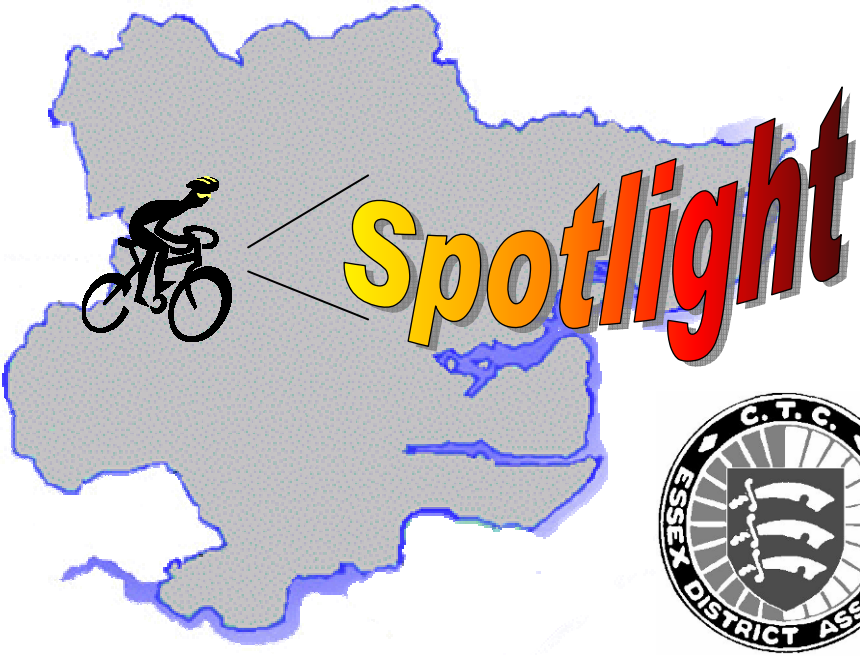

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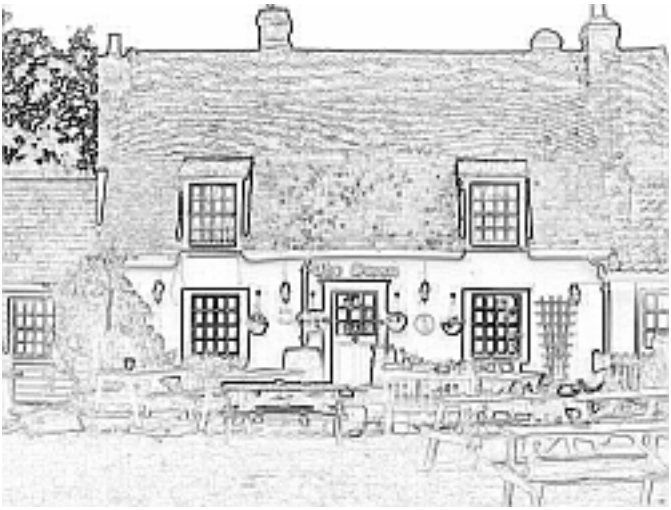
January / February 2013



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Spotlight – Magazine of the **E**ssex CTC MG, a local **M**ember **G**roup of the **C**yclists' **T**ouring **C**lub, the national cyclists' organisation
President: John Steer Volume 1/2013se25

Index

Index 3
Impressum:..... 3
Editor's foreword..... 5
The President's piece 6
Member Groups' Reports 7
Essex Cyclists' Touring Club - Proposed Calendar for 2013 16
Forthcoming Events 17
Easy Rider Meets 17
Chelmsford Member Group – Runs List 18
Havering Member Group – Runs List 19
South East Essex Member Group – Runs List 20
Colchester Informal Member Group – Runs List 21
David Doo Photographic Competition 2012 - The Verdict 22
Chelmsford 2012 "Spring Tour" - continued 25
He, who would valiant be - continued 29
THE BLACK BEAST 31
Honours List 2012 33
Thinking of… 34
Useful Website Links 34

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The Editor reserves the right to edit contributions for reasons of space, clarity or libel.

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John Davis, Peter Moore, John Steer

Essex CTC MG Trustees

Stefan Eichenseher, John Steer, Brian Penny

Closing date for the March / April 2013 edition is on **15 February** 2013

Editor's foreword

Three weeks holiday! Half of December and the 1st week in January… and only 2 days of a bit of dusting just before Christmas. I didn't get a lot of cycling done – at all. But I managed – just – to finish this issue before coming back to the January committee meeting.

Well now, Happy New Year! Hoping it won't be as wet as in the last few weeks.

As with the start of every New Year: some resolutions anyone? I have some for you, if you still have space and time. What about an article in the Spotlight about your latest cycling adventure(s)? Or some experience of your younger days, when streets were less crowded?

There is a nice consideration or, "spare time activity", described on page 31; amongst the touring experiences over several days and issues.

With regards to the Forthcoming Events list on page 16, there will be a further explanation about the points count procedure for CTC Tourist Competition and the Essex CTC Inter-Group Competition in the next issue of the Spotlight.

As I received a comment from a member, please mention the Spotlight when you go to your local bike shop, they might like the opportunity to advertise. Also, if you visit an advertiser, they would like to know the value of their investment.

I still live in hope to see you at some point on the road … or at least at the odd event that I am down to organise.

Have fun cycling.

Your editor,
Stefan Eichenseher

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The President's piece

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year and hope, like everyone else in the country, that the weather will be better this year than last year.

We still have the cold weather to look forward to (I don't mean that literally). I just hope that we have a mild and dry winter without the ice and we can still get out on our bikes.

I hope that you all received a cycling related present at Christmas. I didn't (!), as I have enough clothes, lights, helmets, gloves, shoes, buffies - you name it, I must have it more than once.

What do you think of the good news that we, as cyclists, finished the year with?

Bradley Wiggins winning the Tour de France, then all those gongs, then the Sports Personality of the Year followed by his Knighthood. Wow, what achievements for one man and his team!

Then there was the news that the Tour de France is coming to our shores again and starting in Yorkshire before moving to London and then over to France. I'll try to get a peek at this, if I can.

Enjoy your cycling wherever you ride.

John Steer

From the 🕸:
http://www.dundalkdemocrat.ie/news/local/saddle-up-for-christmas-charity-fun-cycle-1-4604236

[They are on the way home! Ed.]

Member Groups' Reports

Chelmsford Member Group

December 9 - Our festive ride to the EMG Christmas meet at Margaretting Tye was quite eventful. Seven set off on a planned "loop" around Willingale to 11ses at "Blackmore Tea Rooms". As we know too well, the year closing was a wet one, in which meteorological history was made by a rainfall of around 35 percent above the 20-year average. We were therefore cheered up to see such a bright and clear morning, after so many wet ones.

But, fate was to intervene; near Norton Heath, I began to cross a shallow flood, when suddenly, bang! - I was down and Norman, (following) went too, landing half on top! The offending underwater pothole was at least a quarter-wheel deep with a sheer vertical edge. After extricating myself from the wreckage and rolling around in the muddy water, I entertained the group with an exhibition of hopping up and down, swearing and holding my (crushed) finger. Everyone rallied round and after pulling the rear mech out of the wheel and easing off the brake cable, it was possible to resume our journey. There was a brief flurry of activity, as a group of racing cyclists flashed past us in the other direction, accompanied by a motor scooter carrying spare wheels. This we later learned was Mark Cavendish and friends. I hope they avoided the potholes. At Blackmore, we saw another group of cyclists at the tearooms, one of whose machines also had a severely buckled wheel. No need to ask why.

At "The White Hart", the helpful bar staff gave me a glass of iced water in which to dip my injured finger, and I was also able to purchase some rather fine anaesthetic. Sixteen Chelmsford members attended the meet, including Tom Deakins, who had cycled there wearing a full "reindeer-suit" including the head! We all had a good time. **Adrian Leeds**

Colchester Member Group

November 11, Greenstead Green - A cold but bright morning greeted nine cyclists, who met at Colchester Leisure World for the Remembrance Day ride.

We left for Tiptree to meet up with Simon MacFeeters and his group of Tiptree Cyclists. The route out of town was busy with forces heading to the Colchester remembrance service on the High Street.

It was National Cycle Network Route 1 all the way except for the initial town centre section and Layer Road to avoid what would have been a mucky Olivers Lane. We made good time to be in Tiptree for quarter to eleven, meeting a large group from Tiptree for the two-minute silence.

After the silence, the Tiptree group (plus Andrew) headed for "The Layer Fox", to pass several other memorials en route, and arrive back in Tiptree in time for the Remembrance Day parade.

Deniece and Derek headed their own way home, while the six of us remaining forged on to Greenstead Green via Kelvedon, Silver End, and Stisted. I had a funny feeling on the way up into Stisted that my back tyre was a little soft, and confirmed it a short while later. Andy kindly put some air in it, so I could press on to Greenstead just a few miles along the road, where I could fix it in the relative comfort of a barn yard!

Greenstead Green Farm Shop was very busy - so busy in fact, they couldn't accommodate us indoors, instead seating us on the patio outside. I should have pre-booked, but it is never easy knowing how many will be riding, and how many will want to order food.

The short run back to Colchester was on wiggly lanes through Colne Engaine, after which I missed a turning, mistaking the muddy lane for a farm track, so we joined the B1508 before Wormingford rather than Fordham … In West Bergholt we dispersed to our homes. **Malcolm Mitchell**

Havering Member Group

7th Oct – Abridge - Nice little ride to Abridge, David left the others at Passingford Bridge. He headed for "The Moletrap" and back home via Hobbs Cross. Lovely weather and nice to see Geoff out again. Gordon, Stephen and Alex headed home through Navestock. **David Rowlands**

28th Oct - Matching Tye - Four made it to 11ses at Blackmore and two carried on to Matching Tye for lunch. The sun made a brief appearance. We saw loads of wild mushrooms along the way. Return was via Fiddlers

Hamlet, Anil went to Epping and myself to darkest Dagenham. **David Rowlands**

4th Nov – Mucking - Stephen and Dave made our way across the fens in heavy rain being blown all over the place. After going through Horndon on the Hill and riding over the footbridge across the A13, we went then through Stanford-le-hope and on to Mucking.

We were heading for the shiny new visitor centre on the site of a new reserve run by Essex Wildlife Trust. The site overlooks the Thames, with the visitor centre and café perched on the edge, giving a great view of the surrounding mudflats and river, which of course is good for bird watching. Going into the site, the rough surfaced path is a bit hard going. But, if you take a right onto the path near the entrance, it takes you on a better path and route as well.

In the café, we set up camp drying out our gear. In the coming years the site will be expanded with 12 miles of paths for cycling. We decided to cut the day short, as we were wet already. But, you can always get wetter, and we did going over pedal deep on a flooded road on the way back. **Stephen Ingall**

25th Nov - Hylands Park, Chelmsford - Three (Alex K, David & Stephen and I) made the most of the autumn sunshine today. After change of destination, we went to Hylands Park and "Stables Café" instead with some off-road along the way. **David Rowlands**

9th Dec - Essex CTC Christmas Meet, Margaretting Tye - Six made it to 11ses at Ingatestone Garden Centre, where Jeff turned back. Then on to Margaretting Tye for lunch with the other Essex CTC groups. Wind behind us on the way, but boy, did we pay for it on the way back! **David Rowlands**

South East Essex Member Group

21st October – Bunsay Downs to Tolleshunt D'arcy - Fourteen riders headed out from Wickford and it was great to see Chris G & Paul W out on their bikes. As John S was recently back on his bike after illness, he and Chris G brought up the rear and, as they were some way behind the run's secretary, he was instructed to take the main group. On leaving Jon C and his nephew, Paul, waited for them at East Hanningfield. Unfortunately, this gallantry on the part of Jon & John led to an

unforeseen incident at Bunsay Downs. It transpired upon on arrival at the golf club that they weren't expecting us. But it soon became apparent that another club had been in before and they assumed that we were them. They hadn't booked, whereas we had and of course they ate all the cakes. So Jon had no teacakes and John had to settle for a cookie. During the course of conversation on our table, we learned that Paul H tells awful jokes, e.g. "When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane." "I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me". Five went onto lunch at the "Queen's Head" in Tolleshunt D'arcy and we were joined by Lynda C who came by car.

28th October – Brentwood to Stondon Massey - A large group of 19 riders left Wickford for the ride out to Brentwood led by Peter W and Ian M by going up Brock Hill. At the top, the two groups went different ways and arrived at the packed café in "King George Playing Fields" at different times.
Ian M led seven onto Stondon Massey by taking a new route down Hall Lane passing Shenfield Parish Church and by-passing the busy centre of Brentwood, which Peter H took on his own. At Doddinghurst, we turned left onto Dagwood Lane, then Place Farm Lane, School Rd, Chivers Rd to Ongar Rd and the "Bricklayer's Arms", where we found Peter H tucking into a bowl of soup.

4th November – Lovely weather for ducks - It was in torrential rain amidst flooded roads that Ian M & John S approached Wickford in the certain belief that nobody in their right mind would be out in this weather. You're probably wondering why, we were. Well, as run's secretary and club secretary, we thought it was our duty to check that nobody was as mad, as we were. Also, Ian M had suffered far worst weather than this in Wyoming, as part of his 4300 mile cycle ride across America from May to July. Just when we thought, it was safe to go home, Jim C arrived and we decided, to go to Rochford. By the time we got to Hullbridge Rd in Rayleigh, we'd had enough and John remembered the "Fairways Diner" was just down the road. So we stopped for breakfast and a warm up. Whilst we were eating, two very large rescue dogs wearing fluorescent jackets came in with their owners. By the time we'd finished, the rain had stopped and the sun came out, so we carried onto Rochford and "The Beehive Café" for a coffee. It was here that we found Martin F who'd arrived at 11am after travelling 1.9 miles from Southend. Ian M & Martin F went onto Great Wakering and the "Red Lion" pub for lunch, where they sat in front of a roaring log fire and toasted nicely.

11th November – War of the Worlds - Twenty riders assembled at Wickford and split into two groups for the journey to the "Roundbush Café" at Mundon. Alan S & Peter H went via Battlesbridge and Ian M went via Brock Hill, West & East Hanningfield, Bicknacre & Purleigh.

Nine went onto Tillingham, which is mentioned in the H. G. Wells novel 'The War of the Worlds'. It is the place, where the narrator's brother arrives at the coast following his exodus from London during the Martian invasion and "By midday they passed through Tillingham, which, strangely enough, seemed to be quite silent and deserted, save for a few furtive plunderers hunting for food." This quote aptly describes the 9 hungry cyclists in search of lunch, who descended on "The Cap and Feathers", a public house, which dates back to the 15th century. **Manchurian**

18th November – EMG AGM - No official rides.

25th November – Lovely weather for kite flying - The official group ride was cancelled due to the windy weather, but six of us headed out of Wickford. Brock Hill seemed to sort out Peter W with his 14-speed hub gear! We knew he intended going to "Paper Mill Lock", but the majority had swung for "Bringey Pine". After a short wait and no sign of Peter, we proceeded to Great Baddow. Mike C turned left into Stock, as he intended and the rest of us negotiated a flooded Lower Stock Rd. It was made all the more interesting by Jason R and Dave W not having mudguards.

"Bringey Pine" was very quiet and we only saw two other cyclists. Our little group was happy to be led back through Sandon, Butts Green and East Hanningfield. We seemed to do a bit of waiting for Dave H on hills, but then he was probably conserving energy to get back onto windswept Canvey! **Mel Martin**

2nd December – Brrr, it's cold outside - Eleven left promptly at 9.30am and headed up Brock Hill on a particularly bright, but cold day and carefully negotiated the icy patches on the roads. It took just over an hour to do the 10 miles to the "Meadowcroft Garden Centre", just outside South Woodham Ferrers. Just as we were tucking into our coffees and snacks, Karen & Paul H with Peter H appeared. Apparently, they had arrived at Wickford at 9.35am and missed us by 5 minutes. I understand the delay was due to the problem of getting overshoes over boots to keep the tootsies warm.

Eight decided to go onto the "White Horse" at Mundon, but it soon became apparent that this was the wrong course of action, when we encountered a particularly icy stretch of road and we all decided to turn back for home. We later heard that Martin P had gone straight to the pub and wondered where we were and so we told him of our earlier decision.

9th December – EMG Xmas Meet - Here we are again, near the end of the year and preparing to join the other member groups at the EMG Christmas Meet at the "White Hart" at Margaretting Tye. Seventeen headed out to "Ingatestone Garden Centre" for elevenses. Eight went onto the pub and were joined by Dave B, John & Sue S and Ian M who came by car.

16th December – Bunsay Downs to Nounsley - The sun was shining and a pleasant day's cycling beckoned as fourteen set off from Wickford for our morning ride to "Bunsay Downs Golf Club". Two groups were led by Peter W & Ian M and headed up Brock Hill before diverging. Peter took his group around the reservoir then through West & East Hanningfield. Ian M went through Rettendon to East Hanningfield and from here the two groups followed the same route. As we were going down Moor Hall Lane, we kept pace with a guy, who was out for a 15 mile run, which he said would take him 1½ hours to complete. We then took Gay Bowers Rd & Lane to Little Baddow Rd, The Ridge, Mill Lane and Spring Elms Lane. Here we passed several members of the Essex Roads Cycling Club. We met Peter H and Lynda C in the golf club and were soon enjoying our refreshments, although some of us (mentioning no names) were disappointed that they had no tea-cakes or bread pudding.

Eleven then continued onto "The Sportsman" at Nounsley via Hoe Mill Lock, Ulting Lane, Ulting Hall Rd, Ashfield Farm Rd, Spring Lane, Wickham Bishop Rd, Maldon Rd, Church Rd, Crabb's Hill and Mowden Hall Lane. It was here that the River Ter passes over the road at a ford, which was flooded to a depth of 2½ feet and we had to walk our bikes across the footbridge. Someone remarked that they thought we were a cycling, not a triathlon club.

We arrived at the pub at 12.20pm and we soon sat at a long table enjoying our drinks, when, as we waited for our meals, Martin P appeared. Apparently, he arrived at Wickford at 9.35am and we had left at the usual time of 9.30am. Shortly afterwards, Charlotte V & Ian C arrived by car and were joined a little later by John & Sue S, also by car.

Continued on page 15

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Sue informed me that the raffle held at the SEG Christmas meal last night had raised £85 for the Essex Air Ambulance. Charlotte asked Frank G, if he was new and some of the group said he was "old & second-hand". Ian M also said that Martin F was a founder member of the CTC (est. 1878), and he now awaits with trepidation his payback.

After lunch, we headed back up Crabb's Hill and continued onto Paper Mill Lock, where we parted company with Peter H, who decided to continue up North Hill, whilst we turned left onto Tofts Chase. We then went through Woodham Walter, Woodham Mortimer and Bicknacre to Leighams Rd and Creephedge Lane, where Mel M & Jim C continued on home to Wickford. The rest of us (Lynda & Jon C, Martin P, Martin F, Ian M and Ron S) with the exception of Phil N, Frank W & Colin B. who went home, stopped at the "Meadowcroft Garden Centre" for afternoon tea. On arrival, we found Peter H tucking into a toasted tea-cake and we soon joined him in devouring scrumptious cakes. During our repast, our attention was drawn outside to white smoke moving through the garden centre and we discovered, it belonged to a miniature traction engine being used to carry adults and children around. We left, as darkness was beginning to descend to continue our separate ways home after another perfect SEG cycling adventure. **Manchurian**

16th December – A brisk ride out to Bunsay Downs for elevenses today. Considering our pace Peter W is obviously ride-fit again! The Essex Roads club arrived just after us and didn't seem to have a mudguard between them, as evidenced by the amount of mud on their backs!

We circled Nounsley like an aircraft in a holding pattern to arrive at "The Sportsman" at our allotted time. Our route took us by the ford at Nounsley, but with the water almost up to the 3 feet mark, no one attempted going through it. The ford was devoid of an abandoned car *[unlike last year, Ed.]*, so no entertainment there. We had to wait until we got to the pub for a laugh.
Ian C and Charlotte arrived by car and Charlotte asked Frank, if he was new. Frank has never been called that and there were suggestions he was a little shop-soiled! Frank is a fit veteran from the 40 Plus, who was taking advantage of the exceptionally fine weather to ride with us. It livened up the ride home with comments like "The new boy is doing well".
Mel Martin

Essex Cyclists' Touring Club - Proposed Calendar for 2013

CTC Touring Competition (formerly DATC) Events for 2013

Date	Event	Organiser
28th Apr	Witham 150km or 200km	Ed Nevard
12th May	80km	Adrian Leeds
30th June	Windmill Rides	Stefan Eichenseher
14th July	100M / 100km	Stefan Eichenseher
8th Sept	Rough Stuff (29M)	Brian Taylor
29th Sept	Colchester	Malcolm Mitchell

Other events

24th Feb	SEG's 75	Stefan Eichenseher
23rd June	Tri-Vets	Chris Mills & John Davis
28th July	Summer Gathering	Brian Penny
11th Aug	Colchester 40/40	Brian Penny
17th Nov	Essex CTC AGM	Lynda Collins
15th Dec	Christmas Meet	Lynda Collins

Event and contact details will be published in the Spotlight in time before.

For further details on the events, please see our website at http://www.essexcycling.co.uk/events.htm.

Forthcoming Events

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

Date	Event	Organiser
24 Feb	***[MG] SEG 75 miles*** - from 8:30am at the Market Café in Woodlands Road, Wickford, Essex SS12 0AL, OS map 178, TQ745933 (The ride runs throughout OS map 167)	Stefan Eichenseher
28th Apr	***[MG] Witham 150km or 200km,*** Starting from: Woodham Mortimer , Chelmsford	Ed Nevard 07752 305 476

If not stated, please see the *Impressum* (p. 4) for organisers' contacts or see our website at http://www.essexcycling.co.uk/events.htm.

Easy Rider Meets

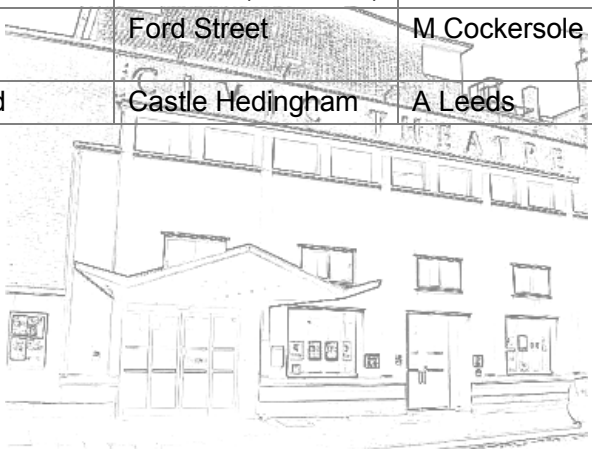
Date	Pub	Destination
13th Jan	"Prince of Wales"	Mountnessing
10th Feb	Ingatestone & Fryerning Community Centre	

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

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: Bus Station at the end of Fairfield Road
(near the Civic Theatre) 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	11ses	Destination	Leader
13 Jan	Perrywood	Copford (The Alma)	D Emery
20 Jan	Sawbridgeworth (The Hut)	Dunmow	A Leeds
27 Jan	Heybridge Basin	East Hanningfield	M Cockersole
03 Feb	Ongar (Budworth Hall)	Stock	A Leeds
10 Feb	Greenstead Green	Gt Yeldham	D Southin
17 Feb	Hatfield Heath	Allens Green	M Beard
24 Feb	***[MG]* SEG's 75** Miles Reliability Ride. Starts from 8.30am, Wickford, Contact: S. Eichenseher		
Alt:	Goldhanger	Perrywood	TBA
03 Mar	Tesco Maldon	North Fambridge (Ferryboat Inn)	J&B Taylor
10 Mar	Thaxted (Poppy's)	Henham (The Cock)	A Leeds
17 Mar	Coggeshall (Dutch Nursery)	Ford Street	M Cockersole
24 Mar	Shalford Curch End	Castle Hedingham	A Leeds



Havering Member Group – Runs List

Secretary: Stephen Ingall
ctchavering@gmail.com or ☎ 07890 386984
www.ctchavering.btck.co.uk & www.essexcycling.co.uk
Runs Start: Roomes (Home & Fashion) Store, Station Road, Upminster
All rides meet Sunday 08:45 for 09:00 start unless otherwise stated

Date	Destination	Leader
13th Jan	Ride with South East Essex CTC (SEG) to West Hanningfield. Meet as usual	Stephen 07890 386984
20th Jan	Epping Green	
27th Jan	Matching Tye, The Fox	
3rd Feb	All-comers Ride	
10th Feb	Writtle, Rose & Crown	
17th Feb	Garden Centre, Hastingwood. 11's Epping Forest	Stephen 07890 386984
24th Feb	***[MG]*** SEG's 75 Miles Reliability Ride. Starts from 8.30am, Wickford. Pre-booking recommended See www.ctchavering.btck.co.uk for info	Stefan Eichenseher, SEG CTC
24th Feb	Alternate: Informal ride	Stephen Ingall
3rd Mar	All-comers Ride	
10th Mar	Ramsden Heath, Nags Head	
17th Mar	Gilston, The Moor Hen	

All-comers ride –
Catering to new cyclists;
regular members can continue
for full ride as normal

* = Destination to be decided on the day

The group out on a bright sunny winter's day

South East Essex Member Group – Runs List

Secretary: John Steer
☎ 01702 529 638– e-mail segssec@btinternet.com

Runs start: from the Market Café in Woodlands Road, Wickford SS12 0AL, Sundays at 9.15am for 9.30am, unless otherwise stated.
Club Nights are the 2nd & 4th Friday of the month
8.00pm @ St Laurence & All Saints Church Hall,
Eastwoodbury Lane, Eastwood, SS2 6RH

Date	Elevenses	Destination for Lunch
January 2013		
13th	Blackmore ("Blackmore Tearooms") Joint meet with Havering CTC	West Hanningfield ("Three Compasses")
20th	Great Baddow ("Bringy Pine")	Bicknacre ("Brewer's Arms")
27th	Brentwood (King George Playing Field)	Ramsden Heath (Nags Head)
February 2013		
3rd	Rettendon (Lodge Country Inn)	N. Fambridge (Ferryboat Inn)
10th	Chelmsford (Secret Garden Tearooms)	Mundon (The Roundbush)
17th	Maldon (Morrison's)	Heybridge Basin (The Old Ship)
24th	***[MG]*** SEG's 75 Miles Reliability Ride. Starts from 8.30am, Wickford, Contact: S. Eichenseher	
Alt:	Margaretting (Saddlery)	*see note
March 2013		
3rd	Southend Airport (Café Stobart)	Great Wakering (Red Lion)
10th	Mother's Day Ride Billericay (Lake Meadows)	Stondon Massey (Bricklayer's Arms)

Note: * When **EMG** or **MG** events take place, the local ride will include a booked Elevenses venue, but not a specific pub for lunch, unless otherwise stated. This will enable members to make their own choice.

Check out www.velocipede.org.uk for GPX and TrackLogs TCX files of our rides.

Colchester Informal Member Group – Runs List 🚲

Secretary: Alan Palmer
☎ 01206 792929, mob 07939 395067 or
alanpalmer@phonecoop.coop
All rides meet Leisure World Container
by Skatepark at 9-30am

Date	11ses	Destination	Leader
Nov 25	Woodham Walter, "The Cats"	Coggeshall, "Dutch Nursery"	Alan Palmer
Jan 13	Castle Hedingham Bell Inn	Blackwells Earls Colne	Paul & Caroline Avison
Jan 20	TBA		Malcolm Mitchell
Jan 27	Heybridge Basin	Coggeshall Dutch Nursery	Alan Palmer
Feb 24	***[MG]*** SEG's 75 Miles Reliability Ride. Starts from 8.30am, Wickford, Contact: S. Eichenseher		

Unfortunately, a further runs list was not available at the time of printing.

Note:
Since the *Colchester CTC Informal Member Group* has its roots in the "Cycle Champions", bikes, helmets, etc. can be provided free of charge.

Members are welcome to attend Bike Drinks, for all local cyclists, held on the 3rd Monday of the month, 8pm at "The New Inn", Chappel St South (CO2 7AX).

Check our website for further information: www.colchesterctc.co.uk

The New Inn, Colchester

✍ David Doo Photographic Competition 2012 - The Verdict

by Martin Fuller

Martin Pipe, who organised this competition, asked me - as a member of the Southend Photographic Society - to judge the entries. Here is the verdict reached by myself and the Society's president, Norman Payne LRPS APAGB. All we had to go on were numbered shots - we had no idea where any of the photos came from, or who their photographers were!

Norman, who generously helped me judged this competition, is a licentiate of the Royal Photographic Society. An ex-employee of Ilford Films, he has been involved with photographic competitions for many years and his work was much in evidence in last year's exhibition at Southend Library. For more information about the Southend Photographic Society, please visit www.southendps.co.uk

1st Prize: Bus-stop 'Baccy Break, by Martin Pipe
"The cyclist, though relaxed, looks as though he has had enough for the day! His blue jacket nicely-balances the red of the bike pannier, so that the cool colours are on the left and the warm ones to the right. They're separated by the pole, which could have spoilt the shot - but here emphasises the two elements of the picture. These are held together by the background of the tiled wall, the pattern of which is muted enough not to be distracting."

2nd Prize: In the Shadows, by Dave Harvey
"This monochrome picture with complete shadows of two bicycles features strong diagonals that add to its impact. The shadow at the bottom-right holds in that corner of the shot; without it, the picture would be unbalanced. The two top corners are also well-filled. A powerful shot, which cannot have been easy to take!"

3rd Prize: To the Hurdlemaker's Arms, by Mike Curtis
"An atmospheric picture; although the cyclists occupy a small area of the overall frame and are riding away from the viewer, the picture evokes the pleasure of group cycling on what, from the fresh green leaves, appears to be a sunny day in early Spring."

Continued on page 25

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ANNUAL TRAINING CAMPS

February, March, April and September

We hope to revive the competition next year, so start 'thinking pictures'! The winner will receive a £20 gift voucher and a shield. The second and third prizes will be £20 and £10 gift vouchers respectively. Further details will be published nearer the time in 'Spotlight'.

✍ *Chelmsford 2012 "Spring Tour" - continued*

By Adrian Leeds

Saturday evening was "Curry Night" – instigated and organised by Joe. The entire group of 14 attended and it was a smash hit, warming our hearts not to mention other organs.

Sunday began bright, clear and sunny. The Claremont Guest House showed us its commanding view of the Wash looking across to Boston and Skegness. In these parts, the sun rises over the land and sets over the sea – strange for the east coast. Dave led the group along a very scenic route. The "Pretty Shop" at East Rudham proved to be an excellent place for tea (and the staff lived up its title, too). I had a cheese scone straight from the oven and a very large pot of tea to refresh me after the previous night's Vindaloo.

At Syderstone, we passed close to a large "drove" of pigs. These were the most contented looking pigs imaginable, sitting their rear ends in puddles or wallowing comfortably in the soft mud. Happy, as pigs in grit! We had a ride around the "Creakes", where the trike threw its front chain, which got seriously jammed up. Heroic efforts by John and Dave eventually got it rolling once more, and we were looking for a cycle-friendly lunch stop, when we happened upon a sign reading "Creake Abbey and Tea Shop Open". This led us to the "Creakey Café", which served our needs perfectly, sitting the whole group around a large square table. After this late lunch, we headed back towards Hunstanton, receiving a severe drenching at Burnham Thorpe - thankfully, the only heavy rain that day. Heading home, Dave and I took the off-road option across Ringstead Downs, a very rewarding ride in terms of scenery and wildlife. Meanwhile, back at the main group, Betty's cape had blown over her head, causing an unplanned horizontal dismount. That evening I parked my muddy bike, satisfied and secure in the knowledge that tomorrow's rain would probably wash it all off [40-miles].

On Monday, Ken led the last ride of the tour to Wells via Holkham Hall. We rode the coastal path, taking in Brancaster Staithe and hopping on

and off the A149 between the coastal villages (one of them we lapped twice!). At the “Deepdale Diner” we enjoyed the biggest scones known to the cycling world. Arriving at Holkham’s landward gate, we met a touring group from the Bradford area, and rode together through the park. The deer were clustered in 2 herds beneath 2 large spreading trees. The scenery was perfect and the sun shone. On the way out of the park, we knocked at Edgar’s door, but found him to be out.

At Wells, the main group had lunch at a café staffed by a pair of identical twin ladies. Joe and I meanwhile opted for lunch at the seafood stall beside the harbour. Enjoying the fresh fare (crayfish, cockles and one of Joe’s welks), I enquired about a cup of tea, in response to which I was told “*We don’t do chips and we don’t do tea. What we do is what you can see.*” When Joe politely pressed this subject, the cheerful, loud-voiced Norfolk lady behind the counter shouted his name loud enough for the proprietor of the café opposite to come to his front door (the other side of the A149). “*These two want a cup of tea*” she hollered, in her broad Norfolk brogue - at about 95 decibels. Sure enough, after a few minutes the man came over with two steaming mugs and set them down besides us. That’s what I call service. We had tea at “Norfolk Lavender” before returning on the sea-wall route [46 miles].

The last night’s entertainment was a “Bandioke” evening, where participants were encouraged to bring their own instruments and sing, accompanied by the aforementioned house band. Our group restricted itself (thankfully) to joining in some of the songs from the back of the room.

On Tuesday morning, we enjoyed a final excellent breakfast before taking our muddied machines back to Essex. We all agreed that it had been a brilliant tour, which a few drops of rain had simply failed to dampen. 🚲

Founded 1878

Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC
For further information about the CTC and the events and services we offer, please contact 0870 873 0060 or look up www.ctc.org.uk

Spotlight

– the bi-monthly magazine for all cyclists in the Essex CTC member Group

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✍ He, who would valiant be - continued

By Chris Mills

Our doubts about breakfast were well founded, as 8.30 on Monday morning showed no signs of life, until the aged mother (?) arrived and spent ages struggling to open the front door, but gave no signs of making food. Eventually we gave up and went back to a café in the square next to a stall with a fabulous array of fruit, where we wasted ages waiting for them to start serving. Finally, we set off and took to the Camino path again, including some rather rough and steep bits, before deciding to divert away from the main road up what turned out to be a very pleasant green valley to Villalmondar. There was then a fair climb through quite English scenery to Cerraton [no coffee] and then Villaescusa, where we did get al fresco coffee. It wasn't far to the abbey of San Juan de Ortega [John the Nettle Whacker!], where we joined loads of picnicking pilgrims and Charles posed by a fountain with a particularly attractive young lady, who was soothing her feet in the water. After lunch, we took more evasive action on lesser roads passing more storks on the church at Castrillo before arriving at Burgos. Our hotel's glories were somewhat faded and there was no food, but we did arrive just before a big thunderstorm, which had passed by the time we were ready to go shopping for food. We couldn't find a shop and asked a young lady, who kindly took us along a long and devious route to a good shop. We invariably found the Spanish to be kind and helpful. We then spent ages looking for somewhere to eat, but eventually found a place, where I had delicious black squid ink paella. By chance it was Fiesta day and, as it got later, the city burst into action: the streets were specially illuminated, groups of musicians often accompanied by dancers paraded randomly through the streets; the squares were full of food and drink stalls, people everywhere, the atmosphere was electric. We finally got back to bed just as the gigantic firework display got going, but we got to sleep eventually. We'd done 42 miles with temperatures up to 38 degrees and found that the distances on the route we'd used were sometimes way out, so a bit of panic rebooking of hotels was going to be needed.

Tuesday breakfast was DIY with stuff we'd bought. Then we rode through the now quiet centre of Burgos. It's currently European City of Culture and has beautiful avenues of plane trees, fine buildings and the obligatory vast cathedral, which I found very impressive. We emerged via a cycle path and took to the old road across the plain stopping for bread at Villanueva and 11ses at Olmillo. We were now on the high, flat,

arid plains and often had big birds of prey circling over the somewhat dull terrain; and we became used to the sweet smell of the broom bushes. It was still hot, but the wind, which can be a big problem here, was actually behind us. Again, we left the main road, and went on to the ruined monastery at Hontanas and here chatted to Dutch and South African walking pilgrims, while we had a drink and had our passports stamped. I'd given up wearing my 'compulsory' helmet [except on big fast descents], as it was too hot and uncomfortable, but there were a couple of police here, as we arrived and I wondered, if they'd say anything, but they didn't and neither did anyone else on the whole trip. Lunch was on a bench outside another pilgrim chapel, San Nicolas this time, in the company of a large and unfit looking American couple, who were nonetheless walking the Camino. We continued over the plain to Fromista on a rare bumpy road passing extensive irrigation systems using concrete channels which stretched for miles. In Fromista we saw what appeared to be a canal with several locks which didn't have gates. What it did, is still a mystery. After 3ses in the square, we sped along the 20km to Carrion aided by our tailwind. The Hostal La Corte had a very pleasant courtyard, where a little light bike maintenance took place, as we were roughly half way, although we did feel that Bully was a little over-zealous individually polishing each chain link. We found a cosy little restaurant in the pretty main street and had another pilgrim special including Castillian soup, trout and Santiago tart [almondy]. In spite of regular suncream use, I got the first bit of sunburn on my arm during today's 62 miles.

We were up and away by 8.00 next day, and with the help of a chilly tailwind sped 25 miles down the former main road to Sahagun, where we were enjoying coffee and pineapple pastries by 10.00. We followed the old road, which wasn't on our maps, to Bercianos, where we came up against a rather strange religious procession. At first, we thought it was a funeral, but asking around it seems it was the local saint's day, and we had witnessed what was a reminder of ancient Catholic Spain. Our day's goal was Leon, which we tried to reach by lesser roads, but as we got nearer, we found ourselves on a main road, which got hotter, busier and narrower as we went. So we were relieved to reach the centre and have a cool drink by the imposing cathedral. As we had time, we did a mini ride round the city admiring the architecture before seeking out our hotel, which turned out to be quite a new building in a back street of a slightly seedy area. However, there was a garage for the bikes, nice rooms, beer on arrival and nice people - shame there was temporarily no hot water! We ate well. I had spaghetti bolognese starter, unidentified fish

main and ice cream pudding, all served by a sparky and charming young lady, who was absolutely delighted to be given a tip. We slept well after 65 hot miles.

Continued in the next issue

✍ *THE BLACK BEAST*

by Barry B

A Faery Story with a happy ending and a moral or two

Are you sitting comfortably? - Then I'll begin.

Once upon a time there was a Good Faery. For the sake of the Editor's space on the page, we will call her **GF**. Now **GF** spent a lot of time raising money for some poor children in a far away land. She did this by collecting unwanted things that her faery friends were throwing out, sorting them and passing them on to other faery friends in return for donations for the children.

One day, one of her friends (**GF**2) brought to her a rusty bicycle that had been cluttering up the garden. "Is this any good to you?" **GF**2 asked. "I expect so" replied **GF**, "I will get my house partner (**GFHP**) to look at it."

Now, **GFHP** was a keen cyclist, he had a "proper" bicycle (several in fact, too many according to **GF**). He never rode on pavements, always stopped at red traffic lights and he belonged to the CTC. However, when he was shown the rusty bicycle, he sneered "that thing is not a bicycle; it's a supermarket Bicycle Shaped Object (**BSO**). It isn't worth even a fiver", and with his (helmeted) head held high, he wandered off to count his bicycles.

Looking at the "thing" again later, **GFHP** began to have troubling thoughts. "Perhaps it could be made to work, with a little fettling". I should explain, gentle reader, that "fettling" is a furtive pastime carried out in private by "proper" cyclists and considered, in the enjoyment stakes, second only to riding bicycles. Of course, **GF** does not appreciate "fettling", involving, as it does, copious quantities of lubricant, odd shaped tools and that most mysterious of artefacts, the "Allen key".

BSO was duly dragged into the murky depths of **GFHP**'s dark and dingy domain, the garden shed, where amid strange incantations ("bother", "it's stuck", "ouch" etc) an inexplicable transformation began.

Wheels began to turn, links of chain started to become pliable, gear derailleur mechanisms moved, and pedal by saddle, disc by bottom bracket, seat post by inner tube, **BSO** commenced to take on the personality of … a bicycle.

After a while, the moment arrived when **GFHP** emerged into the daylight cautiously wheeling **BSO**. Rust had disappeared and black paint was visible instead. Now for the crucial test - the saddle was carefully mounted, a pedal was pushed optimistically and … **BSO** moved. Down the road, turn at the bottom, back up the incline, gear cogs manipulated, cadence changing as intended, back down the road, faster and faster, brakes tested, suspension bounced over some potholes, cheesy grin developing, as it seemed that everything on **BSO** actually worked.

Then back up the road to **GF** waiting in her front garden. "Right", she said, "so it *is* worth a fiver, come on pay up, cash will do nicely".

The happy ending bit. **GF** received money for the poor children, **GF**2's garden looks tidier, **GFHP** has a new toy that he can ride on the muddy and bumpy bridleways that he would never dare take a "proper" bicycle on and, best of all, **BSO** has been saved from the ignominy of the skip.

And they all lived happily ever after.

For those who like a moral to a story, here are two. First moral, never give up, no matter how unlikely a positive outcome may appear. Second moral, every "proper" cyclist *also* needs a £5.00 **BSO** to play with in the mud.

The

THE END

NB *No bicycles were harmed in the production of this story.* 🚲

Honours List 2012

Inter-Member Group Trophy

Havering	3 points
Colchester	50 points
South East	153 points
Chelmsford	174 points

George Welch Trophy

(highest placed Essex rider in **CTC Touring Competition**, see CTC website)

- John Rootkin
  [plus replica to keep]

Measor Trophy

(best Spotlight Member Group report)

- Ian Mather
  (for quality and quantity of reports)

Spotlight Trophy

(best article)

- Ken Rickwood
  ”Just Into Wales”
  (March/April issue)

Special Awards

- *None this year*

Dave Doo Photographic Competition

- 1st Prize: Martin Pipe -
  Bus-stop 'Baccy Break’
- 2nd Prize: Dave Harvey
  In the Shadows
- 3rd Prize: Mike Curtis
  To the “Hurdlemaker's Arms”

The person to select the best Spotlight article and the best Member Group report is chosen by the editor and was for the previous year: *John Davies*.

The person to select the best contributions in the year 2012/2013 will be *Richard Monk*.

Thinking of…

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

Dave Russell from the Chelmsford MG is back on his bike. He rode to meet the group several times so far. So he's making good progress towards a full recovery.

Useful Website Links

Essex CTC Member Group	www.essexcycling.co.uk
Cyclists' Touring Club	www.ctc.co.uk
Chris' site: route planning resources	www.velocipede.org.uk
Yet Another Cycling Forum	http://yacf.co.uk/forum/index.php
Our Advertisers' websites	(a to z)
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Cycle Cellar (Cycle Shop)	www.cyclecellar.co.uk
Herongate Cycles (Cycle Shop)	www.herongatecycles.com
Hopleys Garden Long Barn (Café)	www.hopleys.co.uk
Kings Road Cycles (Cycle Shop)	www.shedbornbikes.com
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