

November / December 2013



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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 6/2013se28

**Index**

Index .....3  
Impressum:.....3  
Editor’s Foreword .....5  
The President’s piece .....6  
Member Groups’ Reports .....9  
Essex CTC Member Group Christmas Lunch .....12  
Forthcoming Events .....14  
Easy Rider Meets .....14  
Chelmsford Member Group – Runs List .....15  
Havering Member Group – Runs List .....16  
South East Essex Member Group – Runs List .....17  
Colchester Informal Member Group – Runs List .....18  
A Winter in South America - .....25  
Kisby Rides Again (or ‘You’ve Been Seen’) .....28  
Thinking of... .....30  
Useful Website Links .....30

**Impressum:**

EMG Secretary: Lynda Collins, 142 Hullbridge Road, South Woodham  
Ferrers, Essex, CM3 5LL, Tel: 01245 320 733, collins.lynda@btopenworld.com  
Editor: Stefan Eichenseher, 42A Whitegate Road, Southend-on-Sea,  
Essex, SS1 2LQ, s.eichenseher@googlemail.com  
Advertising Officer: Stefan Eichenseher, as above, Tel.: 01702 621810  
Postal subscriptions: Peter Moore, 35 The Ridings, Chelmsford,  
CM2 9RR, Tel: 01245 263165, petebermoores@tiscali.co.uk,  
**Price per annum: £6.00, inc. p&p**

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

## Officers of the Essex CTC MG - we are serving you ...

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>(preferred) Contact</u>
President	John Steer	segssec@btinternet.com
Secretary	Lynda Collins	collins.lynda@btopenworld.com
Chairman	Brian Taylor	☎ 01277 657867
Treasurer	Stefan Eichenseher	s.eichenseher@googlemail.com
Members' secretary	Phil Notley	notley324@googlemail.com
Welfare officer	Brian Penny	b.penny522@btinternet.com
Promotions officer	Brian Penny	☎ 01268 777941
Editor	Stefan Eichenseher	s.eichenseher@googlemail.com
Advertising officer	Stefan Eichenseher	☎ 01702 621810
Webmaster	Stefan Eichenseher	webmaster@essexcycling.co.uk
CTC Councillor	Martin Cockersole	martin@cockersole.co.uk

### **Member Group Representatives** (for more information see member group details)

Chelmsford	Adrian Leeds	leeds.adrian@gmail.com	Secretary
	Peter Moore	petebermoore@tiscali.co.uk	Delegate
Colchester	Alan Palmer	☎ 01206 792929	Secretary
	Pam Nelson	☎ 07812 209862	Delegate
Havering	Stephen Ingall	☎ 07890 386984	Secretary
	Dave Rowlands	☎ 07948 583979	Delegate
	John Copas	johncopas06@yahoo.co.uk	Delegate
South East Essex	John Steer	☎ 01702 529638	Secretary
	John Hand	☎ 07747 773209	Delegate
	Phil Notley	☎ 01375 403967	Delegate

### **Other Committee members**

EDARF	John Davis	jldavis_123@talktalk.net
	Brian Taylor	☎ 01277 657867

### **Certificate of Merit Committee**

John Davis, Peter Moore, John Steer

### **Essex CTC MG Trustees**

Stefan Eichenseher, John Steer, Brian Penny

Closing date for the January / February 2014 edition is on **15 December 2013**

## ***Editor's Foreword***

Guess what? – The Essex jerseys have finally arrived! I think they look quite good. Considering the sponsoring (through our own Essex MG account) that is attached to the prices, they are quite good value for money, too.

The AGM season is finished –at least almost: There is the Essex MG AGM still to come on **Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> November** at the Chelmer Club hut from 10:30am. Please attend in droves, as we need some new faces to sport the committee.

There is a quite nice selection this time of ride reports from all sections. One newbie reported from Colchester dares to contribute against all those long-established names under the collated ride reports. Congrats, Des, I hope to read more from you.

And I hope that others will be inspired to also put pen to paper, or their fingers on the keyboard, to write up a few notes of their recent cycling experience.

... I am still awaiting the odd report of a cross-group cycling venture, where perhaps the president might consider participating in group rides of other MGs. ☺

OK, OK, I am getting there – still a bit snowed under, more like swept away by the winds. But, at least I am considering hitting the road again with my bike... might even be before Christmas.

Anyway, have fun cycling, before come out again

Your editor,  
***Stefan Eichenseher***



## ***The President's piece***

The good news about the Essex groups' shirts is that they have now been seen by most of the Essex member groups and their members. This means we should see the four member groups riding the roads of Essex displaying and advertising our cycling groups and the CTC especially on any events or away rides that you do.

See your group's secretary or contact Brian Penny for more details. His number is in the Spotlight under officers of the EMG on page 4.

The Havering and the Southeast groups are still expanding, as is the Colchester informal group, while the Chelmsford are getting the odd new rider, but say they could do with some young blood to boost their numbers.

Please don't forget that the Essex Member Groups AGM is on the 16th November (it's a Saturday). The reason for the change of day is so that you can get out and ride on Sunday instead of sitting in the Chelmer Club Hut.

Talking of the AGM, new committee members are required on the committee, as there are too few doing too many jobs. Become a committee member and help with organising and running the Essex Parent Member Group. It's to your advantage to help.

Stay safe and enjoy your cycling, wherever you ride, and may the puncture fairy be kind to you. And don't forget to talk to any cyclists that you see along the way, as there might be the chance that they are willing to join a cycling group they didn't know existed (like the local CTC).

*John Steer*

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## ***Fun from the : Did you know?***

- It takes far less energy riding a bike to cover 1km than walking. In fact, you can travel three times faster by cycling than by walking using the same amount of energy
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## ***Member Groups' Reports***

### **Chelmsford Member Group**

**4th August - Little Walden** - A beautiful sunny day only attracted 8 riders to the start with some regulars having been attracted to the Semaine Fédérale in France. What we lacked in French cafés, cheeses and wine, we made up for with our lovely Essex countryside and "Poppy's" excellent tearoom in Thaxted! We were very pleased to have Yvonne, a visitor from New Zealand, riding with us for the first time and we hope we will see her again during her stay. We took the 'western' route to Thaxted via Pleshey, Dunmow and Little Easton. In "Poppy's" we met up with Rod bringing our numbers up to 9.

Some turned for home after elevenses but the rest of us made for Debden, Saffron Walden and Little Walden for lunch at the excellent "Crown Inn". Always looking for something new, I had planned to use a BOAT (By-way Open to All Traffic) to cut through from Little Walden to Swards End. However, when we came to it, there was some loose stone on it and the vote went against me! So we added about 5 miles to the planned route, going North to Hadstock and back through Ashdon, rejoining my planned route at Radwinter. We just got to "The Blue Egg" at Great Bardfield in time before they shut up shop, so that was our tea stop. We returned to Chelmsford having ridden a total of 76 miles.

#### **Martin Cockersole**

**1<sup>st</sup> September - Maldon** - Things seemed to be looking up for our Chelmsford City Member Group, when 13 riders lined up at the start, and altogether 19 members took part today. A ride to Maldon may look a bit tame being only about 11 miles from Chelmsford, but our leader Brian (propelled by Jeanette on the back of his tandem) made sure we had covered 20 miles before elevenses at "BHN Pot Plants" and 30 by lunch at "The Queen's Head" on Maldon Quay. I was thrilled to find that "The Queen's Head" now stocks Otter Ale from East Devon, which is one of my favourites.

Our ears and lungs were assaulted by noise and fumes respectively as about 20 Lambretta scooters left en masse from the quayside, which didn't do a lot for the ambience of the place! Otherwise, we had a nice relaxing lunchtime soaking up the sun and watching a seal swirling about in the river.

After tea at Great Baddow, we headed for home having covered a little under 50 miles. A shorter ride but very enjoyable. **Martin Cockersole**

**15 September – Hare Street** - Our planned ride to Hare Street happened to coincide with the first of the autumn squalls with definite forecasts of high winds and heavy rain. Six riders, who either hadn't seen the forecast, or in any case weren't too bothered by it, mustered at the start. So it was that Dave, Martin and I were joined by three new faces: Chris, Helen and John. We took the slightly longer route to "Elsenham Golf Club", where it was decided by a unanimous vote that we would not chance the weather on the long ride. I sent a text informing Peter Tibbetts, who was by then heading for Hare Street from the other direction, and we returned to base via Brick End and Dunmow, ahead of the worst of it with a shortened 45-miler chalked up. **Adrian Leeds**

**22 September - Burnham-on-Crouch** - 10 members participated today in muggy overcast conditions for a ride to Burnham. Keeping mainly to cycle routes out of Chelmsford, we headed via generally quiet roads through Butts Green and East Hanningfield for our elevenses at "Purleigh Roundbush". I say 'quiet', but for a couple of minutes just before East Hanningfield we encountered a large cycling road race in the opposite direction with maybe 50 odd riders, complete with car and motorcycle escorts.

We closed our minds to the traffic around Latchington and made for the peace of the country roads in the Dengie, particularly the loop out towards the east from Southminster and back to Burnham. Having braved Latchington again on the return trip, we headed for tea at "BHN Pot Plants" near Rettendon, before making our way back to Chelmsford - 62 miles altogether. **Martin Cockersole**

**6th October – Horseheath (Cambs)** - Nine riders assembled at the Town Hall on a fabulous sunny morning and we were very pleased to see Helen out for her second ride with the Group. Our elevenses destination was Finchingfield, and we took a less than direct route using minor roads via Little Leighs, Rayne and Shalford. The countryside looked idyllic in the autumn sunshine. However, an idiotic young driver going far too fast round a blind bend on a narrow lane forced me onto the verge and narrowly missed the rest of the group. Finchingfield was swarming with bikers and cyclists, no doubt encouraged by the warm sunshine. Luckily,

we had arrived just in time to avoid the rush in the café and were pleased to be joined by Peter T, who came on to lunch with us at Horseheath.

“The Old Red Lion” at Horseheath is highly recommended with great food and service. Even though they really focus on the carvery on Sunday, they still made up some excellent meat sandwiches for us and the soup I had was top-notch. We returned via Ashdon, Radwinter and Thaxted (taking in an excellent off-road but very rideable section near Wimbish Green) and stopped at the Tilty Church flower festival for tea and cake. We returned to Chelmsford by our usual route having clocked up 73 miles. **Martin Cockersole**

## **Colchester Member Group**

**25th August** - 5 riders set off from the Leisure Centre heading for Shotley Gate. Our encounter with water came early and unexpectedly, as I had underestimated the strength of Saturday’s downpour and chose the Salary brook route, which involved peddling through about 2 feet of water, as we went under the Clacton road.

However, apart from some wet feet, no damage was done and we all made it through to press on to “Mistley Place Park”. This is the only rest place I know, where one can drink a mug of tea in the midst of a menagerie of rescued animals, including scruffy chickens, a solitary cat and a procession of elegant long necked Indian runner ducks. What more could you want for entertainment? From there we pressed on to Brantham via some little used tracks, thus avoiding the main road.

Leaving Brantham, we passed through the impressive buildings, which constitute the Royal Hospital School and then along the Shotley peninsular passing quiet villages with a view over the water and arriving at “The Shipwreck” pub by Shotley marina. From our outside table we were able to watch the activity in the harbour, where small sailing boats shared the water with massive top heavy container ships manoeuvring into Felixstowe Docks.

After a relaxing lunch, the ferry made a special journey to take us over to Harwich pier. Then it was back on the bikes and along the sea front before returning to the country roads and on to Colchester via Wivenhoe.

Only 50 miles covered but a variety of scenery and two excellent stops made this an excellent ride. **Des McCarron**

## **Essex CTC Member Group Christmas Lunch**

The **Essex CTC Member Group Christmas Meet**  
will be held  
on  
**Sunday, 15th December 2013**  
in the  
**“Fox and Hounds Pub”**  
Cock Clarks,  
Essex CM3 6RF  
(OS sheet 168, TL816027)



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## **Haverling Member Group**

**23rd June – Those not on the Tri-Vets** - Stephen, Chan, Ray – decided not to go to Matching Green, as it wasn't really a day for sitting outside. We went through Navestock to Stapleford Aerodrome for 11ses, then on to Abridge and up the hill to Theydon Bois. After coming up and down towards Epping the others were pleased to hear there were more hills to come. We went via Hastingwood to reach the "White Hart" at Moreton for lunch. Food in "White Hart" is fab - five stars. **Stephen Ingall**

**18<sup>th</sup> Aug – Bradwell 100 Mile ride** - 8 made it, wind assisted, to "The Roundbush" for 11ses and then to Bradwell. All went a bit pear shaped on the way back. We got split into three groups, but all got back in the end. 99.4 miles, 16 tired legs! **David Rowlands**

**25<sup>th</sup> August - London to Waltham Abbey** - Alex, Ray A and Stephen caught the train to Limehouse riding up the River Lea, which had quite a lot of deep muddy puddles from the recent torrential rain. Arriving at the "Navigation Pub", which is next to the river Lea, we were pleasantly surprised to meet Roy Watson, who we had not seen for a while and Lisa. We then carried on riding along the river to Waltham Abbey, where we carried onto the "The Horseshoes Pub" in Upshire. Here we had lunch with a great view of the countryside in the valleys below. Roy and Lisa left us after the fast descent through Theydon Mount. **Stephen Ingall**

**8<sup>th</sup> Sept - Rough Stuff Event** - I met Dave on near Upminster and we rode up to Mill Green, from where the event was starting. The route took in various bridleways, byways along with some tarmac roads going up to Pleshey, where the route turned back. We stopped for coffee at the "Leather Bottle" in Pleshey to steel ourselves for the rest of the journey. There had not been much rain so the trails were very good and navigable. **Stephen Ingall**

**8<sup>th</sup> Sept - North Fambridge** - Another cyclist, Sophie, joined us from London for our ride to North Fambridge and pushed speeds up to 14.1 mph average. Fortunately, Chan was there, as she put her foot down with a flat race developing along the straight alongside Hanningfield reservoir. Chan was riding an MTB with fat road tyres and still held up club honour overtaking her. The group didn't go down to the river, as it was raining and wanted to get back.

*Continued on page 19*

## Forthcoming Events



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

Date	Event	Organiser
16 Nov	<b>[EMG] Essex CTC MG AGM, 10:30 am</b> at the Chelmer Club hut, Meteor Way, OS167, TL698067 (refreshments are provided)	Lynda Collins
1 Dec	<b>[MG] Havering CTC Christmas Lunch</b> 12.30 at Izumi (Oriental Buffet) Brentwood Leisure Park, Warley Gap, Warley, Brentwood, CM13 3DP. Or meet as usual for short ride. RSVP Secretary ASAP.	Stephen Ingall
13 Dec	<b>[MG] Chelmsford Group Christmas Meal</b> "Black Bull", Margaretting, 7 for 7.30pm	Adrian Leeds
14 Dec	<b>[MG] SEG Christmas Dinner</b> , "The Lodge Country Inn", Rettendon, 7.30 for 8pm - Pre-book with John Steer by 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov.	John Steer
15 Dec	<b>[EMG] Essex CTC Christmas Lunch</b> , "The Fox and Hounds", Cocks Clark, 12pm	Lynda Collins

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	Organiser
8 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Brambles Café (Chelmsford Co-op)	Please contact <b>Peter Moore</b> on <b>01245 263165</b>
12 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Prince of Wales, Mountnessing	
16 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Prince of Wales, Mountnessing	

The above Easy Rider Meets are what would have been the Charles Comport venues. Sara & Peter Moore would welcome anyone who would like to join us for lunch, on any other Sunday. However, due to us not knowing who will be out we will not be booking the venues.

Other meeting dates and venues follow the runs list of the *Forty Plus Cycling Club*, available at <http://www.fortypluscc.co.uk>.

## 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
16 Nov	<b>[EMG] Essex CTC MG AGM, 10:30 am</b> at the Chelmer Club hut, Meteor Way, OS167, TL698067 (refreshments are provided)		Lynda Collins
17 Nov	Budworth Hall	Tawney Common	D Southin
24 Nov	Perrywood Nurseries	Rowhedge	M Cockersole
01 Dec	Rayne Stn	Gt Bardfield	J&B Taylor
08 Dec	Sawbridgeworth (Hut)	Hatfield Broad Oak (the Cock)	A Leeds
13 Dec	<b>[MG] CCMG Chelmsford MG Xmas Dinner</b> Black Bull Margaretting 7 for 7:30		A Leeds
15 Dec	Blackmore Tearooms		A Leeds
15 Dec	<b>[EMG] Essex CTC Christmas Lunch</b> , "The Fox and Hounds", Cocks Clark, 12pm		Lynda Collins
22 Dec	Andrewsfield	Finchingfield	D Russell
29 Dec	Perrywood Nurseries	Tolleshunt D'Arcy	D Southin
05 Jan	Hatfield Heath P.O.	Viper Mill Green	A Leeds
12 Jan	Coggeshall Vineyards	Copford Alma	M Cockersole
19 Jan	Hastingwood	Moreton	D Southin



# Havering Member Group – Runs List



**Secretary:** Stephen Ingall

[ctchavering@gmail.com](mailto:ctchavering@gmail.com) or ☎ 07890 386984

[www.ctchavering.btck.co.uk](http://www.ctchavering.btck.co.uk) & [www.essexcycling.co.uk](http://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
16 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<b>[EMG] Essex CTC MG AGM, 10:30 am</b> at the Chelmer Club hut, Meteor Way, OS167, TL698067 (refreshments are provided)	Lynda Collins
<b>Alt:</b>	Ride with South Herts CTC: Nuthampstead	Stephen Ingall
17 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Epping Green	
24 <sup>th</sup> Nov	West Hanningfield, The Three Compasses	David Rowlands
<b>*** Dec – Feb 2014, 9.45 for 10am Start ***</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	<b>[MG] Havering CTC Christmas Lunch</b> 12.30 at Izumi (Oriental Buffet) Brentwood Leisure Park, Warley Gap, Warley, Brentwood, CM13 3DP. Or meet as usual for short ride	Stephen Ingall
8 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Moreton, The White Hart	
15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>[EMG] Essex CTC Christmas Meet,</b> Fox and Hounds Pub, Cock Clarks ***Getting 10.02 Train from Upminster to Basildon to shorten ride*** <b>We will go to Station at 9.55.</b>	Stephen Ingall
22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	Harlow Garden Centre	
29 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Writtle Tea Rooms	
<b>Weds</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup> Jan</b>	<b>New Year's Day Ride -</b> Mill Green, The Viper	David Rowlands
5 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Short Half Day Ride	
12 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Matching Tye, The Fox	
19 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Ramsden Heath, The Nags Head	David Rowlands

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month  
Short Half day ride for those wanting a  
shorter or easier ride

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](mailto: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 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month  
8.00pm @ St Laurence & All Saints Church Hall,  
Eastwoodbury Lane, Eastwood, SS2 6RH

Date	Eleveneses	Destination for Lunch
<b>November 2013</b>		
16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>[EMG] Essex CTC MG AGM</b> , 10:30 am, at the Chelmer Club hut, Meteor Way, OS167, TL698067, contact Lynda Collins	
17 <sup>th</sup>	Sandon (Sandon Garden Centre Café)	Danbury (The Cricketers)
24 <sup>th</sup>	Ingatestone (Ingatestone Garden Centre Café)	Stondon Massey (Bricklayer's Arms)
<b>December 2013</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Maldon (Morrisons)	Woodham Mortimer (Hurdlemaker's Arms)
8 <sup>th</sup>	Norton Heath (Transport Café)	Writtle (Rose & Crown)
14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>[IMG] Christmas Meal</b> at Lodge Country Inn, Rettendon 7.30 for 8pm	
15 <sup>th</sup>	Rettendon (BHN Garden Centre Café)	
15 <sup>th</sup>	<b>[EMG] Essex CTC Christmas Lunch</b> , "The Fox and Hounds", Cocks Clark, 12pm	
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Great Baddow (Bringley Pine)	West Hanningfield (Three Compasses)
29 <sup>th</sup>	Bunsay Down (Golf Club)	Little Braxted (Green Man)
<b>January 2014</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Informal Ride 10am start	Cock Clarks (Fox & Hounds)
5 <sup>th</sup>	Rochford (The Beehive)	Hawkwell (White Hart)
12 <sup>th</sup>	Mundon (Roundbush)	Ramsden Heath (Nags Head)

**Note:** \* When **EMG** or **MG** events take place, the local ride will include a booked Eleveneses 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](http://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](mailto:alanpalmer@phonecoop.coop)  
 All rides meet Leisure World Container  
 by Skatepark at 9-30am

Date	11ses	Destination	Leader
Nov 16	<b>[EMG] Essex CTC MG AGM, 10:30 am</b> at the Chelmer Club hut, Meteor Way, OS167, TL698067 (refreshments are provided)		Lynda Collins
Nov 17	Dedham Craft Centre	Hadleigh, George	Malcolm Mitchell
Nov 24	Mistley Place Park	Harwich, New Bell Inn	Paul & Caroline Avison
Dec 01	Tiptree	Earls Colne, The Castle	
Dec 08	Weeley, The Cabin	Lawford, Hearts Delight	
<b>Dec15</b>	<b>[EMG] Essex CTC Christmas Lunch,</b> "The Fox and Hounds", Cocks Clark, 12pm		Lynda Collins
<b>Alt:</b>	Aldham Millrace	Bures, Eight Bells	TBA
Dec 22		Decide on the Day	
Dec 29	Coggeshall, Dutch Nursery	Copford, The Alma	
Jan 05	Stanway Barnplants	Bures, Eight Bells	
Jan 12	Boxted Fillpots	Edwardstone, White Horse	Malcolm Mitchell
Jan 19	Tiptree	Stisted	

### 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month, 8pm at "The New Inn", Chappel St South (CO2 7AX).

Check our website  
 for further information:  
[www.colchesterctc.co.uk](http://www.colchesterctc.co.uk)



The New Inn, Colchester

**22<sup>nd</sup> Sept - Littley Green** - Six keen souls had an undulating ride via Hutton, a dry Buttsbury Wash & Stock to Gt Baddow for 11ses. Then on to Boreham, Gt Leighs & Littley Green for lunch. Them huffers are so big you need a map to find where to start!

Return was via Pleshey, High Easter, Willingale & Blackmore. Too late for the flower festival at Norton Mandeville so 3ses at Blackmore instead. After 70 miles I'm huffed out!!! **David Rowlands**

**29<sup>th</sup> Sept - South Herts CTC** - We had arranged to meet South Herts CTC in Ware, Hertfordshire. Starting from Ware was not quite enough of a ride for Gordon, so he decided to ride from Upminster and persuaded Alex and Chan to join him for this 30 mile warm up. We enjoyed our ride through the hillier landscape of Hertfordshire to Nuthamstead, where we were stopping for lunch. We rode back to Dane End, where we left the rest of the group ridding back to Ware for the train home. **Stephen Ingall**

**6<sup>th</sup> Oct - The Havering Express** - Chan, Steve, Ray and Gordon set off for a short ride to Writtle with Stephen who came to Doddinghurst before going to Basildon to survey a future ride.

We started with a hard hilly ride though Warley and South Weald, then at Blackmore we tagged on to two other rides, who towed us at 20 mph plus all the way to the coffee stop at Writtle. We returned home though Mill Green, Buttsbury Ford and Herongate reaching Upminster at 1.30pm. Total mileage: 45. **G Peel**

## **South East Essex Member Group**

**18<sup>th</sup> August** - We left Wickford in two groups, Peter W leading one, while Ian M lead the other. We had our new rider with us on her second trip out with the group. On our arrival at the tearooms we set up our eating arrangements at the bench tables outside. The first group had just finished ordering, which meant that we would all eat and be ready to depart at about the same time, for a change. Ian lead the group on a new route out to Rowhedge, but on a more familiar route back. Our lunch by the river was taken sitting outside again with the group spread over three tables. Claude and Jim sat next to two ladies, who were seated under a sign which read "please don't feed the birds". On the ride back there was some sort of event taking place at "The Whalebone" pub in Fingeringhoe, as there was a Scarecrow dressed as a French onion seller with his onions tied around his neck. There was no 3ses today, as

we were running late due to the distance, and having to keep waiting for Martin P with his overweight pannier slowing him down.

**25<sup>th</sup> August - Viking Coastal Trail** - Only three of us braved the weather (fairly strong winds) for the Viking Trail ride on the Isle of Thanet. An early 11ses was taken at "Le Café Cream" in Birchington before driving to Minnis Bay and unloading the bikes. The ride to Margate went well until we met crowds along the seafront enjoying a televised game of Volleyball between young ladies in Bikini briefs and skimpy tops. But we managed to drag ourselves away, and continued to Broadstairs; then on to Ramsgate, where we stopped for our lunch. After our refreshment stop, we headed off to ride past the Hugin before turning in-land for our usual stop at St Nicholas at Wade for more refreshment where we found a beer festival in the pub gardens. On leaving the pub (one drink honestly), Mel took us along the new link to the Reculver. This route is on a Sustrans path, which now makes the Viking Trail complete and more interesting to ride. **J Steer.**

**25<sup>th</sup> August** - Beautiful weather but poor turnout. I cycled from our caravan near Herne to the café in Birchington and began to wonder, if anyone was going to turn up. Eventually John and Norman arrived. I assumed most of our members had other things to do, but hoped it wasn't because of the previous days' heavy rain. Kent escaped the deluge in Essex, although any rain sounds heavy in a caravan!

After unloading their bikes, we made off into a stiff head wind round the coast. Normally we do the ride out of the holiday season; so we found in the main towns, i.e. Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate, we were threading our way through pedestrians on the shared paths.

I kept thinking we looked like the cast of "Last of the Summer Wine", but couldn't match the characters. Norman didn't fit Compo, as he is a Waitrose man!

Lunch was had in Ramsgate next to the boating lake. As we turned inland, the wind was behind us and it was getting hot. A stop was made at "The Bell" in St Nicholas at Wade, where a beer festival was going on.

For a couple of years the Viking Trail hadn't been officially a complete loop and we used a private track to turn it into one. I was in Kent on Friday, so went to investigate whether the Trail had been extended and found a fairly new cycle path. The loop now goes through Reculver and

it was near the prominent windmill replica, where we split, John and Norman to their car and I, to the caravan. **Mel M.**

**1<sup>st</sup> September** - As we did not receive any paperwork for the Leukaemia event this year, 5 of us decided on taking up Ian and Charlottes offer of a ride from Maidenhead out into the countryside in Buckinghamshire. The first thing I had to do, was to drop off Ian M's panniers at I & C's place ready for him to ride to Heathrow and his American trip the next day (after an overnight stop at their place). The 7 of us were meeting at a café in the local park before setting off - don't ask me where we went. We arrived at Henley on Thames for our 11ses at a cake shop/ café with a name something like "Chocolate something". Everyone ordered either chocolate cakes or scones, not me. I thought that I would like a bacon sandwich (big mistake). Our coffees and teas arrived, then the cakes, but no bacon. A reminder was given to the waitress, who said that it was on the way! Time went by with words from the group like "oh, they are still chasing the pig". I sat and waited. Half an hour came and went. In the meantime, there were two young lads getting an earful from the manageress in the room behind us. Our waitress was hassled again. She came back and said that there will be no charge for the sandwich when it arrives. My sandwich eventually arrived and the bacon was stone cold. Needless to say I was glad that she had said, don't pay, as there seemed to be trouble in the establishment with other customers complaining about their service that day.

The route that Ian had selected was very hilly (not like Essex). Some of the roads were just wide enough for a mini/smart car. As we climbed one, Ian M and I heard a bough breaking to our right, just as we were passing a large tree. Needless to say, we sped up for a few yards. Lunch was had at a pub in the middle of nowhere. Lynda had trouble making the staff understand that she is a vegetarian and didn't want meat in her ploughman's lunch. This time, I got my food ok without any delays. Our return journey took us back through Marlow. For me the enjoyment of seeing all the very old historic buildings along the way, plus it was very scenic and with lots of new sights like a herd of deer in a private park and what I think were some Red Kites flying above us. We hope to repeat the ride next year. Ok, maybe a different route or even the same one again. One thing I did notice that Charlotte can now ride down-hill holding the handle bars with one hand and relax.

**Ian's route** - The route was Maidenhead, White Waltham, Henley-on-Thames (11ses at the Chocolate Theatre Café), Fingest, Bolters End

(lunch at The Peacock), Marlow, Cookham, Maidenhead; total 39 miles, 1,900 ft climbing. Thanks Ian for a good days ride.

**8<sup>th</sup> September - Secret Garden to Andrewsfield** - As it was an early start this morning, some of us arrived at the start just after 8.30. At 09.00 the group was ready to leave, when others started to arrive. How irritating (!), as, when asked originally, if they would like to ride to Stebbing, they said “no”. It was then agreed that we would wait until the 09.30 riders arrived and then leave. Good progress was made to the café, where we found that they were employing some new staff members, who got the odd thing wrong with orders or change. 8 of us went onto Andrewsfield for lunch arriving at 1.00 having made good time after our late start from Wickford. On the way back home, we rode into heavy rain. But by the time we arrived at Felsted, it had stopped and the sun came out again. We stopped off at the Butts Green “Garden Centre Café” just as they were closing, but managed to persuade them to stay open for cold drinks and cakes, after which we all set off for home via East Hanningfield.

**15<sup>th</sup> September - Margaretting to Stondon Massey** - I only went to 11ses, as I needed to get home early - I needn't have bothered. 2 groups set off from Wickford. I led my group via Lower Stock Rd, West Hanningfield, East Hanningfield, Butts Green, Sandon, Gallywood to Margaretting. Phil N said that he would come with my group, as it would be a slow short ride - he was wrong(!). Even going down the hill from Galleywood was hard work against the head wind. I had to change down the gears to make any headway. I don't think that I have ever come down it so slow. On our arrival at the “Saddlery Café”, there was a long queue and about a 15 to 20 minutes wait for a table. Even Ron S and Mel M gave up waiting, and went off to Stondon Massey with those of the group that had eaten. I still clocked up 47.5 miles for a morning's ride.

**22<sup>nd</sup> September - Maldon to Great Braxted** - 14 of us set off in two groups. I had said to Phil N that I would either go down Middlemead or down South Hanningfield Road. We went down South Hanningfield Road. When we arrived at “The Bell”, there was no second group. Phil had gone via Middlemead. I had four ladies in my group, one of which had come from the Chelmer CC for a foray into lower Essex. We arrived just after Phil's group having taken a different route. After 11ses, the group split again as some went on to lunch at “The Green Man” while I led the others towards Wickford before turning for home. **J Steer**

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**6<sup>th</sup> October – Hawkwell** - Peter W led one group and I brought up the rear of Brian P's group, which headed up Brock Hill and then down Middlemead to join the old A130 to Rettendon. From Battlesbridge we took Watery Lane to Hullbridge and continued along Lower Road to our destination at the "Bay Tree Café" in Hockley Market Garden Centre. Upon arrival, we met up with Dave B, and Ken W, Peter H, and John G, who had been to the "Beehive Café" in Rochford before coming here.

Brian P led eight onto lunch, although only seven stopped at "The White Hart" in Hawkwell and these were Ian M, Phil N, Ron S, Mel M, Jim C and Claude A, who all enjoyed the afternoon sunshine in the beer garden.

**13<sup>th</sup> October – Cock Clarks** - As run's secretary, I felt it was my duty to venture out into the pouring rain and proceed the 15 miles from Shoeburyness to Wickford to check that nobody else would be foolhardy to venture out in such appalling weather. Just as my hopes were rising that I'd be able to call it a day and head home to a warm hearth and curl up in front of the fire (except, I don't have one), who should turn up, but Brian P. He did say, "I could go home," but I thought, "I'm wet already" and so we proceeded by the most direct route possible to the "Sandon Garden Centre". Upon entering the café, the warmth from the real coal and wood fire was invigorating and we were soon nourished from pots of tea, teacake and scrambled egg on toast.

When we left, the rain was beginning to ease up, so that by the time we reached Cock Clarks and "The Fox & Hounds" pub at noon, it had stopped and patches of blue sky were visible. Lynda & Jon C joined us by car for lunch and a very enjoyable time was had by all. **Manchurian**

## **A Winter in South America -**

### ***Cold Showers on a Colombian Cycle-Tour!***

*By Steve Gregson*

Landing at the mountain top airport at Bucaramanga, Colombia is always exciting but this year, 2 hours before midnight on New Year's Eve, the partying was already in full swing and the fireworks going off in the city below us. In Bucaramanga the cold showers were refreshing!

After a few days acclimatising and a bus trip to Mompox ( historical Colonial town ) and El Banco , an atmospheric port on the Rio Magdalena where having a beer, sitting on a terrace by a bend in the river with our special friends the Angaritas is one of life's great pleasures.

That was definitely our last bus trip, we had been scared to death by the driver constantly nodding off!

The 75-mile mountain road to Barrancabermeja is over the wooded mountains and what we used to ride in a day now takes half a day longer. Ah - ageing! On the flattish run-in to Barranca, we asked about a new hotel to be told, "yes, your friends have just gone up the road to find it". Quite a surprise to realise we had come across the first cycle-tourists (Polish residents in Edinburgh) in our 8 Colombian tours since 1977. Lots of stories to be swapped and they were glad of recommendations as to how to get off the murderous north-south trunk road and on to wild, steep and unmade roads in the mountains and also to use the small Rio Magdalena river boats. In Barranca, said to be the hottest city in Colombia, the cold showers were not cold enough and sometimes cold water from the fridge had to be added!! Lots of our 1979 cycle racing and ex-work colleagues to meet up with and a few day-tours to the other side of the river over the new bridge. Good to see that cycling in Barranca is still alive. No racing, but annual tours and always a few groups out in the early (cooler) mornings.

Repeating this road twice again , plus a "touch of the trots" ride to Puerto Wilches we finally made it to Medellin for a few days visit with a cycle-racing colleague from 1979 before returning 4 days through high mountain scenery then avoiding the busy trunk road by finding a mini-train now run on the old but broken national railway track. A couple of towns in the mountains, on this line show enterprise by lashing motor cycles or even bicycles to low wooden platforms with seats to make short but (very) exciting trips along the abandoned Medellin to Bucaramanga railway track. There is nothing quite like taking bends at 60 km/hr to meet another Moto-Rodillo. Discussions as to who shall lift which machine are always genial (that is if there are any passengers still in one piece!). The return to a few days rest in Bucaramanga over the Andes was our hardest day of the 2 months, with the long 28 mile climb to Portugal done in the heat (37°C) of the day so quite glad of a well situated hotel at the top of the climb. Showers still cold.

It had taken Anni and myself a few days to cycle to the Hospital Integrada San Juan de Dios, Barichara from Bucaramanga via La Mesa de Los Santos, the Chicamocha Canyon, Aratoca and San Gill. They were very proud of the fact that the FOCSA charity- donated Foetal Monitor, was the only one in the area. Interestingly, they were very relieved when we said we had come from FOCSA to have a look at the

equipment etc. as they were half expecting us to have come to take it away!

Leaving Barichara after a couple of days relaxing and walking the Lenggerke "camino" down to the delightful Guane, it was to be a further week before arriving at Bucaramanga to make 2 further equipment visits. The road to Galan, El Fuente and Zapatoca is unmade and quite mountainous dropping firstly 10 miles down 2300 feet to the bridge across the Rio Suarez. It was Saturday market day in Galan and we were quite amazed at the loaded donkeys making their own way down from the high fincas straight to the market door, the produce unloaded and sold the same week-end. Carcasses around the back were being attacked with axes also ready to be sold immediately. Sunday in El Fuente was much the same story and our afternoons were spent walking the local tracks. All very enjoyable in the dry and hot weather; overnights in clean and simple lodgings. It was up, up and up to Zapatoca but no 4 wheel traffic at all in fact the only excitement was when we were chased by 4 turkeys. Evidently, they are used instead of dogs to guard the farms. On our rest day in Zapatoca, a bumpy surfaced road took us within a few miles of Betulia. But here it was rather cloudy, no long views, a chilly atmosphere so we retraced our route slowly taking in the distant mountains. Marvellous cycling country.

To avoid the 100F+ temperature that we experienced on the way to Galan, it was an early start for the near 5000 ft descent down to where a new bridge was being built to cross the end of the new Puente Sogamosa reservoir and climb the spectacular hairpins before the long run-in to Bucaramanga.

The Fundacion Estructur out on the north side of Bucaramanga, is in a tough part of the city and although we were warned not to go there, we took a taxi with a driver willing to wait for us at the School for Vulnerable Children. The school Director showed us into the dentistry surgery, which was clean and uncluttered. This school is very worthy of donations, the 3 officials we met were very clearly moved by our visit.

Marvellous mountain scenery, interesting excursions by mini-train and chalupa (launch), never rained on, just one thin jersey the whole trip, no punctures, joyful people met en-route, the welcome by our old cycling friends, being chased by turkeys, the murderous bus and motor-bike drivers, clean, simple and cheap lodgings out in the country. Cold showers! The UK winter's aches and pains, frost-bite-flesh, chill-blains,

rheumatics and arthritis all forgotten. Yes, the experiment to avoid our UK winters had been a success. 🚲

## **Kisby Rides Again (or ‘You’ve Been Seen’)**

*By Gordon (Kip) Kisby*

The Velo Club Wrinkly Di Petritoli got off to a somewhat ignominious start. Allow me to explain.

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my joining the CTC. I rode with the Chelmsford Section alongside such legends as Dave Foster, the Lago Brothers, Pete Moore, Ian Mackenzie, Graham Jones, Dave Stokes, Andy Wills and, of course, brother Dave, to mention but a few. The 1960's were certainly halcyon days. I dabbled with racing on and off until the mid-1980's and then called it a day; a decision I now much regret.

In 2006 my wife, Carol and I bought a house in Italy, in a village called Petritoli, in Le Marche. We are situated about mid-way between Ancona and Pescara, about 10 miles inland, up a steep hill (about 3km. long).

I started watching the local cyclists, all Lycra and, in Carol's words, 'fit'. I got 'bitten' again.

My neighbour, Geoff, had been doing some riding and he suggested that we take a drive to the nearest bike shop of any size, 'Decathlon', in San Benedetto. There I purchased a 'road' bike, cycling shoes, Lycra shorts, the lot!

The next day I went for a short spin to enable me to get used to the machine, all 21 gears and the strange 'clicky' things that were part of the brake levers used to change gear. I stuck to toe-clips.

I'd arranged to meet Geoff at "Fanny's Bar" at 5pm to go for a 'potter'. However, word had got around and two other riders turned up: Rye, a super-fit German guy, who generally treats all things as a challenge, from house building to restoring Apes pronounced apee, a 3-wheeler truck. He's also been a tennis champion and he can drink the locals under the proverbial table; and an English bloke, who specialises in off-road, hilly terrain events. I looked at Geoff. He shrugged his shoulders. Off we went. V.C. Wrinkly di Petritoli's inaugural run had begun.

The first 5 km were downhill to the valley at Valmir. I've never been so scared in my life - all twists and turns, the school bus and a couple of Apes left in our wake. I felt a nervous wreck. However, I must have built

up some adrenaline from somewhere, because I managed to hang on reasonably comfortably for the next 10 km or so. The valley roads have gentle inclines in our area and the land is verdant. Very pleasant indeed. However, as all cyclists know, what goes down will eventually go up!

We stopped for water at Rubianello. Then the 5 km climb to the 'top road' began. The others carried on, as if there was no climb at all! My legs ceased to function and the surroundings seemed a bit fuzzy. A classic case of the 'bonk'. I walked, rested, rode, rested, rode..... Rye came back to see, if I was OK. I mumbled something rude and he turned round and disappeared up the road. Eventually I got to the top and found a new surge of energy. I headed towards home feeling a little elated, thinking that after today it can only get easier. Geoff appeared driving the 'sag wagon'. I politely refused his offer of a lift. I arrived home shattered, but determined to go out again asap.

At the bar, the next day Geoff and I decided that our next run would involve putting our bikes in the back of his wagon and driving down to Valmir, before riding along the valley.

The following Saturday at 9 am on a beautiful early August morning we set off from "Fanny's". We unloaded opposite the "Bar Hedoni" and proceeded in a westerly direction at about 'evens' towards Ortezzano. The road is very straight with a kind gradient, as it heads towards the mountains. It's quite narrow considering it's a major route to the ski slopes and it's also used by lorries coming and going to the Indesit factory at Communanza. It occurred to me that cyclists are often at their most vulnerable on straight roads, when all of a sudden I found myself flying over Geoff's bike and landing on the road with a crunching sound. I vaguely remember hearing some ripe language that I'd learned at the local football ground, before passing out. I woke up in an ambulance heading for the hospital at Fermo.

*Continued in the next issue*

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### **Fun from the :**

Q. Do you know, what is the hardest part of learning to ride a bike?

A. The pavement.

- The most efficient animal on earth in terms of weight transported over distance for energy expended is a human on a bicycle.

## ***Thinking of...***

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

Stephen Ingall, the Havering CTC MG Secretary advised the Essex CTC MG committee on the position of their chairman: John Copas has decided not to carry on as chairman, as the recovery from his illness is not going too well at moment.

He was going into hospital for some tests and so did not think he was going to be in good shape for the Havering CTC AGM.

We wish John all the best for a swift recovery and hope to see him at the Essex CTC AGM. 🚲

## ***Useful Website Links***

Essex CTC Member Group	<a href="http://www.essexcycling.co.uk">www.essexcycling.co.uk</a>
Cyclists' Touring Club	<a href="http://www.ctc.co.uk">www.ctc.co.uk</a>
Chris' route planning resources	<a href="http://www.velocipede.org.uk">www.velocipede.org.uk</a>
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