

SPOKES holds regular rides on the first Sunday of most months. Everyone is welcome, including non-members. Children under 16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

- We aim to integrate bikes and trains by starting and finishing our rides at or near railway stations.
- We have taken every care to ensure that ride details given here are correct at time of printing but you may wish to check with the leader by phoning before travelling.
- You are advised to wear protective equipment, such as a cycle helmet, and wear warm clothing in cold weather. On longer rides, there will usually be refreshment stops but please bring a drink and some food with you. You should ensure your bike is in a safe, roadworthy condition before setting out.
- SPOKES and its members accept no liability for any accident or loss – please note that you attend a cycle ride at your own risk.
- Details of East Kent CTC rides from Lorna on 01304 832492, South Kent CTC, from Mick on 01233 625414.
- Kent section Veteran Cycle Club rides, contact Dave on 01892 722584.
- White Cliffs and Romney Marsh Countryside Projects regularly organise cycle rides throughout South Kent. Call 01304 241806 or 01303 274806 for details and ask for a comprehensive guided walks leaflet.

Sunday 2 February 10.15am
Winterbourne Wonder
 A wander round the quiet lanes to the south-east of Faversham. Please note there is no pub stop but we will be returning to Faversham by mid-afternoon. Details Rich 01795 534310

Sunday 5 January 2003 11am
The Lion in Winter
 A short ride for the short daylight, to the Red Lion at Stodmarsh. Returning mid-afternoon. Meet at the City Council Offices Military Road at 11.00. Details Andy 01227 713285 or Martin 01227 712244

Sunday 3 December **EVENT POSTPONED**
Cycling and Health 10 Years On: Meet a Cycling Paramedic
 More details next time

Friday 22 November 7.30pm
Across the Andes by Bike
 The Environment Centre, St Alphege Lane, Canterbury. All welcome to an illustrated talk by Kaddy Lee Preston, BBC TV's cycling weather presenter, on her recent epic ride across the Andes for the Macmillan Cancer Charity Fund. Bring family and friends. Refreshments provided. Donation appreciated. Details 01227 738296

WINTER EVENTS 2002

Rides coordinator: Austin Cassidy 01227 280135

SPOKES

www.spokeseastkent.org.uk ISSUE 34 WINTER 2002

HOW TO ROCK AND ROLL
A CITY RIDERS' REPAIR MANUAL
DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME, FOLKS!
BY SAM TRACY

INSIDE
 Crab & Winkle bridges latest
 Books to read in the dark times
 Grim news from Ashford

SPOKES was formed in 1994 to campaign for better cycling facilities in East Kent. SPOKES works closely with Sustrans, Kent County Council, district and parish councils. SPOKES is affiliated to the Cyclists' Touring Club, the Cycle Campaign Network and Euro-Regio Velo.

National Route One, and Gateshead in particular, has notched up a new first with the 2002 award of the Stirling Prize, which is to architecture what the Booker Prize is to literature. Not content with being the home of the most notorious concrete multi-storey car park in Britain immortalised in the 1972 cult classic film, 'Get Carter', Gateshead now has one of the most brilliant bridges in the world. Designed by Wilkinson & Eyre Architects with Gifford Engineers, it fits and fits to let ships underneath.

Our own homegrown prizewinners for making the most words from HOSPITAL are Hazel, Dave and Jo Terry of Sturry. A suitably gift wrapped prize is on its way to them. They came up with 152 although "I" and "A" were ruled out as being a little bit too obvious.

National Routes' bridge award

East Kent CTC would like to encourage new members to join their weekly Sunday Runs. Rides leave at 10.00am for about 2.5 hours to reach a different destination each week, always a friendly country pub where we have lunch. The group is made up from people from Thanet, Deal, Dover, Canterbury and Herne Bay so there is usually someone to cycle home with. We ride as a group at a speed of 11 mph. Tandems, and will make you feel welcome! For details of the rides either phone the runs secretary Lorna Stanley on 01304 832492 or see our website on www.eastkentctc.org.uk

More Rides with CTC
 A potter from Whitstable Station through the rolling hills of Kent via Boughton to Ferry Wood. Ride back or take the train from Selling. Details Austin 01227 280135

Sunday 6 April 10.30am
Porter to Ferry Wood
 North Downs Way to Canterbury. Details Sam 01227 738296.

Saturday 3 May
May time goings on in the woods!
 Don't miss the 50th anniversary of the final closure of the Crab & Winkle line – the world's first steam passenger railway. Make this an event to remember. Much fun and goings on at the Winding Pond. All proceeds to the Lady Mayores' Charities. Rides start from both Canterbury and Whitstable.

Sunday 2 March 10.30am
Now that spring is here
 This 20 mile ride is through a landscape which gives Kent its character; small attractive villages with vernacular architecture, quiet lanes, rolling countryside, orchards, hops and east houses, open farmland, woodland, the chalk landscape of the North Downs and to cap it all, dramatic views of Canterbury Cathedral. Stop for lunch at a pub in Bridge, or BVO before riding back along the North Downs Way to Canterbury. Details Sam 01227 738296.

Sunday 15 February 7pm
Bridge irregular style evening ride
 Not for the fainthearted or teetotal. Meet at the Bat & Ball, Old Dover Road, Canterbury at 7pm for 10-12 miles in and around Canterbury. Details John Shirley 01227 831697 or 01304 210010 Note it is essential that riders have working lights and reflective clothing for this ride.

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MANY thanks to all those who generously donated to Sheila Webb's cycle paramedic fund. This now stands at £1,061. After a memorable ride on the trail of her ancestor to Cortu.

Sheila's Cortu ride thanks

But you might not. Three Little Billy Goats too. And if you ride from Faversham to Gravenny you can see the across my bridge" and they all lived happily ever after.

And because they were different bridges everyone was happy, Ride their bikes over.

appeared! Fragrant Bridge by the sewage works for the troll to hide Then all of a sudden as if by magic, not one but two bridges One but still...no bridge.

again. The Good Fairy went to the opening event of National Route Good Fairy because of Foot and Mouth. Summer turned to Autumn Sprung turned to Summer. The Good Fairy had to stop being a suppliers and obtained tenders but no-one knew what that meant. ed to sing again. No bridge. The Good Fairy had identified possible No bridge. The Good Fairy had done a feasibility study, but no-one knew what that meant. Winter turned to Spring and the birds start-Autumn to winter. The leaves fell from the trees and the creek froze. They waited and they waited. Summer turned to Autumn, their cycle track and she promised the Big Bad Troll his bridge. their dearest wish. So she promised the three little Billy Goats Baptie for short. Whoever Baptie met, she promised to grant One summers day along came a good fairy, whose name was what he wanted more than anything in the world was a bridge to hide under.

He loved the creek, he loved nice juicy little billy goats, but Nearby lived a Big Bad Troll. He smelt like a sewage works. They lived near Faversham Creek and their mum and dad said lovely bikes to ride but nowhere to ride them.

They were Gruff because they had three little Billy Goats Gruff. Once upon a time there were

the road was too dangerous and the path was too rough. They lived near Faversham Creek and their mum and dad said lovely bikes to ride but nowhere to ride them.

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Reflective Snap Bands – two for £4.00!
 Wear a SPOKES hi-vis yellow safety waistcoat. A bargain at £10 each.
 Order by phoning 01227 738296. A full range of sizes on offer.

How to make an impression at the lights

When I was a lad, traffic light changes were triggered by pneumatic pads set in the road. Bicycle wheels were too large and too light to change the lights, so I used to stop in Palace Street, for instance, and dig my heel into the pad to allow me to ride legally into the High Street. Traffic lights in Canterbury High Street! That'll tell you how long ago it was!

Since then technology has changed everything and traffic lights are no exception. Pneumatic pads have been replaced by buried induction loop technology. Induction loops can be seen as a thin tar line on the road surface. They work very well, for motorbikes, cars and larger vehicles. Unfortunately, the poor old cyclist has missed out again, because, some induction loops do not detect bikes.

The loops detect metal mass; the greater the mass and the closer to the loop the metal is, the greater the chance of detection. Even a small car weighs around 600Kg, so it doesn't matter that its centre of gravity is 400mm or more above the loop. However, an average bike weighs about 12Kg and the centre of gravity is considerably higher than a car.

This means that, unless a loop has been set to maximum sensitivity, unlikely because that can produce other problems, it will not detect bikes are ridden over its centre. So how can lone cyclists make the lights change?

The answer is fairly simple. Throw away those light-weight aluminium-rimmed wheels and fit thick, heavy steel ones. The greater mass gives you a better chance of being detected (but forget braking in the rain). A more acceptable solution is to ride with your wheels as close to the tar lines as possible – right over them is best.

The greater proximity to the loop dramatically increases your chances of being detected. However, if you ride a super-lightweight bike, with carbon-fibre wheels, you should seriously consider carrying a small anvil in your pannier.

ANDY MCNALLY

More articles can be found on www.spokeseastkent.org.uk Some of the items included in this issue have been edited to fit our limited space. For the full versions, please log on to the web site.

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Find us on the internet at www.spokeseastkent.org.uk

Now's the time to be a SPOKESperson!

Name _____
 Address _____
 Postcode _____ Phone _____
 Email _____

Annual membership – please tick relevant box
 Individual adult £4 Family/household £6
 Senior citizens/unwaged/under 16 £3

Please make cheques payable to SPOKES and send to the address overleaf. **WIN02**

If they can do it, why can't we?

This issue sees a number of changes to the structure of Spokes. John Shirley has taken over from Andy McNally as Chairman with Nick Evans our new Vice Chairman.

Terry Croft is now Treasurer. Our thanks to Sylvia McNally, Treasurer for many years, her husband Andy and Paul London who was secretary for meetings.

Spokes started life in the summer of 1994 following a meeting in the White Hart pub in Canterbury between The Bridge Irregulars and CLIPS, aka Chartham Local & International Pedalling Society, which started life as Chartham Ladies Intermittent Pedalling Society.

The meeting had been arranged by Robin Townsend and from it grew a campaign group which has achieved much. Most of the cycle routes you now see in the area would not have happened without the close co-operation between Spokes, Sustrans and the cycling officers of the local authorities at local and county level. We also work with the Cyclists Touring Club.

In the eight years since Spokes has achieved both national and international recognition. Members of Spokes rode Sustrans' Trailblazing Rides from Inverness to Dover in 1995 and Belfast to Land's End in 1996. John and Emily Shirley took all their children. Following an email from the Deputy Mayor of Calais in 1999, Spokes escorted the Mayor of Dover to Calais on Car Free Day.

Resounding success

Out of this grew links with Richard Evans of ETA (Environmental Transport Association), meetings with Ken Livingstone, the Mayor of London, and the setting up of a national group of authorities keen to promote and expand the Car Free Day idea.

In Europe it has been a resounding success. The authorities in Paris have even closed the motorway along the Seine during the summer months and covered it with sand, palm trees and deckchairs. This year for one day only on 22 September, London's Tower Bridge had Sand Sculptures and Street Theatre. The north side of Trafalgar Square has been closed to traffic linking it with the National Gallery for the first time. In Kent enthusiasm for the CFD has waned despite a promising start.

There is still a lot to do in our area. Bridges have been built on National Route One, near Faversham, and on the Canterbury Fordwich Route. Spokes would like to thank the volunteers from Kentish Stour Countryside Project who gave their time to clear the vegetation on this route recently. Their work has enabled it to be used during the winter months.

A key element of the Crab & Winkle Route is still missing over the railway tracks near Whitstable station.

If two bridges were built not only would cyclists, walkers and horse riders benefit, so too would local residents, shopkeepers, B&Bs, boarding houses, hotels, pubs, cafés and restaurants. But the greatest benefits would come from the reduction of unnecessary traffic in the town which would make it safer for everyone. These bridges would do for Whitstable what the Winking Eye Bridge has done for Gateshead. That too is part of national Route One and only open for pedestrians and cyclists. If they can do it, why can't we?

SAM WEBB

Danish network makes cycling a piece of pastry!

The Danes having invented Safe Routes to School are now poised to take over a uniquely British idea, the Walking Bus.

SR2S started in the Danish university town of Odense in 1973. With the Danish economy threatened by the crisis caused by the Arab Israeli War and with no internal car industry, they looked afresh at the problems of getting about and cutting down car use.

They started in Odense by linking all the schools, libraries, university buildings and the town centre together with safe traffic free paths. This was so successful the Danish Government ordered all towns and cities to implement a similar plan and when these were complete they were all linked up.

As a result Denmark has a wonderful network of cycle and walking routes, all of which are properly signed with destinations and distances. There is a superb set of cycle maps. All this is an immense tourist draw. Fly to Denmark with your bike and you are directed to a safe cycle route into Copenhagen. If you don't fancy that you can hop on a taxi with your bike as they all have racks in their boots. Trains positively invite cyclists with bikes painted on carriages. Denmark transformed its child casualty rate from the bottom of the European League in the 1970s to the top, partly through its Safe Routes to Schools programme. It will be interesting to see how the Danes develop the Walking Bus.

From Sustrans Newsletter Summer 2002 No 19. For more info email Troels Anderson ta@odense.dk



Above, C&W Trust, Spokes and Sustrans members with plans for the bridges plans at Old Bridge Road, Whitstable. Left, John Shirley, left, with Sustrans John Grimshaw.

Sustrans lends support to Crab & Winkle Way bridges scheme

Members of Sustrans board of directors, including Chairman John Grimshaw, visited Whitstable in early October to lend their support to plans to build two bridges over the railway line.

If permission is granted, and funding found, the bridges would provide an invaluable link to take the Crab & Winkle Way on a direct route route all the way to the town centre and harbour.

The scheme, which is being proposed by the Crab & Winkle Trust has the support of local organisations including Whitstable Chamber of Commerce who see it as a way of bringing more tourism to the town. It is also viewed as a safe and indispensable means of

encouraging cyclists and pedestrians to travel between home and shops.

The C&W Trust wants money from a £475,000 'sweetener' given by Tesco to be used towards the £250,000 cost of the scheme. The money is to be given to Canterbury City Council in exchange for planning permission to extend its store, which lies close to the route. Townspeople are being consulted on how the money should be used and ideas have included updating town centre amenities and providing a park and ride scheme but the bridges plan seems to be the most popular so far.

Around 40 members of the C&W Trust and Spokes turned out to meet the Sustrans board who were due to hold a meet-

ing in Canterbury the following day. The group had earlier ridden the stretch of National Route One from Faversham and were to be guided to the city and on to Fordwich.

During the meeting in Whitstable, John Grimshaw presented Spokes Chairman John Shirley - only elected a few days before - with a copy of the book Millennium Miles to celebrate the group's contribution to building the Crab & Winkle Way in the past few years.

● Anybody wishing to support the bridges plan is urged to write to Council Chief Executive Colin Carmichael without delay or email to colin.carmichael@canterbury.gov.uk

NICK EVANS

When pavement riding would pay

In October Ashford's Kentish Gazette carried a front-page story reporting that a young boy was hit and knocked down by a car while cycling to school.

It was the first time he had ridden on the busy road linking his home to the school.

Previously, he had cycled on the pavement but following a phone call to the school complaining about children cycling on the pavement the head teacher had banned youngsters from doing this.

Approached by the paper, the caller defended his views. The boy's parents were shocked and the boy said he didn't want to get a detention.

Ashford Council has no plans for a cycle route along this road. Everyone was lucky the injuries were not more serious. The usual argument put out for not providing a safer environment is there haven't been any serious accidents or deaths - but do we need a needless fatality and yet another wayside floral tribute before we act?

● While the Highway Code is specific about not riding on pavements, Home Office guidelines to police forces say cyclists are allowed to use them if they do so cautiously, for their own safety.

Light reading for those dark nights

As the nights draw in, the mornings grow frosty and the bike gets put away in the shed, what can be better than to curl up by the fire with a good book? They make good Christmas presents too and this year cyclists are spoilt for choice.

Bike books range from "the serious and only for the anorak types" to the useful. **Sam Tracy's: How to Rock and Roll: A City Riders Repair Manual** is very funny and thought provoking. **Lance Armstrong's autobiography: It's not about the bike, my journey back to life** is truly inspiring. In October 1996 he was diagnosed with cancer. Doctors gave him a 40% chance of recovery and said he would never race again. Between the summers of 1999 and 2002 he rewrote the history books, winning the Tour de France four years in a row. He is poised to add a fifth.

Of course if you read that you'll want to read **Graham Fife's: Tour de France - the history, the legend, the riders** and about one rider in

particular, certainly the greatest British cyclist of all time, Tom Simpson. His last words on the unforgiving slopes of Mont Ventoux are the title of **William Fotheringham's: Put me back on my bike: In search of Tom Simpson**.

Matt Seaton's The Escape Artist: Life from the Saddle tells the story of his love affair with his wife Ruth Picardie, a journalist on the *Independent* who died tragically young from cancer, and his career as a racing cyclist.

"Chris Brown rode a 'Dilecta', it was electric blue with white box panelling; the tubing wasn't 531 double butted and it didn't have a wrap-over seat cluster or even Simplex ends, but it was undeniably French and that made it a hothouse bloom in '50s Shepherd's Bush."

Those of us who remember those days of Woodbines and National Service will love **Charlie Wood's: Bikie: A love affair with the racing bicycle**, and so too will the rest of you, even those of you who have only been told about it

by your granddads.

Any book by **Dervla Murphy** is a good read. An inveterate traveller, now in her 70s, who ventures to places on her bike that George W Bush would only visit by proxy with Stealth bombers and B52s.

Through the embers of chaos: Balkans Journeys tells of her visits in 1990 and then on her bicycle after the NATO bombing in 1999. Writing of the river running through the Rugovo Gorge she says: "Thus it flowed when the Illyrians were around, when the medieval Serb Kingdom flourished and a monastery was built on its banks in the twelfth century, when the Turks came, when the Austrians attacked, when the Nazis came and went, when Tito came and went, when Nato came - and when Nato came they dropped 31,500 depleted uranium tipped weapons on Kosovo."

SAM WEBB

Introducing our new Chairman and officers

As incoming Chairman, writes John Shirley, it is only right and proper I pay tribute to the wise steerage of the outgoing Chairman Andy McNally and the hard work put in by his wife Sylvia, the outgoing Treasurer. It is fitting that at the time of their resignations Sustrans honoured Spokes by holding a board meeting in Canterbury.

For those who do not know me perhaps a brief introduction might assist. As a schoolboy fed up with the unreliability of buses and motorcycles, I began cycling to school. This led to a solo cycle ride to Yugoslavia and back, which taught me no matter how many cars pass, you will always get to your destination, and enjoy the journey to boot - unlike most other forms of transport.

In London and Sarajevo while a student, and then in Quebec as a married man inspired by "La Monde à Bicyclette," I learned the speed and freedom of urban cycling where five or ten miles go unnoticed, cutting from street to street.

Back in Kent the creeping encroachment of tarmac, bricks and mortar over the limited green space was shocking. We got rid of the car and formed The Bridge Irregulars which helped found Spokes. Why The Bridge Irregulars? Well, we met in the evenings on the spur of the moment, agreed the number of country pubs to visit and work out how long we would spend in each one. There was nothing more fun than riding in a long line of bright rear lights with every rider laughing their way to the next hostelry.

Be that as it may, I would like to propose seven points for strengthening The East Kent Cycle Campaign:

● Closer links with pedestrian and equestrian organisations such as we had recently at the Kingston A2 bridge demonstration

● Occasional surveys of members' travel habits, to see why on some days we choose one method of travel over another

● Set up some open lectures or challenges to speakers who wish to defend car culture

● Set up an information pool, library or advice line to those willing to wean themselves off cars

● Make it clearer to the public the link between oil/car/steel and rubber barons and power. How by buying cars and petrol they make governments vulnerable to intimidation by multinationals vastly more powerful than them

● Perhaps set up some car free columns in mainstream magazines with contributions from Spokes and pedestrian and Equestrian organisations

● Take advantage of the new routes which have been built and hold games similar to those played on roads and streets in days when traffic hardly existed.

Anybody wishing to add to or extend these ideas is most welcome.

To advertise in this newsletter, please call Andy McNally on 01227 713285 andy@room-101.freeserve.co.uk

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13, Mercery Lane, Canterbury, tel: 01227 768631 fax: 01227 767795 Email: albionbookshop@compuserve.com Web: www.cantweb.co.uk/books/albion/

Spokes needs your support

If you would like to join Spokes, please complete the form overleaf and send it with your subscription to:

SPOKES, The Canterbury Environment Centre, St Alphege Lane, Canterbury CT1 2EB Tel 01227 457009.

The centre is open Tuesday to Saturday 10.30am to 4.30pm. Good food, drink and lots of useful resources and information.