly wind – a low-pressure weather system had set in for the day. Definitely it was not a day for cycling. But Karl Nelson had e-mailed to say he'd be at the Copper Mine, and likewise commitments had been made to meet Tony Pickles, Keith Orum (and Pippa), Geoff Sharp, and Bill Graham. So it was a friendly party. That helped brighten up the day considerably. And the food was good too.

The pub, not unsurprisingly given its name, has copper mining as its theme, and a collection of photographs depicting copper mining on its walls. At a casual glance you could be forgiven for thinking that the subject was the old mine round the corner at Gallantrybank on slopes of Peckforton Hill. But given the huge scale of the caverns depicted, it could not have been the one once here. And with photographs dated 1793 and 1801 someone was getting their history of photography muddled too (“When was photography invented?” we asked – but no-one in the pub had the answer).

DDB

## *e-Clips*

- From John Moss, on his return to South Africa: Dubai was very hot. I got there about 6.30am I think, managing to sleep on the flight, in fact on all the long flights I slept, just remember I had 4 seats so as soon as the plane took off I lay down so no-one else could move in. I missed the meals but at least slept. In Dubai, I walked round the old town, then saw a safari into the desert in a travel agents window for 190 dirhams so booked.

The safari went out of town in to the desert, it was 43 C at 5 pm. A drive over the sand dunes and a braai (BarBQ). The food was ok and you could get a beer for about 4 times the price of SA. Needless to say I was falling asleep on the way back to the hotel. The next morning I got the double-decker tour bus around the town and beach. In the evening I couldn't find any hotel in the area I was in that sold beer so it was a dry night.

Overall it was interesting, but you must like heat. They say it gets to 50C in the summer (now ). The food I had was OK but don't expect bacon for breakfast. Prices I would say are not as cheap as they make out. Maps you can forget as the roads do not go where the maps show they do, and it would help if you can speak Hindi.

Please put my e-mail address in the circular should anyone wish to drop me a word or two, it's [moss@cam.wits.ac.za](mailto:moss@cam.wits.ac.za). That's the home one.

- From Chris Shorter:  
Ruth and I are having a very full racing season on the tandem and I'll send some news when the season is eventually over, but at present we're down to 20:35, 52:45, 1:07:03 and a crash-interrupted 1:52:21.

- Peter Catherall - Let's Tell The World  
Amongst those helping Geraint in this year's 24 was his mum. On the Saturday evening, having driven out to Prees with fresh drinks and food, she had seen plenty of signs advising motorists that a bike race was in progress but nothing to tell them what the race was. "Why not?" she wondered.

Why not tell motorists that this was a **National Championship**; that the race lasted for **24 hours**? In the early hours of Sunday morning, I was talking to a marshal at Tern Hill, when a police car sped by with blue lights flashing. "Oh", said the marshal, "I was talking to him about 15 minutes ago. He stopped to ask what was going on. He was amazed that people could cycle for 24 hours and initially refused to believe some could cycle over 500 miles."

In addition to the vital warning signs, why not have large signs that tell

the motorists about the race? If they know what the race is, then they may show far more appreciation and consideration for the riders involved. And why restrict this to national events? What about our own **Anfield 100?**

Why not erect signs around the course telling motorists that they are witnessing a classic event that has been held for over 100 years and has some of the top cyclists from all over the country? What about putting up notices in the shop windows in Shawbury telling the locals about their town's association with one of the British cycling calendar's most prestigious events?

Are we ashamed of our sport? Do we wish to remain anonymous? Cycling has taken repeated knocks over the past few years because of drug scandals. At least our sport has faced up to it and deals severely with miscreants, which is more than can be said for some other sports. For the sake of the many amateur cyclists in this country, who race week in and week out with no thought for reward other than the enjoyment they get from participating; let us proclaim their efforts and virtue. Let us tell the world that the British cyclist is a true sportsman taking part in the toughest sport in the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Cornish Tandem Ride – 18<sup>th</sup> February 2006**

Due to extensive gardening (Adam), teacher training (Liz), and re-discovering the muddy brigade, the tandem had lain unused for a couple of months. But with half term and the prospect of home-grown steak, chips and all the trimmings at Liz's Mum's, we had the incentives to get it back on the road. Previous rides between Truro and Marazion had used the Cornish Cycle Way - not entirely satisfactory wending its way up hill and down, in and out of gateways, stiles, Camborne housing estates and Redruth industrial estates – none of which are particularly conducive to smooth tandeming. So we proposed trying an alternative route using the Mineral Tramway from the south to the north coasts of the county just to the west of Truro. Once you reach the north coast at Portreath you can then use the quieter coast road to Hayle.

The ride got off to a bad start when the cycle track out of Truro turned out to be unexpectedly closed. Whilst some might have climbed the site fence and scrambled through the bramble thicket we decided that the tandem would not be quite so easily managed, so we diverted along a steep dual-carriageway. At least we were rewarded with the sight of daffodils about to burst into flower, and a mile later we were back on track. Our route took us to the west of Truro for 5 miles until the trail is reached in the historic mining centre of Bissoe. The valley bears evidence all around of past mining activity. The gorse was in

flower. An old wives tale says when the gorse is in flower kissing is in season – gorse of course is always in flower! The trail climbs steadily to Scorrier, its half-way point, where it then drops to the north coast through a subtly different landscape of smallholdings and farmsteads and a lot of horses.

Reaching Portreath we revived ourselves with bananas and watched the brave souls surfing the Atlantic breakers. Then came a mile long Alpine style hill with hair-pin corners followed by a relatively gentle rolling road for the next 8 miles eventually ending in a sweeping descent into Gwithian. A quick sprint along the harbour in Hayle saw us at the famous Philps Pasty Shop (young land agents have been known to plan a whole day of visits around a “chance” lunchtime stop at one of the Philps shops). Now happy tandemers, we retreated to a bench along the harbour to refuel. An enthusiastic pensioner (with zimmer frame – on wheels) trundled past with a cheery ‘Good morning’ before commenting ‘I bet she’s the leader’ (addressed to Adam) and ‘you look like the brains and he looks like the brawn’ (addressed to Liz). Tummies and egos suitably satisfied we then set off for the last 5 miles to Marazion where we completed the day with a walk on Marazion beach and a crossing to St. Michael’s Mount on the causeway just ahead of the incoming tide ... followed by steak and chips and free bed and breakfast (well worth all the cycling).

Adam and Liz Birchall



*And finally ... Anfielders exploring Wales: Dyffryn Dysynni with Craig yr Adern in the background*

# ANFIELD CIRCULAR

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

December 2006

No.919



Stuart Twigg, Chris Edwards and Mike Hallgarth, at Lake Vrynwy

# ~ CLUBRUNS ~

*hic et ubique*

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

December	23	Castle Hotel	Tiverton	
	30	Farndon Arms	Farndon	
January	6	Calveley Arms	Handley	
	13	Britannia	Halkyn	
	20	Copper Mine	Brown Knowle, Broxton	
	27	The Buck	Bangor-on-Dee	
February	3	Cock O'Barton	Barton	
	10	Cross Foxes	Overton Bridge	
	17	Castle Hotel	Tiverton	
	24	Farmers' Arms	Kelsall	
March	3	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee 1130hrs</u>	
	<b><u>Anfield BC Birthday Lunch to book phone Keith Orum 1230 for 1300</u></b>			
	10	Farndon Arms	Farndon	<u>Club 10 1130hrs</u>
	17	The Liver	Rhydtalog	
	24	Yew Tree	Spurstow	
	31	Carden Arms	Tilston	
April	7	The Plough	Christleton	
	14	Farndon Arms	Farndon	<u>Club 10 1130hrs</u>
	21	Captain's Weekend		



## ***Subscriptions***

*21 and over: £15.00; Junior (under 21): £7.50; Cadet: £3.50 Family £1*

*CTC 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance £12*

**Hon Treasurer:** Keith Orum 5 Brunstath Close Barnston WIRRAL CH60 1UH

☎0151 342 8958

**President / Editor:** David Birchall, 53 Beggarmans Lane, KNUTSFORD, WA16 9BA

☎/fax: 01565 651593; e-mail: [david@birchall39.freemove.co.uk](mailto:david@birchall39.freemove.co.uk)

**Hon Secretary:** Chris Edwards, 4 Beach Road, Hoylake, Wirral CH47 1HT

☎0151 632 3462 e-mail: [cge@delcam.com](mailto:cge@delcam.com)

**Captain:** Bill Graham, 47 Main Road Kinnerton CHESTER, CH4 9AJ ☎01244 660858

**CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT CIRCULAR: 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2007**

## Committee Notes

**Change of address:** Brian Bird, 41B Pollard Close, PLYMOUTH, PL9 9RR,  
☎01752 24064

**Family Membership:** Alex Rees, proposed by M Twigg seconded T Williams

**Committee Meetings 2007:** 3rd March, 19th May, 1st September

### Club Events 2007

(subject to CTT approval)

1 <sup>st</sup> club 10	10 <sup>th</sup> March 2007	11.30 hours start
2 <sup>nd</sup> club 10	14 <sup>th</sup> April 2007	11.30 hours start
3 <sup>rd</sup> club 10	12 <sup>th</sup> May 2007	11.30 hours start
4 <sup>th</sup> club 10	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2007	11.30 hours start
5 <sup>th</sup> club 10	4 <sup>th</sup> August 2007	11.30 hours start
Hill Climb	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2007	11.30 hours start

## WCTTA MARSHALLING

**Volunteers needed for the events highlighted, as follows:**

**Sunday 25th March\*** (10); **Sunday 29th April\*** (30); **Sunday 6th May\*** (50);  
Wednesday 20th June (10) [Chris Edwards and Peter Catherall]; **Sunday 12th August\*** (12); Sunday 16th September (25) [Alan Orme and David Birchall]

**\*Geoff Sharp is preparing a rota. If you are able to help, please phone him:  
0151 336 2092.**

## Racing Results

WCTTA 25 17<sup>th</sup> September: G Thompson 1.02.00, G Catherall 1.09.22, B Griffiths 1.11.41  
Horseshoe Pass hill climb 8<sup>th</sup> October: Geraint Catherall 13.02

### *Birthday lunch - Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2007*

*A friendly and informal "hotpot" lunch is planned at Carriages, Gateshead by Tattenhall to celebrate our birthday. We hope that members who we don't often see will be able to join us - all are welcome. Contact Keith Orum (0151 342 8958) and make a note in your diary. (Alternatives to hotpot will be available!)*

### *Captain's Weekend - 21-25 April 2007*

*After the enjoyable ride to Hadnall last April Captain Bill Graham is looking in to a similar weekend near Hodnet. The idea is to ride there and back with lunch on Saturday at Wrenbury. £10 deposit to Bill by end of January please*

## Hon Secretary's Report

Another year has passed in the life of the Anfield Bicycle Club and as in previous years it has been a time of change blended with a continuation of the fine traditions established by the club on its original foundation in 1879.

Membership currently stands at 61 in total comprising 8 life members, 50 full members and 3 family members. The latter category being introduced after the membership proposed and accepted a rule change at an extraordinary meeting. This new category allows family members to formalise their relationship with the Anfield, and has had the added advantage of offering third party CTC insurance to the family members at a reduced rate. It was probably about time that membership was opened up to a broader population that includes family members who have been life long supporters of the club and helped with the running of Anfield Events.

It was another successful year for the 100 with a well run event attracting 97 riders, and again this event would not be possible without the help of the other local clubs and the family of Anfield members who turn out every year to help with marshalling and running the highly successful tea and cake stand.

Probably the most radical change this year has occurred with very little fanfare or ceremony but it is an indication of our ability to move with the times whilst adhering to traditions. I am talking of the launch of the Anfield website which has finally taken shape due to the endeavours of David Birchall and Jonny Sharp. It is a very useful point of reference and will hopefully carry the exploits of the club, both past and present to a worldwide audience.

Another part of the club's heritage was also given an added dimension this year when David Birchall and Glynn Stockdale explored our links with Liverpool Football Club. The outcome was more positive than any of us could have hoped for and further emphasised the place of the Anfield Bicycle Club in the history of Liverpool.

Our history even inspired an American to attempt a circumnavigation of the world by Penny Farthing. Even though Steve Stevens did not complete his mission, those of us who met him could not help but admire his determination and enthusiasm, which was highly infectious.

This year saw our members competing in time trials and a notable performance by Geraint Catherall in the Mersey Roads 24 where he achieved a personal best of 355.46 miles. Geraint was the mainstay of the Club Events but they also saw performances by John Thompson, Graham Thompson, Chris Shorter and Ben Griffiths competed in time trials.

It of course has to be said that the overall membership are not taking part in the racing scene these days but this does not mean that the club is failing rather that members are enjoying their cycling in different ways with interest in off road cycling and touring. These activities continue to be enjoyed by many club members.

We have had another good and varied year with each member being able to take what they want from club membership. The officers of the club should be congratulated for another fine year in the growing history of the Anfield Bicycle Club. Without the efforts of all those that work to serve the club there would be no Anfield Bicycle Club and no sporting and social life that we can all enjoy.

**Chris Edwards**



## Clubruns

*If we awarded a prize for contributions to the Circular, Peter Catherall would be the clear winner. All the reports that follow are from Peter except where otherwise named...*

### **The Antelope**

-

**12<sup>th</sup> August 2006**

Geraint was doing a '12' the following day so, when I rang him, he told me that he was only going for a short ride, straight to the Antelope. Thus I was surprised when he drew alongside me as I cycled up the old A55 from Northop towards the Celyn. At the Middle Mill, we climbed left to the Blue Bell in Halkyn, then through Windmill to the Black Lion in Babell. On reaching the Lloc – Caerwys road it was still only 11.00 so we decided to go straight across for Tremeirchion which I had not approached by this route before. It has the great advantage that you enter the village via a couple of steep descents rather than a steep ascent. Perhaps I am showing my age, but signs indicating 14% and 9% convey far less meaning to me than 1 in 7 and 1 in 11.

Bodfari was next, on a road recently resurfaced, a proper tarmac job, not a cheapskate pebble-dashing. Mind you, it had been needed. When I had ridden this way a couple of months previously, it had resembled a road in southern Lebanon. Now, Geraint and I could whiz along at high speed.

I now followed Geraint at a fair rate through Afonwen reaching the Antelope shortly after 12.00: 29.4 miles, so much for Geraint's short run. Joining us Len Walls said that his first ever ABC run was here in 1946. It was a popular venue in those days; though there was one member who complained that it was always rabbit pie on the menu. During the chat, Billy Graham arrived and soon he and Len were engaged in talk of Bath Road 100s whilst the youngsters (Geraint and I) listened in awe. All too soon, it was time to leave for home.

### **The Old Town Vaults**

-

**28<sup>th</sup> August 2006**

Had my name been Noah, I would have gone to Whitchurch by Ark. Instead, I set off just before 10.00 under grey but dry skies. At Dodleston I observed that the Welsh hills had disappeared under a veil of torrential rain. Stay there I prayed. I either prayed to the wrong god or his hearing aid was off.

The first few drops fell at Pulford. By Lavister I was wet, and in Trevalyn I was squelchy. Still, it was warm and I do not object to being wet and warm. On through the ceaseless rain to Tilston and then the conditions became dire. Climbing up to Malpas I had to ride in the middle of the road as there was a raging torrent flowing down either side. Then, I came upon a completely flooded section of road. To go on, or not, that was the question. I watched a car traverse the flood and decided that I would go on. After all, I couldn't get

any wetter, and was feeling quite pleased with myself when I encountered a second flooded section. Like Moses leading the Tribe of Israel, the waters parted and I was soon in Malpas. By Grindley Brook, the rain had eased and by Whitchurch, ceased. Whitchurch was clearly designed by Daedalus as a trial run for the Cretan labyrinth. I threaded my way through the streets like Theseus in search of the Minotaur. And, I did not have Ariadne to help me.

Eventually, more by good luck than design, I found the Old Town Vaults, parked my bicycle and entered. I fell in love with the pub. It simply oozes nostalgia and has excellent ale and food. However, I do have reservations about its suitability for cyclists. It opens onto a very narrow pavement on a narrow street. I was able to park my bike, but, there is only room for one. Where would a group of cyclists park their bikes? There is no room on the pavement and, as far as I could determine, there is no access to the small courtyard at the back of the pub other than going through the pub. Having eaten and with the appearance of blue in the sky, I decided to make my way home via the A41 to Grindley Brook and Malpas. As I did so, I met Billy Graham en-route for Whitchurch. After a short confab, Billy decided to join me rather than go on to the venue.

The return was far better than the outward journey. The flooded sections of road were still there, but, for the most part, it was under blue skies. The only complaint was that just as you dried out, you would be subjected to another short downpour. I arrived home wet, with 54 miles in my legs, but with a deep glow of inner satisfaction. Despite the weather, I really enjoyed the day.

**The Nag's Head, Haughton Moss** - **9<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

After three successive wet Saturdays, the prospect of clear blue skies made the club run irresistible. I left just before 10.00 and dropped down to Kinnerton en-route for Chester. As I approached the junction at Gorstella, I saw a familiar car parked on the small grass island. Ben was just about to cycle off to Broughton to meet up with John Futter for their own ride.

Instead of riding through Chester (it was a Race Day); I took the bypass for Christleton. Then, it was on via Waverton and Huxley to Beeston and thence through Bunbury to Spurstow. The last few miles to Haughton were new to me, so I rode slowly along the lanes taking in the Cheshire countryside.

I arrived at the pub with some 10 minutes to spare so I continued on past the pub for a mile or so before returning just on 12.00. Parking my bike against a table in the gardens, I went in and got a splendid pint of bitter. As I returned to the table, I noticed a very suspicious character loitering about at the front of the pub. I called out to Mr Birchall and invited him to come and join me.

David had left his car at Bunbury and had ridden out to Wrenbury and Cholmondley before making his way back to Haughton – twenty miles all in quiet lanes. Soon, Billy Graham, who had come via Bickerton and Peckforton, joined us, and John Williamson, who had cycled from Tarvin.

After a very pleasant chat in the midday sun, I was the first to go. My route was the reverse of Billy's. Between Broxton and Farndon, a car passed me, screeched to a halt in a lay-by, and the driver leapt out and frantically flagged me down. Il etait un homme Francais qui ne parle pas Anglais.

He thrust a piece of paper into my hand. It appeared to be the booking for his destination with typewritten instructions (in French) at the bottom. He had made a major faux pas at Broxton where he had turned to the droit instead of the gauche. His route should have taken him from Broxton towards Nantwich and he should have taken 'le premier rue, a droit, après le Coppermine'.

Whilst I can still read French, my spoken French has faded into oblivion. And, to compound matters, il n'avait pas la plume de sa tante, so I could not even draw him a map. Eh bien. After drawing several imaginary maps with my finger, yelling loudly and hitting him over the head several times with a banana, I think I got the message across. Anyway, he left in the right direction. The rest of my journey home was uneventful and wind assisted. Even the final climb from Kinnerton was a delight. 55 miles and a most enjoyable day.

### **Hill Climb and Druid Inn, Llanferres - 16<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

Another fine Saturday, so I set off through Padeswood to Pontblyddyn. As I started the long ascent to Llandegla, I saw a fellow cyclist just up ahead. Most unusually, he was travelling somewhat more slowly than I was. Very soon, I caught him, exchanged pleasantries and accelerated away feeling exceedingly pleased with myself, but soon brought down to earth when, nearing Treuddyn, I heard voices behind me and three lads from Deeside Olympic swept past.

On I went, through Rhydtalog, over the top and down to Llandegla. The last couple of miles into Llandegla are rough. The road needs resurfacing and with 120psi in the tyres; the term 'boneshaker' takes on a whole new meaning. At the crossroads I turned right, then right again at the top of the Nant-y-Garth and made my way to Llanarmon. The Raven appeared to have received a coat of paint and there were new tables outside. However, a friend of mine who does a lot of shooting in the locality, had advised me that the new incumbents could not yet be relied upon for the provision of food.

I arrived at the hill climb with plenty of time to spare so tested my legs riding (very slowly) to the top. On my way back down, I met Geraint on his way up. He returned to the start with me and we awaited the arrival of other Anfielders.

We had almost given up hope when Nigel Fellows came sweeping down from Eryrys on the bike that he got in a cereal packet (well the voucher for it). 11.30 was rapidly approaching so Geraint decided to do a solo run using the stopwatch facility on his computer to time himself. He shot off and returned about 10 minutes later claiming a time of 5-32.

The three of us were about to depart for the Druids when we spotted an Anfield vest in the distance, heading down from Grianrhyd. It was John Futter and Billy Graham who joined us and, after a brief chat we set off for lunch. The bar belongs to a long bygone age. The ancient wooden tables and oak beams would not have looked out of place in Tudor times. One could almost picture ample-bosomed serving wenches and jugs of ale. As well as fine ale, there was also a good menu, though Billy was the only one to partake of food.

Geraint was the first to leave, closely followed by the rest of us. We dropped down through the Loggerheads and then climbed up the Rainbow. Near the top, Nigel, John and Billy turned right to go through Maeshafn whilst I carried on over the top, down through Mold and home to Buckley.

**Calveley Arms Handley - 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2006**

It was the start of yet another sunny Saturday as I dropped down through Hawarden and Mancot en route to Saltney Ferry. Just as I started across the footbridge, I was confronted by a phalanx of Birkenhead North Enders coming the other way. Greetings exchanged, I crossed the bridge and turned immediately right onto the cycle path and headed towards the centre of Chester along the riverbank. On the way, I saw numerous gulls, ducks and swans as well as several cormorants and a heron.

Once through Chester, I took the well-cycled route through Christleton and Waverton to Huxley and thence to Tattenhall. My route then took me towards Broxton, and, on arriving at the A41, there to greet me, on the other side of the road, were three of the Birkenhead mob. Ribaldries exchanged, I turned right onto the A41 and cycled the short distance into Handley. The Calveley Arms had just opened, so in I went. After 20 minutes, I was giving up hope of seeing another Anfielder when Mike Twigg arrived. Mike was on an alcohol free day because of medication. After a chat, having decided to make our ways home, just as we left, Tecwyn arrived and so our departure was pleasantly delayed by several more minutes.

My route home led to Aldersley and Coddington. On the way, I met an Anfielder cycling towards Handley and, although we waved to each other, I must confess that I did not recognise him. A couple of minutes later, I met Billy Graham also heading towards Handley. As for me, I continued to Coddington, then over to Barton, Farndon and home.

Yet another sunny Saturday. I headed down to Hawarden and the footbridge at Saltney Ferry. Then, it was up through Blacon on the cycle path to Hoole. I crossed the main road and cycled on through Mickle Trafford, Bridge Trafford, and Manley. Here, from the B5393 I took the lane down to Woodside, past Lower Longley Farm and entered Kelsall at the bottom of the old Kelsall hill.

I rode up the hill, and parked my bike at the back of the pub. My pint of Old Dog bitter had just been pulled when Dave Birchall arrived. A few minutes later, Dave Edwards joined us, so we were three for a pleasant chat. Dave (Birchall) informed us that he, Keith Orum and Geoff Sharp were riding the Cambrian Challenge from Oswestry the following day. (In view of the weather on the Sunday, I am glad that I did my cycling on the Saturday). I was the first to leave and made my way back to Buckley via Oscroft, Waverton, and the southerly bypass. Total distance covered was 47.6 miles.

**The Buck, Bangor-on-Dee**

-

**28<sup>th</sup> October 2006**

Today I was back on my bicycle after two weeks of gout, which had forced me to miss a fantastic weekend at Llanfyllin. I was like a Macaw with psittacosis.

It was a reasonable day although there was a fair wind. My journey was via Pen-y-Ffordd and Hope up to Caer Estyn where I turned left for Burton Green. In my feckless youth, I would have sped down this lane in the firm belief of my immortality. These days I go with greater caution, and thus, on rounding a blind bend, I was able to stop (just) without modifying the radiator grille of an exceedingly big lorry. The lorry completely filled the lane and the driver was making earnest enquiries at the only house for miles as to how to get to civilisation. He had been following the route shown by his GPS, which did not take into account the suitability of the road for juggernauts. I dismounted, and just managed to squeeze past before continuing to Lavister and Farndon.

Then it was on via Shocklach and Worthenbury where I noticed that the Emral Arms was due to be demolished and houses built on the site. At Bangor, Geraint, who had travelled via Wrexham, Ruabon and Overton, joined me. Just on midday, we observed Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (alias Ben and John Futter) riding into town looking for a bank to rob. There being no bank, they turned into the Buck car park and hitching up their steeds.

Geraint and I joined them and we entered the pub and ordered lunch. Our conversation was wide-ranging and convivial. On taking our leave we found numerous fellow cyclists (CTC?) outside. Ben and John stopped to talk to some of them whilst Geraint and I crossed the bridge and made our way home via Cross Lanes, the Industrial Estate, Gresford roundabout and Llay.

**The Yew Tree, Spurstow**

-

**4<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

I met John Futter in Broughton at 1030am on a very pleasant autumn morning, just right for cycling – dry, mild, very little wind. We rode out via Dodleston, Pulford, Churton and Tattenhall. Passing between the castles at Beeston and Peckforton, the trees looked at their best – most of the leaves still on and very colourful, then on to the Yew Tree for 12.10pm.

David Birchall and Peter Catherall were already in the bar. Peter was soon away, but David, John and Ben enjoyed a long chat, mainly on horse breeding and racing, and the merits of owning a narrow boat, (on this, David being for and Ben against). We left for home about 1.15pm, with still no agreement. We had a good ride home, getting in at 3pm with 60 miles covered. A pity we don't get more members out on these good days.

Ben Griffiths

**The Liver, Rhydtalog**

-

**11<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

It was a windy but mild morning for the run to Rhydtalog. John Futter was not out this morning, so I made my way via the lanes, stopping at the house of friends in Cymau for tea break. Then on through Llanfynydd up the hill past the Stone Zoo, and a left towards Blaenau got me to Rhydtalog a bit early. So I rode on to Graianrhyd and back to the Liver for 12.05pm, ordered some food, and waited for more members to arrive. Only Mike Twigg came. We left about 12.50 – me for home down the A5104 past my old work place (it was a good place to work – 10 miles home mostly down hill). In Treuddyn I crossed with the Captain – Bill making his way out. Home by 1.30 – only 28 miles, but some good hills on a windy day.

Ben Griffiths

**The Goshawk, Mouldsworth**

-

**18<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

The day was bright and dry on leaving Sychdyn. I headed down to Broughton to meet Ben and John, who, as I arrived, were just setting out, but not for the club run. So it was a lone ride over the bridge at Saltney for the cycle path through Chester to Mickle Trafford where I joined the A 56 for Dunham on the Hill and Alvanley. Arriving in Helsby I turned right and headed up to Manley, until I reached a fork in the road - unfortunately all the direction signs were pointing in the same direction. Thankfully a local person pointed me in the right direction and so I soon reached the Goshawk. Mike and Stuart Twigg were already there. Then followed David and Mary (with friends Ron and Jo Punshon), and finally Billy, back from his travels in America. After eating I returned via the cycle path through to Connah's Quay, then up to Hawarden and Ewloe Green, and home to Sychdyn: a round journey of 60 miles.

Geraint Catherall

## *e-clips*

- Karl Nelson:

What a difference 156 miles makes! Lots of people tend to jet out of Manchester in the month of August to sunnier climates. In my case I did the reverse and flew with BA into Manchester. When home, I always have access to two very good training partners-Keith and Geoff. This time was no exception. Thanks to their help I managed to get in over 150 miles in just over a week. I always enjoy my rides with them both. Coming from Heswall, the road along the front at Parkgate is a particular stretch I enjoy for some reason.



Back in Germany I entered a cycle event on the 9th September in Ratingen. I have ridden this before: the first part is flat, the second quite hilly and the third undulating. As always, a couple of hundred riders rode - all on racing bikes and most riding as though there was no tomorrow. Anyway I rode well, with some fast groups, though did lose the plot on the hilly section. I rode a total of 44 miles this time-it may not seem much-but bearing in mind the speed it is not bad. I have ridden a total of seven of similar events this year: all are good training indicators - they always tell me how "slow" I am riding. The team car is not shown in the picture - it is about 15 metres behind.

- From Chris and Ruth Shorter:



This photo was taken just after our little crash in the 50. If you look at my lower left leg closely, you'll see it is covered with grazes and small cuts. There is worse damage to Ruth's knee but Chris Lax carefully waited until it was hidden behind her hand! It explains why I look rather angry. It was a very hot day and we are both tooled-up with Camelbacks. Our season certainly exceeded expectations. The fastest 10 time was only 12 seconds off a national age record, currently belonging to Christine and Alan Roberts. Neither of us have been natural 10 milers and

I suspect we will have much better opportunities for a national record at longer distances.

- From Steve Marriott: Three of us took part in the Phil and Friends ride around the Peak District: so some new scenery for me, and some areas that I'd not been to for a very long time. Next I'm off to Geneva with the aim of cycling from there to the Med: it's going to be tough going undoubtedly, but I've thoroughly researched everything so with careful ride planning I should be able to make it.

\* \* \* \* \*

### The Road To Hell

The one advantage of a '12' is that it is not a '24'. Given the weather on the 13<sup>th</sup>, Geraint was glad that he was only riding for 12 hours and not 24. Though the threatened rain did not arrive, the north wind was cruel. Keith Orum started Geraint at 06.06 and so began a 12 hour battle with road and wind.

The hardest stretch was that from Shawburch to Esplay - nearly 10 miles of gently climbing road, riding into the face of what was a seemingly gale-force wind. I established myself in a lay-by, approximately half way along the road. Here, I could catch Geraint on his way to Shawburch and on his way back.

Slowly, the riders returning from Shawburch would come into view, each one bent low over their machine, gritted teeth clearly visible as they tried to take in air. You could almost hear their muscles screaming in pain as they forced the wheels round through yet another revolution. The pace was more akin to that of a gentle Wednesday afternoon CTC run than a race.

On his third journey back from Shawburch, Geraint pulled in for a quick cup of tea and a piece of cake. "How's it going?" I asked. "Thank God I won't have to do this stretch again." was the heart-felt reply. Then he was off and on his way to the finishing circuit.

He completed two and a half laps of the circuit before time ran out. I reckoned his mileage to be between 200 and 201 miles. There seemed to be quite a few riders missing on the finishing circuit. I do not know how many did not finish; perhaps I just was not in the right place at the right time to see them.

My lasting image of the race was of one rider, who, like Bonnie Tyler, went 'faster than the speed of light' in the early stages of the race. I next saw him on the finishing circuit, standing astride his cycle, at the foot of the Prees by-pass looking forlornly up the hill. A broken man, who, like a hunted animal that can run no further, was accepting his fate with calm resignation.

Peter Catherall



## Bicycling bells

*Exploring old churches, especially in Cornwall, was a favourite pastime for the poet John Betjeman, and he was surely the inspiration for the Cornwall Historic Churches Trust's fund-raising church-crawl. Adam and Liz Birchall took up the challenge on their tandem:*



Church number eleven: St Gerموe

The day of the ride dawned a perfect late summer morning. Setting off in sunshine, from Liz's parents at St Hilary, near Penzance, for churches round Mounts Bay, the first was in Crowlas, at the end of a track through the St Aubyn Estate. Our arrival coincided with that of the steward, who insisted on a detailed discussion of Liz's family tree before allowing us on our way. Next stop was Ludgvan, at the top of a long climb. One of the nice things about the climb is the long freewheel that follows - today leading us to Gulval. Another nice thing (about both churches) is that they are next to excellent pubs ... but, alas, no time to stop as we headed to church number four at Heamoor.

Madron and a commanding view over Mounts Bay notched up no.5, followed by Penzance Methodist Church, where coffee was on offer. A quick stop at St Mary's further down the hill to enjoy the palm trees in the churchyard, bagged us church number seven, and put us on the cycle track to Marazion. After picking up pasties we stopped for lunch at Liz's mum's holiday cottage before number eight - Perranuthnoe. Here our arrival coincided with a wedding. Feeling sure the bride and groom would not want a pair of, by this point, slightly grubby tandemists in their photos, we discretely took our own from behind a grave stone as evidence of our visit.

Next came Kennegie Methodist chapel. The busy main road to Helston was the only route to it, with the added downside of a strong south-easterly head wind. Even the aerodynamic advantages of the tandem did not translate into better forward progress. This chapel is unusual with schoolroom downstairs and church above. Its windows, originally frosted, have recently been replaced with clear glass, giving magnificent views. But it must keep the preacher on his toes to avoid his congregation's attention wandering!

Church number eleven was round the corner at Germoe, nestling in a hollow by a little stream. Officially next was Balwest, but before calling there we diverted to Ashton, having checked the map to ensure we would not lose too much of the valuable height we had only recently gained. We were only the second names on the list at Ashton and returned to Balwest where we were the first visitors of the day (at 4pm). The road back to our final stop at St Hilary kept to the high ground under Godolphin Warren before a very welcome descent. The view below us in the afternoon sun surely could not have been bettered anywhere else on the west coasts of England, Wales or Ireland.

We had ridden 30 miles, visited 14 churches, and raised £140.50 for Truro Cathedral. We had also enjoyed the special landscape of Mounts Bay, and a wonderful variety of churches, ranging from the old (14<sup>th</sup> century Ludgvan); to the recent (St Mary's, Penzance of 1832); and each in its way unique.

\* \* \* \* \*

*They shoot horses don't they? - RAAM 2006 - Mike Hallgarth*

The Race Across America (RAAM) started as an annual event in 1982 as a solo challenge ride from Los Angeles to New York. The idea was to ride the designated route as a time-trial with the minimum of stops. Sleep would be at the cost of miles so riders had to balance the two in order to get the best advantage over their rivals.



(RAAM team - Mike Hallgarth kneeling 3<sup>rd</sup> from

My interest in joining a support crew was thwarted when the attempt was cancelled in April. Then in June came an e-mail from the team "Just Sweat No Tears": could I get to Los Angeles by Saturday? I agreed immediately!

Tactics were that 2 riders would take an 8 hour "shift", riding for about an hour each. Then the other

pair would take over. There were 8 in the support crew and we hired 2 vehicles, one an MPV ("pursuit vehicle") and an enormous Mobile Home ("RV"). The MPV had to follow the rider at all times and the RV acted as a mobile dormitory for us all. At the start all teams were loaned a GPS system, with the exact route pre-programmed. Impressive technology indeed but not matched by the mobile phone reception. We had 10 mobile phones but for most of the trip they were out of range.

It took a while to get used to the rules concerning the following vehicle. In UK time trials we are not allowed to have them but under RAAM rules you

MUST have a following vehicle! Also the following vehicle must never overtake the rider but drinks could be handed up whilst on the move.

Special permission had been obtained to use Interstate motorways. This caused, for our team at least, problems as the hard shoulders were littered with the remnants of shredded lorry tyres - and punctures followed. On one occasion I was woken and handed a pile of punctured tubes to fix - no-one else seemed to know how to do it! On a rare visit to a bike shop, we managed to buy 20 new tubes but they were short valve and no use for any of the wheels.

After leaving Los Angeles we quickly entered desert country with strong tailwinds. The Rockies are, apparently, beautiful mountains but I was asleep during the daylight and on driving duty in the dark so missed the scenery.

On through the flatter terrain of Arizona, Utah and Colorado and the ever present smell of oil from the wells. The bikes' lighting didn't need to be bright, as the rules required riders to ride at night entirely within the pursuit vehicles headlights. Through Kansas and Missouri we encountered mini tornados, which caused many teams to stop and wait. Illinois, Indiana and Ohio came and went before the team entered West Virginia and Pennsylvania and the serious climbing began after the riders had been on relatively flat terrain since the Rockies. Average speeds plummeted as the Appalachians took their toll but we knew all our rivals were in the same boat.

For the final few miles the team rode as a "4-up" and were given a police escort through the suburbs of Atlantic City, crossing the line on the seafront to a tremendous cheer having ridden 3047 miles in 7 days and 10 minutes.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *Autumn Tints Weekend*

**Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin - 13<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2005**

This was the fourth year in succession that we have made Llanfyllin our home for the Autumn Tints weekend. And the weather was just as calm and sunny as before. Without doubt Llanfyllin is a really good place for a cycling weekend, nestling in the heart of the wooded hill country between wild Wales and pastoral Shropshire. The hotel is comfortable, its food excellent, and we were made to feel welcome. Well we did contribute to their best beer running out.

In classic ABC style on Saturday we divided into three separate parties. Geraint Catherall joined Keith Orum and Geoff Sharp for the roadmen's ride. Their circuit took them over the Bwlch-y-Groes then down to Bala for lunch. Returning from Bala they climbed the Miltir Cerrig and "little" Hirnant before returning to Llanfyllin. The senior trio of Mike Twigg, Tecwyn Williams, and Dikki Bird were content to ride round Lake Vyrnwy before retiring to the Lake Vyrnwy Hotel then back to Llanfyllin where Tony Pickles joined them. The

third group comprised Chris Edwards, Mike Hallgarth, Stuart Twigg and David Birchall. For these four it was forest tracks and drove roads in the hills and woods between Llanfyllin and Vyrnwy, meeting the senior party for lunch. As for the greatest distance travelled, there was no competition: John Thompson and Rob Hopkins (SRC) left Bristol at an unearthly hour to reach Llanfyllin, some 130 miles later, via a route that included some of the hilliest roads that you can find in the Welsh borders. With the prospect of a similar ride back no wonder they both looked - er - focused at breakfast on Sunday.

In what has become something of a tradition, we rounded off the weekend with a brisk circuit of Vyrnwy followed by tea and toast at the café by the dam. All in all an excellent weekend.



(top – green track above Pen-y-Bont-Fawr; lower – panorama of Llanfyllin)