

Andy's Unusual Bike Ride

by Iain & Veronica

e gathered at the Pump House encouraged by the warm sunshine, then set off in the direction of Northwood, up hill past the Nato base.

e followed Andy and Alison who were riding borrowed bikes with eccentric wheels (axles off centre). They bounced along and we followed in convoy causing a bit of a stir.

n arrival at the Northwood Cycle Depot *(established in 1924)* we perused the collection of historic cycles and talked about all things cycling.

ea and cakes were provided and a few of us tried out some alternative bicycles. (see picture)

or the return journey some of us headed the other way towards Rickmansworth and then back along the Ebury Way.





SPOKES - Chairman's Report - April 2012

Over the past year SPOKES has continued to promote cycling, by organising rides, having social activities and campaigning for better cycling facilities.

I wish to thank committee members for their support in organising SPOKES activities, and other members for leading rides and supporting events.

Each year a number of members leave & join the committee. I wish to thank David and Veronica who are not standing for re-election this year. A special thanks to Dara who is retiring from the committee as Membership Secretary having provided a vital and excellent service for 6 years.

We have a flexible committee structure allowing members to participate in a way suitable to them. As in previous years we invite members to come onto the committee helping to develop our activities and campaigning.

Our principle activities continue to be the organisation of rides, and the production and distribution of the Quarterly Newsletter. We have a useful web-site, which has information of interest to all cyclists, but it now needs a fresh look, to encourage regular viewing by those interested in cycling.

SPOKES can now also be followed on Facebook and Twitter, although this facility has not been used to a great extent. We will need to decide whether we use Facebook or Twitter to communicate with members. Feedback on this issue is welcome.

In the past year we have participated in the formation of **CycleHerts** a countywide federation of cycling groups, hoping to influence Hertfordshire County Council in the promotion of cycling.

A great local success in the last year has been the rides for Less Experienced Cyclists (LEC) as these were held on a regular monthly basis and attracted many new cyclists.

SPOKES has also participated in other local events including Croxley

Revels, Rickmansworth Environmental Fair and had recruitment stalls in Watford High Street.

David has developed the organisation of our rides, which is now being done on Google documents. Although there are still some minor issues to be resolved, this should provide a more interactive means of organising rides. We welcome and rely on members coming forward to lead rides; please get in touch with David if you are interested in leading a future ride.

Last year we had a very successful weekend away in the Peak District. Many members have said they wish to have future weekends away, but we will need someone willing to organise them.

Membership has increased slightly to 229, consisting of approximately 144 lead members and another 85 family members.

We would like to be more effective in our campaigning for better and safer cycling facilities. Learning from other organisations may help in this. Determined residents are running the current campaign in Watford for 20 mph in residential areas in a very professional way. It is a campaign we can learn from and one that most of us support.

The County and District councils have acceptable cycling policies, but to be effective they need to have a higher priority and be implemented more effectively. The obstacles to cycling need to be removed and a safe cycling network developed.

Of course we would like to see all the missing links in the local cycling network completed, but the two projects in Watford we do wish to be given a high priority are the completion of the cycling route from the High Street to the Lower High Street and linking the cycle paths in Cassiobury Park to the canal path. The good news is we should be seeing some improvements to the cycle path going though the Colne River Park in Watford towards the A41.

I would like to see more footpaths by busy rural roads converted to shared use paths. These are often little used by pedestrians, but could be a significant benefit to cyclists. Some members of SPOKES have participated in the training for leading future **Local Sky-Rides**. It will be interesting to see how this evolves during the summer months.

An interesting local development for cyclists is the **Watford Cycling Hub** which Kate Jenkins has set up, providing a local meeting point at Holywell where people can hire a maintenance facility, but has also offered a base for cycling activities.

The future success of SPOKES depends on members participating and supporting the rides, having a social programme, and improving our campaigning ability to ensure that better cycling facilities are provided.

Cycling is not only a recreational pastime, it provides a cheap and effective means of local transport. It is also a way of achieving a healthier lifestyle in a pleasant and sustainable environment.



BIKE BLENHEIM PALACE has something for everyone; from the competitive cycling fanatic, to families looking for somewhere safe to ride their bikes in beautiful surroundings. The 2 day event will include:

18th & 19th August

40Km Off-Road Sportive; 20Km Time Trial; Family Rides; Bike Polo Tournament; 60/100 mile Road Sportives; Brompton Marathon; 26.2 mile Pink Ribbonride; Brompton World Championship & Brompton Sprint event.

For further information visit the web-site: http://www.blenheimpalace.com/whats-on/events/654.html

20s Plenty for Watford – update

The local 20s Plenty group, one of over hundred around the country, was formed just last November. It campaigns for a standard 20 mph speed limit, without humps, in towns on all non-major roads. The Watford group is drawn from local residents' associations (such as Nascot and the Cassiobury Triangle) and community groups (such as Living Streets, Friends of the Earth, Sustrans as well as Spokes).

The 20s Plenty group has concentrated on setting out the arguments in favour at a series of briefings and presentations to community organisations around the town as well as to each of the political groups on Watford Council. These have been very well received and, as a result, all four parties on Watford Council unanimously supported a motion calling on Hertfordshire County Council (the highway authority) to examine the feasibility of such a scheme.

The Council noted that where a 20 mph limit has been introduced elsewhere, it has:

- significantly reduced speeds in just the first year of operation; after several years in operation reduced urban accident rates by up to two-thirds (with numbers killed and seriously injured reduced by even more);
- encouraged walking and cycling, especially for the elderly and younger children;
- benefited communities, with residents a quarter more likely to stop and talk on footpaths;
- increased the journey time of a 15 minute journey by just 1 minute;
- reduced vehicle emissions by 12% due to less acceleration and deceleration;

 and been supported by 72% of drivers surveyed as part of the British Social Attitudes Survey conducted for the Department for Transport in 2010

There has been considerable coverage of the campaign in local papers as well as on BBC Three Counties radio.

Now the focus turns to the politicians and traffic engineers at the county council. So far there has been reluctance from county politicians to meet the group to hear the arguments – in contrast with the local Watford councillors – but we do have a number of allies. With increasing numbers of towns and cities adopting this policy on speed limits, "The Times" newspaper supporting the cause and widespread support in the town, we feel the momentum is with us.

If it can work in Portsmouth, Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Oxford and the whole of Lancashire, why not Watford?

If any Spokes member is also a member of a residents association or group that would like to host a presentation from 20s Plenty for Watford, do get in touch with us.

Phil Gough Graham Everett Kevin Ambrose

- Phil Gough pgough@ntlworld.com
- Graham Everett graham.everett@care4free.net
 - kpambrose@gmail.com

FOR SALE

- His & hers (Blue / Pink) Victory, Italian-made, sturdy foldup bikes. Never been separated since birth! £60 each.
- Chinese make brand new folder : £150.
- 16" ladies Falcon bike : £50.

Contact Vince for further details.

SPOKES RIDES & EVENTS JUNE / JULY / AUGUST 2012

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.

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

SPEED GUIDE FOR RIDES

SLOW	a gentle pace up to 8 mph	
MEDIUM	average pace between 9 and 12 mph	
FAST	faster than 12 mph	

Saturday 2nd June 14:00

Cha Cha Café, Cassiobury Park Easy ride for less experienced or rusty riders wanting to enjoy a short ride away from busy traffic aided by experienced cyclists. Slow 5-8 miles only Leader to be advised David

Wednesday 6th June 18:00 1st Evening Ride

Irish Club, Wiggenhall Road, Watford, WD18 0HS Heading out to Sarratt or Heronsgate direction on roads with some off road sections. Pub stop prior to heading back. Medium 15 miles Steve

Tuesday 12th June 10:00

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green An easy morning ride, back around 12.30. Medium 18 miles Roger

LEC Ride

Tuesday Morning Ride

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Thursday 14th June 10:00

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green Along 'Under the Heavens', Flaunden and Ley Hill. Medium 20 miles Dennis

20:00

Thursday 14th June **Spokes Social Evening** Moon Under Water, High Street, Watford A chance to have a chat while enjoying a curry & drink. We are normally in the rear section of the pub. Diana

Bike Week 16th - 24th June

www.bikeweek.org.uk

Sunday 17th June **10:00 Town Centre Recruitment Activity** St. Mary's Square, High Street, Watford Please let David know if you can assist in publicising Spokes amongst the local community. David

Sunday 17th June London to Brighton Bike Ride

Traditional Father's Day 60 mile bike ride in aid of British Heart Foundation - see details on http://www.bhf.org.uk/getinvolved/events/bike-rides/london-to-brighton.aspx?TestGet=Y

Thursday 21st June 20.00

Bandstand, Watford Central Library Short ride along the canal towpath to Hunton Bridge, then return via Rousebarn Lane for a drink in Watford with a surprise finale at 22.00! Medium 8 miles Iain

Saturday 23rd June 10:30

Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome Denham Country Park - mainly on tracks. A free drink & Bike Coding available after the ride. Slow 14 miles Roger

Saturday 23rd June Croxley Revels

The Green, Croxley Green Can you help in the afternoon at the SPOKES stall? Kate

Whelpley Hill

Longest Day Ride

Aquadrome Ride



Tuesday 26th June 10:00

Watford Metropolitan Station Country lanes. Refreshment stop. Back by One. Medium 12 miles John

Saturday 30th June 10:30

Garston Medical Centre in Sainsbury's Car Park Lanes via Potters Crouch-Buncefield-Trowley and Gaddesden-coffee or pub stop at Red Lion in Whipsnade area. Please confirm with ride leader in advance your intention to attend. Medium 35 miles Andrew

Tuesday 3rd July 18:00 Heading out to Irish Club, Wiggenhall Road, Watford, WD18 0HS Sarratt or Heronsgate direction on roads with some off road sections. Pub stop prior to heading back. Medium 15 miles Steve

Saturday 7th July 14:00

Cha Cha Cha Café, Cassiobury Park Easy ride for less experienced or rusty riders wanting to enjoy a short ride using off road routes and quiet lanes followed by a cuppa. Slow 5-8 miles only Errol

Tuesday 10th July 10:00

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green back around 12.30. Medium 18 miles

Wednesday 11th July 10:00

Pump House, Local Board Road Some off road. Refreshment stop. Back by One. Medium 12 miles John

Thursday 12th July 10:00 **Elstree Excursion** Pump House, Local Board Road Wall Hall, Batlers Green, Letchmore Heath and cuppa in the café. Medium 15 miles Dennis

2nd Evening Ride

LEC Ride

Ride

Tuesday morning

South Watford Circular

An easy morning ride, Roger

Chiltern Lanes

Whipsnade Ride



Saturday 14th July 10:00

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green Outward journey to Denham Aerodrome and return via canal towpath with expected pub stop for lunch. Slow 20 miles Vince

Sunday 15th July 09:00

Cassiobury Park Start Point This is a fun cycle ride for all cyclists offering the choice of 10. 20 or 30 mile routes for the benefit of the Peace Hospice, Watford. Entry is £15 per person and this fee covers a T-shirt and tag-pack for your bike to record you at check-points. More details on www.peacehospice.co.uk/application form detail.asp?id=19 More details from Kate Slow/Medium

Thursday 19th July 20:15 - 23:00 **Pump House Jazz**

Colne River Room, Pump House, Local Board Road Traditional jazz with Rance's Rockin' Chair Band. Real ale & snacks available. Entry £8.00. Join Diana for an enjoyable evening.

Tuesday 24th July 10:00 Pump House, Local Board Road Refreshment stop. Back by One. Slow

Thursday 26th July 20:00

Moon Under Water, High Street, Watford A chance to have a chat while enjoying a curry & drink. We are normally in the rear section of the Diana pub.

Wednesday 1st August

To be advised but possibly near Richmond Centred at Hampton Court Palace this is the day for the Olympic Time Trial - male and female. Many viewpoints on its 27 mile route in the south west London area.

Cyclists competing will set off at 90 second

intervals providing plenty of opportunity to support Team GB. Further details from David

12 miles John

Olympics Cycling Time Trial

Approximately 105 million bicycles are made every year, this is double the number of cars

Spokes Social Evening

Flat Ride Canal towpath, Ebury Way.

Pedal For Peace

Colne Valley Park Ride

Saturday 4th August 14:00

Cha Cha Cha Café, Cassiobury Park Easy ride for less experienced riders of all ages wanting to enjoy a pleasant ride using quiet roads or paths. Slow 5-8 miles only Leader to be advised

Tuesday 7th August 18:00

Irish Club, Wiggenhall Road, Watford, WD18 0HS Heading out to Sarratt or Heronsgate direction on roads with some off road sections. Pub stop prior to heading back. Medium 15 miles Steve

Thursday 9th August 10:00

Pump House, Local Board Road Chiswell Green for a cuppa in McD. Medium 20 miles Dennis

Saturday 11th August 10:00

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxlev Green a pub lunch. Medium 36 miles

Tuesday 14th August 10:00

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxlev Green around 12 30 Medium 18 miles Roger

Saturday 18th August 10:30

Garston Medical Centre in Sainsbury's car park Gorhambury to Harpenden. Pub/Coffee stop. Medium 25 miles Andrew

Thursday 30th August 20:00

Moon Under Water, High Street, Watford A chance to have a chat while enjoying a curry & drink. We are normally in the rear section of the pub. Diana

Tuesday Morning Ride

An easy morning ride, back

Spokes Social Evening

Harpenden Ride

On a bicycle you can travel 3 times further than you can walk for the same amount of energy

LEC Ride

3rd Evening Ride

St Albans

Day Ride

Into the Chiltern Hills for Roger

Ride through Bricket Wood and

Looking Forwards to the Autumn Programme

Saturday 1st September 14:00

Cha Cha Cha Café. Cassiobury Park Easy ride for less experienced or Slow 5-8 miles only rusty riders followed by a cup of tea and cake Leader to be advised

Saturday 8th September 10:30

Garston Medical Centre Ride to Dunstable Downs, on the road. Stop for lunch near Dunstable. Medium 30 miles approximately Andy

Sunday 16th September

Royal Hospital Chelsea The London Bikeathon is a day of adventure where you'll not only be taking on a cycling challenge, you will be supporting a fantastic charity (Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research) and seeing the capital's wonderful sights. 13, 26 or 52 miles. Further details on http://leukaemialymphomaresearch.org.uk/get-involved/sportschallenges/cycling/london-bikeathon

CYCLORAMA

You may be interested in a new web-site/on-line magazine called CYCLORAMA which has the simple aim of promoting cycling.

The site is intended to appeal to cyclists of all levels of experience, from beginner to bike geek.

It contains:

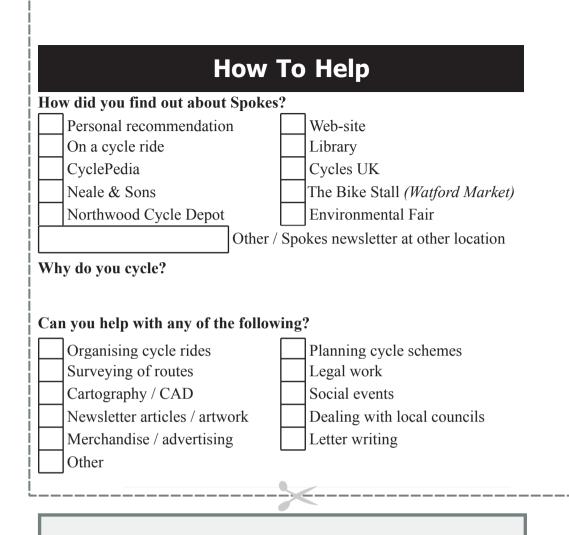
- information about a range of cycles and cycling related products from all over the world
- a collection of hundreds of articles (Bike Culture) covering subjects ranging from ingenious machines to cycling around the world
- galleries of interesting images, postcards and cartoons
- a blog covering cycling issues and interesting stories from the cycling world. People are encouraged to contribute to this in any way they like.

http://www.cyclorama.net or follow link on our web-site

LEC Ride

Annual London Bikeathon

Dunstable Downs



The **Deadline** for the Autumn Newsletter is **Saturday 11th August 2012**

How To Join

additional family m For this amount you satisfaction of helpin South West Herts an	ember at the sam a receive regular ng us campaign f rea. We organise form <i>(see other sid</i>	00 per person per year, and just £2.00 for each le address <i>(plus any donation you can afford).</i> mailings on activities and actions and the for improved cycling conditions in the regular events and rides too. <i>de too)</i> and send with cheque to:	
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Surname			
Address			
Post Code Telephone			
Amount £	Donation £	Cheques payable to SPOKES please	
E-mail:			
SPOKES DISCOUNTS Show your SPOKES membership card and get 10% off repairs and spares at:			
CyclePedia 01 70-78 Merton Re		Neale & Sons 01923 223916 26 Vicarage Road Precinct, Watford	
Cycles UK 01 484 St. Albans R		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			

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THE BIG RIDE by David

As day dawned on Saturday 28 April, London was surrounded by grey clouds which proceeded to deliver a mixture of rain and drizzle on its inhabitants and visitors below. Included amongst the crowds would be thousands of cyclists wanting to have their voice heard in the mayoral elections of 2012. With 7 candidates standing, the London Cycle Campaign key message to the candidates, enforced by 40,000 petition signatures, was that cyclists need more money spent on their safety. This is the aim of the Love London Go Dutch Campaign.

Trom all corners of London, cyclists prepared to face the rain and head to Park Lane. There were 40 guided routes into London, one of which started in Harrow and contained a number of Spokes members. All assembled at the north end of Park Lane and met with many other groups that found their own way to the start. Some had come from as far away as Brighton, Bristol and even Copenhagen. With bells ringing, cycle horns and a trumpet or two resounding, a mix of over 10,000 mountain bikes. city bikes, racers, Boris bikes, Bromptons, tandems, recumbents. BMXs, and even kids bikes with stabilisers. headed down Park Lane on the motorised traffic free roads through Piccadilly on the hour long slow ride to the Embankment. People of all ages and backgrounds had joined the UK's largest-ever bike ride supporting safer streets for cycling and to make the message clear.

http://lcc.org.uk/sign-go-dutch-petition

See photo on the back page

Quarterly Quotations

"If constellations had been named in the 20th century, I suppose we would see bicycles." * Prof. Carl Sagan

"Bicycling is a big part of the future. It has to be. There's something wrong with a society that drives a car to workout in a gym." Bill Nye - the Science Guy

Pedal for Peace Volunteers - Sunday 15th July 2012





Care to volunteer?

Fill form in.





20 bicycles can be parked in the same space taken up by one car

> On a bicycle you can travel up to 1,037 kilometres on the energy equivalent of a single litre of petrol

to Rickmansworth Aquadrome

On Saturday 23 June 2012

- Free cycle security tagging by the police
- Free cycle safety checks courtesy of Northwood Cycles
- Free cycle ride to Denham Country Park led by Spokes South West Herts Cycling Group