

Affiliated to: Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC) www.ctc.org.uk
and Cyclenation www.cyclenation.org.uk



SOUTH WEST HERTS SPOKES CYCLING GROUP

Peterborough May Bank Holiday Cycling Weekend



SUMMER: JUNE / JULY / AUGUST 2010 ISSUE # 65

The Peterborough Experience

by David, Mary Ann and Diana

30 April – 3 May, 2010

A Spokes weekend away in a distant part of the country seemed a great idea for the May Day Bank Holiday weekend. It required great cycling



opportunities, availability to Watford Spokes and Harrow Cyclists, fantastic weather and good accommodation and a local cycling group willing to use their knowledge to show us round their countryside.

So 8 Spokes members and 4 Harrow Cyclists combined to make a party of 10 (2 being joint members) that landed in

Peterborough, less than 2 hours from London, for a weekend of cycling and other leisure pursuits. The weather forecast was not at all good. There was a lack of youth hostels in the area, but a good hotel was available near the city centre for around £30 per person per night.

On the Saturday, the Peterborough Cycle Club offered us a 28 mile cycle ride round the outskirts of the city led by one of their members, Richard. Starting from the Newark hotel we headed East along Sustrans route 63 on a tarmac cycle



path and across the Peterborough Millenium bridge (see photo) and then round the southern part of the city through a series of wide paths across the fens through the villages of Farcet and Yaxley. Great cycling with no hills and no traffic until rounding one corner we were nearly undermined by a fleet of mini-motorbikes who were also expecting not to meet any traffic. We headed back into the city and the very pleasant Ferry Meadows country park for a cup of tea in the café whilst watching the scores of rabbits running around the park.

On Saturday Brian and Diana went on a guided walk to the Guildhall, built in 1671, and the Cathedral grounds. We then walked to the River Nene and the impressive Lido - an outdoor pool still in use. We learned that the Cathedral was a Benedictine Monastery church, build with local Barnack stone.

After the walk we explored the interesting museum and were fascinated by the intricacies of eel catching in the Fens. They were mostly sent to the East End!

Back to the hotel to muster up energy for Sunday's Cycle Club Run!

Sunday 9am - club run start time for the Peterborough CC from Cathedral Square. As they had organised a time trial for their members out in Stilton (nice cheeses come from here) we were invited to join them. Just had to resolve an overnight puncture and some mechanical problems With the wind behind us our speed increased to 15mph as we arrived at the start to see a number of 2 person teams set off on their 15 mile two-up time trial. Some of us wanted to join in but when we realised that the top team was finishing in 36 minutes considered that maybe this was not a good idea. There are some pictures of Brian and Diana having a go but these are best kept secret for fear of probing by life assurance companies.

We watched the teams return from our position at the American War Memorial at Glatton after which the club secretary, Tim, took us on a rather gentler ride. Stopping near Stilton at Folksworth for an early lunch we returned to Peterborough. This time we faced a head wind making the pace more like 5 mph. The rest of the afternoon was spent here exploring some of the well signed cycleways in the city in weather that continued to exceed our expectations when it was pouring in Watford. We are indebted to the Peterborough Cycle Club for the effort expended in giving us a good time in the city and at a pace which was rather slower to their norm.

On Monday a group of us cycled to the village of Helpston, birthplace of John Clare, English poet in the early 19th century.

We set off into a strong headwind with glowering clouds threatening rain. At one point a shower was about to drench us but somehow blew sideways after just a few drops. It was dry the rest of the day, even with a bit of sun.

Having reached the northern edge of Peterborough, we turned west along a road which was marked on the Peterborough Cycle Map with a cycle route, but it was very busy and not pleasant. There are lots of traffic-free and on-road cycle paths and lanes in the city, but their quality leaves much to be desired. The Sustrans NCN 12 passes through and is much better sign posted than the local paths and routes, but the surfaces are poor. It looks like Peterborough did a lot of work on cycle paths in the 1990s but have not maintained or improved them. Familiar story.

John Clare's cottage has been carefully re-constructed with a Lottery Grant. He was a poet of the countryside - the bookworm son of a farm labourer, who had some education at the school in the next village. He decried the effect of the Enclosure Movement on local people who lost so much of their freedom to roam. Sadly, he spent much of his life in asylums.

We then made our way back on a different route which took us into the Nene Park within the Nene River valley, passing a bluebell wood and cowslips by the roadside, having enjoyed our weekend together in Peterborough.

Another group went to meet some of the locals congregating at the Flag Fen Bronze Age site on the fens just outside the city. Whilst there, a fight broke out following the kidnapping of a local Anglo-Saxon princess. A pitched battle ensued in this 5th century environment between the Roman Britains and the local Anglo-



Saxons and we were lucky to escape with our lives as the Roman soldiers just looked on. The thought of demonstrating the benefits of cycling to this very different local group rapidly disappeared and we headed for home.

SPOKES RIDES & EVENTS

JUNE / JULY / AUGUST 2010

Remember to bring: **water, spare inner tube, lights & reflective/waterproof clothing** as appropriate.

Disclaimer: Participants of rides must be over 16 unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Insurance is your responsibility.

Spokes cannot accept liability for you or your possessions.

It is your responsibility to follow advice and the **Highway Code** at all times. Your participation is the acceptance of these terms.

Note: All telephone numbers without codes are Watford (**01923**).

Please make sure you arrive in plenty of time at the start so rides can leave at the stated time

Tuesday 1st June

10.30am

The Tuesday 2 Hour Ride



Harvester Pub by Two Bridges, Baldwins Lane Regular easy rides on the first Tuesday of each month. 12 miles Slow Roger

Sunday 6th June

10.30am

Aldenham

Garston Medical Centre Easy ride up to Aldenham return via Patchetts Green. 15 Miles Slow Andrew

Thursday 10th June

10.00am

Denham Country Park

Pump House, Local Board Road Ebury Way, Aquadrome and Denham village. Return via Colne Valley Trail. 25 miles Medium Dennis

Saturday 12th June

No official Spokes ride but why not visit:-

the 7th London World Naked Bike Ride for riders wanting to see the city sights in their nakedness – <http://wiki.worldnakedbikeride.org/wiki/London>

Sunday 13th June

10.30am

Butterfly World (£6 entrance)

Lower High Street Station Ride on quiet streets and lanes through Bricket Wood to the Butterfly World (Chiswell Green) and back through Bedmond and Abbots Langley. Picnic or lunch in the café. 12 miles Slow Mary Ann



Please note: the Spokes Social Evening shown in the last newsletter for 17th June is now to be on Thursday 24th June

Friday 18th June 11.00am Chiltern Cycleway Launch
Berkhamsted Station Ride a 17 mile section of this relay event - Berhamsted to Hyde Heath. Return by cycle or train to Rickmansworth. Mainly lanes, some hills. Train to Berkhamsted from Watford 10.11 or 10.26am. 27 miles Medium Roger
www.chilternsociety.org.uk/about-ChCyWay.php

Bike Week 19th - 27th June

Saturday 19th June 1.30 – 5.00pm Croxley Revels
Croxley Green Spokes volunteers required to support the publicity stall.
www.croxleyrevels.co.uk Michael

Saturday 19th June 7.30pm Film / Play / or Something
Chance to see a play or film in Watford. Phone Linden for details.

Sunday 20th June 10.00am Trowley Bottom
Garston Medical Centre, near Sainsburys Long and hard ride up past Buncefield-Trowley Bottom up to Whipsnade area. Lunch in Studham. 40 miles Medium/Fast Andrew

Sunday 20th June 1.00 - 5.00pm West London Greenfest
Furnivall Gardens, Hammersmith, W6 9DJ For those not on the ride - Ealing cyclists recommend a visit to Greenfest, an environmental fair with around 50 environmental groups present. A wide variety of groups on community activity, recycling and saving energy, cycling etc. www.hfcyclists.org.uk/wlqf/index.shtml
Hammersmith & Fulham LCC Group



Wednesday 23rd June 7.00pm Longest Day Evening Ride
Watford Junction Station Circular ride along lanes and towpath in the Berkhamsted direction, refreshment stop at a nice pub in the middle. Don't forget to bring lights and batteries. 12 miles Medium David


Thursday 24th June 8.00pm Spokes Social Evening
Moon under Water, High Street, Watford Normal location is in the dining area at the rear. Chance for a meet up with fellow members for a drink and a curry. Diana

Saturday 26th June 2.00pm An Up and Down Ride
Kings Langley Station Circular ride, more off road than on, up to Chipperfield then down to Woody's at Apsley Lock for tea. Flat finish via canal. 10 miles Medium Diane

Sunday 27th June Morning London Bikeathon



Royal Hospital Chelsea 26 mile ride in London for Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research – details: www.londonbikeathon.co.uk
26 miles David

Tuesday 6th July 10.30am The Tuesday 2 Hour Ride
 **Harvester Pub by Two Bridges, Baldwins Lane** Regular easy rides on the first Tuesday of each month. 12 miles Easy Roger

Thursday 8th July 10.00am Hockeridge Bottom
Harvester Pub by Two Bridges, Baldwins Lane Under the Heavens, Ley Hill, Ashley Green. 25 miles Medium Dennis

Saturday 3rd July 9.50am MK4U
Watford Junction Train ride to Milton Keynes then explore the Redways and lanes of Bedfordshire with a lunch stop at Cranfield. 20 miles Medium Veronica / Iain

Sunday 4th July Aspire Summer Cycle Ride
This is a fundraising ride for the Aspire centre, within the grounds of Stanmore Orthopaedic Hospital. Now in it's fourth year the Aspire Summer Cycle will head off into the Hertfordshire countryside offering a choice of routes. The ride welcomes cyclists of all abilities. The emphasis is on a great day out for everyone and raising as much as possible for Aspire. 30 or 50 miles Paul Entry forms available on: www.aspire.org.uk/fundraising/AspireEvents.aspx



Thursday 8th July 8.00pm Spokes Social Evening
Moon under Water, High Street, Watford We are normally in the dining area at the rear. Chance for a meet up with fellow members for a chat, vindaloo and vino. Diana

Saturday 10th July 11.00am Spokes Publicity Event
Opposite British Home Stores, High Street, Watford The Support of all members is required for this. Armed with Newsletters, web-site details, Rides lists and the aid of the club stand, the aim is to publicise the group in the Town Centre. Please let David know if you can assist for an hour or two. David and others

Sunday 11th July 9.00am Peace Hospice Pedal for Peace
Sponsored 10, 20, 30 mile ride

For more details:

www.peacehospice.co.uk/viewevent.asp?eventID=231

Volunteers might be required to assist in Cassiobury Park on the day for this event. Tanya

Saturday 17th July 10.00am South Mimms
Pump House, Local Board Road, Watford Ride via Wall Hall, Radlett and Shenley. 28 miles Medium Dennis

Saturday 24th July 10.00am Chiltern Ride
Harvester Pub by Two Bridges, Baldwins Lane A scenic ride with hills. Pub lunch at Little Missenden. 30 miles Medium Roger

Thursday 29th July 8.00pm Spokes Social Evening
Moon under Water, High Street, Watford Normal location is in the dining area at the rear. Chance for a meet up with fellow members for a balti and a beer. Diana

Saturday 31st July 10.30am Andy and Alison's Family Ride
(Based on Ride 4 from Blue Book)

Garston Medical Centre, near Sainsburys Specifically geared for families, this ride to Aldenham Country Park is expected to be smooth going with some off-road sections. A picnic is planned for half way round so feel free to bring sandwiches.
10 miles Medium Andy



Sunday 1st August

10.00am

**Ride to Water End
(Ride 17 from the Blue Book)**

Garston Medical Centre, near Sainsburys A pleasant ride using the Alban Way to Water End then back via South Mimms and Radlett.
27 miles Medium Paul

Tuesday 3rd August

10.30am

The Tuesday 2 Hour Ride



Harvester Pub by Two Bridges, Baldwins Lane Regular easy rides on the first Tuesday of each month. 12 miles Slow Roger

Thursday 12th August

10.00am

Elstree Airfield Café

Pump House, Local Board Road Wall Hall, Batlers' Green and Letchmore Heath.
15 miles Medium Dennis



FRIDAY 13TH AUGUST

7.30pm

Film "The Kite Runner"

Watford Film House, The Pump House, Local Board Road, Watford.
Phone Linden for details...

Saturday 14th August

11.00am

Gorhambury

Watford Central Library Hunton Bridge, Bedmond, Gorhambury
Chiswell Green, Bricket Wood. 22 miles Medium Phil

Sunday 22nd August

11.00am

**London Cycle Hire Scheme
Transport for London Trial**

Euston Station, Eversholt Street exit Transport for London is offering bicycles for use in central London with an intended launch date of 30 July; Spokes intends to test these facilities.

From Euston Station, following appropriate TfL pre-registration requirements, we will be using hire bicycles for short periods over a pre-determined route. This may be on a timed basis. You are welcome to bring your own bicycles to keep the hirers company.

It is important that you register your interest with the ride leader as TfL requirements have not yet been announced.

www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/cycling/12444.aspx

15 miles Slow David



Thursday 26th August 8.00pm Spokes Social Evening
Moon under Water, High Street, Watford Normal location is in the dining area at the rear. Chance for a meet up with fellow members for a cider and a chicken tikka masala. Diana

Saturday 28th August 10.30am Three Valleys Ride
Harvester Pub by Two Bridges, Baldwins Lane Hilly ride across the Chess, Gade, and Colne Valleys via Loudwater, Bovington and Chiswell Green. 25 miles Medium Phil

Looking Forwards to the Autumn Programme

Tuesday 7th September 10.30am The Tuesday 2 Hour Ride
Harvester Pub by Two Bridges, Baldwins Lane Regular easy rides on the first Tuesday of each month. 12 miles Easy Roger

Saturday/Sunday 18/19th September Open City Ride (Open House)
Architectural visits by bicycle to places in London not normally open to the public. Check the web-site: [**www.londonopenhouse.org**](http://www.londonopenhouse.org)

Wednesday 22nd September In Town Without My Car Day
Part of European Mobility Week [**www.mobilityweek.eu**](http://www.mobilityweek.eu)

Thursday 23rd September 8.00pm Spokes Social Evening
Moon under Water, High Street, Watford Normal location is in the dining area at the rear. Chance for a meet up with fellow members for a drink and a curry. Diana

Sunday 3rd October Brompton World Championship
Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire

The event, now in its fifth year will be hosted in the majestic grounds of the palace, as part of the Breast Cancer Care Bike Blenheim Palace event. See [**www.brompton.co.uk/bwc/2010**](http://www.brompton.co.uk/bwc/2010) for details.

13-17th October Bicycle Film Festival
Film screenings, parties and rides to celebrate the humble two wheeler. Check the web-site nearer the time: [**www.bicyclefilmfestival.com**](http://www.bicyclefilmfestival.com)

Bamboo Bicycles Grown To Order

from the ETA web-site

Bamboo has been used to make bicycle frames for more than 100 years, but while the material is lightweight, environmentally friendly and cheap to produce, its use is usually confined to basic models for the developing world or prohibitively expensive designer bikes.

The latest range of bamboo bicycles from California bike builders, Masuelli, is 'grown to order' using a local supply of bamboo.

The bikes can hardly be described as cheap, the 'All Black' track bike costs £1,500, but promises to be far more exclusive than other bicycles at this price.



The bikes are available in Britain from ***rawbamboobikes.co.uk***

How To Help

How did you find out about Spokes?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal recommendation | <input type="checkbox"/> Web-site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On a cycle ride | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CyclePedia | <input type="checkbox"/> Cycles UK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neale & Sons | <input type="checkbox"/> The Bike Stall (Watford Market) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northwood Cycle Depot | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Fair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Why do you cycle?

Can you help with any of the following?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organising cycle rides | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning cycle schemes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying of routes | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cartography / CAD | <input type="checkbox"/> Social events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter articles / artwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Dealing with local councils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Merchandise / advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> Letter writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |



Quarterly Quotations

"The hardest part of raising a child is teaching them to ride bicycles. A shaky child on a bicycle for the first time needs both support and freedom. The realization that this is what the child will always need can hit hard."

Sloan Wilson

"Toleration is the greatest gift of the mind; it requires the same effort of the brain that it takes to balance oneself on a bicycle."

Helen Keller

How To Join

SPOKES membership is only **£8.00** per person per year, and just **£1.00** for each additional family member at the same address (*plus any donation you can afford*). For this amount you receive regular mailings on activities and actions and the satisfaction of helping us campaign for improved cycling conditions in the South West Herts area. We organise regular events and rides too. To join, complete form (*see other side too*) and send with cheque to:

Dara Godivala

6 Highland Road, Northwood Hills, Middlesex, HA6 1JT



Name(s)

.....

Address

.....

.....

Post Code Telephone

Amount £ Donation £ *Cheques payable to SPOKES please*

E-mail Address :



SPOKES DISCOUNTS

Show your **SPOKES** membership card
and get **10%** off repairs and spares at:

CyclePedia 01923 221901
70-78 Merton Road, Watford

Neale & Sons 01923 223916
26 Vicarage Road Precinct, Watford

Cycles UK 01923 243707
484 St. Albans Road, Watford

The Bike Stall Watford Market
thebikestall@aol.com or 07941 800029

Northwood Cycle Depot 01923 824174
118 Pinner Road, Northwood

10% off food & drink at the Café in the Park 08456 800835
The Aquadrome, Frogmoor Lane, Rickmansworth, WD3 1NB

My Trip to Cambodia

by Janet

Leaving early Sunday morning from Heathrow I flew to Kuala Lumpur then to Phnom Penh. I was met by Vince and Aneta - they had been out there teaching since the beginning of December. Vince had bought a bike so I had a ride up the street before venturing in traffic. I hired one and cycled to the Olympic stadium for a swim.

The traffic was horrendous, motorbikes coming from all ways, the cars are mostly 4 x 4, at intersections they just sound their horns and go.



At roundabouts it is everyone go. The traffic lights are good, they count down from as much as 70 seconds and then the little green man starts walking, then runs when the lights are due to change. One evening I got lost, I didn't have a clue how to get back. After asking directions to the wrong market I put my bike on a tuk tuk and let the driver get me back to my guest house, I only knew the street number but they do not always follow on. It was a great experience and the people are very obliging.

Hi-Viz Waistcoats

Be safe and seen

Adult £4

sizes M & L

Child £3

ages 4-7 & 8-11

For further information contact

Michael

The Chilterns Cycleway

will be launched on Friday 18th June, 2010.

Plans for the event will include a Cycle Relay, where teams are spaced around the route to start off at the same time and to ride a section of the route. In this way the whole route will have been ridden within a couple of hours.

This is a chance to enjoy the scenery along the route. A number of Chiltern cycle clubs will be taking part. There will also be a series of 'taster rides' on offer in the week following the launch of the Chilterns Cycleway.

