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Spotlight – Magazine of the **Essex CTC MG**, a local **Member Group**
of the **Cyclists’ Touring Club**, the national cyclists’ organisation
President: John Steer Volume 3/2013se27

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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 July / August 2013 edition is on **15 June 2013**

The President's piece

"We have had snow cover twice - we could still get more." I was right: we did get more. OK, so it didn't stay for long - not like the first and second coverings - but it still played havoc with our cycling activities. Hopefully it is all behind us now.


I have now been out cycling with the SEG's. What a wonderful feeling being back on the bike again. Having missed out on some of the worst weather and returning when the weather warms up, sounds like cheating. But believe me, there are a lot of cyclists that stop cycling from November until March/April. But I'm not one of them as I normally cycle all year round.

The SEG's 75 event went well this year, although the weekend before had been a lot warmer. Still, you can't have everything - it's either sunny, raining, windy or freezing cold. Even the South African Argus has its problems with the weather: more of the wind and sand being blown around blocking up the rear-gear mechanisms and anywhere else it can get into.

I hope that you have all booking yourselves into the Essex Member Group Events either as riders or as marshals around the courses. After all, they are there for you.

Stay safe and enjoy your cycling where ever you ride.

John Steer

From the : <http://ladystiles.blogspot.co.uk/2009/12/22-bicycle-fun-facts.html>
[...]

Safety

15. A study found almost three-quarters of fatal crashes (74%) in NYC involved a head injury and nearly all bicyclists who died (97%) were not wearing a helmet. Helmets have been found to be 85% effective in preventing head injury.

16. From 1990 to 2005, only one fatal crash with a motor vehicle in NYC occurred when a bicyclist was in a marked bike lane.

17. Research has shown that tripling the number of bike riders on the street cuts motorist-bicyclist crashes in half.

[...]

Member Groups' Reports

Chelmsford Member Group

17 March 2013 - At the start, seven chilly riders were just saying how cold it still was for the time of the year. Little did we suspect that a mini Ice-Age was on its way. We headed for Coggeshall going the slightly longer route around Little Waltham, and Terling Ford. There was a punishing, cold breeze to contend with for most of the journey, which made its presence most keenly felt as we crossed the old airfield road. On the final approach to Coggeshall, I got a double-flinted puncture and eventually arrived at the Dutch Nurseries at about 11:20. Already sitting was the CTC Colchester Group, and at a separate table, Ken, Maureen, Beryl, Clive and "Snowy" – so somewhere around 20 cyclists had tea together.

The run up to Ford Street was thankfully short and uneventful and the pub catered well for the eight riders taking a light lunch. Progress in the afternoon was a little easier and we had tea at "Perrywood Nurseries", welcomed by their brand new modernised servery and posh new loos. The "usual" way home followed, with 55 very nippy miles logged. **Adrian Leeds**

Colchester Member Group

[More an essay than a report this time. Ed.]

by Jason Cobb

April 21, 2013 - And so with the oldest Spring Classic rolling out from Liege – Bastogne – Liege on Sunday, I took to two wheels to take on the Spring Classic of Britain's Oldest Recorded in Leisure World – Witham – Leisure World.

Chapeau!

This was one of the regular Sunday rides organised by Colchester CTC. A higher than normal peloton signed on shortly after 9:30 am by the glamour of the Leisure World skateboard ramps. The talk was of possibly two breakaways to funnel us through the chicanes of Witham etc. The appearance of a tricycle only complicated matters.

But they're a friendly lot at the CTC. Ahead of us was a 54 mile round circuit, roughly taking in Tiptree and Witham, before backtracking around

the edges of Braintree and heading slightly north for Wakes Colne, then the descent back to Colchester.

The hive mentality of the peloton is ALWAYS there to be celebrated. No one gets left behind - not even the wonderful tricycle contraption with a pair of drop handle bars to match. I'm still not sure who was doing the pushing or the pulling, but the male / female team both seemed to be enjoying the sexual division of labour.

A slight climb exiting the edges of Castle Park, and whaddya know — I got lost.

Whoops.

Other CTC riders chose to roll out with GPS devices attached to their frames. I prefer the more informal navigational route of asking an old fella, if he had seen a group speed past wearing Lycra.

The peloton was caught around Prettygate, and soon we were Stanway bound. Layers of Lycra started to leave the bodies, as the North Essex sun broke through and threatened to develop a roadie suntan.

I almost came a cropper at Copford. The POTHOLEs were on par with moon craters. The joy of riding in the pack is the etiquette of the Lycra bottom in front of you pointing out each POTHOLE. This becomes a problem though when the road is made up of 90% POTHOLEs and 10% rubble.

Meanwhile the rolling lanes of Messing were anything but a mess. This is my new FAVE time trial patch. A long, straight and smooth surface and not a car in sight early on Sunday morning. The joyous sound of rubber rotating on the road is something quite special for any roadie wannabe that is living out the Spring Classic dream out in the suburbs of Sunny Colch.

The first feeding station took place at the "Perrywood Garden Centre" in Tiptree. If you didn't fancy tea and scones then at least an Alan Titchmarsh grow bag was available to buy.

Out of the Land of Jam, and then we were presented with the most challenging part of the ride. Twenty-four miles of uninterrupted pedalling lay ahead, if we wanted jam tomorrow - or even a late luncheon.

A poor bolting horse got the jitters around the edges of Braxted Park. The whole pack slowed down to walking pace, but the old fella didn't take a liking to the Lycra tights. The rider managed to steady the old chap,

proving that jodhpurs probably have the better of cycling tights when comes to a game of Transport Trousers Top Trumps.

It was at this stage of the ride that I first started to feel tired. It was a funny sensation - not tired, as in my legs were turning to lead; there was still plenty left in the tank to keep on pedalling, but tired as in yawn, yawn, yawn.

Cycling often overcomes the metaphysical. A five-mile sprint into town and back can put you out for the count for the rest of the day. Thirty plus miles into an all day ride and you almost pedal yourself into fitness. The yucky energy gel bar certainly helped as well.

Witham was a little... weird.

“Look! London Marathon!” ...exclaimed a teenage girl.

Gosh.

Buzzards and beautiful gardens characterised Bradwell, and soon it was time to go Dutch at ... “Dutch Nursery” at Coggeshall. You buy the tea, I’ll buy the brie and bacon toasties. We’ll split the difference on the Alan Titchmarsh grow bag this time, darling.

I’m not quite sure what it is with cycling groups and garden Nurseries, but the two go together like punctures and compost. Add in a bussed group of OAP’s, and it was quite a collection of travellers in the serene gardens of the “Dutch Nursery”.

By now, it was late afternoon and the chase was on back to base. My magpie eyes were hungry for the prize - much like Mr Magpie himself just outside of Wake’s Colne. He stooped down right in front of the peloton and plucked a poor field mouse from out of the grass verge. Impressive stuff - but not quite on par with the feat of one member of the CTC group confusing a scarecrow kite as a magnificent bird of prey.

Whoops.

It was just past Wake’s Colne that I took the pro-rider [yeah, yeah] decision to ride at the tête de la course. Stay out of the pack, stay out of the pitfalls, as Lance was often fond of saying. Yeah, but yer man never had to guide his way around a route that he knew bugger all about.

Continued on page 11

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Five minutes of over enthusiastic cycling, and soon I was left stranded and off route. A rescue service was sent out, and I was back with my bicycle and tail firmly between my legs and pulling up the back of the pack.

The approach ride back into Colchester was relatively smooth. A rider punctured, but the joy of these CTC rides is that no one gets left behind. A new inner was on hand, and we were back on course for the final push for the punching of the air, as the Leisure World – Witham – Leisure World came to a close.

Chapeau! 🚲

Haverling Member Group

24th Feb - Alex and Gordon were joined by new rider Bradley on their ride to Lake Meadows Billericay.

3rd March - 5 riders (including 3 new): B Laane, Steve, Chen, G Peel, S Ingall, went to Lake Meadows after deciding Hanningfield was too far, as some needed to get back for lunch. After riding in the morning sun to 11ses, we were taking a winding route back through Thorndon to Upminster. **David Rowlands**

10th March - Four riders (Chen, D Rowlands, S Ingall & B Curtis) managed to avoid the Mother's Day madness with a short ride to Ingatestone garden centre for 11's. Freezing headwind on the way and blown back, some snow but not enough to make a snowball let alone a snowman! **David Rowlands**

17th March - Slight change of plan today. Three rode through the fens for a (mostly dry) ride to Hanningfield for 11ses at "The Waters Edge". Two then pushed on towards Maldon, but cut the ride short at Bicknacre for jacket spuds at the "Horseshoe Nurseries". A wet and windy ride home via Stock and Brentwood. **David Rowlands**

24th March - Around November (see ride report) two rode to Mucking in pouring rain and a blowing gale across the open flat countryside near the Thames. Since then we haven't been near the coast because of this. Following David's ride, detailed below, we are going to award him "Ice Road Cyclist 2013".

Made my own way to Mucking, what a horrible ride! Sleet and a bitter East wind, brrrr!!! Thawing out with a coffee.

With the wind behind me the ride back was better, I didn't feel so cold. Gear shifting got gradually worse, as the exposed cables iced up. When I got home I twanged my mudguard back and a big mudguard shaped lump of ice fell off!!! Roll on summer! **David Rowlands**

31st March - Seven Riders - K Dane, A Kornfeld, G Peel, D Rowlands, S Ingall, C Kwan, Andy Dakene. After successfully passing the iced up cold spot on Bird Lane just south of Warley that has caught out others from our group I went down on a patch of ice covered by running water luckily only suffering cuts and bruises.

Six carried on to Blackmore for an extended 11ses. Nobody wanted a full day in the cold so back home the quick way! **Stephen Ingall**

7th April – Hanningfield and Ingatestone - Seven riders (N Wright, J Wright, Rob, G Sherman, and Steve) set out from Rooms Stores of Upminster led by Alex Kornfeld & Gordon Peel.

Two riders dropped out shortly after starting out whilst still in Upminster due to mechanical failure. We decided to carry on in cold conditions up through Bulphan, where ice was still evident on the road. But we carried on through the bracing cold and made our way to Hanningfield reservoir: "Gifford Road Café", where we stopped for a welcome cup of tea.

We then made our way to our next stop at the unlikely "Ingatestone Saddlery", for another rest in the café, which was in a most unusual location inside of a massive warehouse, which was full of equestrian equipment for sale and full of horsey people.

We carried on our way through to more familiar locations of Kelvedon Hatch, Brook Street, then down past South Weald Country Park and onto Tylers Common, where we went our separate ways. Rob & I made our way to Harold Wood station to make our way home, the others went back to Upminster.

This was my first real ride out of the season. Whilst an easy ride, it did put some miles into my legs, topped off by some very pleasant company in form of the Havering CTC. **G Sherman**

South East Essex Member Group

17th February – Maldon to Heybridge Basin - Twenty arrived at the refurbished café in the Morrison's store in Maldon in two separate groups led respectively by Peter W & Manchurian. Unfortunately, Martin P went missing again and was last seen by "The Cat" pub (probably popped in for a pint). Luckily, he arrived at the café at 11.25 am and was soon tucking into a big breakfast.

Thirteen, including Martin, headed out through Maldon down the hill and along the cycle path by the canal to join Holloway Road. It was here that Manchurian stopped to ring the pub with the numbers for lunch & Mike C waited with him. The remaining riders carried on with instructions to turn right onto Maypole Road and then right onto Captains Wood Road. Unfortunately, by the time M & Mike took this road there was no sign of the others (I presume they don't understand Mancunian). It later transpired that they stopped at "The Mitre" pub in Wickham Bishops and Colin B decided to return and see, if we were in sight (by this time we had turned off). When Colin went back to join the others, he found they had left him behind and after he had said a few choice words under his breath, he made his own way to Heybridge Basin. It was here that Manchurian & Mike encountered him and we learned of the sorry saga or farce of the lost run's leader. We all had a good laugh in the end, as we enjoyed our grub in "The Old Ship" and nobody was made to walk the plank or receive the 'black spot'.

3rd March – Rochford to Great Wakering - We were originally going to Southend Airport to fly off somewhere warmer or end up in Café Stobart. But unfortunately, it was being refurbished and so we settled on our old favourite, "The Beehive" in Rochford. Twenty-nine eventually passed through the doors of this establishment throughout the morning (thankfully not all at the same time much to the relief of the staff). Ten went onto lunch at "The Red Lion" in Great Wakering.

10th March – Billericay to Stondon Massey - We returned to Lake Meadows after a long absence and eight made it into the café from Wickford and carried onto the "Bricklayer's Arms" at Stondon Massey. The low turnout was partly due to it being Mother's Day and the particularly cold weather. It even started to snow when we were in the pub.

17th March – Great Baddow to Danbury - Fifteen left Wickford in two groups led by Manchurian & Peter W and headed out to Great Baddow and the café at Bringy Pine. Peter H arrived at the café with a tale to tell that had us all in stitches. Apparently he went up Galleywood Hill and decided to hide behind a tree (wearing a fluorescent jacket) and surprise the group led by Peter W, but he had a long wait as they went via Highwood instead. We were joined in the café by Peter Cubley, a Forty Plus CC member, who has recently joined the CTC.

Continued on page 19

Forthcoming Events



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

Date	Event	Organiser
12 th May	[EMG] 80km - Dot Sharp Memorial Ride , Starting from: Mountnessing, Church Hall	Adrian Leeds 01245 260272
23 rd Jun	[EMG] Tri Vets 100m Ride , start from Mountnessing Church Hall, see www.essexcycling.co.uk for info	John Davis / Chris Mills
30 th Jun	[EMG] Windmill Rides , start from Galleywood Heritage Centre, see p. 27 for more info	Stefan Eichenseher
14 th Jul	[EMG] Peggy Thorndike Memorial 100m/100km , start from Wickford Market Hall Café	Stefan Eichenseher

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
May 12	Ingatestone & Fryerning Community Centre	
June 09	Brewers Arms, Bicknacre	
July 14	Three Compasses, West Hanningfield	
Aug 11	Prince of Wales, Mountnessing	

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
05 May	Hastingwood	Spellbrook	D Emery
12 May	[EMG] 80km - Dot Sharp Memorial Ride , Starting at 9.30 from Mountnessing, Church Hall		Adrian Leeds 01245 260272
Alt:	Andrewsfield,	Littley Green.	
14 May	[MG] Social Supper, Sandon; please contact A Leeds for orders etc.		
19 May	Finchingfield	Horseheath (Cams)	D Russell
26 May	Thaxted, Poppys	Henham Cock	M Cockersole
02 Jun	Thorndon Park	Fiddlers Hamlet	J & B Taylor
09 Jun	Blue Egg	Cornish Hall End	D Russell
16 Jun	Barn Plants Copford	Nayland Anchor	A Leeds
	TRIENNIAL VETS		
23 Jun	[EMG] Tri Vets 100m Ride , start from Mountnessing Church Hall, see www.essexcycling.co.uk for info		John Davis / Chris Mills
Alt:	Andrewsfield	Littley Gn.	TBA
30 Jun	[EMG] Windmill Rides , start from Galleywood Heritage Centre, see p. 27 for more info		Stefan Eichenseher
Alt:	Informal		TBA
07 Jul	Sawbridgeworth Hut	Standon	D Russell
14 Jul	[EMG] Peggy Thorndike Memorial 100m/100km , start from Wickford Market Hall Café		Stefan Eichenseher
Alt:	Coggeshall Dutch	Bures	TBA

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
19 th May	Papermill Lock with SEG CTC - meet as usual	Stephen Ingall
26th May	Pleshey	
2nd Jun	All-comers ride	
9th Jun	The Blue Egg, Great Bardfield; with South Herts CTC; 75 miles; meet as usual	Gordon Peel 07711 609 230
16th Jun	Heybridge Basin	
23rd Jun	[EMG] Tri Vets 100m Ride , start from Mountnessing Church Hall, see www.essexcycling.co.uk for info	John Davis / Chris Mills
Alt:	Matching Green	
30th Jun	[EMG] Windmill Rides , start from Galleywood Heritage Centre, see p. 27 for more info	Stefan Eichenseher
Alt:	Paglesham & Southend-on-Sea Meet as usual for Train towards Southend	Stephen Ingall
7th Jul	All-comers ride	
14th Jul	[EMG] Peggy Thorndike Memorial 100m/100km , start from Wickford Market Hall Café	Stefan Eichenseher
Alt:	Much Hadam, Hertfordshire	
21st Jul	Sights of London (with 40 Plus CC) See website for start time & place.	Pre registration necessary

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
May 2013		
19 th	[IMG] Blackmore (Tearooms) Joint meet with Havering MG	Little Baddow (Paper Mill Lock)
26 th	Chelmsford (Secret Garden Tearooms)	Littley Green (The Compasses)
June 2013		
2 nd	Billericay (Lake Meadows Café in the Park)	Stondon Massey (Bricklayer's Arms)
9 th	Margaretting (Saddlery)	Pleshey (The Leather Bottle)
16 th	[IMG] Hythe to Dungeness	Contact: John Steer
Alt:	Bunsay Down (Golf Club)	*see note
19 th	[IMG] Benfleet (Barge Gladys) , meet 7pm Leigh-on-Sea Station for Bike Week ride along sea wall (lights needed)	John Steer
23 rd	[EMG] Tri Vets 100m Ride , start from Mountnessing Church Hall, see www.essexcycling.co.uk for info	John Davis / Chris Mills
Alt:	Great Baddow (Bringy Pine)	*see note
30 th	[EMG] Windmill Rides , start from Galleywood Heritage Centre, see p. 27 for more info	Stefan Eichenseher
Alt:	Mundon (Roundbush Café)	*see note
July 2013		
7 th	Ingatestone (Garden Centre)	Bicknacre (Brewer's Arms)
14 th	[EMG] Peggy Thorndike Memorial 100m/100km , start from Wickford Market Hall Café	Stefan Eichenseher
Alt:	Maldon (Morrisons)	*see note

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
May 5	Coggeshall, Dutch Nursery	Rayne Booking Hall café	Alan Palmer
May 12	[EMG] 80km - Dot Sharp Memorial Ride , Starting at 9.30 from Mountnessing, Church Hall		Adrian Leeds 01245 260272
Alt:	Stanway Barnplants	Wickham St Pauls Farm Shop	TBA

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

Jun 23	[EMG] Tri Vets 100m Ride , start from Mountnessing Church Hall, see www.essexcycling.co.uk for info		John Davis / Chris Mills
Jun 30	[EMG] Windmill Rides , start from Galleywood Heritage Centre, see p. 27 for more info		Stefan Eichenseher
Jul 14	[EMG] Peggy Thorndike Memorial 100m/100km , start from Wickford Market Hall Café		Stefan Eichenseher

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

Six members of the Hainault CC arrived before our main group and, as the café was bursting at the seams, it was decided that Manchurian would lead seven out on a circuitous hilly route around Little Baddow, Bunsay Down and Danbury to “The Cricketer’s” pub. Jim C & Mel M went a different way and joined us in the pub along with Frank Grimble.

31st March – Mundon to Bicknacre - The original lunch destination should have been “The Sportsman” at Nounsley, but alas, this pub has closed down like so many others during this recession. A substitute was chosen and this was to be “The Green Man” at Little Braxted, but the contact number was unobtainable and no email response was forthcoming either (it later transpired that the landline was down). Thankfully, the “Brewer’s Arms” at Bicknacre were able to accommodate us, after elevenses were taken at Mundon in the “Roundbush Café”.

7th April – Rettendon to North Fambridge - We split the fourteen riders up into three groups led by Lynda C, Manchurian & Phil N (this was done to make it easier for cars to pass us). We went along Borwick Lane, Church Road to Ramsden Heath, West and East Hanningfield to the BHN Garden Centre for elevenses, where we were joined by Martin Fuller (more about him later). Eleven went onto lunch at the “Ferryboat Inn” in North Fambridge and we were also graced with the presence of our President and his wife (someone has to keep an eye on him and make sure he doesn’t get up to any mischief). I think he only comes out to check on us really, and we all hope he will soon be back on his bike. I mentioned Martin F earlier (I’d referred to him in a previous issue of Spotlight as one of the founders of the CTC) and he’d threatened to get his own back on me sometime in the future. During our conversations whilst waiting for our food (they were very busy) he raised my hackles by referring to me as a Yorkshireman, which is like leading a bull into a china (Manchurian) shop and produced howls of laughter on his part and snorts of derision on my part. Luckily, the President was on hand to restore order, although he also had some cutting remarks (it’s all part of the banter between the SEG members).

14th April – Norton Heath to Ongar - Twenty-five assembled at Wickford just as it clouded over after early morning sunshine and a few spits and spots of rain fell. Luckily, it didn’t last long and we set off in three groups out of Wickford via Brock Hill and Hanningfield Reservoir towards Stock. We continued to Buttsbury and were able to negotiate the barrier blocking the bridge towards Ingatestone. And by this time, it was getting hotter hence frequent stops to take our clothes off (layers, not

totally nude). I wondered whether the large numbers would pose a problem for the staff at the transport café at Norton Heath, but as we arrived in separate groups, they were able to cope. This place is very popular with other cycling clubs and motor bikers as it's good value. Nine went onto Ongar via Willingale and Fyfield and we arrived at "The Cock Inn" just before 1pm. The journey home was uphill to Stondon Massey to begin with and we were treated to a display by Ron S on how to mount his bike which was duly filmed by Martin P (no doubt it will go viral on YouTube). Apparently, he sweeps a leg over the handlebars and then sits on the saddle (you have to see it in person to truly appreciate this art form). Lynda C led us through Billericay until a parting of the ways, when three headed for South Woodham Ferrers and the rest continued onto Wickford and then Southend. By the time I got home to Shoeburyness, I had 73 miles on the clock. **Manchurian**

Editor's comment

Bit late in the pages, but for layout reasons, I put my comment onto this page.

I received a good response again on my requests for essays, some of which you can read in this issue.

I am still not very much out and about. But I also shun the computer, for as much as I can keep away from it. Since we acquired a garden - permission from our new downstairs neighbour to make use of it - there is quite a bit of work going into the ground, especially, when the weather is nice. Unfortunately, this is rather detrimental to exercising my legs.

However, I anticipate that come the summer months, the plants will grow without help... and I can go back onto the bike.

For now, though, I wish you all:

Have fun cycling.

Your editor,
Stefan Eichenseher



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My Youth Hostelling

By Brian Stevens

I joined the YHA in 1981, and it was only this year that I didn't renew my subs, mainly because of the lack of hostels these days - especially in Essex! Though I did get a little excited in 2007 when a new YHA opened at Brantham Hall, Suffolk, which would have made a nice day ride for me, only to find it was for groups only.

My first Havering hostel weekend was led by Brian Phipps. So a fair amount of rough stuff cycling was involved. We all met (9 of us) in Epping known to many as the leaking roof hostel, then onto Ely and Milton Keynes. After that I led a number of hostels-weekends around Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent and Surrey. One Easter weekend we had 10 members planning to stay in the Lake District at Coniston Coppermines, but in the end only two got there: John Copas took the train up and I took a week to cycle there.

On all my solo cycle tours I always used hostels, and met some great characters along the way. Like a young guy I met at Burley in the New Forest, who arrived on an old 3 speed sit-up-and beg bike with rod brakes. He had an old rucksack tied on with string to an even older rack. His breakfast was porridge made with water; lunch was a Mars bar and evening meal porridge again! We had both booked in for three nights and I never saw him eat anything else and he only drunk water ... and he was on a three week tour!

Today Hostels users don't have to do chores like we had to. And in my time I've cleaned windows, chopped wood and collected eggs from a nearby Farm.

My favourite hostel? Has to be Alpheton, near Long Melford, Suffolk, which has long gone after the untimely death of its warden/owner. It was a simple hostel with no hot water tap. So you had to boil the kettle not only for your cuppa! I spent many nights at this hostel with some great cycling during the day exploring my favourite country of Suffolk. ☘

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EDARF Summer Meet


by Margaret Davis (EDARF Committee Member)

EDARF Summer Meet
Saturday 18th May 2013
Langdon Hills Golf Club, Laindon
12.30 for 1.00pm

£16 for three courses, plus tea or coffee

Essex D.A. Reunion Fellowship is a bit of a mouthful, so EDARF for short. I suppose, if we wanted to be politically correct, we should rename it EMGRF (Member Group) but it's a bit difficult to pronounce! This social meet is open to everyone interested in meeting up with old friends and enjoying a good old chin wag whilst eating delicious food. Eva Paine will test our knowledge of Essex towns and villages with another of her fiendish quizzes, and there will be prizes (!) and a free raffle.

Cheque for £16 made payable to "EDARF" and sent to Eva Paine, 59 Gordon Road, Grays, Essex RM16 2GN.

Look forward to seeing you all on the day. 

He, who would valiant be - continued

By Chris Mills



The two
Chris' - high in the
Cordillera Cantabrica

Saturday was the big climb and we made an earlier start with Alan, Mark and Charles going on, while Bully and I did the shopping. The climb was long but not too steep, zigzagging over and under the new road. On the way we saw Enrique again and met a Dutch couple who had ridden all the way from home. We regrouped in a café at the main road summit before doing the last bit of the climb accompanied by

fantastic views and the sweet smell of elderberries. I wore my arm warmers to keep the sun off my arms. Part way Alan's pedal started to come to bits as some tiny Allen screws had come loose. Luckily my multi

tool had a 2.5 mm Allen key and the job was done. The summit at the Alto de Pojo was at 1370 metres the highest place on our route, so it was disappointing to find there was no board or anything to denote the height. We swooped down to our picnic in Triacastela at 35 mph or more on a lovely smooth winding road - very exhilarating. It was up and down to Samos, where there was a big monastery, where we had our carnets stamped and looked at the large and sparse dormitory for pilgrims. Enrique arrived yet again, and took us to a café and introduced us to 'tonica', a refreshing drink of tonic, lemon juice and ice. There was more up and down to Sarria, where we decided we'd had enough for the day, so cancelled our hotel ahead in Potromarin and looked for the recommended Pension Londres in Sarria. After searching for ages, a local finally pointed to a pile of rubble and said that was the remains of it! At the Hostal Roma, yet another lovely young lady said they were full but she rang around for us and sent us to the super posh Hotel Alfonso IX, where we were given rooms above the function room at a cheap price, as there were 2 weddings that evening. In fact the rooms were excellent, with air con, and not much noise. We ate al fresco by the river with Gregory, another Spaniard we had met on the road. This was a very good meal, between us we had things like tortilla, octopus, langoustines, gambas and great salads. Gregory got us onto Orujo, which is an olive liqueur and comes in 2 varieties – white [paintstripper] and yellow [more mellow and herby] ... a great evening after 50 hilly miles.



**The square at Portomarin
strewn ready for the
procession**

It was drizzling when we set off next day, but still warm - for once no sun cream was needed. Our route profile was misleading as it showed a continuous climb to Palios [where nothing was open], when in fact the road was a switchback, followed by an unexpected fast descent to cross the river and climb to the hilltop town of Portomarin. Here cafés and shops were open and we encountered our first empanada – a sort of very thin pie with tuna and peppers in it – served warm, delicious! The square and main street were strewn with foliage, apparently in preparation for a religious procession, but we had to move on little the wiser. We had now left the hot, arid plain and the countryside became quite like

home except that it was getting quite hot again.

We passed the tiny village of Legonde, little changed by time with Spaniards in peasant clothing digging up potatoes watched by a few cows while the dogs slept at the roadside. On a fast descent I nearly came to grief when a walking pilgrim stepped out in front of me, but I managed to swerve round him. Approaching Palas de Rei [where we picnicked under trees in the square] we caught up with what was evidently an organised group of six girls escorted by two young men. As we got further on the route, there were increasing numbers of pilgrims and places catering for them and the atmosphere became very cosmopolitan with a sense of a common goal.

Continued in the next issue

The Windmill Audax Ride

Sunday 30th June 2013

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120km - Audax -
start 10.00, map 167

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My Venture into Cycling with De'ja Vu

by the Greasy Cyclist

I first rode a bike when I was about 3 years old a trianq? 3 wheeler, my first fixed wheel bike, it wasn't long before I had to swerve to miss a car coming out of a block of flats (SMIDSY) (I had right of way being on the pavement) plus I was too young to be prosecuted as I was under 10 years old. In turning the front wheel I went over the top and broke my front teeth (milk teeth) but I missed the car and cried my eyes out as I liked my teeth plus I had a few grazes to show for my face plant. My next venture into cycling came at secondary school, I used to borrow a boy in my classes bike of a lunch time and I would ride all over Leyton or go to Walthamstow, Stratford, Hackney or Leytonstone, boy was it fun to escape from school for an hour or two. When I left school my father bought me a second hand bike for my 15th birthday (But I didn't get it until two months after my birthday) On my first day of owning my new bike (it was a Friday) it was my scout group meeting, I proudly set off for the church hall on my arrival some of the other scouts admired my bike but one challenged me to a race as he had a fairly new Raleigh bike with derailleurs similar to mine (Campagnolo Super Grand Sport) Everyone else had either Sturmy Archer or just a free wheel. It was agreed that we would cycle to Leabridge Road and back following a set route, we arrived together (no winners there then) on the way back I was in the lead when I turned my head to my right to ask him if he was going right or straight up, he wasn't there. I looked back to my front and he was turning across me, I turned my handle bars sharply to my right and braked hard (no-one had warned me that my brakes were set up Continental style as I thought that I was braking hard on my back brake when it was my front) This is where De'ja Vu comes in, over the handlebar I went onto my right hand side of my face followed by shoulder rolling all the way down my length to my feet, on getting up I took one look at my bike and thought of leaving home and joining the Merchant Navy. My front wheel which had been a 27" rim was now about half the size as it was folded in two with both sides nearly touching (4" apart) John Smith won by default, I then had to walk about a mile home to face my parents' anger at breaking my bike on the first day. That bike had a few more scrapes to come; I had a new front wheel fitted a heavy chrome thing, not the Large Flanged Deep Campagnolo Hub that I had with a racing Aluminium rim. The next incident followed about a year later when I had parked my bike in a bike rack that you had one bike up and one down at an angle, when I came back to my bike I lifted it out of the rack put my leg over the saddle and

pushed down on the right pedal what happened next? Half my spokes were ripped out, someone had knocked my derailleur into the wheel. You guessed it a new back wheel in the heavy chrome style, that one lasted a few months until I was run over by a white VW Beetle whose driver turned left across me as I was cycling across a side road, guess what it was a new back wheel a new rear mech (Simplex or Benelux I think) my old one as I said earlier was a Compagnolo Super Grand Sport. This mech I kept on for a few weeks before I changed it to a fixed wheel set up with 54 teeth at the front and 16 teeth at the back, I rode this set up for about 15 years of and on, over the years bits and pieces went onto my sons bike as he broke them on his until I was left with the frame, forks and the Italian handle bars. The frame stayed with me moving from house to house, marriage to marriage until in 1997 I rebuilt it and rode it on many a club ride, but I was still hankering for a fixed wheel ride on it again and guess what I changed it and now it only comes out on the odd occasions on local rides and it is still one of the most comfortable rides I have ever ridden. I only wished I could find out who owned it before me he was a gas fitter who lived in Leytonstone, he had 18 bikes (one of which was a trade bike) he raced on the Continent as well as at home, my bike had been hand built for him about a mile or so from where he lived by Bill leach in his Stratford workshop in St Martin Street. The frame number is 2715 what does it mean? 27/1/1950? Or 2/7/1950? Or 27th frame built when ever or the 15th frame built when ever? Even his great grandson who also ran a bike shop didn't know when I asked him and he mends and rebuilders' old bikes at his bike shop as well as selling new bikes and doing repairs and selling spares in Southend (to this day he is still trying to get information on his great grandfather Bill leach) I did have another plant some years later when I was riding with a couple of members of my group off-road, I hit a tree stump that was about 4" (100mm) high and in the middle of the track only this time I somersaulted over the handlebars and landed on my back with the bike still attached to my feet (I was riding with clipless pedals) I'm glad that I never rode an Ordinary high wheeler I would never have survived these face plants. ☘

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

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Hopleys Garden Long Barn (Café)	www.hopleys.co.uk
Kings Road Cycles (Cycle Shop)	www.shedbornbikes.com
Megarry's Antiques and Teashop (Café)	www.megarrysteashop.co.uk
Richardson Cycles (Cycle Shop)	www.richardsonscycles.co.uk
The Cycle & Toy Centre (Cycle Shop)	www.thecyclecompany.co.uk
The Prince of Wales (Pub)	www.thepow.co.uk

From the : <http://ladystiles.blogspot.co.uk/2009/12/22-bicycle-fun-facts.html>
[...]

Trivia

4. The longest "tandem" bike ever built was almost 67 feet long and could seat 35.
5. The smallest adult bicycle ever created had wheels made from silver dollars.
6. Unicycling is a mandatory subject at St. Helen's School in Newbury, Ohio.
7. Half of all the parts of a typical bicycle are in the chain.

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