

Saturday 2nd July
 Celebration of Wheels day at the Julie Rose Stadium, Ashford. Organised by the Kent Disability Sports Unit. On show many demonstrations of disabled sport including adapted cycles. Entry likely to be free. Volunteers to help are needed – contact Jennie Parker on 01233 330232

Sunday 12th June 10am-2pm
SHEPWAY 2004 CYCLETHON
 On the second day of National Bike Week, Shepway District Council and the Romney Marsh Countryside Project, will cycle National Cycle Route 2 across the Romney Marsh from New Romney in a short, circular route. There will be a stop at Lathes Barn tea rooms. As usual there will be a FREE T SHIRT plus FREE grub at Lathes Barn tea rooms and at St. Martins Field, New Romney at the end. Ride starts St. Martins Field, New Romney 10.00 am and Lathes Barn Tea Rooms 11.30 am. Details: Owen Laysdon, Romney Marsh Countryside Project on 01797 367934.

Saturday 11 June BIG WHEEL OF KENT RIDE
 Choose your spoke of the Big Wheel. A dozen routes all converging on Canterbury where a big celebration with refreshments will be held at the finish at the White Hart, Northgate Place in Canterbury. Typical rides from Rochester, Maidstone, Ashford, Folkestone, Dover to Canterbury. Entry form from James Magowan 01634 854146 or email: cathy@lovelomac.freemove.co.uk. Booking fee £3 or £4 on the day.

1-19 JUNE NATIONAL BIKE WEEK. Last year there were over 1,400 national events. More details, now, from www.bikeweek.org.uk
 Spokes will be organising with East Kent CTC, one of the rides in the series Belles d'Europe. These rides are coordinated by the Amicale Européenne de Cyclotourisme to foster good relations between cyclists in our part of Europe. Our ride will be based at Crabble Athletic Ground in Dover starting between 8.00 and 10.00 and will have four distances of 30K, 50K, 100K and 120K to cater for other regions to experience cycling routes in different locales. The routes will be based on Sustrans routes 1, 15, 16 and 17. The entry fee will be £5.00 which will include snacks at the control points and food at the HQ based in the Clubhouse of Dover Rugby Club at Crabble Athletic Ground where there is plenty of parking. Last year 170 cyclists took part, many from the other participating clubs in France and Belgium. For more information contact John Hunt, 01227 769035, johndehunt@tiscali.co.uk

Sunday 5th June – Belles d'Europe Ride
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SUMMER EVENTS 2005

Coordinator Beatrice Shire, 01227 766782

SPOKES

ISSUE 44 SUMMER 2005 www.spokeseastkent.org.uk



Mayoress' Charity Ride

How new routes could help tourism

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.

More rides with CTC
 EAST Kent CTC would like to encourage new members to join their Sunday Runs. Rides leave at 10am 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 cycle at the pace of the slowest rider. Tandems, racing and touring bikes are the most suitable. We are a social group and will make you feel welcome. For details of our rides see our website on www.eastkentctc.org.uk

Enjoy routes in our nearest parts of France and Belgium
 On Sunday 5 June, Spokes with the CTC is organising rides of 30k, 60k and 100k based at Crabble Mill Athletic Ground (plenty of free parking) in Dover. It is one of the series of Belles d'Europe rides run by Amicale Européenne de Cyclotourisme to foster links between cyclists in our Euro region. Many riders from Calais, St Omer and Nord will be at Dover in June. Similarly, they will welcome us to their events, 12th June, Randonnée du Camp du Drap d'Or at Calais, 21st August Randonnée la Debessener at Roubaix, 4th September, Sur la Route du Cap Gris Nez at St Omer, 2nd October, Randonnée de la Quintine at Mouscron (Belgium). These are not races and you can choose your distance from 25k up to 145k for a very modest entry fee of 3 euros. This includes refreshments at control points and beer and baguette at the finish!

Sunday 6th November
 Folkestone to Dover starting at 10.30am at Folkestone West, and following the coastal cycle route past Samphire Hoe. Return to start or get the train back from Dover. Details, Ian Rogers 01227 733792.

Sunday 2nd October
 Ashford station at 10.30 am start. A ride around the villages to the west of Ashford, without any significant hills, and the majority on minor roads. About 20 miles in length with a lunch stop well past the halfway point. Details, Chris and Maggie on 01233 633108.

Thursday 29th September SPOKES AGM
 7.30pm Canterbury Environment Centre, Speaker Martin Lloyd

Sunday 4th September
 An Old Favourite, starting from Canterbury West at 10.30am, the Village Churches Ride. Not the one you get sponsored for to help repair your church roof, but the original winner of Canterbury Cycling Campaign's competition to find a ride on quiet lanes to visit as many interesting churches as possible. About 25 miles, to Woodnesborough and back in a figure of eight with Adisham in the middle. Details: Beatrice Shire 01227 766782

Sunday 3rd July
 10am Minster Station for a ride round the Viking Trail, (which was opened by Kelly Holmes). Prepare to enjoy a day circling Thanet, though there are railway stations to escape from if you want a shorter ride. The riders will set off in two groups, clockwise and anticlockwise, meeting for lunch at a point which is not exact. By half way round so that a short return trip is possible. Even those riding the longer stretch in the afternoon will be back in Minster hours before dusk – it is the Spokes ride closest to the longest day! Details: Andy McNally 01227 713285 or Beatrice Shire 01227 766782

Sunday 14th August 10.30am Variety & cream tea ride
 10.30am. Variety & cream tea ride.. 2005. Cycling on traffic-free or lightly trafficked routes we will visit the oldest thatched house in the area (by courtesy of Paul and Jennifer who are SPOKES members) and then onto the Vineyard at Barham for a cream tea, wine tasting and entertainment by a group from the Whitestable Playhouse. Cost is £5, which includes a donation to the Fifth Trust (Family Investment for the Handicapped) who run the Vineyard. Booking is essential and numbers are limited. Details will be sent on receipt of payment to the Treasurer, Terry Croft at SPOKES, the Environment Centre, St. Alphege Lane, Canterbury, and details from Robin Townsend, Tel: 01227 831546.

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Sunday 9th–Sunday 11th September and Sat 10th–Sun 18th September
 Celebrate the creation of 10,000 miles of cycle paths in 10 years by Sustrans. There are two major rides London to Cambridge and London to Preston. (See article)

September
 Friends of Kent Churches Ride. At time of going to press we do not have details of this so watch out in local press. Usually second Sunday.

Reflective Snap Bands – two for £4.00!
 Wear a SPOKES hi-vis yellow safety waistcoat. A bargain at £10 each.
 Order by phoning 01227 479643. A full range of sizes on offer.

Contacting SPOKES
CHAIRMAN: John Hunt 01227 769035 johndhunt@tiscali.co.uk
VICE CHAIRMAN: Beatrice Shire 01227 766782
SECRETARY: Sylvia McNally 01227 713285
TREASURER: Terry Croft 01304 831887
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RIDES: Beatrice Shire 01227 766782
RANGERS: Ian Rogers 01227 733792
 Find us on the internet at www.spokeseastkent.org.uk

Now's the time to be a SPOKESperson!

Name _____
 Address _____
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 Email _____
 Annual membership – please tick relevant box
 Individual adult £6 Family/household £10
 Senior citizens/unwaged/under 16 £5
 Please make cheques payable to SPOKES and send to the address overleaf. **SUM05**

Martin should keep quiet!

I must learn to keep my lips pressed firmly together but it is difficult because, as a professional public speaker, people pay me to talk to them, writes Martin Lloyd.
 It all started six years ago when a friend asked me to entertain his history group on the subjects of passports. So I did, and nobody fell asleep. Indeed, so infectious was their enthusiasm that others asked for the same talk. Thus did I become a public speaker.
 And, when I spoke, my audience demanded the book. "Well why not?" I thought, nobody has written a history of the passport. So I did, and suddenly I was Martin the Famous Author, broadcasting on television and radio and lauded in the national press.
 The book sold out in hardback and is now published in paperback. I had five talks in my repertoire yet the audience was getting restless. "What about another book?" they said.
 It took shape as THE TROUBLE WITH FRANCE, published last year as a concoction of the idiotic things that happen to me when I ride my bike in France and written in the sideways humour style that those who have had the misfortune to ride with me would recognise instantly.
 But my public were not content with that. The sequel, THE TROUBLE WITH SPAIN, will be out in July and my original publishers are nagging me to write them another history book. All this does not sound much like me clamping my jaws together, does it?
 So why is it that I must learn to keep my mouth shut? Two reasons. Cycling home along Route 16 to Canterbury after the Spokes ride to Ardres on 1 May, enjoying the bats and owls, the badgers and the foxes, I inhaled an entire and rather startled moth which had been dazzled by my headlamp. It took me fifteen minutes of choking to get it up. And the other reason? When John Hunt (bless him) said: "Martin, you could give one of your talks at the Spokes AGM," I said, "Yes."
 I must learn to keep my mouth shut.

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.

East Kent Cycle Campaign

Cycle routes are powerful way to aid tourism

Every year Canterbury is visited by tourists – 6.3m of them to be exact. That's two million more than Winchester or Salisbury. Canterbury is a wonderful place to wander round.

In fact many more people just wander round, rather than go inside buildings, because the spaces between them are often delightful in their own right. Just look at Westgate Gardens. Nevertheless visitors spend £270.7M annually and 585,000 stay overnight with 140,000 from abroad. This accounts for 2.61 million nights spent by visitors sleeping in the district, generating £105.7M.

These numbers support 5,627 jobs in the district or 7,710 actual jobs in Canterbury. That's a lot of employment which Spokes thinks could be increased further for little extra financial outlay.

In the autumn the building site at the end of the City Wall by St George's Gate, which now houses a tower crane, will become Kent's first purpose built cycle centre. This will be one of the last pieces in the jigsaw puzzle of the Whitefriars redevelopment to be slotted into place. It could be one of the first visible pieces of a new jig saw which could put cycling in Kent on the map in a big way.

Soon we will have one of the UK's longest outdoor cycling venues up and running at Fowlmeade on the old Betteshanger colliery site. This will be open to all, not just for racing cyclists but everyone from children upwards. As well as the tracks there will be a nature park. It will be a magnet for cyclists from all over the south to the pas de Calais and beyond.

Recently I went to Cambridge. Like Canterbury it's another place thronged by tourists and also students. Many people cycle. Cambridge has seized the nettle of providing for cyclists in a big way. Vehicular traffic has not been allowed to swamp the city to the exclusion of any other means of transport. Only buses and taxis are allowed in the centre. Like Canterbury there are park and ride schemes. But the real noticeable difference is the number and length of the network of cyclepaths.

Like Denmark mixed cycle and walking routes in Cambridge radiate out from the centre in all directions. They are treated as the norm. We rode a new one alongside the Cam on a Sunday afternoon seeing many parents cycling with their children, people out for a stroll, all coexisting happily side by side.

Just think what impact a series of radiating cycle routes from Canterbury to Chartham, down the Elham valley, along the Stour to Sturry would do. They would certainly cut the number of cars as people discovered they could cycle to work safely and faster than they could drive and park. Tourists would use them and if the Chartham route was extended along the Stour Valley to Ashford it would become as successful as the Crab & Winkle has. All this would bring income into the area and boost green tourism. Let's finish the jigsaw.

SAM WEBB EDITOR



Journey's end – riders back in Canterbury after riding from Reims.

Three day tour boosts charity, marks VE Day

Thirty nine cyclists arrived in Reims to start the 240 mile three day ride back to Canterbury in support of the Lady Mayoress' Charity.

This was on the weekend which saw the 60th anniversary of the end of WW2. Banners, bunting and the flags of all the nations were hung in celebration of VE Day.

In 1945 the final surrender was taken by General Dwight Eisenhower in a local college in Reims. It is now preserved as the Musée de la Reddition. On 8 July 1962 General Charles de Gaulle and Chancellor Konrad Adenauer sealed the Franco-German reconciliation in Reims. They laid the foundation for modern Europe. That was being celebrated too.

It was a sombre time to be riding through northern France over a route that had seen so much painful history in the last century, past so many war memorials and so many cemeteries of countless young men and women of all nationalities lost in the prime of their lives.

That sombre past was reflected in the weather. Battering headwinds, rain, hail, thunder, lightning and occasional sunshine but the wind never dropped even when we got back to Kent.

The riders came from all walks of life; the Lord Mayor of Canterbury Cllr Martin Vye, the Sheriff of Canterbury Richard Parkinson, assorted

police, a judge, a recorder and barrister, lawyers, builders, joiners, a former bookseller, a canon from the Cathedral, the CTC, local councillors and officers, boys and staff from St Edmund's School and a number of recipients of the Winter Fuel Allowance.

We arrived back in Canterbury to a rousing welcome in fitful sunshine and a splendid barbecue in the Cathedral.

Sponsorship and help came from many sources, P&O Ferries, Lehane Travel Ltd, the two paramedics from Kent Air Ambulance, Andy from Cyclmart Herne Bay, Julie & Bryan from Downlands Cycles at Canterbury West Station, Chavereys Accountants, Pfizer, Coombs, Pharon Independent Financial Advisers Ltd and Lady Mayoress Jenny Vye who was in charge of provisions and the purchase of 500 bananas to keep us going.

If you would like to contribute to Jenny's chosen charities, the Kent Air Ambulance Trust, Relate and Volunteer Reading for Children please contact her on 01227 831820.

I would like to give a special vote of thanks to two people who carried much of the burden of this ride on their uncomplaining shoulders, Ray Bissell and John Hunt.

SAM WEBB

Only the menu was Ardres going here!



Riders cross one of the newer canal bridges on the way to Ardres.

More than 40 eager cyclists joined Spokes' ride to Ardres in the Pas de Calais on 1 May. After a pleasant ride beside the canal we stopped at a charming lakeside restaurant with pedalos. There it was possible to dine on such rare delicacies as "Pièce du boucher aux

champignons des bois." The translation on the menu said this was "part of the buttcher to mushrooms of wood." (sic).

Most declined "La Frégate's" speciality and went for moules or an omelette instead.

Join in to celebrate 10,000 mile national route

September will see the completion of the first 10,000 miles of the National Cycle Network in the 10 years since Sustrans first received £43.5 million from the lottery through the Millennium Commission.

To celebrate this amazing achievement we are holding a series of rides around the UK and as a participant in the successful Eden Trailblaze ride last year I would like to invite you to join us.

Here are some celebratory rides taking place

this year and their dates. Some rides will require an overnight stay, in these cases a charge will apply or riders will be asked to arrange their own accommodation. You can join all of the rides for one day or in the case of the London - Preston ride join us for the whole week. The dates are:

10th – 18th September - Ride from London to Preston

9th – 11th September - Cambridge rides – Rides from Colchester, Wells Next the Sea,

Oxford and London to Cambridge
17th – 18th September – Rides from Chester, Kendal and Manchester to Preston

Rides into Cambridge on the 11th September and rides into Preston on 18th September will arrive to join cycling festivals taking place in both cities.

If you would like further details please reply with your name to rides@sustrans.org.uk further information can be posted or emailed to you, if you would like this information posted please provide your address

Sustrans is a charity encouraging people to walk, cycle and use public transport to reduce traffic and its adverse effects.

Sustrans, National Cycle Network Centre, 2 Cathedral Square, College Green, Bristol BS1 5DD, www.sustrans.org.uk

Emma Keegan, co-ordinator, SUSTRANS

Local trains fail integration test

At the recent Canterbury Transport Advisory Group, (writes Beatrice Shire), we learnt that Canterbury is now part of the East Kent Highways Division whose offices will be in Beer Cart Lane, Canterbury, for at least a year. They are the people to whom you report problems like potholes! Instead of a transport conference, there will be a CTAG newsletter, reporting progress that has been made. There is much talk of integrated transport and the word sustainable is exemplified by the City Council's Travel Plan – encouraging Council employees to travel by bus, foot and bike, or at least share cars.

Let's hope it far exceeds its targets. It would be good for everyone (particularly the employees, as the inducements are carrots rather than sticks!), and may it encourage other businesses in Canterbury to do likewise.

Integration does not have such good examples. Travelling between Chartham, Chilham and Canterbury with a bike on a train will soon be impossible with the proposed new timetable, when trains won't stop at Chartham and Chilham except in peak periods. Comments to Mike Gibson, Public

Affairs Manager, South Eastern Trains, Friars Bridge Court, 41-45 Blackfriars Road London SE1 8PG, or mike.gibson@setrains.co.uk.

Buses could carry bikes too – some have been seen in Sevenoaks with bike racks on, as well as in other parts of the country. The new Quality Bus Partnership between Stagecoach and the City Council has achieved many improvements, and has more planned, and yes, they are (since the CTAG meeting) considering bike racks.

The new cycle centre near the bus station is taking shape, and, thanks to suggestions from Spokes' past and present chairmen, will have many environmentally friendly features in addition to the provision of cycles and cycle parking! While it is recognised that traffic in Canterbury is far worse on school days than in the holidays, it does not appear to be within the remit of CTAG to suggest a coastal grammar school.

If we are serious about children cycling to school, and the selective system stays, then this is something we should consider. It is a pity that the opportunity was missed when Barton Court went co-educational and expanded.

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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.