

Hertfordshire Cyclists' Touring Club Annual Report for year ending 30th September 2009

This is the 81st annual report for the Hertfordshire Cyclists' Touring Club.

The total number of CTC members in the County on 30th September 2009 was 1560 (In 2008 the total was 1488).

The report normally ends with expressions of thanks to those who have given their time, dedication and enthusiasm to providing rides and social events for the benefit of our members. Without such folk, there would be no Club; so this year I would like to start by thanking all those that have organised rides including the Group Secretaries: Jim Brown, John Curry, Richard Stubbs and David Woodley who organise the backbone of rides on a weekly basis throughout the year. The programmes offer opportunities to explore the quiet lanes in this and the surrounding Counties. Our thanks are due, not only to the Secretaries but their band of ride leaders who take us down lanes we have not been down before. Hertfordshire CTC has also organised 12 rides as part of the CTC Tourist Competition. These are not trivial undertakings and we should thank Paul Boielle, Jim Brown, Brian Jackson, and Robert Corbett and all those that help and marshal these events. Many people give up their time to ensure these events can take place.

The points awarded to those riding the events comprising the CTC Tourist Competition. This used to be the District Association Tourist Competition (DATC). The DATC Trophy is awarded to the highest placed Hertfordshire rider. This year Eric Johnson, the current holder of the Trophy, is in 16th place and will retain the cup. Richard Balawender and Bruce White are the next highest placed Hertfordshire riders, both in 92nd place. Eric was 37th last year, perhaps he'll finish in the top 10 next year. Congratulations Eric! Hertfordshire are currently 10th in the team event. The Committee congratulates all those that took part in the competition and hope you all enjoyed these events.

Thanks are also due to Anne Jarman for another very successful tour of France. This year's tour went to Brittany. Simon and the Yorkshire Bikeliner provide a comfortable and convenient way to get the travelers and their bikes across the Channel. Well done Anne, there are a group of happy travelers eagerly awaiting the 2010 tour!

The President's Ride is an opportunity for all the County's Groups to meet up and ride together. This year we met for elevenses in Codicote and there were two rides to the lunch venue. The Group Secretaries, Paul Boielle and Brian Jackson deserve our thanks for arranging the event, which celebrates the birthday of the Club.

This considerable list of rides and events is almost certainly incomplete, but the Committee would like to express their thanks to all involved in these and all the other activities of the Hertfordshire CTC. However, more help is always welcome, especially with marshalling the Audax rides!

Luke Peters has been awarded the Chapman Trophy, awarded to a young rider who has been an active member of the Member Group. He has participated in several of the CTC Tourist Competition events run in the County and is the most regular young rider with the North Herts Group, Well done Luke; we hope you enjoy riding with the Group and that you will enjoy many more years of cycling with us.

In addition to the rides programme, there have been a number of social events arranged. Albert Jarman organised what will probably be the last barn supper in the format we have enjoyed over very many years. We are looking forward to a different style of event in 2010. Thanks Albert.

The photographic competition, also organised by Albert, saw a new member raising the bar in the prints section. Sue Jackson took first, second and fourth places with her three prints. The clean sweep was prevented by David Dickenson taking third place. Well done to Sue and David and all the other entrants. Barrie Wood won the slides competition and took second place with Albert's entries in third and fourth places.

Finance

Stuart Hammond, Hon Treasurer, reports that the Member Group is in a very healthy financial position.

The Sections:-

North Herts Section (Jim Brown)

We're delighted to report that we have attracted and kept several new riders this year. This has included a good number of "new women" which has reinvigorated the mix and feel of the group. Gradually some are being introduced to the joys of leading and sweeping rides. Several have helped with our events.

The Group has been very busy with an average of just over two rides per week, 1602 riders (not including visitors on the big events). Highlights from 2008-2009 include 222 riders on a damp Emitremmus 2008, 356 over the three SSoSS 2009 rides and a record 122 on the Circular Cycle. Lots of thanks to Costello's Café and all our volunteers. These events would be impossible without lots of help on the day.

During Bike Week, we organised more rides than there were days in the week and many people did a lot of cycling. This time our twelve rides and the associated publicity did attract new people and we've still got most of them. The Teddy bears picnic was well attended despite the dodgy weather beforehand. The ride remained dry and was enjoyable. This has become something of a local tradition!

Alasdair Massie has spent a great deal of time campaigning for better cycling facilities throughout the North Herts area with help and assistance from Tina Walker and Jim Brown. Alasdair has moved to Cambridge but is still continuing to work for our benefit.

Alan Baxter leads the Blazing Saddles competition with a massive 83 points. Phil Kitchen is second on 64 and Paul Boielle third with 49. Georgie Robinson was our leading lady with 21 points but closely pursued by Christina Meade on 20 and Tina Walker on 18.

South Herts (Richard Stubbs)

The main cycling activities of the South Herts CTC continue to be our regular weekly rides organised on Wednesday evenings and the longer rides starting on Sunday mornings. We also have had extra cycling events for special occasions (like Bike Week) and for special groups.

The mid-week evening rides are based in St Albans and are organised by Steve Brazier. The routes are usually 12 or 15 miles, finishing at a pub. The average attendance was over 8 for the year, with a peak of 17 during National Bike Week due to publicity by St Albans Cycle Campaign. The winner of the attendance trophy this year was Graham Figg.

Our Sunday rides aim to run every week, but last year I see that 6 rides were cancelled because of bad weather (I think this could be a record, was it really that bad?). As usual, many thanks to the group of leaders who have been inventive about picking new and interesting routes. Again, we have had car assisted rides to take the routes into further flung areas of the Chilterns. These are popular and it is good to explore less familiar areas. But the most popular ride of the year was organised by

Bill Upsdale. This was an expedition from St Albans into south London, using off road through London where possible and crossing the river at the Woolwich Ferry. Another variation on the normal Sunday trips, which was well received, was a rough stuff day organised by Jon Crosby. We will try to repeat this next year.

After a couple of years of attendance numbers falling off a bit, it is good to report that we have had quite a few new people joining us regularly. A special welcome to John, Neil, Vish, Simon and Giles, among others. We have had 45 different people coming along throughout the year, which is about the same as the previous couple of years, but it is good to report new faces along with the 'regulars'.

The points for the Hargreaves Trophy, which is awarded for the most miles covered on the Sunday rides, have changed around quite a bit from last year. This year's winner is Richard Stubbs. The top results for this trophy are: Richard Stubbs with 131 points, Jon Crosby on 119 and Peter Ridehalgh who accumulated 112.

The Easter weekend away, which has been a tradition for some years, did not happen this year for various reasons. This may be something to consider again for 2010. Rona Wightman continued to organise her 'Five miles to fabulous' introductory cycle rides for newer female cyclists throughout the year and is obviously filling a niche. A number of members have been active in overseas touring during the year. A group attended the 71st Semaine Federale Internationale de Cyclotourisme in St Omer.

It is sad to report a serious accident early in the year to Judy Allfrey in an encounter with a Spanish lorry driver. We have been delighted to see Judy taking the first steps to cycling recovery over the last few weeks. It is good to report that the CTC at national level have been very supportive in taking up her case.

Stort Valley Section (John Curry)

I'm not certain whether it is disappointing or encouraging to report that numbers for our regular Sunday rides have neither decreased nor increased during the year. Probably the most disappointing aspect of it is the almost total absence of women; and perhaps, the average age of the participants!

The "last of the summer wine" group continues strongly, with regular outings on Wednesdays, although anno Domini and illness is catching up on us and more members are driving to the meetings than hitherto.

The festive lunch in December 2008 once again attracted 22 members, only half of whom cycled. As tradition dictates the event was held at The Hope Poles, Bedlars Green, and they produced an excellent lunch.

Full scale support for National Bike Week 2009 was given by Harlow District Council; mostly in the form of publicity. An encouraging increase in the number of participants was the result. More rides than ever before (in Harlow) were undertaken. Not surprisingly the pub rides proved most popular. I think that we can build on this 2010.

Some of our members availed themselves of the offer of a free training course for ride leadership recently. This was organised by Harlow Council.

West Herts (David Woodley)

The Group has not changed significantly during the past 12 months. We still have the same core group of riders and, although we have seen some new faces during the year, none has started to ride with us on a regular basis. The Sunday rides over the last year attracted an average of 10 riders with the maximum for one ride being 17.

Group activities during the past 12 months include a trip to the Welsh cycling festival, car assisted rides to the Cotswolds and Northamptonshire and members went on cycling trips to German and France. No one in this group attended the Birthday rides this year, being put off by the cost of camping so the Welsh Cycling festival was arranged as an alternative. This was an excellent event. Well organized, reasonable prices and stunning countryside. Shame about the weather though!

Our competition winners this year were:

Attendance	Joint winners Bob Hodgkinson and Roger Pask
Ladies	Christine Wiech
Hill Climb	Mike Joseph
Free Wheel	Bob Hodgkinson
Speed Judging	Joint winners Bob Howe and Brian Braybrook.

And Finally:-

The Committee would like to wish a rapid and complete recovery to all those that have suffered accidents and illnesses during the past twelve months. We especially hope that Judy Alfrey, Albert Jarman, Paul Kocher, Harry Swanston and Gordon Welch are able to resume cycling with us in the near future.

Let us also hope that we all have a wonderful year of fine weather and accident-free cycling ahead of us.

By Order of the Committee

B Jackson
Secretary.