



working for cycling

EDITORIAL

This issue seems to be turning into a 'D&G special'.

When I wrote in the last issue about Dumfries & Galloway being 'wild & woolly country' I was particularly thinking about the CTC side of things. With a scattered population of cyclists stretching from Carlisle to Stranraer mainly close to the coast and with inroads up the valleys there are obvious problems of communication and connections. Because of history and postcodes about 60 members, roughly east of the Nith, are attached to the Lothians DA, while the rest are attached to the Glasgow DA. As the mountains of Wales separate north and south so the Galloway hills separate the D&G members even from those in Ayrshire.

I wasn't saying anything about the attractions of cycling in the region and certainly not about the level of cycling activity in the region and enthusiasm of cyclists. A letter from Bill Love, a member who has been active for many years in the area, has put me right on all of these – a strong Wednesday group which has expanded to include Sundays, clubs in Dumfries, Annan and Carlisle and a mountain bike club as well as the Galloway Cycling Group..

In September a new CTC Section was formed – the Dumfries and Galloway Section. This will be a Section of the Glasgow DA, but of course members living on the borders of a Section or DA can decide which Section or DA they want to be attached to. If you don't want to be automatically assigned by postcode, then you need to tell the DA Secretaries concerned (or HQ directly).

Also in September a personal landmark was attained by Lochmaben member **Les Brown** who celebrated his 90th birthday by doing a 90-mile ride. Congratulations and best wishes, Les, from all of us!

CYCLETALK

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CTC Scotland AGM

By the time you read this, all DAs will have had their own AGMs and will have elected reps to the CTC Scotland Committee. Affiliated organisations can also nominate reps, and we do usually have a little space for 2 or 3 co-opted members either for their specialised contributions or to fill in other gaps.

The AGM of 2004 will be held in St Columba's Church, Park Terrace, Stirling from 11:00 to 16:00 on Saturday 17th January 2004.

Members are welcome to attend, but only the appointed reps can vote. This year we have had a donation towards the cost of the meeting, and we will be providing some lunch for those attending. It would be courteous if those intending to come could notify either the Secretary or Ron or Pat Harrow (email and phone details at bottom of this page).

Scottish Vets Rides - date fixed June 6th - Stirling

It was not only the Scots who thought that early May was not a good time for the national Vets rides, and CTC is now advising that weekends in June before the York Rally should be used.

That's good, because we had already decided after the last Cycle Talk went to press to go for **Sunday 6th June**.

The main ride, as always, will be the 100-mile one. But, so that those who can't manage that distance can still join in both the riding and the social, we are planning two shorter versions (probably 50 miles and 50k). The start-finish will be in **Stirling**, and the plan is to have a **communal meal in Stirling in the evening**, so book a bed for the night and don't rush off home straight away.

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A hostel tour of Dumfries and Galloway?

John Taylor

There have been quite a few SYHs in D&G over the years, but I don't know how many there ever were open all at the same time. What is true is that for many years it has not been possible to make a comprehensive hostel tour of D&G, particularly including the coast, at moderate mileages. But we are now getting some independent hostels which help to make such a tour more possible. All of them have a description and a photo in the D&G accommodation brochure.

The main public transport nodes now have hostels. At **Stranraer**, there is a small one which I have seen. It holds six in one room; that meant that when I wanted to stay there I couldn't since it was occupied by a family, so I would have been intrusive. So book well in advance here. Four miles from Dumfries is **Mabie** (in the forest) which holds 20 and, I am told, is rarely booked far in advance. There is also camping space there.

In between, there is a hostel beautifully situated on the shore of **Loch Ken** which can hold 20 but may be booked by people attending the sailing school. At **Dalbeattie** forest, hopefully by next season, there will be a hostel and chalets with camping space. The hostel will hold seven, but here they are all in separate rooms, which avoids one problem, but they may all be booked by mountain-biking parties. This revision is a direct benefit of the Seven Stanes development. The pressure is mounting for the establishment of an alternative cycle route to the unwelcoming A710 coast road, but - don't hold your breath - the possibilities do not exactly jump out of the map and will be expensive.

D&G is still sadly overlooked by cyclists. I look forward to seeing some of you about next year!

Contacts:

Galloway Sailing Centre, Loch Ken 01644 420626.

Marthrown of Mabie, 01387 247900.

Mrs P Parker, Balyett, 01776 703395.

John Taylor 01387 670395.

Maryculter Audax

More than 100 cyclists ventured forth on one or more of the four audax long distance rides on 13/14 September 2003. The rides varied from 54km to 208km, and all started from Maryculter, by Aberdeen, taking riders north south and west. There were many 'first time' audaxers, as well as more experienced legs, the weather was kind, and a good time was had by all.

East of Scotland Cyclists' Reunion

Earlier this year there was a small reunion for members of the Clarion Cycling Club. From this Norma and Neil Brearley had the idea of having a reunion for all former racing cyclists from clubs in the east of Scotland from the period of the 1940s to 1970s. There was a lot of list-making - recalling names, tracking people down (are they still alive, where are they now, who knows how to contact them?). Just this in itself probably did quite a lot of good in re-establishing connections.

An invitation to meet in the Fairmile Inn in Edinburgh in a booked function room with a capacity of 100 max went out. No disco, no food, small charge to cover room booking. Result: over 140 people turned up, and a great reunion took place. Naturally the CTC members who were there were pointing out that cycling does not have to stop when you stop racing, and that the local DA does have 3 rides every week all year round! So we may expect more of those who ride with a pencil-case attached to their seatpost rather than a pannier to join us soon!

CTC National AGM & Annual Dinner

CTC's Annual General Meeting and National Dinner weekend is coming North. CTC Scotland is to host the closing weekend of CTC's 125th Anniversary year in **Edinburgh on 24th and 25th April 2004** in honour of CTC founder Stanley Cotterell. A medical student in the city, Cotterell made his student lodgings CTC's first office in 1878, not only inspiring the cyclists of the time but finding time to publish CTC's first Land End to John O'Groats tour.

The actual venue is almost booked. HQ commented that the local people did not support it last year as well as expected. Put the date in your diary now, and show that Scotland cares.

The AGM will be on Saturday at 14:00, followed by the Dinner in the evening.

On the Sunday the Lothians DA will provide rides for the visitors - a 'club ride' for those who have time for it, with shorter alternatives for those who have to leave in the afternoon to get home.



Cycle for a Healthy Heart

Pat Harrow

It is surprising how one thing can lead to another. Over a year ago, the headline, "£3m earmarked for local health ideas" caught my eye in the local paper. On further reading, I found out that New Opportunities Funding cash would be available for NHS Boards to work with local groups to prevent ill-health and improve health and quality of life. The New Opportunities Funding from the National Lottery would be used for Scotland-wide projects and in each NHS board area for local initiatives focused on coronary heart disease and stroke prevention.

Bids would need to demonstrate joint working between services across the public and private sectors and voluntary and community groups. This seemed an ideal opportunity for CTC Scotland to put in a bid. Assessment was done in various ways and stages by each NHS board. After a lot of work and bids being submitted including an enterprising joint bid with the Bike Station to NHS Lothian, CTC Scotland were delighted to learn that their bid to NHS Tayside had been approved.

The aim of the "Cycle for a Healthy Heart" project in Tayside will be a health promotion one to decrease the incidence of CHD and stroke. Potentially at-risk individuals, particularly in deprived communities, where there is inequality of access to health (and leisure) services, will be targeted to develop a healthier lifestyle. Cycling will be promoted to be accessible, enjoyable, safe and welcoming for all.

A part-time development officer and admin assistant will be employed to provide cycle training at the appropriate level for the individual i.e. taking into account their level of fitness and previous experience of cycling. Local volunteers who are interested in cycling will be recruited to develop cycling skills so that participants can make a short, on road cycle journey, for example shopping or commuting. Cycling as a health activity involving the family will be encouraged in order to make the lifestyle change sustainable.

This will be an exciting project and most encouraging that the Health Board have recognised the importance that cycling can bring to so many aspects of health. It is exciting for CTC Scotland as an office base will be established in Scotland.

Anyone who is interested in becoming involved should contact Pat Harrow, e-mail cycling@supanet.com, tel 0845 4589298.



Pedal for Scotland

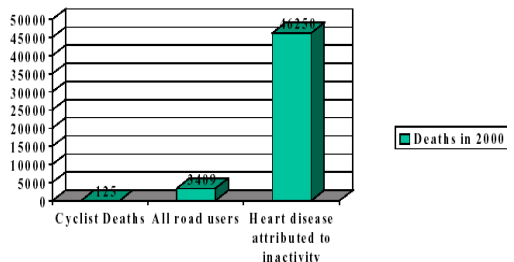
Once again the PFS day provided good cycling conditions for the 1000 cyclists who took part. Many were 'old hands' but there are always newcomers. For many who are not cycle-club people there is great satisfaction in doing a journey of 50 miles – often for the first time in their lives, and cycling between the two major Scottish cities is a part of that.

There are discussions going on about the future format of the event – the present one is now well-established, and the organisers are torn between the 'If it ain't broken – don't fix it' line and the 'If we keep it always the same, it will become stale and we'll lose customers' line. (Does anyone know the answer to this problem?).

One idea which has been mooted is to have two loops, one from Glasgow and one from Edinburgh, which would meet midday in some central place. This would avoid all the hassle of the bussing of bikes and riders (definitely a plus), but would lose the sense of travelling from A to B (definitely a minus for the non-club people referred to in the first paragraph), and also the almost intangible plus of getting a group of Edinburgh people into George Square for the start, and the parallel plus of getting the Glasgow folk into Meadowbank at the end.

If you have taken part in the PFS ride and have any views on the format, then tell the organisers (write to Organiser@PedalForScotland.org). If you haven't taken part, and there's something about the format or organisation which has put you off, then also let them know.

Cyclist deaths compared to deaths attributable to inactivity



CALLING CTC MEMBERS IN THE PERTH AREA

There is a lively cycle campaign group for the Perth and Kinross area called **Bycycle**. Membership is a mix of CTC and non-CTC members, and we would like to encourage more CTC members to come along and contribute, or even just be a non-active supporting member. The more members we have, the more we can demonstrate to the Council that there is a strong lobby for better cycle provision in its area. For those wanting to play an active role, the group does most of its work through topic groups, but there are three or four general meetings per annum, to which all are welcome. There is a website www.bycycle.org.uk which lets you know what the group does, and you can join through the site. But best come along to the next meeting....contact the Secretary Mike Earrey on 01796 474048 for details of the next general meeting.

The Future of Cycle Talk

Following the appeal in the last issue, about 100 people emailed me saying they would be happy to receive Cycle Talk electronically. While this is a much better response than the last time I asked, it's obviously a long way below the critical number to make it worth our while doing our own packaging and posting rather than having it inserted into 'Cycle'. So, for the time being, those who are on the e-list will get an email giving a link so they can pick up an electronic copy, but they will also (about 3-4 weeks later) get a copy included with Cycle. Hopefully more of the 2500 of you will soon opt for the e-copy.

Send an email to

E-CTCS@CTCSScotland.org.uk

giving your email address, name, and preferably also CTC membership number.

All possible effort is made to ensure that facts in this newsletter are accurate. Please tell the editor of any inaccuracies – it's too late to correct what's in print, but most information is repeated on the web and can be corrected there.

Opinions are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the policies of CTC and CTC Scotland.

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Bikes & Buses

Not of much use if you want to commute by bus with your bike, but for holiday travel Dave Holladay writes:

"You might note the likely continuation of the **Glen Affric Bike Bus**, a service for walkers & cyclists which ran this summer, from Beaully to the top car park, and a lunchtime shuttle down to Cannich and back. The road run downhill from Loch Affric is exhilarating.

"Other handy help comes from the **Inverness to Durness** coach service running in the summer, getting you one or both ways for a bike ride."

Station Survey



This picture is NOT of Altnabreac station! It's a station in Denmark.

I must say that I was sorely tempted by the offer of possible financial assistance to survey remote stations for the CTC survey, but I thought that Dave Holladay would probably not approve of me taking a north of Scotland tour at CTC's expense. Someone from Godalming might not have known where Altnabreac and Rogart were, but Dave would!



Sheffield Pedalpushers has 400 members. 100 are on the e-mail list (a better ratio than CTCS is managing!), but that's not good enough for the "It's a nice day, I'm going out to xx, do you want to come with me?" scenario, so they are using an SMS service to remind people of fixtures, give updates (e.g. closed roads), and spontaneous rides.