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Spotlight – Magazine of the CTC Essex DA, a local member group of CTC, the national cyclists' organisation

President: Brian Taylor

Volume 2/2010

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Closing date for the May / June 2010 edition is on 16 April 2010.

Officers of the CTC Essex DA - we are serving you ...

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Other Committee members

EDARF	John Davis	jldavis_123@talktalk.net
Veterans Rep	John Davis	☎ 01787 474224

Editor's foreword

Shall I call it the fairy hovered over the last article in the last edition? – So embarrassing... Clearly someone's eyes were not properly with it. I do apologise to Charles, to Roy Davidson and the readers for this major faux pas.

It seems that my call for contributions has taken fruit. There are quite a few articles this time round. Keep it coming.

You find Charles' comment on the President's proposal for an off-road section on page 30.

Take note: this year is the Trivets (Veterans' Triennial) Ride, where John Davis is asking for support on page 17. Also, we have another edition of Strawberry Tea this year.

And the dates for *Bike Week* have changed, please see page 28.

You may find that the website links are missing on the previous page. Collating all the links, including the advertisers', I have put the lot onto the last inside page.

Finally, we got a memento on our First Lady of cycling support with an excellent list of achievements on page 27.

Enjoy the read.

Your editor,
Stefan Eichenseher



The President's piece

As we are not riding our cycles in the ice and snow and getting soft I happened to come across some reports of the Romford section in 1926.

On Saturday the run was to Galleywood and between Margaretting and the destination two long stretches of the muddy lane were completely submerged whilst adjacent fields were partly under water. Considerable time was spent in the failing light negotiating the very narrow "bridges" over this watery waste and slithering over field paths and through slimy ditches.

Sunday saw the section en route to Finchingfield, in the pouring rain. The lanes here were at their worst and on the return journey by way of Dunmow and Ongar, the heavy surface and the mighty wind made the going very slow. The Bull at Blackmore was eventually reached and after tea and a chat it was discovered that the stars were shining but the wind was still blowing hard in the wrong direction.

If you would like to read more of the early reports please contact the editor.

Take care on the road and safe cycling!

Brian Taylor



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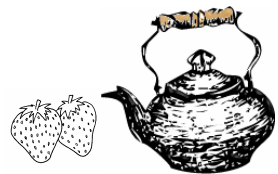
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Strawberry Tea – 4th July 2010

John Davis is once again organising this Summer Social Get-together this year. He has had confirmation that Purleigh W.I. would be pleased to host the tea for us as last year at Purleigh village hall again. However there is one small difference. The W.I. undertake functions of this nature as a way of raising money for their chosen charity. Last year they underestimated the cost of the meal in terms of per head and it did not leave enough to give to the charity. So this year, for the same menu, they are asking **£7** per head. This is a £2 increase, but the cost has been in the £4/5 area for some years so perhaps £7 is not too much in the circumstance.



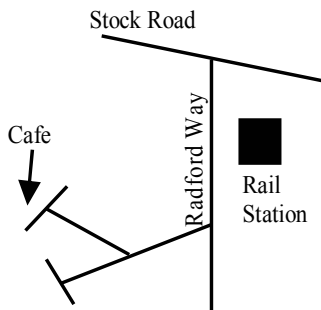
Please contact John either by telephone (☎ 01787 474224) or by email: jldavis_123@talktalk.net and let him know that you still value the worthwhile cause and the social benefit that we gain.

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Member Groups' Reports

Chelmsford Member Group

January 24th - It was a cold, grey, still morning with just the occasional spot of blue in the sky as accompanied by Heather, Les, Dave S, Norman and Martin I set forth towards our elevenses stop at Heybridge Basin. We took the country route via Tofts Chase and Beeleigh locks. The lanes were pitted, wet and muddy and the terrain at Beeleigh was particularly so, forcing us to dismount in a few places along the track. The reward for this inconvenience was to stand on the wooden bridge and see and hear the mixing, crashing waters of the rivers Chelmer and Blackwater, swollen by the winter conditions as they pounded through the fully-open sluices and tumbled over the weir. Les took some photos, (which perhaps we can get published at a later date)?

Jane and Betty were already waiting at the Café at Heybridge Basin, where I sampled a very tasty sausage sandwich accompanied by some of Messrs. Wilkin's finest English Mustard. Five went on to lunch, and on the way I suffered my second rear wheel puncture in as many weeks. Having recently switched from Specialized Armadillos whose record was a single side-wall puncture in the lifespan of 3 sets, I'm beginning to question the meaning of the phrase "Ultra Dura Gator-Skin". I suppose in reality, it comes down to luck and the fact that no tyre is bullet-proof.

"The Ferry Boat Inn" did us proud with a light lunch and a well-kept pint before we headed back via Woodham Ferrers and Sandon, without taking an afternoon stop. This also meant that we got home without the need for lights. **Adrian Leeds**

February 7th - Eight riders started on a cold cheerless day, with Rowhedge the lunch destination. Plans started going awry quickly when Les had his first puncture less than a mile from the start. The ride leader contributed to further delay by being slow on the hills and choosing an indirect (but scenic) route to the scheduled elevenses at Tiptree jam factory. We arrived at 11.20am and Dave was waiting there patiently to meet us. As time was short we agreed to change the lunch venue to Layer-de-la-Haye. A fine drizzle had started as we left the pub and we returned to Chelmsford via Messing and Tiptree. Les had another puncture near Birch and we had a welcome stop for threeses at Perrywoods on the way home. **Martin Cockersole**

Havering Member Group

Dec 6th – A brief downpour wet the roads nicely for five Softees, Barrie, Brian, Gordon, Stuart and Dave. We had a quick blast to Langdon Hills for 11ses after which Brian bade farewell. The rest carried on to Dunton and Herongate followed by an off-road ride through a primeval swamp in Thorndon Country Park. We basked in the winter sun outside the visitors centre over hot drinks, and then set off for Warley and home. **David Rowlands**

Dec 20th – Just four out on a rather chilly morning with their destination being the “White Hart” at Margaretting Tye for the annual DA Christmas meet. John W led Gordon, Jeffery and Kelvin out of Upminster and through Bulphan and Dunton to reach Billericay for their cuppa. Afterwards Kelvin turned for home leaving the now threesome to speed through Stock to reach the “White Hart”, where Gordon and Jeffery who had his bike nicely decked out with tinsel, said they would prefer to reach home before lighting-up time. So they both turned for home, leaving our John to have lunch and a chat with other Essex riders, and then headed for home via Blackmore to get those extra miles in. **John Wynstanly**

Dec 27th – Glorious sunshine greeted five riders eager to burn off that Christmas pud. Dave led Barrie, Gordon, Stuart and Jeffrey with his very tinselly bike to Langdon Hills for 11ses and then a on to Billericay via Blind Lane, where we saw our first ice of the day. A windswept circuit of the reservoir led us to “The Three Compasses” at West Hanningfield. Getting excellent service as usual and once fed and watered we set off into the wind for the return leg. On to Stock and Buttsbury, where we declined a dip in the icy waters, then in Padhams Green Jeffrey found a patch of ice and ended up on the grass. Luckily no harm was done to man or machine. At Hutton it was on with lights for the last bit through Warley. Back at Upminster with 40 miles on the clock we said our goodbyes for the last time this year. **David Rowlands**

Jan 1st – On a bitter cold New Years morning Mike led Barrie, Gordon, Jeffrey and Dave towards the “Old Dog” at Herongate. Off down Fen Lane towards Bulphan, a little diversion around Horndon-on-the-Hill and then onto Dunton, after which the road conditions took a turn for the worse and in Dunton Road with just over a mile to our destination we hit black ice. Three went down - Barrie and Jeffrey managed to get up, slightly bruised but otherwise OK. Mike unfortunately was in considerable pain and unable to get up and needed an ambulance. With Mike on his way to Queens Hospital and his bike locked up at a nearby house the group

decided not to carry on to the pub, and retraced their route back to Langdon Hills, where they thawed out over a coffee. Then Jeffrey set off at a racing pace as he had work that afternoon, while the rest took a more leisurely pace back to Upminster.

Mike spent a few days in Queens, where he had a pin and plate fitted in his pelvis, which was fractured in the fall. The Doctor said he should make a swift recovery. Thanks go to the ambulance service, Queens Hospital and to Gordon for returning to the scene in his car and recovering Mike's bike. **David Rowlands**

Jan 3rd – Due to the icy conditions of the roads this Softees Ride was cancelled.

Jan 10th – The ride to Mill Green was also a non-started.

Jan 17th – After having been indoors for some weeks due to the icy roads, five riders were out for this Softees ride on a rather lovely morning, and they were the Leader Alex, Barrie, John, Jeffery and Stuart. Their first cuppa stop was at South Wealds Country Park. Well, they earned it after that climb up to South Wealds. This was followed by more ups & downs as they sped through Noak Hill and Abridge to land at Stapleford Abbots Aerodrome for further refuelling! On their return trip they had a lemonade break at a pub that served lemonade that cost nearly as much as vintage champagne. Jeffery & Stuart thought it tasted great, though it could just have been the hilly route and any stop was more than welcome! Mileage for the day - well Alex computer battery had died en route but had stopped at 20 miles -, but they guess they had done much more, or it felt like more due to the hilly route. Some say this wasn't really a Softees ride, but being stuck indoors for so long it was great to out again and hills ... what hills? Essex is flat, innit? **Alex Kornfeld**

Jan 24th – Seven riders, Alex, Barrie, Jeffery, Gordon, and two riders who have not been out for some time, Michael Striesow and Dave Blake, and myself leading with the intended destination being Chipping Ongar. After a little diversion via South Ockendon to deliver the Spotlights and the Attendance Shield that our Secretary had won, we headed off to Warley where I really struggled with the hill climbing. And it was here that Gordon had the first puncture of the day. Then after 11ses in "King George's Park café" Alex and Gordon turned for home, while we change the destination to Margaretting Tye. Through Stock we sped and found the road to the Buttsbury Ford was closed off, but not to cyclists of course and nor to a

courting couple that we disturbed! In Swan Lane just before we reached "The White Hart", Barrie collected the second puncture of the day and had to walk to the pub. Puncture fixed and bellies stretched we set off for home via Mountnessing and Warley, and on reaching Upminster with daylight to spare and 50 miles covered. **David Rowlands**

Jan 31st – A sunny but cold morning saw only three riders turn out for this Softees ride, Gordon, Geoff and myself. Having no leader we had a quick "committee" meeting and Gordon was voted in as our main man for the first part of our ride. Our destination being that old favourite Langdon Hills, our route took us via Pike Lane and Fen Lane. But on arriving in Bulphan we noticed a certain amount of ice on the road. So we decided to continue cautiously via the shorter route to Langdon Hills. On reaching the Visitor's Centre we had coffee and indulged in much chat, banter and laughter. We then took a short ride off-road around the forest area, ending up slightly lost! We had to lift our bikes over a fence into some parkland eventually finding some side roads. After a bit of a discussion and help from Gordon's navigational aid, we found our bearings and started our return home. At this point Geoff took on the mantle of leader and led at a brisk pace against a slight wind via West Horndon, then along St. Mary's Lane to Upminster with Gordon saying his goodbyes at the Cranham turn-off. An enjoyable day seemed to be had by all. **Barrie Blazeby**

Newsflash:

The "**Roundbush Café**" will **close down on the 5th March** and will **reopen on the 15th March**. New owners are taking over - it sounds like it might get a lick of paint and maybe a new kitchen?

John Steer

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South East Essex Member Group

December 27th, London - Thirteen members arrived at Wanstead for a day's riding around some canals on, Hereford, Regents and the Limehouse. But we also rode along the Rivers (Lee/Lea) and the Thames on both sides (North & South) on what was a rather chilly day with a strong headwind for most of the ride. Young Ross was in his element riding wheelies on his ATB/MTB at every opportunity. On the way through Shadwell there was a cry of puncture from Fiona and that was before we hit the cobbles going through Wapping and all the way to St Katharine's Dock. Five of the group set off for the café at St Katharine's while we assessed the problem. Then I took four more to the St K's Dock and rushed back for the remaining three. Just as we were about to move off, our mobiles rang and we were told that the lovely cheap café was shut. I was then told my head was on the block and I was to go to the Bloody Tower. So we had a change of venue, which saw some of us taking a hot drink and some food at the Tower with my head staying on my shoulders. We crossed over Tower Bridge without any problems and then around by Boris's office and under the bridge to pass in front of Butlers Wharf (a beautiful building) on one side and the paddle steamers on the other (I have never seen them move from their moorings). We then rode on to Rotherhithe and through to Canada Water for our look around Decathlon with a few buying bits and some eating again. Just before Surrey Docks Farm the cry went up from Colin B that he had a puncture. This was dutifully dealt with. We were on our way to Greenwich when Peter H asking if we would like to go up to the Observatory. Quite out of question bearing in mind that daylight was now starting to fade. When we arrived at the lift on the south side it was closed which meant we had to carry/drag our bikes down 100 odd steps to the foot tunnel below, but luckily for us the lift on the north side was working. Our ride back from Millwall to our cars in Wanstead went perfectly. I even took in a detour to miss going through Wanstead Park in the dark as it had been icy with wet mud patches along the path in the morning. **John Steer**

January 1st, New Years Day - Ian Mather, Charlotte and I set off from Shoeburyness, but as I felt the roads were too dangerous we returned home after about half a mile. There were five riders that made it out in the freezing conditions with one rider taking a fall (thankfully with no injuries to report). Most of us stayed in the warmth of our homes or took refuge in the local tavern. **John Steer**

January 3rd - A cold and bitter wind greeted the Shoeburyness riders (JS, IM, IC & CV) as they headed out to Rochford and the "Beehive" café,

where we would meet the main SEEMG riders from Wickford. As this was a local ride for us, we were fortunate to have an extra hour or two in bed, rather than start from Wickford – southern softies, I hear you say. After the usual good fare from the ladies at the “Beehive” café, a few of us “locals” + 1 or 2 foreigners from Stanford-le-Hope and Rawreth headed out to Great Wakering and our lunch stop at the “Red Lion”.

The rest of the SEEMG’s made their way home via various routes. After lunch we went through Shoeburyness (CV & Dave “Recumbent” headed home). The route that John led was via East Beach where we joined the cycle path through the Garrison and onto the seafront. We then made our way to the café in Southchurch Park and were soon having a cuppa and piece of cake. When we came out it had started to sleet and JS noticed a nail on the ground and said, “I hope nobody’s got a puncture”, only to discover that he had one from a large thorn. KJ headed off home while JS was fixing his puncture and soon we were all heading back to Shoeburyness after another eventful SEEMG ride. **Ian Mather**

January 10th - Ride called off because of the weather conditions.

January 17th - This time only JS and IM set off from Shoeburyness to ride to Wickford as CV & IC were in Skipton. 24 riders in total met at Wickford and we split into 2 groups to head out for Maldon and a well-known supermarket café. Here we were joined by Andy & Margaret, Dave B and Alan S (car-assisted due to wonky knee). After elevenses, 10 went on to lunch, which was going to be held at the “Hurdlemaker’s Arms”. Unfortunately, Chris H & companion on tandem sustained a puncture near Hoe Mill Lock and JS gallantly assisted. As we had lost sight of Chris, JS had raced up to the main group to tell them of the calamity and IM came back with him to assist. IM then rode back to the main group to report on progress and they said they should wait. IM rode back to JS and as soon as it was fixed rode back to tell the group, only to discover they had gone. So he waited for JS and Chris H who eventually turned up after having trouble re-aligning the Rohloff gear mechanism. When we got to the “Hurdlemaker’s Arms”, we found we had been dispatched to the barn for our meal. Luckily we didn’t have to muck out or sit down on straw bales as it was a cosy little room. We met Herman and his mother there, plus Kevin and Pam H along with Peter and Janet W. After we all had a good meal and pint, we headed home in two separate groups.

Continued on page 23

Forthcoming Events



Organisers: please advise me of what you wish to be included

Date	Event	Organiser
18 Apr	[DA] Witham 150km (Audax event, starting from Woodham Mortimer)	Ed Nevard 07752 305476
2 May	[DA] 80km (starting from Mountnessing)	Brian Penny

If not stated, please see the Impressum (p4) for organisers' contacts.

Easy Rider Meets



Dates	Pub	Destination
14 Mar	The Brewers' Arms	Bicknacre
11 April	The Viper	Mill Green
9 May	The Three Compasses	West Hanningfield
13 June	The Crown	Ingatstone

Easy Rider Lunch Meets - for details contact Pete Moore 01245 263165

Trivets Ride – 20th June 2010

by John Davis

We are now well into organising the 2010 event. We need the support of people not entering to help marshal on route and at the 11ses / lunch/tea stop at Aythorp Village Hall on the 20 June. It is a longish day, but even if you can only manage a few hours it will be very much appreciated.

Please contact John either by telephone (☎ 01787 474224) or by email: ildavis_123@talktalk.net.

Chelmsford Member Group – Runs List



Secretary: Adrian Leeds

4 Oaklands Crescent, Chelmsford CM2 9PR, ☎ 01245 260272

Runs Secretary: Dave Russell

7 Willows Crescent, Hatfield Peverel, ☎ 01245 381055

Rides Start: Sundays: Civic Theatre, Fairfield Road 9am for 9.15am

All day rides start **9.15am**

For Tuesday evening destinations

call Peter Moore ☎ 01245 263165 or Dave Russell ☎ 01245 381055

Date	Destination	11ses	Leader
14-Mar	Green Tye	Dunmow	D Russell
21-Mar	Copford, (The Alma)	Coggeshall, (Dutch Nurseries)	A Leeds
28-Mar	Ford Street	Stisted	M Cockersole
4-Apr	Delvin End, TL 755353	Finchingfield	D Russell
11-Apr	Earls Colne	Coggeshall, (Dutch Nurseries)	J&B Taylor
18-Apr	[DA] Witham 150k (contact Ed Nevard)		
Alternative:	Monk Street	Dunmow	L Hurrell
25-Apr	Elsenham Golf	Ferneaux Pelham	A Leeds
2-May	[DA] 80k (contact Brian Penny)		
Alternative:	Maldon	Tiptree Jam	J&B Taylor
4-May	Social Supper	Margaretting Tye (White Hart)	A Leeds
9-May	Mount Bures	Greensted Green	A Leeds
16-May	Green Tye	Hatfield Heath	L Hurrell

Colchester Member Group – Runs List



Secretary: Alan Palmer

☎ 01206 792929, mob 07939 395067 or

alanpalmer@phonecoop.coop

A gentle, mostly traffic-free ride: <i>Cycling Back to Health</i>	11am Wednesday's , by Skatepark at Leisure World, Colchester	Led by Richard Monk.
Around 5 miles distance, taking somewhere between an hour and two. We stop for refreshments somewhere half-way.		

This is a faster-paced ride for more experienced cyclists: <i>The Pete Finch Thursday Night Ride</i>	7.15pm by Tenpin, Colchester	It must be mentioned this is run by the SUFFOLK DA:
Distance usually upwards of 15 miles at a steady pace. The destination is always a pub in one of the surrounding villages and cyclists make their own way home (there will always be someone to cycle with, however).		

Members are welcome to attend *Bike Drinks*, for all local cyclists, held on the second Tuesday of the month, 8pm at The Bricklayers (CO4 5AA)



There is always some idiot who spoils your holiday snaps!!!!!!
(from Neil Comport)

Haverling Member Group – Runs List



Secretary: Brian Stevens

3 Gidea Close, South Ockendon, RM15 6PF

☎ 01708 851636 or bristevens@btinternet.com

Memberships Secretary: Phyllis Gregory ☎ 01708558221

phylmay@talktalk.net

Runs Start: Roomes (Home & Fashion) Store, Station Road, Upminster

All rides meet 09.15 for 09.30 start unless otherwise stated

Softees Rides: Meet 09.45 for 10.00 start

	Destination	Leader
Mar 14 th	Softees Ride	
Mar 28 th	Softees Ride (Matching Tye)	
Apr 4 th	Easter Egg Ride	Brian Stevens
Apr 11 th	Softees Ride	
Apr 18 th	[DA] Witham 150k (contact Ed Nevard)	
OR	Pleshey	Brian Stevens
Apr 25 th	Softees Ride	
May 2 nd	[DA] 80k (contact Brian Penny)	
OR	Easy with Brian	
May 3 rd	Not so Easy with Brian	
May 9 th	Softees Ride	
May 16 th	Hatfield Forest	Brian Stevens

The leader will either be decide on the morning or see website for up to date information about rides

The Haverling local website is <http://www.haverlingctc.btik.com>.

South East Essex Member Group – Runs List



Secretary: John Steer

☎ 01702 309958 – e-mail jonsue@blueyonder.co.uk

Runs start: from the Market Café in Woodlands Road, Wickford SS12 0AL,
Sundays at 9.30am, unless otherwise stated.

Club Nights are the 2nd & 4th Fridays of the Month

@ St Laurence All Saints Church Hall,
Eastwoodbury Lane, Eastwood

Date	Eleveneses	Destination for Lunch
March		
21 st	Writtle (Garden Centre Tearooms)	Pleshey (Leather Bottle)
28 th	Maldon (Morrison's, Café)	Burnham (The Anchor)
OR	[MG] French Day Trip	Car Assisted, J Steer
April		
4 th	Rochford (Beehive Café)	Grt Wakering (The Red Lion)
11 th	[DA] Witham 150K, Start from Woodham Mortimer (contact Ed Nevard)	
OR	Writtle (Garden Centre Tearooms)	Chatham Green (Windmill)
18 th	Bunsay Downs (Golf Club)	Little Braxted (Green Man)
25 th	Maldon (Morrison's, Café)	North Fambridge (Ferryboat Inn)
OR	[MG] Viking Trail Ride	Car Assisted, J Steer
May		
2 nd	[DA] 80k Event	Brian Penny
9 th	Margaretting (Saddlery Café)	Danbury (Cricketers)
16 th	Writtle (Garden Centre Tearooms)	Woodham Mortimer (Hurdlemakers Arms)
23 rd	Ingatestone Garden Centre	Bicknacre (Brewers Arms)
30 th	Great Baddow (Bringley Pine)	Purleigh (The Bell)

Also a member's website with other cycling information about the group with
GPX and TrackLogs (TCX) files provided: www.velocipede.org.uk.

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ANNUAL TRAINING CAMPS

February, March, April and September

Another stop was made at the “Haybarn café” in Battlesbridge by JS, IM & DB before going via Hullbridge, Rochford home to Shoebury. We even managed another pub stop at the “Rose Inn” and by the time we got home had covered 68 miles. **Ian Mather**

January 17th - The sun brought out the riders today as we had 21 at the start and a further three at 11s. When we got to lunch there were another four plus “H” and his mother waiting for us, total SEEMG’s 28. The ride to Maldon was taken at an easy pace by fourteen of the group. It would have been fifteen, but one turned back at the start of Brock Hill. There were complaints by some of the riders that they hadn’t ridden for two weeks and they felt tired after just a few miles. Twelve riders went on to lunch at the “Hurdlemakers Arms”. As there were so many of us they put us in the barn at the back of the pub (we didn’t know that it existed until then). There was no heating in the barn, but when some of the group started discussing the beer the barn soon heated up. After lunch the group split in two with Peter H leading his group back to Basildon, Fobbing and Stanford-Le-Hope, while I led the other group back to South Woodham Ferres 2, Hullbridge1, Rayleigh1, Leigh1, Southend 1 and Shoeburyness 2. **John Steer**

January 24th - The usual 4 suspects left Shoeburyness at 8pm to cycle the 15 miles to Wickford, where we met up with the other SEEMG’s, including Paul H and Karen on tandem. Peter H led one group on a circuitous route via Herongate, Little Burstard and Billericay to “Ingatestone Garden Centre” for elevenses. On leaving here we headed towards Green Street, but some became detached from the group and got left behind. Luckily we were with JS who knew the way and we soon arrived at our destination, which was “The Brewer’s Arms” at Bickenacre. From here it was a short ride to Battlebridge and the “Haybarn café” and then back to Shoeburyness. **Ian Mather**

January 24th - Three groups made their way to “Ingatestone Garden Centre” today: one following Chris W and the other two following Peter H and John S. Chris’s group arrived first shortly followed by Peter’s with John bringing up the rear. At 11ses I was asked, “Where did we drop Bob?” To which I asked, “What Bob?” It turned out Bob King arrived at the start just as the groups were leaving - he was late for the start – so missed the ride.

I can’t quite understand why the Garden Centre can’t do baked beans on toast, when they can cook Sunday roast dinners (perhaps it interferes with their system?)

After 11ses two groups set off for Bicknacre with Peter losing his group along the way. He ended being up being picked up by John's group. After lunch we took an easy ride to Battlesbridge for a small snack at the "Haybarn Café" before heading for home. When we got outside the café somehow the conversation came up with the word "umpaglumpa" to which a member of the public said ("I have just seen one in the shop over there"). Apparently Dave B and Charlotte V know of this person. Luckily for us they didn't have a bike with them, and Peter has since been told to talk quieter when he sees something strange or save it till later. On our ride home we noticed that the nights are at last drawing out giving us more daylight and less battery time on the bike. **John Steer**

January 31st – The freezing cold had me struggling all day. The climb up Brock Hill saw everyone waiting for me at the top (no difference there then). Ross even gave me a push with the words, "This is to help your Asthma." "Thanks," I croaked or was that gasped. The ride to Bunsay Downs Golf Club saw the group split and re-join at every twist and turn (once again most of the group waiting for me). When I caught up with Peter after Eve's Corner, he said how everyone was racing off and we should have another group of the younger riders doing their own thing. (Peter was at the front all morning - everyone else was behind waiting for me). On the way from Eve's Corner we were stopped by other cyclists coming our way, they told us that North Hill was a sheet of frozen ice and not to venture near it. That was OK, as we were about to turn off for Bunsay Downs. On the back road to the Golf Club the road was treacherous in places, as there was mashed up ice across the road in places making for a very slippery road. After 11ses 9 set off for lunch via Mundon, so that Peter could buy some Honey (Martin also brought some.). On our arrival at the "Ferryboat Inn" - in bright freezing sunshine - I worried that we wouldn't find enough table space for our group (nine of us), but we managed to fill two tables and a spare seat. When we had all finished (as we thought) and we were about to get up to leave, Martin said how he hadn't had his lunch yet. After a chat to the bar staff he got his food and we all agreed that he owed us a drink for waiting for him. The ride back to South Woodham Ferrers along the Lower Burnham road was as bad as the ride from Latchingdon along the Street. Cold Norton road B1018 (I would call it suicide alley) the speed and overtaking without due care or regard for any other road user is ¬!"£\$%^&*()_ [= "phenomenal", Ed.]. Peter H had left us at the pub, as he had a more pressing engagement at home. He was last seen racing along the New Burnham road towards Rettendon Turnpike. We turned off up the potholed old Woodham road to the Turnpike where a mad dash through the Turnpike

and down Hawk road to the “Haybarn café” was made by seven of us. Then a ride home as the twilight faded, with only 66 miles on a very cold day.

February 7th - Three groups set off for Bringley Pine this morning. The easy riding group was divided again into two groups, as there were too many for one group. On our arrival at the café I wondered about filling the café with over 20 members as they only have seating inside for 24. Once we had filled the café members of the public had to sit outside while we enjoyed the warmth inside. Fourteen went on to lunch at “Purleigh Bell”, where the new landlord and landlady struggled with the lunch orders as there were so many people eating lunch. After lunch we set off for Woodham Ferrers losing Brian P and Danger Mouse along the way. Eventually Brian found his way back to the group by Rettendon Turnpike, where we started to split the group and headed for home before it started to get dark. It's nice to see the evenings are drawing out so that you can see the pot holes. **John Steer**

February 14th – 15 Riders met at Wickford today. Since we had a new rider and it was snowing I decided to lead a short ride to Brentwood via Dunton and Herongate. After a fairly slow ride (Charlotte was pleased that she wasn't the slowest for once), we arrived at the café within King George Playing Fields, where we were joined by Dave Bartram, who had acquired a puncture on the way to Wickford.

Peter H then led 9 of us to “The Viper” via Doddingtonhurst. Unfortunately this was full, due to a party of ramblers, so we headed down the road to “The Cricketers” that served some of the best looking sandwiches that I have seen in a pub.

We then rode back via Ingatestone, stopping at Battlesbridge for more food, before continuing home. As we reached Rochford it was my turn for a puncture (at least it was still light!). **Ian Cable**

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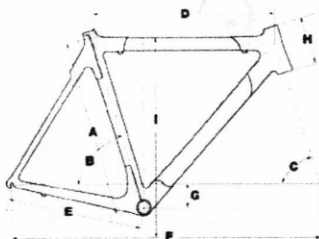
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A Dot in the distance

by John Davis

In any club or similar organisation there are always a few personalities without whom the club would be very much the poorer or slide into decay and eventual obscurity - and amongst these few there is usually one who stands out a metaphorical head and shoulders above the rest. In the annals of the Essex DA Dot Sharp is such a one.

As most of you must know by now, Dot has gone foreign and moved to Norfolk to be near her family and we are left with a Black Hole that is difficult to fill.

Dot has been on or around the DA / Brentwood Section Committees since the mid 1970's through to the end of the 2009 and during that time has become part of the fixtures and fittings of the EDA. To recall everything that she has done on our behalf would fill a book. Here are but a few:

Brentwood Section Secretary for 8 years and for 4 of those years edited the Brentwood Magazine 'Hubbub'. She has been DA Secretary for absolutely ages (from 1981 - 2000). Both she and Jack, her late husband, provided a clubroom for the Brentwood Section, which from 1985 up to December 2009 doubled as the DA Committee room. After Jack unexpectedly died, Dot continued to give of her time and effort to the DA unstintingly for which she deservedly received a Essex DA Certificate of Merit in 1991 to add to her and Jack's National CTC Certificate awarded previously. While all this was going on, and in further recognition of Dot's service to the DA, she was elected to the office of President by which time she was almost able to form a committee quorum all by herself. Our rules state that there is a maximum term in post as President of five years so at the end of her term Dot had to stand down. Otherwise I'm sure she would still be in office to this day.

Another aspect for which she became justifiably famous was DBP or Dots Bread Pudding, which along with apple pies, fruit cake, sponges etc. were to be a life line for many a DA event entrant whenever the DA ran an event either active or social. Whenever she was needed she was there.

2010? - Tri-vets of course, something else Dot has put down her marker for, setting a standard others will struggle to follow.

All this and much, much more is Dot Sharp. It is to be hoped she has a long, happy and well deserved retirement in the bosom of her family. Too old at 60? Not our Dot, she was just getting into her stride!

Written on behalf of hundreds of grateful cyclists from Essex and beyond.



Brian Penny (Essex DA President from 2004 – 2009) and Dot Sharp with an engraved glass bowl at the Essex DA AGM on 15 November 2009

Bike Week – Change of Dates: **from 19th June - 27th June**

When we set up the cycling events in the proposed Calendar for 2010 for the year (previous issue of Spotlight) we were anticipating Bike Week to be from 12th June to 20th June. Due to this change, one of our calendar events: the **George Welch Memorial Ride** has been moved from 13th June and is now taking place on **27th June** 2010.

Please contact John Steer of the SEEMG (☎ 01702 309958, email: jonsue@blueyonder.co.uk) for further information on this event.

John also organises a Wednesday evening bike ride to the Barge Gladys on the 24th June from Leigh-on-Sea train station (further details will be in the next issue of the Spotlight).

Interested in a Cycle Tour in Moldova?

by Brian Penny

I am organising a 2 week cycle tour in Moldova mid-June led by somebody from the Moldovan Cycle Federation.

This begs two questions:

1) Where is Moldova?

Moldova is sandwiched between Romania and Ukraine, north of the Black Sea. Its first language is Romanian but Russian is also widely spoken. My contact at the MCF speaks fluent English.

2) And why Moldova?

Because Moldova has occupied my working life since 2006 in my Government job managing development projects in Europe's poorest country. About equivalent in size to Belgium, Moldova is a contrast of lovely restaurants and hotels in its capital city, Chisinau, compared to poverty in the countryside where farmers struggle to make a living. More positively, Moldova makes great wine and there's little traffic outside the capital. Indeed, horse and cart are likely to be the main feature on rural roads.

The scenery is more pleasant than spectacular and there are no big mountain passes. A tent will be needed, although I am hoping some kind people will accommodate us from time to time in exchange for a modest donation. I hope the tour will cover about 50 miles per day.

If anybody is interested in joining me then let me know by e-mailing b.penny522@btinternet.com.

Brentwood Off-Roaders

by Brian Taylor

Here is some additional information about this group: They meet at Thorndon Park Visitors Centre on Tuesday and Thursday at 11am. And you don't even need to have a bike, because they hire them at very reasonable rates.

Just turn up and ride the miles of woodland trails led by experienced leaders Alison, Keith and Geoff. It is good fun and good exercise.

Tuesdays is for less experienced and beginners, Thursdays for the more adventurous, and I think it would be good for the CTC to support them.

Proposition for an Off-Road Group

by Charles Comport

Dear Stefan,

I'd like to support our new President's idea of an off-road group developing from the Brentwood Group. I have long thought that our organisation needs to include the various types of cyclists around today. Whether such riders would be willing to come under the 'umbrella' of the CTC is of course a moot point, as many of them seem to be of a different mindset to road riders. However, it should be pointed out to them that 3rd party insurance and legal help would be needed although a formal group with Secretary / Treasurer / Auditor is unnecessary and an informal group would be ok, at least as a start.

Having set up several different sections in the past I know it will need work and dedication if this is to succeed. A piece in the local papers, in the Brentwood / Billericay areas would help plus notices in various local cycle shops. A phone number and / or a website could be provided and a meeting called at a convenient location one Saturday or Sunday. If desired a room could be booked at the new Galleywood Heritage Centre. They have a number of rooms of different sizes and refreshments are available. I would be willing to make and pay for a booking if necessary.

A new title would be needed such as 'Mid-Essex Off-Road Group'. This would be no problem as Brentwood itself developed from the former Western Section, which in turn evolved from the old Ilford & Barking Section. I think this is a worthwhile idea that needs support although at nearly 85 my cycling days are now limited, certainly with regards to off-road - although I used to do 'rough-stuff' in the old days.

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Museum Bike (Ride)

by Julie Fairbairn

I acquired a second hand bike in the autumn which needed a bit of TLC, having been left in a shed for two years. The previous owner unlocked her shed and I saw this sorry sight - a bike covered in cobwebs, with two flat tyres and looking a bit rusty. The bike was not fit to ride so I walked home with it and it squeaked all the way. Oh my God I said to myself, what have I done?

I called the bike the “ol girl” and lovingly cleaned her up, getting off the rust – well as much rust as I could anyway and sorting out her tyres - giving her a new lease of life and the respect that she deserves, having served her previous two owners so well.

This new lease of life was put to the test recently when I decided to take her for a spin. The “ol girl” had actually cleaned up rather well and was in fact quite a good quality bike.

I didn't want to be too adventurous and cycle too far in case anything went wrong, so I took the quiet back roads and planned a circular route so at least I knew I wouldn't be too far from home. I had only got as far as Chadwell Heath shops when another cyclist stopped me. Oh no, I thought to myself, something has dropped off already, but the other cyclist was asking me if I had lost a combination lock which was lying in the road. The lock wasn't mine but I thanked him anyway, feeling quite relieved!

Eventually I ended up in Ilford and paid a visit to the Redbridge Museum located in Ilford Library. The museum is celebrating 100 years of Redbridge Life. Only a small exhibition but very interesting, going through each decade. There you are, I bet you thought the museum piece was the “ol girl” didn't you? And she gave me no trouble whatsoever!

Thinking of...

... well-known people who enriched the life of our cycling community:

Frank Walker - (of the Chelmsford Member Group) had a fall at home recently fracturing his leg near the hip joint. He has had a half ball fitted and is now home and getting about with a Zimmer.

We wish him a full and speedy recovery. **Peter Moore.**

Obituary

Leonard J Duffin

We regret to report the death in late February of Past President Len who died in a Cheshire hospital from a leg infection, aged 88. Len and his then wife Minnie joined the CTC and the Romford Section in 1951, riding a tandem, then a tandem trike later ridden by the Davis's. They helped Don Journet form the Tandem Club in the 1960s and later switched to the Photographic Section. Then, when the Western Section was formed in about 1964 they joined that, although by the time it became the Brentwood & District they had discontinued club riding. Len served on the Essex CTC Committee for many years being Treasurer and as a trained accountant, introduced a system of double entry book-keeping that nobody else could understand. With Min he also helped with catering at various DA functions and at the 1975 AGM was elected President for 1976-1978, the first President since Eddie Engel stood down in 1967.



Len suffered the loss of Min in 1987 and his cycling activities began to decline as he developed an interest in canal boating. In the 1990s he moved to Stalybridge, Cheshire, and re-married - his second wife Millie dying a few years ago. He was also a member of our reunion body, the Essex DA Reunion Fellowship, and attended the annual dinner as recently as three years ago. Len was a stalwart of the Club for many years and we are sorry for his passing. **Charles Comport**

(Picture taken from the 80 Years Special Anniversary Edition, thanks to Charles Comport)

Links

to check out online:

CTC Essex DA	www.essexcycling.co.uk
Website of the Havering section	www.haveringctc.btik.com
Chris' site: route planning resources	www.velocipede.org.uk
Cyclists' Touring Club	www.ctc.co.uk
Yet Another Cycling Forum	http://yacf.co.uk/forum/index.php
Nutty cyclist's insane world (Mike's site)	http://www.nuttycyclist.co.uk/

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