

ANFIELD CIRCULAR

JOURNAL OF THE ANFIELD BICYCLE CLUB (formed March 1879)

President: Tony Pickles
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March 2003

No.904

CLUBRUNS hic et ubique *(lunch 1230hrs)*

April	5	Beeston Hotel	Beeston*		
	12	Grosvenor Arms	Aldford	Club 7 Huntington 1130hrs	
	19	City Arms	Minera		
	26	Nags Head	Lavister		
May	3	The Ffrwd	Cefn-y-Bedd		
	10	Carriages	Gatesheath	Committee 1130hrs	
	17	The Grosvenor	Aldford	Club 7 Huntington 1130hrs	
	24	The Bull	Clotton*		
	26	ANFIELD 100 –	HQ Prees	Lower Heath School	
	31	The Buck	Bangor on Dee*		
June	7	Calveley Arms	Handley	Club 14 Broxton 1130hrs	
	14	Cotton Arms	Wrenbury*		
	21	Carriages	Gatesheath	Committee 1130hrs	
	28	The Goshawk	Mouldsworth		
July	5	The Swan	Marbury*		
	12	The Grosvenor	Aldford	Club 7 Huntington 1130hrs	

*: Meet Holt Car Park for 11:00hrs; 11:10hrs prompt - departure

Hon Treasurer: Chris Edwards, 4 Beach Road, Hoylake, WIRRAL CH47 1HT Tel: 0151 632 3462
(CLUB SUBSCRIPTIONS: 21 and over: £15.00 Junior (under 21): £7.50 Cadet: £3.50)

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CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE – 7 June 2003

Committee Notes

Autumn Tints 2003

The Autumn Tints Weekend this year will be a return visit to the Cain valley Hotel, Llanfyllin. A good price (around £30 - to be confirmed) has been negotiated by our formidable Social Activities Team (Tecwyn Williams and Mike Twigg). The dates for your diary are 17 to 19 October. With on and offroad riding options.

The 100

As we go to press, there are problems with the 100 course. Yet again Sandford Bridge on the A41 is out of commission following a lorry crash which has partially demolished it. Since we use this stretch of road 4 times, twice in each direction, it has been necessary to find an alternative. Thanks to the sterling efforts of Stuart Twigg and Cliff Ash we have a course. Marshalls will be needed and Club members' help will be essential. Please put the 26 May in your diary for the Anfield.

Ben's Year

Well here we go again. Another year has flown by. Where does the time go. I hope this letter finds all Anfielders fit and healthy. I have had a particularly good year – and only worked when others were on holiday or when they were very busy.

It's been a good year for cycling particularly in our area. All the events I entered had good weather and I only punctured in one event. I managed 41 clubruns and finished in 40 events, all on very local "D" courses. These were the four "7s" and two "14s" that the Club ran (I didn't ride the hill climb).

I rode fourteen 10s – best time 25.03 (nine better than 26 mins) – average time for all being 25.52. I also rode thirteen 25s, best time 1.04.13, (but did 1.01.42 following Graham Thompson's wheel in the Vics 2-up). Seven were better than 1.07.00 with the average at 1.07.06. There were two rides at 30 miles – best 1.23.29, three 50s (best

time 2.20.09, average 2.21.09), plus two early season hilly events – the Chester Road Club 28 and the North End 22.

For the year I averaged 261 miles per week. January was my best month. As the table below shows:

January	1513 miles	48.8 per day
February	1296	46.2
March	959	30.9
April	954	31.8
May	923	29.7
June	1274	42.4
July	1175	37.9
August	920	29.6
September	1155	38.3
October	1131	36.4
November	1210	40.3
December	1063	34.2
<hr/>		
	13573	37.2

Ben Griffiths

* * * * *

Clubruns

Golden Lion, Ashton.

-

16 November

It's not often that Anfield clubruns revert to type but today was one of those days. Clubruns of late have festered into a format of turn up, have a sandwich and a pint of squash then return home. Today was to be an exception.

I arrived shortly after twelve to be followed, in no particular order by Ben, John Futter, Lee and Geraint on bikes, Tony and Dave Birchall by car and a little later Billy by bike. Dave introduced us to his new toy, a compact digital camera.

The orange drinkers and Tony soon departed leaving the rest of the Anfield Sports and Social club to start the club run proper. Although it was fairly mild outside if a little damp, the barmaids decided to light a fire. Little success was had until Dave and Billy started to wrap up newspaper into spills. Before long a roaring flame was spotted but disappeared in a blink of an eye. More newspaper and dryer wood soon had it going again. After a final pint, Billy and I headed for the lanes north of Barrow at a gentle pace before parting company at Mickle Trafford. All in all a high

Stuart Twigg

The Ffrwd

-

30 November

Cold with misty rain this morning. John Futter was not out, and, as I have worked up the hill from the pub for the past 17 years, I thought I would give it a miss today. But the weather cleared for a while, so I was on my bike heading through Pulford and Rossett for Llay and the Ffrwd. I arrived just as Tony was crossing the road from the carpark. Brian Bird was inside and we soon joined by John Stinton. So just four today. I wonder if we could tempt more out if Clubruns went to cafes?

Ben

T'Ouse at Top, Kelsall

-

7 December

I called for John Futter at 11a.m. Geraint was also on time. We three rode to the Holt meeting place. No one else turned up.

We kept in the lanes crossing the A41 at Gates Heath and the A51 at Clotton. We were soon joined by David Birchall then Dave Edwards – so five today.

We returned via Manley, Mickle Trafford and the cycle way to Blacon over the Dee via the footbridge at Saltney Ferry. John went one side of the Airfield while Geraint and I went the other – past the new factory or is it a nice big bike shed for Tony.

A nice day out on the bike – 48 miles for me, about 60 for Geraint.

Ben

Golden Grove, Rossett

-

14 December

The Golden Grove lies deep in the lanes west of Rossett. We have it on the runs list at this time of year because our Chester and Deeside members can easily reach it. Wishful thinking that, given the lack of support today.

I arrived by car very early – 11:45 a.m. It's a long way from Knutsford. But John Futter and Ben were already inside. And by a roaring log fire. They had found the lanes too muddy and thorn strewn for their liking, so had cut short their ride. Bill Graham and John Stinton completed a party of five, and a chatty and enjoyable hour followed.

Back outside, a flat tyre put paid to more cycling for John Futter. He accepted a lift home, leaving Ben and John Stinton to pedal into the sunset along the old drove road on which the pub stands.

The Bull, Shocklach

-

28 December

Ben writes: John Futter said he would not be out today so I made my way to Holt for the 11a.m. meeting at the Cross Street carpark. When I turned the corner I was surprised to see a group of cyclists waiting. But they were Wrexham RC members

repairing a puncture. Geraint arrived on time but just as we were leaving my phone rang – John Futter had got out and was only five minutes away. So we went into the café while we waited.

John arrived before the coffee so out we went through Farndon, Churton, and Pump Lane Coddington. We crossed the Broxton – Wrexham road at Barton. At Tilston, we stopped at Tony's mother's house but no Tony. So we continued through Horton, turned left at Chorlton, then two right turns brought us back to Shocklach. A very good day for cycling – mild and sunny. We had a good group of five on the way home a very enjoyable day.

Stuart Twigg took the direct route out to The Bull passing John Williamson at Churton. In the pub were a trio of Birchalls, Ben, John Futter and Geraint. John W complained that his hat had blown off in the Saughton area. As there was little wind that day, we assume that he had been sprinting...

It is always very pleasant to see John Williamson on a clubrun. Today John wondered why more were not supporting the run. Of those conspicuously absent, sadly Mike Twigg was confined to bed with an ear problem that upsets balance – we wish him well quickly. It was an enjoyable and chatty hour over lunch. Ben announced with great modesty that he has totted up almost 14000 miles in the year, attended 41 clubruns and competed in 40 events. In total he has attended over 1700 ABC runs. Not many members can claim that sort of record. For his services to the sport for over half a century we think he deserves a gong.

The Bull has changed hands. For the last fifteen years (and more) the place has offered friendly and relaxed hospitality delivered with understated panache. Today there were no locals, no lunchtime eaters, no classical music, no warmth. Instead - a pool table, pop music and an extended family with kids in the bar. And posters in the gents that Ben enthused over. Oh and senior citizens meals. More urban than rural Cheshire. So no market research either. But the landlady was doing her best to be hospitable and the food was acceptable. Lunchtime curries too.

The Buck Bangor on Dee

-

11 January

Set off at 11.30 in bright cold conditions after a week of sub-zero temperatures. Went up the Whitchurch road as far as Haulton, turned left and found cyclo-cross conditions of mud and ice until the road to Threapwood. Then downhill to the Buck.

Already there were John Futter, Ben, Billy Graham (on cycles) and Mike Twigg by car. The chat was about the hard winters of the past – 1947 (before my time) and 1961 / 62.

Set off after lunch with John, Ben and Billy via Shocklach for coffee at Holt to sort out Ben's new mobile phone. As we were leaving Tony Pickles put in an appearance. A brief hello and I departed for Wrexham still chatting.

John Stinton

A phone call from Graham arranged a meeting for 11.30 in Hawarden. He arrived only a few minutes late with Ian Billington. We went all the way out through lanes – Wood Lane from Ewloe – Buckley, across Buckley common to Alltami – Sychdyn, down past Geraint's house then across the main road and up the hill to Gwernaffield. Graham had his new US Postal team kit on, and looked and rode very like Lance Armstrong. Ian could easily pass for Richard Virenque, especially when out of the saddle on the hills. While I plodded along at the back (wondering what the hell am I doing this for).

The descent from Gwernaffield was very greasy and both Graham and I almost came to grief when a car stopped before the bridge to get it right for the very narrow crossing of the River Alyn. But we both just managed to stay upright. It made the 1 in 4 climb up to Cilcain very hard. I don't think Lance or Richard noticed even with lowest gears of 42x17, while I used my granny gear of 32x26 and still found it hard. After Cilcain we crossed the main mold – Denbigh road at Star Crossing, then once more up hill to Rhes-y-Cae and Halkyn.

What a surprise at the Britannia, a good selection of bikes, including three very smart mountain bikes. They belonged to Mike Kimpton and two friends Martin and Paul. Also out we had the President Tony, Mike and Stuart Twigg, Len Walls, John Stinton, Bill Graham Keith Orum Geraint Graham Ben and Ian. Just as we were leaving Treasurer Chris arrived (late as usual). We waited while he had a drink so it was five for the ride back to the Eureka. We went down the lane to the Middle Mill then Northop down Oakenholt Lane, over the Flintshire bridge through the Deeside Industrial Estate. Bill punctured so we left Graham to pace him back. After Chris had eaten and refreshed we parted company – Chris, Ian and Graham for the Wirral, Ben and Bill for the Welsh side of the Dee. A very enjoyable ride in good company.

Ben

This was a day of indecision for me. Shall I go? Or shall I stay? I really fancied going on the clubrun, after all, I hadn't been on one for almost 2 years, and I missed them. There was the problem right there. Not only had I not been on the runs, but I hadn't done many miles in those lost years either.....would I make it? I stood in the warm kitchen, drinking my warm cup of coffee, and gazed out of the window looking for an excuse! Was it raining? Well nearly, but not quite. Was it windy? No, it was just sort of ...well...nice really. That's it then, no excuses! Right then, Ashton, that's somewhere in Cheshire isn't it? Now I am not someone who is particularly well known for his route finding ability. I must confess that I had actually been to the Golden Lion before, but on that occasion I was in the company of the Anfield's official guide (Ben), and didn't take much notice of where I was going. The Anfield seems to have an abundance of these people. You know the ones I mean, they know every lane and shortcut in Cheshire, never look at a map, and never get lost (Pickles is another one!). Well that's not me, I had a quick look at the map to get a general impression of where I was going, put my faith in luck, and set off.

I dropped down from Brynteg into Wrexham and from there took the road to Farndon: 18...19....20mph, hey, this cycling is easier than I remembered – I was going to be OK after all. I took the familiar lanes through Holt and Farndon, Bruera and Saughton, and then crossed the A41 and headed down a lane I thought looked promising. At this point I wasn't lost, but I also had no idea where I was going to end up. The cycling was good though, the day had turned out to be a cracker, the sun was shining and there was a good tailwind. Mmm....a tailwind....something bothered me about that, but I was enjoying the day so much I dismissed the thought almost as soon as it had occurred to me. Anyway, there was a cyclist ahead of me, occasionally I caught a glimpse of his red jacket – right I'll catch him up!

I put my head down and gave it everything I had, but made no impression on the gap whatsoever. Ah well, not to worry, I'll just look for a less fit victim. It was at this point that 'Mr Red Jacket' apparently decided it was too nice a day to go rushing around, and eased up to enjoy the scenery. As I approached I was sure I recognised him...it was David Birchall. Now David is one of those guys I was talking about, the ones with a copy of autoroute and a compass implanted in their heads...how lucky can you get, he'll show me the way. And so it was for the rest of the ride to the pub, pleasant chat and lovely weather, safe once again in the company of an official Anfield guide. Now I know it is customary in these write ups to give a brief description of the route taken, but to be honest, I haven't got a clue how we got there! It was sort of left, then right, then a few more lefts, with a sprinkling of rights in for good measure. The lanes were all lovely and quiet, and all of a sudden, there it was. I recognised the pub instantly, but nothing of the devious route concocted by Mr Birchall. I even had a look at the map when I got home, but that didn't help either!

In the pub were Tecwyn and Mike Twigg, soon to be joined by Bill Graham. We hadn't long to wait before Ben and John Futter arrived (I think they had been dropped by Bill on the last climb before the pub, either that or Ben had had a puncture, I can't remember which). That was it then, 7 Anfielders out on my 'come back' clubrun. We all enjoyed a good meal, and the beer looked nice too!

The journey home, however, was another matter. It is a truism that you can't have your cake and eat it, or, put another way, "he who enjoys a cracking tailwind on the ride out is going to suffer like a dog on the way home". I also realised that it had been almost all downhill from Wrexham to Ashton – not a good mix then, headwind and uphill. There was nothing else for it, with David continuing on to Knutsford I sensibly tucked in behind Ben, John and Bill for the ride home (thanks guys!). I admit to being shattered by the time I got back to Brynteg. It was a (very slow) 50 mile round trip, and I think that's about my limit at the moment. Nevertheless, I'll keep plugging away in the knowledge that it will come good in the end. I thoroughly enjoyed the day, and look forward to the next one. See you there!

Mark Livingstone.

Ben said: “You’re not cycling, so write up the run”. Well with blustery hail and frozen rain showers in Knutsford I’d swithered about attending at all.

A phone call to Mike Twigg had revealed that he and Tecwyn would not be there – they were in Shropshire looking for a suitable venue for the Tints weekend. Then came a report that two “young” Anfielders had been spied leaving Chester in the general direction of the Clubrun.

So there would be company and I set off hopefully. Geoff Sharp and Keith Orum were flattered at the description. They arrived at the same time as John Futter, Ben, Bill Graham and Geraint. The six on bikes had all enjoyed better weather west of Beeston than east Cheshire. Chris Edwards works to Euro-time, and so is always late. He didn’t quite reach Spurstow today, but joined the homeward riders for a coffee in Holt.

For the **Carden Arms Tilston** (8 February), rain by lunchtime was the forecast, but in the end it did not reach Cheshire until the evening. Shortly after midday outside the Carden Arms were John Futter, Ben Griffiths, and Bill Graham giving what looked like last rites to Mark Livingstone’s bicycle. Stuart Twigg had done the wise thing – nipped into the pub, got himself a pint and a seat by the roaring log fire from where he watched the proceedings outside. Mike Twigg completed the group. The rumour was that Chris Edwards was on his way, and President Pickles was actually seen, but neither arrived while we were there.

Bill had reported that a hunt meet was in full swing in the lanes near Coddington. They were still there after lunch. Kindred spirits with the ABC really – muddy, companionable, enjoying the Cheshire countryside on a Saturday. And like early time-trialists enjoying their sport cautiously.

Carriages Gates Heath was the venue on 15 February for the Committee Meeting and Clubrun. Solving the latest problems over the 100 course was on the Agenda. Attending were Tony Pickles, Craig Clewley, Mike Twigg, Tecwyn Williams, Ben Griffiths, John Futter, Bill Graham, Geraint Catherall, John Stinton, Keith Orum and Geoff Sharp. The Editor was there too and astounded the meeting by thanking members for their contributions to the Circular. The thanks are genuine: you’re a talented lot. We think the effort keeping the Circular going is well worthwhile. The party was completed with Adam Birchall and Liz arriving in time for lunch.

The wind was in the east for **T’Ouse at Top Kelsall** on 22 February. Ben Griffiths, John Futter, Bill Graham and John Stinton struggled all the way there, but could look forward to an easy ride home. Mike and Stuart Twigg plus Editor completed the party.

e-Clips

- Stan Wild sends greetings from Australia (and very kindly a donation to the 100 fund). Stan adds that he would like to revisit the UK in '03 "but I shall be 95 in May and may not be able to get travel insurance".
- Rod Anderson sends greetings from Singapore. Despite the climate he is still on two wheels:

“Great to wear shorts all year, no matter what the weather. Actually cycling in the rain is best here – it makes it less sweaty. PS thinking of bringing a trishaw back.”

If you do, we think the President might get ideas above his station. Captain and VPs providing the power?
- Congratulations to Adam Birchall on his engagement to Liz Tilly of Penzance. The wedding (traditional Cornish) will be in November at Ludgven church between Penzance and St Ives.
- *e-Clips* are pleased to report the safe arrival of a grand-daughter for Dave and Delia Bettaney. Grand-parents are reported to be doing well too. As Delia puts it “Dave’s grumps”. Congratulations all round.

It was 40 years ago

In the 1960s Clubruns were still held on Saturday afternoons – with a meal at 6:00p.m. Joe Dodd’s write-up describes a bitterly cold winter evening forty years ago.....

Pontblyddyn – 12th January 1963

Picture an old man sitting in front of a roaring fire, surrounded by his grandchildren. Grandpappy speaks: “Why, I remember the day when the River Dee froze solid”. The children make suitable noises to express their surprise. “Yep, and I was out in that weather as well”. More impressed coos. “They made ‘em tough in those days. And I wasn’t the only one out. If I recall correctly there were four others out with me – and there was snow on the ground”. The children’s mother smiled fondly and whispered to her husband, “He must have been madder than he is now”. “I heard that”, growled Grandpappy. “It was the club spirit that counted in those days, and we enjoyed every minute of that ride, and our two hour natter in front of a roaring coal fire. Only trouble was that all four of my companions were called David which confused me rather”. Grandpappy Dodd glared at his daughter but there was no comment on this latter part of his statement, so he settled back in his chair. “Frozen over”, he muttered, and dropped off to sleep.

(Grandpa Dodd’s companions on this historic occasion were Davids Birchall, Bennett, Bettaney and Barker.)

A short cycle round Anglesey by John Williamson

I have motored often enough on Anglesey but had never pushed a bike across the bridge. So last August I thought it was time for a small new adventure; only 4 days mind you.

So on August 11th I'm off from Prestatyn heading for Snowdon Ranger YH by Llyn Cwellyn, 2 miles from Rhyd Ddu. Of course I've done this 55 mile ride dozens of times already, but usually en route to the Llyn Peninsula.

I head for the Abergele - Llanrwst road but join it a few miles above Llanfairtalhaiarn by cutting through Bodelwyddan and over Moelfre heights - great scenery. From Betws-y-Coed I have to follow the A5 to Capel Curig but the traffic never seems too difficult; a bit of a pull up to Swallow Falls. It's the 4 miles from Capel Curig to Pen-y-Gwryd that always gets me. I must have done it twice a year for the last 30 years, but if I get a fairly easy ride I'm lucky.

The two trips across this year are typical – nice and calm at Betws but the wind and rain howls across that high plain and I crawl along at 5mph and arrive exhausted and cursing at Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel ready for a coke and meat pie. At least after that there are about 6 or 7 more pleasant descending miles to Beddgelert alongside Llyn Gwynant - my favourite spot.

Although I'm nearly at my target I take the Caernarvon road with about 3 hard miles up hill before falling into Rhyd-Ddu. But that side of Snowdon offers a magnificent piece of scenery especially on a bright day. Those magnificent sloping green hills.

Day 2: I must head for the old Menai Bridge. The road from the hostel goes straight for Caernarvon so I must turn back easterly. My first opportunity is at Waunfawr where I must turn towards Bangor. But I'm soon lost in a maze of steep lanes trying to cut across, miss the back road and end up in Bangor's traffic. Across the bridge I make for Llanfair PG (you know the long name I can't spell), and in for a coffee at Pringles.

I'm heading for Cemaes Bay for b+b. I had planned on taking the route to Rhosneigr and the north coast, but the wind is so tough getting towards Malltraeth that I lose heart, hit the old A5 and find a pub for a sandwich and beer break. I decide I'd better follow the A5 almost to Bryngwran and take the B5112 north.

Now I'm enjoying myself again going by Trevor and Llantrisant but take the wrong turn and rather startle an elderly couple at their lonely bungalow to ask the way. I think they thought I was up to no good! Anyway I turn back and I'm on a fairly straightforward route toward Cemaes through Llanbabo and Carreglefn with twists and turns arriving eventually at Llanfechell and find myself high above Cemaes – a lovely descent to a very peasant b+b on the cliffs above the bay. A lovely view from there. Then to find an evening meal pub - no problem.

Day 3: So now its Tuesday and I'm booked in Bangor's YH. I could be there in no time along the main road, but I want to make a day of it across the centre. By golly though it's windy and steepish and hard going. Who said Anglesey was flat? I've been through a few villages but hardly seen a soul all morning. A bit lost yesterday on these lanes but I'm ok today in spite of cold showers. Ready for a coffee too but difficult to find in these deserted one-horse villages. Thankfully I soon reached Llangefni where there's a bit more life and a decent café to be found.

Pentraeth provided a sandwich and beer stop. To avoid the main road to the Menai Bridge, I went over to Llandonna and descended by many lanes and villages to the Beaumaris road. I was a bit early so leisurely walked across the bridge and idly down to Bangor.

Day 4: Back to Betws-y-Coed but not too much A5. The old back road behind Bethesda is very good – if steep – taking the Nant Ffrancon Pass on the other side of the River Ogwen, coming out by the newly refurbished YH at Ogwen Lake. From Betws , to avoid the busy A5 I take a back high wooded lane on the other side of the River Conway from Fairy Glen to the Conway Falls. Next on to Pentrefoelas. From here there is a hard but very worthwhile 10 miles over the hills to Nebo (last done by the Tints party).

So I was off home toward Llanfairtalhaiarn – but then I had a puncture. With a new slim racing tyre on the front I couldn't get the tyre off – then put the wrong tube in and had to start again. I really sweated thinking oh no not a 5 mile walk to the nearest phone. But I got it right eventually. Phew!!

* * * * *

From the archive: The Crown, Llanfihangel, August 1918

There are many fascinating photos in the archive. This one (over page) is of interest because of its informality – it's an early “snapshot”.

By the start of the 1900s, cameras had become small and portable. Fast roll film had been invented, and lenses were good enough to permit snaps of mundane things like mending a puncture, feeding riders in the 100, and marshalling. This one is typical, a lovely casual scene, with the five riders each enjoying a pipe of tobacco on a peaceful summer's day. It captures the comradeship and the tranquil atmosphere of riding on traffic free and un-surfaced roads at the end of the First World War.

Interpreting old photos is riddled with pitfalls. This one, captioned on the reverse, proved wrong on date and names. “The O'Tatur” (T W Murphy) was the man behind the camera. Editor of the *Irish Cyclist*, he was a good friend of the ABC. We travelled to Dublin to tour and race as much as he and his friends visited us in the first years of the century.

The location is easy enough to place if you know North Wales. Little changed over the years, it's the Crown at Llanfihangel, on the Ruthin – Cerrig-y-Druidian road in Clocaenog Forest. As to the date – with the trees in full leaf, Easter it could not be. And while we stayed at the Glan Aber Hotel, Betws-y-Coed in 1911, the Circular records that we travelled on the Sportsman road. So when was the photo taken and who are the cyclists?



Thanks to the Circular, the photo can be traced to late morning August 5 1918. Of the riders, W P Cook is easily recognisable. But the others proved a little more difficult. To enlarge the detail, computer scans came to the rescue, and it can be said with certainty that the riders are (l-r) Mercer, Carlisle, Cook, Toft and Turnor. All were from the earliest days of the ABC, and by 1918 were national figures in the cycling world. All were the wrong side of 50, and "renewing their youth" as the Circular put it, celebrating the end of the War, on their way home from the ABC August Bank Holiday tour to the Glan Aber Hotel.

Mercer, Carlisle and Turnor were crack racing men in their time. Of particular interest is the presence of "Doc" Carlisle in the group. He began his career riding "ordinaries". He was a formidable "End to Ender", and a companion of G P Mills, in the days when the ordinary bicycle ruled the road. He was also one of a select group of Anfielders who took part in the Bordeaux – Paris race in the 1890s.

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JOURNAL OF THE ANFIELD BICYCLE CLUB (formed March 1879)

President: Tony Pickles
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June 2003

No.905

CLUBRUNS hic et ubique (lunch 1230hrs)

June	21	Carriages	Gatesheath Committee	1130hrs
	28	The Goshawk	Mouldsworth*	
July	5	The Swan	Marbury*	
	12	The Grosvenor	Aldford	Club 7 Huntington 1130hrs
	19	Th'ouse at Top	Kelsall*	
	26	Farndon Arms	Farndon	Mersey Roads "24"
August	2	Carriages	Gatesheath Committee	1130hrs
	9	The Bull	Shocklach*	
	16	Carden Arms	Tilston*	
	23	Forest View	Oakmere*	
	30	Calveley Arms	Handley	Club 14 Broxton 1130hrs
September	6	The Liver	Rhydtalog	
	13	Carriages	Gatesheath Committee	1130hrs
	20	The Pheasant	Burwardsley*	
	27	The Raven	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Club Hill Climb 1130hrs

Sunday 21 Anfield BC Open 25 Chester

*: Meet Holt Car Park for 11:00hrs; 11:10hrs prompt - departure

Hon Treasurer: Chris Edwards, 4 Beach Road, Hoylake, WIRRAL CH47 1HT Tel: 0151 632 3462
 (CLUB SUBSCRIPTIONS: 21 and over: £15.00 Junior (under 21): £7.50 Cadet: £3.50)

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CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE – 13 September 2003

Autumn Tints 17 -19 October
Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin
£30 B&B £15 for 3 course dinner on Saturday
evening.

Booking (£10 deposit please) by 30 September to:
Tecwyn Williams, 65 High Street FARNDON CH1 6PT

Racing Results:

Chester Road Club Hilly 28 - 9 March

G Thompson 1.12.27; G Catherall 1.24.12

Port Sunlight Wheelers 25 - 16 March

G Catherall 1.05.33 pb

West Cheshire 30, - 13 April

G Catherall 1.27.26

Birkenhead North End Hilly 22, - 18 April 2003

G Catherall 1.00.47

Chester Road Club 25 8 June 2003

G Catherall 1.9.25; Ben Griffiths 1.9.02

(No other results, Club or Open, received at going to press)

Clubruns round-up

The Bull, Shocklach

-

1 March 2003

John was not out today so I made my way to Holt for the 11.00 a.m. meeting. At the end of the long straight over the River Alyn I glanced back and spotted Geraint in the distance. I kept up the pace as fast as I could but he still caught me well before Holt.

John Stinton was waiting at the Cross Street car park. At 11.10 we were away in just slight rain which soon stopped. We went out on the Welsh side of the Dee crossed the cobblestone bridge into Bangor-on-Dee. Through Worthenbury I pulled a large thorn from my front tyre, so at Chorlton we cut left for Shocklach arriving at 12.05.

We were first in closely followed by Brian Bird, Keith Orum, Geof Sharp, Tony Pickles with the next generation Anfielder son Christopher on mountain bikes, Treasurer Chris Edwards with very welcome visitor John Thompson, both on time for once made up the party. After lunch I had a puncture to repair before making my way home alone. A very enjoyable Club run and home well before the rain.

Ben

I set out towards Loggerheads then down the Bwlch to Ruthin. At the bottom I turned left and went up the Nant Y Garth and followed the road over the top and down to Coedpoeth where I headed towards Minera.

When I arrived there were no bikes to be seen so I rode around for a while. Stuart and Mike Twigg by car eventually joined me at the pub. Colin Werner made a surprise visit. Ben, Billy Graham and Mike Kimpton and Mark Livingstone arrived on cycles. Colin confirmed my belief that he had left the Postal service. He has now set up on his own looking after dogs whilst their owners are away. After eating we all set out on our way back heading down the 39 steps to Cefn Y Bedd where I left Ben and Billy to head back to Sychdyn.

Geraint

The Bull, Clotton

-

24 May 2003

I set out to our new meeting point at Holt, en route I caught Billy and we continued together. On arrival no one else was there. We waited for a while but no one appeared. Billy thought Ben may be racing. Billy decided against going on the club run as the weather was not promising, so I set off alone heading through Churton, and Bruera to Tattenhall then over to Huxley and soon arrived at Clotton. At the pub I was joined by Stuart and Mike Twigg and Tony Pickles then David Birchall all by car. After eating and discussing the 100 we all set off for home. I retraced much of my route out except I opted not to go to Tattenhall as it looked rather black in that direction so I headed to Christleton then up the A41 to Chester and home.

Geraint

The Buck, Bangor on Dee

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31 May 2003

These days, dumping the car somewhere quiet, and then cycling is much more preferable to riding in traffic all the way to the Clubrun. Purists would say that's admitting defeat, but I'm happy to be pragmatic.

So it was car from Knutsford to Bunbury from where you can ride on tranquil country lanes all the way to Bangor. At first, the route threads its way in the shadow of the Peckforton Hills to Tilston. There are extensive views across south-west Cheshire to the Dee valley. Today the countryside really did look its luxuriant best. With the thermometer nudging 30C, in the heat haze the distant Welsh hills shimmered grey blue. Thanks to dairy farming the county is lucky. Fields have remained largely unspoilt. Hedges, hedgerow oaks, and field ponds make this landscape special.

My ninety-minute outward ride was solo, and provided plenty of time to ruminate on the world. For the return, John Futter, Ben Griffiths and Tony Pickles provided company as far as Shocklach, and that was very pleasant too. Mike Twigg completed the lunch party in the tea-pot lounge of the Buck.

DDB

At 11.30, the advertised start time for our Club 14, John Futter, Ben Griffiths, Geraint Catherall and Mike Twigg could all be found sitting round a table at the Broxton Picnic Area, looking distinctly peeved. With good reason as it turned out. Why? No numbers; no timekeeper's watch. All in Anglesey apparently.

Well it was sunny, and Brian Bird and Chris Edwards joined us while Mike drove round the course standing down the marshals.

Those on bikes set off to ride to Handley for lunch. Stuart Twigg, Bill Graham, Craig Clewley and Tecwyn Williams added to the numbers present for lunch. Good food, banter and beer.

DDB

* * * * *

e-Clips

- The Anfield BC website seems to be stuck at the moment. Hugh Dauncey has mocked up a possible format, which seems to work fine. But we have yet to decide who will host the site, and the fine-tuning of what goes on it. Our history and archive material is ideally suited, and *The Black Anfielders* too. But home addresses are not acceptable, so we would have to be cautious about the Circular, unexpurgated. And new members? Will we need to insist on prospective members' attendance at Clubruns before accepting applications?
- **Stuart Twigg's** idea of a holiday in Scotland having come to nought, he, **Brian Bird, Tecwyn Williams** and **Bill Graham** are up for a long weekend (or short week) based at Brian's caravan near Plymouth in July. Nothing strenuous. Possibly some Cornish tramways, many of which have been converted into excellent cycle routes. With Adam Birchall having gone native, and father working there too, we might even have enough Anfielders to qualify for a Clubrun. There's still time to join in: see Stuart for details.
- From **Rod Anderson**: I did a search under Anfield BC in the internet the other day - shock horror it gave me an interview with Thommo and Mike Hallgarth's latest time trialling prowess! Here is the Thommo link:
http://www.thesevern.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/Clubinfo/thompson_int.htm
- **Rod** also commented:
"I was just flicking through the Anfield Circular this morning and saw that this weekend's Clubrun was to Bangor on Dee. How I miss the glorious weather of early June with the lush new foliage and the first taste of warm sunny weather.

Here in Singapore, we officially have a "heatwave" meaning that it is a few degrees warmer than normal - today hit about 36 degrees, making for a very warm ride, especially since the accompanying humidity was intense. As you will see from the picture, I have become a "roadie" again as it offers a more favourable breeze than labouring through the rainforest area in the central district of Singapore with a mountain bike."



Rod Anderson



Chris Shorter

- From **Chris Vessey** (27 March): Rode the Sotonia 10 last Saturday and knew Chris Shorter was also competing, so looked round for him. I was just getting ready to start and Chris rode past having completed his "10"; I yelled out to him, he looked round and carried on oblivious. I continued to search him out at the HQ later but to no avail. Would you be kind enough to let him know I saw him but he didn't see me.

This P613 course must be one of the fastest in the country but with an easterly wind blowing it's a lot slower. I managed a "PB" of 23.37 last year but on Saturday could only manage 25.07; and I think Chris was 30secs faster. Best wishes to all, have a good season

- *In the light of the above the least we could do was put the two in touch, with the following result from **Chris Shorter**:*
Without "Anfield BC" next to his name I didn't make the connection. I'd spent the week rock climbing on Portland Bill and took in the Sotonia 10 on the way back home. I did 24:33, which I wasn't unhappy with, since it was a tough day. I have only managed more than 5 hours training in one week since Christmas and have been working half of most weeks in Paris. Paris has finished now and so I expect that my training will be better organised. Here's a picture to prove I really am doing it. Sorry I haven't got the Anfield kit yet! **[Why? - Ed]**

- *It's nice to know that the ABC Circular is in the same league as the Times Educational Supplement (and that at least **John Thompson** reads it – drawing **e-Clips** attention to an article by **Hugh Dauncey** and colleague). Hugh has provided the unedited text published in amended form as a full page article (TES, Friday 23 May 2003).*

Hugh also enclosed Phil Liggett's ("the voice of cycling around the world on television") endorsement of the associated book:

"This is the finest book written in the English language [on the Tour de France(!)], chronicling one of the world's great sporting events in a manner never read before. This is not a sports book, but a history of France's most famous happening throughout the month of July. It is the cruellist, toughest, annual sporting event in the World, and this book will tell you how it evolved, why, and what heroes are made of. You don't have to be a sports lover to enjoy this magnificent story."

The Centenary of the Tour de France: A national epic on two wheels' **By Hugh Dauncey and Geoff Hare**

If the French are a sporting nation (and Frenchmen originated the modern Olympic Games and the football World Cup), it is seen in their reaction to the third of the world's great sporting events, the Tour de France, celebrating its centenary in July this year. Millions of French people will again stand at their front door, or by a near-by main road, or even camp on the side of a far-away mountain to see their annual 'two minutes of lurid lycra' (as Julian Barnes has called it). It is the greatest free sporting event in the world, but the French will, as ever, feel they are participating in a national celebration as much as watching a mere cycle race. The Tour de France has for a century been a laboratory of the interactions between sport, politics, economics and culture, both within France itself and more widely.

The starter of the original event, as he raised his flag to set off the 60 riders, professional and amateur, from near the Réveil-Matin Café in Montgeron, a nondescript Parisian suburb, on 1st July 1903, could not have imagined he was making history. Yet, the conception of the event in 1903 strikes us as remarkably modern sporting, commercial and journalistic achievement.

The race was devised and partly funded by a newspaper in conjunction with the French cycle industry as a way of publicising French cycle brands in an emerging mass market. Its originality was selling a mass consumer product by reference to sport. It was also the event that fixed the genre of the sporting press in France. The sports daily sold itself by creating interest in sports events that it invented, organised and sponsored, and on which it reported in a new form of writing, the pseudo-live report. Since it was a stage race lasting 19 days, it broke up the event and its reporting into episodes, capitalising on suspense and uncertainty about the result to maintain interest. The interaction between television and the race in the modern era has again shown how the Tour has served as a test-bed for innovative media techniques.

The event emerged also out of the political quarrels of the Dreyfus Affair that split France in two over issues of anti-semitism, the rights of the individual and the future of the republic. Anti-Dreyfusards founded *L'Auto* as a rival to the top sports daily, the Dreyfusard *Le Vélo*. *L'Auto*'s editor, Henri Desgrange aimed to out-do *Le Vélo*'s one-day races, and invented the first cycle stage

race that would visit all the big French towns and many smaller ones on the way, to be called the Tour de France. Hitherto professional road races usually involved pacers, often on motor-bikes, such as the classic Paris-Roubaix, first run in 1896. Desgrange, a former holder of the French one-hour cycle record (unpaced) was not interested solely in speed, but in exploring the limits of the human body and in pitting man against man and against nature.

The race was to become ever more demanding as mountain stages were introduced from 1905, and is generally recognised today as the most punishing sporting event in the world. The Scottish Tour rider Robert Millar once said: "The riders reckon that a good Tour takes one year off your life, and when you finish in a bad state, they reckon three years." Desgrange said that the ideal Tour would be one where there was only one finisher. He knew that to create interest, it was not enough to report on the intricacies of the race and its outcomes. As he said: "the Tour needs heroes".

Under the pre-Second World Third Republic, the Tour contributed more to France than just modern heroes. As Eugen Weber has stated: "It put flesh on the dry bones of values taught in school but seldom internalised: effort, courage, determination, stoic endurance of pain, and even fair play." Later it introduced the French to commercial advertising. As the Tour passed through a truly Homeric landscape (so-described by Roland Barthes in the 1950s), it also familiarised the nation with its geography and its historical heritage. The French cultural historian Georges Vigarello has argued that it created French national consciousness over the course of the twentieth century.

The Tour has indeed become the stuff of legend, in which French champions defined by their regional origins and foreign champions create an epic narrative of effort and suffering in the face of obstacles imposed by the road and the race organisers, of courage, sacrifice and redemption in common with fellow competitors. The 'national' race melds riders from the provinces into Frenchmen and pits France against the world.

Even occasional French spectators know the story of Eugène Christophe who broke his front forks in the Pyrenees in 1913, shouldered his bike, ran seven miles to the closest blacksmith's shop, repaired it with his own hands as the rules required, and rode on two hours late. Unfortunately, for allowing a little boy to work the bellows at the blacksmith's forge during the welding, Christophe was penalised three minutes, and with this penalty he rode into sporting history.

The investigative journalist Albert Londres's article on the Pélissier brothers' abandonment in 1924 turned the Tour riders into the mythical 'slave labourers of the road', while in the 1960s Antoine Blondin coined the phrase 'giants of the road' to describe its modern heroes. The Pélissier affair, couched in the language of workers' rights and magnified by the Communist press in particular, sparked a national debate about the race's abusive nature that lasted through the 1930s. Current controversies have concentrate more on the alleged organised nature of riders' abuse of performance-enhancing substances at the risk of their own long-term health.

It is the superhuman challenge of the race imposed by the original organisers that creates heroes, who attract its admiring millions. While the overnight stages disappeared before the First World War and the overall length has been reduced since the Second World War, the general demands have been maintained. The Tour has burned itself into the national collective memory because of its systematic exploration and celebration of the resources of the whole of the French national territory, its plains and mountains, and their range of summer climatic conditions, from scorching heat to the rain and cold of the climbs.

One of the most vivid of the Tour's memories of heroism is the story of the British rider Tom Simpson, whose zigzagging and lung-bursting ascent of the lunar heights of the sun-scorched Mont Ventoux in 1967 led to his death at the roadside through heat exhaustion exacerbated by the effects of drug-taking. During the 1960s, the legendary Jacques Anquetil - five times French winner of the Tour - scathingly dismissed what he saw as hand-wringing concerns over doping and, admitting that he used artificial aids to performance, sarcastically enquired whether anyone could really imagine that riders could meet the demands of the Tour and professional racing in general without such assistance.

The 'artificial' constraints and demands imposed by the race organisers on the riders sometimes lead to rebellion amongst the peloton: the early organisers were called 'murderers' by the first riders forced to climb the Pyrenees. More recently, there have been go-slows, sit-downs and other protests, as the competitors – often led by charismatic 'bosses' of the peloton such as Bernard Hinault – assert their right to have a say in how the event should be run.

Most recently, the Tour has attracted attention because of renewed concerns about drug-taking and because of the dominance of an American rider, the recovered cancer-sufferer Lance Armstrong, who has won four consecutive Tours since 1999, and this year aims to match the records of French stars such as Anquetil and Hinault. Armstrong and the French media entertain a relationship of healthy dislike reflecting the widespread disbelief in France that someone who almost died from cancer can succeed without drugs, and the US-Postal rider's belief that the French don't like him because he is monopolising their national event.

Another criticism levelled at Armstrong by the French media is that he is a champion without 'panache', in other words that he rides in a calculated manner, competes only in races he knows he can win, and in general, applies a cold rationality to sport which contrasts with the 'bravura' and heroic exploits the Tour has traditionally demanded and produced.

Armstrong's current dominance marks a further stage in the globalisation of the Tour that has occurred since the 1970s, as the race has attracted competitors from further afield than the usual European cycling nations. In the 1980s, the American rider Greg Le Mond was the first to push France's love-hate relationship with the US into the sporting arena, firstly by winning in 1986 and ending the career of her favourite cycling son Bernard Hinault, and then, by taking the second of his three Tours in 1989 by a margin of only eight seconds, from the French champion Laurent Fignon. His lead was gained during the final time-trial stage on the symbolic Champs-Élysées in Paris, where Le Mond's high tech aero bike gave him the advantage over Fignon's more traditional mount.

In 2003, of course, Franco-American rivalry in the Tour will be heightened by the disagreement over the war against Iraq between President Chirac and President Bush. Fellow Texans Bush and Armstrong, although friends, have differed over the policy to adopt towards Saddam Hussein, with Armstrong apparently believing that the US should have paid more attention to countries such as France before launching military operations. While the prospect of enduring conflict in Iraq during the Tour itself seemed probable, Armstrong demonstrated his commitment to the race by declaring that he would compete whatever the potential risks to his personal safety, but, characteristically, couched this positive support for the Tour in a way which betrayed his belief that dislike for Americans in Europe naturally requires them to adopt a kind of bunker-mentality.

The opposition between France and the US over Iraq will have done nothing to mollify those cycling fans in France who love to hate Lance Armstrong, but will have fuelled his determination to win once again. Whatever happens in the 2003 race - and an Armstrong victory seems likely - the Tour seems set to continue as a palimpsest of sporting values, organisation, and much more besides.

*Hugh Dauncey and Geoff Hare have jointly edited/authored **The Tour de France, 1903-2003: A Century of Sporting Structures, Meanings and Values**, (London: Frank Cass, July 2003). They have also edited/authored **France and the 1998 World Cup: the national impact of a world sporting event** (London: Frank Cass, 1999)*

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The 104th Anfield 100, 26th May 2003

(Edited version of Ken Matthew's Cycling Weekly report)

With a time of 3.53.48, Gethin Butler (Preston Wheelers) won the event for the second year in succession, but was again outside Dave Lloyd's long-standing record of 3.47.10 from 1982.

Conditions were good and there was a serious chance that the record might be clipped, but with road works forcing a move from the A41 to a bumpier and hillier alternative, it proved too much even for Butler who was the only one inside 4 hours.

Veteran David Johnson (High Wycombe CC) hung in for second place in 4.04.51, just 10 seconds faster than Howard Waller (Oxford City RC).

Butler spoke for all the riders at the presentation as he lifted the WR Donovan Trophy: "It's the first time I have ridden on roads where hands came out of the road to grab you back".

Despite spending 28 hours the previous week, by his wife's bedside awaiting the arrival of their daughter Annwen Mae – who weighed in at 5lbs 5oz – Butler showed no signs of fatigue at 25 miles where he was the fastest in 55.14 ahead of Malcolm Cox (VC St Raphael), 57.3, and Johnson, 58.50.

At 50 miles Butler was still on target with 1.54.14, and Cox 7 seconds inside 2 hours with Johnson at 2.00.04, and Billy Robinson (Rossendale RC) 2.00.38. To the relief of Dave Lloyd, who was keeping in touch with progress by mobile phone, the poor road surface on the circuit took a toll on everyone over the second half.

Scratch Prizes

1 st	Gethin Butler (Preston Wheelers)	3.53.48
2 nd	D Johnson (High Wycombe CC)	4.04.51
3 rd	H Waller (Oxford City Road Club)	4.05.01
4 th	M Cox (VC St Raphael)	4.07.45
5 th	M Perrin (Ashfield RC)	4.12.37

Handicap Prizes

1 st	J Morgan (N Shrops Whrs)	3.35.17
2 nd	M Jenkins (Chester RC)	3.35.52
3 rd	= Phil Guy (N Shrops Whrs)	3.36.56
	= D Johnson (High Wycombe CC)	3.36.56

Team Prizes

1 st	Pete Read Racing (S Beldon 4.13.04, S Smales 4.14.12, C Higgins 4.32.02)
2 nd	N Shrops Whrs (P Guy 4.26.30, N Farr 4.34.53, J Morgan 4.45.17)

<u>Fastest Woman</u>	Marina Bloom (Walsall RCC)	4.33.59
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Thanks from the 100 Event Secretary.

Stuart Twigg

Firstly, our thanks go to the most important people without whom the event could not function – Timekeepers at the Finish Bob McNamee and Keith Orum and Ben Griffiths at 50 miles.

Secondly, to all the marshals who stood on corners and roundabouts. My especial thanks go to those not of the Anfield BC: Bob and Ruth Williams and members of the Mersey RC; Cliff Ash and the Mid Shropshire Wheelers together with other supporters who lent a hand. Extra thanks go to those Anfielders who were out before the start, performed more than one duty and were still there long after everyone else had gone home. Thanks go to my father, Mike Twigg, who tidied and mopped up after those who discarded rubbish and spilled tea without a care.

The Anfield manned Tern Hill (Colin Werner, Tom Sherman and friend). At Prees Heath it was Johnnie Williamson, Geraint and Peter Catherall, and Billy Graham. Shawbury traffic-lights were looked after by Hugh Dauncey and Chris Edwards, and Shawbury Corner - Mike Hallgarth and Philippa. Also on the circuit were John Whelan, Brian Whitmarsh and Dave Eaton (Dave Bettaney too?), John Futter, Craig Clewley, Tony and Martin. The Mid Shropshire Wheelers plus Ira Thomas were at Battlefield. Hodnet was staffed by Bob and Ruth Williams and Mersey RC. The Start Steward was Tecwyn Williams with Dave Edwards at the final corner to guide the riders to Geof Sharp and the timekeepers. Stuart Twigg controlled Event HQ with assistance from Duncan Rees, Mike Twigg and David Birchall.

Thanks also go to the catering staff, Pippa Orum, my mother Pat and my niece Emma, and to my nephew Alex who ran errands and brought me tea! Cake recipes are available on request.

To Deeside Cycles our thanks for their donations of vouchers. Even if you didn't receive a voucher, please feel free to spend you hard-earned wages there. They can be found at www.deesidecycles.com or simply dial 01244 812067/831110. Thanks also go to Phil Griffiths for his kind donation.

As you are aware, we were unable to run this year's course along the A41 due to roadworks. The bridge at Sandford has been controlled by traffic lights for some time and no firm date is available for their removal. I do hope you liked our course; sorry it wasn't pan flat but the Anfield Hundred wouldn't be the same if it were too easy! Thanks again go to Cliff Ash for his tireless work in measuring the course and ensuring a safe start and finish point. I'm sure many of you were slightly concerned by the view uphill from the start though!

I will be looking into a new course for next year, possibly avoiding the A49 if the A41 is back on the cards. The course may take us north up the A41 towards Chester but may incur the penalty of a long drag into the wind.

There were a few non-finishers this year, mostly put off by the circuit. Better luck next year. I won't go into a "gentlemen in England now a-bed shall think themselves accursed they were not here, and hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks that fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day" type speech but at least you started and can take pride in the distance you completed.

I received an e-mail from one of the non-starters saying they could not find the event HQ. Apologies to them for a wasted journey. **However**, there were bright yellow signs and arrows off the A49 but somehow these were missed. And the grid ref was on the start card. And my mobile number but I received no calls. If in doubt, RTFI!

Moving on to next year, I will be organizing the event again. Veterans should be aware that next year's event incorporates the Veterans National Championship Hundred. As I wrote in the letter sent out with the start cards, I welcome any comments / advice / abuse / cash to enable next year's event to be better than this year.

Many travel some distance to the event and often arrive on Sunday afternoon. Next year we hope to have a Club luncheon on the Sunday afternoon prior to the event. The location will be in the Chester area and will cost about £15 per head. All riders / families / supporters will be most welcome.

Final thanks go to the riders for their gift of £7-00. That entry fee has to go a long way but there is no intention of increasing that for next year.



Tom Sherman and Ira Thomas were spotted in the crowd at Event HQ.



Duncan Rees and Ben Griffiths transferring times to the results board; and Gethin Butler with the Donovan Trophy

And finally, from the Anfield archive, how we ran the Event 102 years ago:



*W.M Owen, feeding, Anfield 100, 1901 Crudgington
(Photo by Joe Hooydonk NRCC)*

ANFIELD CIRCULAR

JOURNAL OF THE ANFIELD BICYCLE CLUB (formed March 1879)

President: Tony Pickles
Captain: Martin Cartwright (Tel: 01244 539979)
Hon Secretary: Craig Clewley
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(Tel: 01244 536055; e-mail: craig.clewley@virgin.net)

September 2003

No.906

CLUBRUNS hic et ubique (lunch 1230hrs)

September	20	The Pheasant	Burwardsley*
		Sunday 21 Anfield BC Open	25 Chester
	27	The Raven	Llanarmon-yn-Ial <u>Club Hill Climb</u> 1130hrs
October	4	The Buck	Bangor on Dee*
	11	Carriages, Gatesheath:	Annual General Meeting
	17 – 19	Autumn Tints:	Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin
	25	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee Meeting</u>
November	1	The Bull	Clotton*
	8	Britannia Inn	Halkyn
	15	Beeston Hotel	Tiverton*
	22	Carden Arms	Tilston* (Note change of venue)
	29	Golden Grove	Rossett
December	6	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee Meeting</u>
	13	Golden Lion	Ashton* (Note change of venue)
	20	Nags Head	Farndon
	27	The Bull	Shocklach*

*: Meet Holt Car Park for 11:00hrs; 11:10hrs prompt - departure

Hon Treasurer: Chris Edwards, 4 Beach Road, Hoylake, WIRRAL CH47 1HT Tel: 0151 632 3462
(**CLUB SUBSCRIPTIONS:** 21 and over: £15.00 Junior (under 21): £7.50 Cadet: £3.50)

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CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE – 6 December 2003

Autumn Tints 17 -19 October
Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin
£30 B&B £15 for 3 course dinner on Saturday
Final reminder £10 deposit please by 30 September to:
Tecwyn Williams, 65 High Street FARNDON CH1 6PT



The Anfield Bicycle Club at Lake Vyrnwy 1900.

The original photograph is undated. However, in 1900 our August tour took us to Welshpool and Lake Vyrnwy. The Annual Report (no Circular in those days) records that the tour, like the all-night ride that year, was sadly marred by bad weather:

“Twelve members participated, and the ride to Welshpool on the Saturday afternoon and evening was most enjoyable, and all were in high spirits. Sunday morning brought rain, but we managed to plug through the mud to Cann Office between showers. The afternoon proved, fortunately, fine, and the ride was continued to the Lake - which was viewed under splendid conditions – all feeling glad they had come. Sunday evening was spent in Llanfyllin, as also the best part of Monday, as the rain fell incessantly up to 3 o’clock, when a start for home was made. Oswestry was reached between showers, where most of the party took train, and those who rode through will not readily forget the tremendous thunderstorm with which the August Bank Holiday terminated.”

Racing Results:

Burton and District Cycle Association 100, 15th June: Geraint Catherall 4.49.50 PB (Winner Darren White NSW 3.49.42. Course based on the A50 between Etwall Derby and Blyth Bridge Stafford – this is the same course as the National Championship.)

Chester RC 25, 8th June: Ben Griffiths 1.09.02; Geraint Catherall 1.09.25

Birkenhead Victoria CC 25, 6 July: Ben Griffiths 1.06.42; Geraint Catherall 1.06.50

Rhyl CC 25, 31.June: Ben Griffiths 1.04.48

Ben writes:

Congratulations to Geraint on his excellent ride in the Heanor Clarion Middle Markers 25 on the 10 August 2003. He did a personal best by 6 minutes – a terrific ride. He went from 1.05.33 to 59.33 in one go.

Mersey Roads Club 24 Hour

We were pleased that Geraint safely completed this event, with support from his dad and Tony Pickles (if others, apologies, but we've not been told who you are so cannot thank personally). Before the event we met at the Farndon Arms. Ben, John Futter, Mike and Stuart Twigg, Tecwyn Williams, Dave Edwards and John Stinton. We then made our way to watch the riders start. Keith Orum assisted on the finishing circuit.



Chris Vessey (second claim ABC) at the start



Geraint Catherall (308 miles)

Clubruns round-up

Cotton Arms, Wrenbury

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14 June 2003

Regrettably, today there was no Anfield Bicycle Club run. One member attending does not count. Very disappointing. But on such a beautiful summer's day, it was not a waste of time. Starting in Kelsall, out of the village the road shelves down towards Willington. You can get up speed, freewheeling, and enjoy the swift descent. However ahead by the roadside was a ladder against the wall of a house, a man at the top. No sooner seen than in quick succession came alarm: he's off the ladder – clinging by his fingertips to the gutter, and horror: he's not moving. By this time my speedy descent was at an end with swiftly applied brakes. Finally and somewhat embarrassed I noticed other strange characters. One stranded on a telegraph pole, and another sitting on a fence. Scarecrows. A village competition.

Happily, there were plenty of real people out and about too. With the sun shining, Cheshire farmers were making hay, and train-spotters were on the lookout for a steam excursion on the Crewe – Chester line. At Beeston Castle, a jousting tournament seemed to be about to start.

Through Bunbury and Haughton Moss there are quiet lanes and the countryside is unspoilt. Southwest of Nantwich you're in as forgotten bit of Cheshire as can be found, delightful today. There were cyclists too, but not another Anfielder. Nor was there anyone at the Cotton Arms. The pub provided a sandwich, a shandy, and a chat with a local who had not a clue about where in Cheshire he might find Kelsall.

The return ride led to Christleton through the Cholmondeley Castle estate where the rhododendrons looked good. At Bickerton, about to start was a summer fete centred on a rather fine marquee. At the top of the climb over the Peckforton ridge, in Harthill, a group of walkers took in the view. From the Welsh hills the panorama sweeps from the Dee valley and Chester to the Wirral, the Mersey Estuary and Liverpool, the two cathedrals clearly visible some 30 miles distant. I dropped into Tattenhall then via Waverton finished the ride in Christleton. 40 miles.

The Goshawk, Mouldsworth

-

28 June 2003

Last time we were here the place had just been take over. Big changes were planned. Ben had got wind of exactly what – and boycotted the run. Not for him the pink pound, polished wood floors, antiques, and fancy food. “It's just the place for me” said Chris Edwards. “Doesn't bother me” said Tony Pickles, “so long as the cook washes his hands”. Bill Graham put the barman right, indeed left him speechless, on wearing lycra. Sitting in sunshine next to the bowling green, all this was very much enjoyed by the rest of us - Mike Twigg, David and Mary Birchall (with Adam and Liz on their way home to Cornwall), John Stinton, Geraint Catherall and John Futter. Bowls? What a good idea. “We don't do bowls sir” I was told. And the Goshawk won't do us again.

The Swan, Marbury

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5 July 2003

I set out down to Broughton but John was going away on holiday so I carried on to Holt. After waiting 20 minutes or so no one else appeared. I continued alone through Farndon, Tilston to Malpas then across the A41 to Marbury. The pub is now under new ownership with carpets on the floor rather than the slippery concrete floor they used to have. I waited but no one else appeared. After eating I set off back towards Malpas then up the A41 to Chester and back to Sychdyn.

Geraint

The Grosvenor, Aldford

-

12 July 2003

The way out of Ruthin back to England is mostly hilly, so I started with the Nant-y-Garth pass and pushed on along the A525 to Bwlch Gwyn and Coed Poeth. Turning right at the bottom of Coed Poeth I made my way through shady lanes to Bersham and then - disinclined to peer at the OS map for ages - went back towards Wrexham town centre before taking the simple route out to Bangor-is-y-coed. From Bangor, things became quieter as I tried to maintain pace through Worthenbury, Shocklach, Crewe, before crossing the A534 to reach Farndon and Churton, and then Aldford. As I reached Aldford, I saw Geraint just leaving the village, apparently after participating in the Club 7.

In the garden behind the pub were Mike Twigg and Tecwyn Williams, both sunning themselves in Anfield kit and sipping pints of restorative Guinness. Tecwyn was on the bike, Mike in the car, but having done some riding earlier. Some talk centred on what the flat short route back to Ruthin was. The continental temperatures were too much for me, so after a brief break Tecwyn and I left Mike and rode back to Farndon together before I continued on through Holt, Rossett, Llay and then the "39 Steps" road back to Bwlch Gwyn. I only count three main "steps" on that road, but at 8mph they certainly seem to drag on a bit. And so to Ruthin down the Nant-y-Garth again. The computer (can it be trusted?) said 66 miles at 16.3mph.

Hugh Dauncey

Th'Ouse at Top, Kelsall

-

19 July 2003

Too tired by riding around the Denbigh Moors during the week to have to negotiate the hills back into Wales from the Cheshire plain after reaching Kelsall, I drove to Holt carpark (for future reference is there only one?) and rode through the lanes via Farndon, Crewe, Barton, Clutton, Tattenhall, Huxley, Duddon, Oscroft and other places before reaching Kelsall.

As I suspected, the pub was indeed right at the top of the hill. Tony Pickles was just getting out of his car as I arrived, and inside were already Mike Twigg and David Birchall, Ben and other regulars being off racing somewhere. The collective wisdom was that my legs hurt because I was getting old, which was reassuring, as I thought that there must be something wrong with me. Other topics of discussion included the

old chestnut of tyre pressures (I have read that the ideal compromise is a tenth of one's weight in kilos, in bars - Tony had a nasty moment while wondering if he weighed 200lbs or 200kg) and how much should be drunk during exercise (new studies have shown that it's probably best not to drink too much). Just as long as we know.

The return route was via Beeston, Burwardsley, Harthill, Malpas, Tilston and Barton. This time I did the "39 Steps" in the car, and hardly noticed them at all. The computer (on the bike) said 55 miles at 16.0mph, so the more I ride, the slower I seem to get, although I was a week older, of course.

Hugh Dauncey

Carden Arms, Tilston

-

16 August 2003

A very nice sunny warm morning when I went down to John's for 10.30a.m. Geraint was waiting at John's all smiles. I soon found out why. He had done a 59.33 last Sunday. We went out via the lanes to Tilston arriving very early. But Geraint's dad Peter was already waiting outside. With time to spare we did a short circuit around Horton – Malpas and back to Tilston. We met Mike Twigg on the way, and arrived back at just afternoon. We were soon joined by Lee Nichols and David Birchall.

In all seven were out and all on bikes. With the editor heading eastwards for Bunbury, we had six for the ride back to Farndon, but just Ben and John stopped at Holt for coffee. A very nice run on a good day.

Ben

Forest View, Oakmere

-

23 August 2003

A phone call on Friday evening from John Williamson clinched it. "Where is the Forest View?" was the question, "I'll be cycling from Tarvin".

The venue is not usually well supported, so not wishing John to make the effort only to find no other Anfielder present, I thought I'd better be there. Stuart Twigg having arrived first (and early) and seeing no one else was just about to give up when Mary and I arrived. "Don't like drinking alone" he said. So, with John, we were four.

John's latest CD of his own piano works has just been issued. He had a copy for me and excellent it is too, with good reviews. Get yours from John - £10 to Anfielders.

Club 14 and Calveley Arms, Handley

-

30 August 2003

Last time we were here we had to cancel the event – the timekeeper and his watch were in Anglesey. Today we were on our best behaviour with a representative of Cheshire County Constabulary Cycling Club riding as our guest. With marshals on every corner, we were playing this one by the book. Trouble was the riders (Geraint and Ben of ours and two private trials) were outnumbered by marshals. However play

it by the book we did, and even enforced the rule that to be timed at the finish you shout your number to the timekeeper. We could have eliminated (but didn't) one rider.

Marshalling duties done Mike Twigg beetled off to Aldford where Stuart had been stationed, conveniently close to the Grosvenor Arms. The official clubrun at Handley, was the destination for the rest of us - Tecwyn Williams, Craig Clewley, John Futter, Tony Pickles, David Birchall, Ben, Geraint, and Duncan Rees.

* * * * *

e-Clips

- A polymorphic virus (one that changes and is therefore difficult to detect) managed to find its way through my computer's defences, despite anti-virus software and absolute care only to open e-mails from known and reliable sources. The thief not only stole identity and address book, but pinched an e-mail, issuing it in my name while attaching his own dodgy file. It beats me why the service providers are so complacent about such criminal activities.
- Karl Nelson, Dusseldorf:
I am doing some cycling at the moment - I seem to be doing more km. on my trekking bike than on my racing bike. I went down to Bavaria in May - and did some hard km down there - the gradients in the area where we stayed were typically 13%! I rode one organized cycle event here in Germany also in May - and enjoyed it a lot. Hope to be on the Autumn Tints later this year.
- John Moss, South Africa, confessing to very few miles:
We are just starting Spring here so I did 12 km on Sunday and was knackered. Dave Bettaney is coming over in November for a short holiday, he is using up his air miles. We will go down to the Northern Natal coast then hope to do some white water rafting on the Vaal River. Maybe a short ride on the bikes. I've put off the trip to UK as Wendy and I hope to go to Australia early next year to visit Jennifer and Craig in Perth. Had I managed a trip for work then I would have used my air miles to go onto New Zealand, but there doesn't seem to be much chance of a work trip at present. Give my regards to everyone.
- As reported last issue, Stuart Twigg and Tecwyn Williams visited Dikki Bird in Devon during the July heatwave. A little cycling was done on cycle paths following a former railway line out of Plymouth into the Dartmoor National Park. And a lot of thirst quenching.
- The end of August means fulfilling our obligation to marshal the District Associations' 12 hour event. Our stints are at Battlefield roundabout. The morning shift was undertaken by John Futter, Ben Griffiths, and Craig Clewley (and dad); the afternoon by Tony Pickles, Geoff Sharp and David Birchall.

- The afternoon was brightened when Cliff Ash brought along Ira Thomas. Ira has just had a spell in hospital, and we were pleased to see him, we thought, in good fettle. Ira's memory is amazing. Cliff Ash had contacted me about a cyclist called Parton of the Wem Cycling Club who had ridden our 100 many years ago. Not many people know that there was a Wem Cycling Club. But Ira does, and that Parton won the Handicap Prize in our last 100 before the First World War. Checking the archive confirmed Ira's memory - there was Parton heading the list of riders. What's more Ira remembered the winning time too.
- From Chris Vessey on his 24 epic:
What terrible conditions this year how I managed to reach the finishing course I shall never know more down to Marjory I think. Was under a cloud burst at Barton on the finishing course and this WAS the final straw and concluded my ride at Handley with 309 on my clock, but do not know the exact distance. We were both so shattered we found a b&b at Hadnall on the A49 and got our heads down. We drove to London overnight which definitely was the right thing to do reaching home at 0100 hrs. Next year probably stay at same b&b night before the race to gain the extra hours of sleep. Once more it was good meeting all from the club and it makes me feel really part of the Anfield. So look forward to next year all being well
- So where's the timekeeper then? John Futter and David Birchall at the start of the June Club 14, that we were forced to abandon:



Reminders

Volunteers wanted for Club 25 Sunday 21 September - please phone Martin Cartwright 01244 539979: yes that really does mean you.
and please attend the Annual General Meeting 11 October Carriages, Gatesheath
1.30pm

ANFIELD CIRCULAR

*JOURNAL OF THE ANFIELD BICYCLE CLUB
(formed March 1879)*

December 2003

No.907



Stuart Twigg and Chris Edwards at Vyrnwy, Autumn Tints weekend

~ CLUBRUNS ~

hic et ubique

**Phone Captain ☎01352 759463 for details of meeting place
or be at venue (lunch 1230hrs)**

December	20	Nags Head	Farndon
	27	The Bull	Shocklach
January	3	The Pheasant	Burwardsley
	10	The Raven	Llanarmon-yn-Ial
	17	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee Meeting 1100hrs</u>
	24	The Buck	Bangor on Dee
	31	Grosvenor Arms	Aldford
February	7	Beeston Hotel	Tiverton
	14	Carden Arms	Tilston
	21	Britannia Inn	Halkyn
	28	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee Meeting 1100hrs</u>
March	6	The Ffrwd	Cefn-y-Bedd
	13	Th'ouse at Top	Kelsall and <u>Captain's Weekend Betws-y-Coed*</u>
			<i>* phone Tony Pickles for details</i>
	20	Grosvenor Arms	Alford
	27	The Yew Tree	Spurstow
April	3	The Raven	Llanarmon-yn-Ial
	10	Carriages	Gatesheath <u>Committee Meeting 1100hrs</u>

Will your MEMBERSHIP LAPSE on 1st March?

Have you paid your SUBSCRIPTION (due 1st September 2003)?

21 and over: £15.00; Junior (under 21): £7.50; Cadet: £3.50

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CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT CIRCULAR: 28 FEBRUARY 2004

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Adam Birchall: 18 Penair View, TRURO, Cornwall, TR1 1XR

Tel: 01872 320113

Report of the Secretary for the Annual General Meeting of the Anfield Bicycle Club, 11th October 2003

Membership

Club membership has continued to decline this year, but at a slower rate than in 2002. No new members have joined and we have sadly recorded the death of Peter Stephenson. The current count is 62 members and 9 life members.

Based on these figures the quorum sizes for 2003-2004 are 10 for a general meeting and 5 for a committee meeting.

Attendance

There have been a total of seven committee meetings during the year. Attendance has improved, with numbers attending between 8 and 11, giving an average of 10 (compared with 8 at each meeting during 2002-2003).

Website

There has been some progress on the website thanks to the efforts of Hugh Dauncey. A sample website has been created.

Trophy

In addition to the trophy purchased in memory of Peter Colligan, a donation has been made to Macmillan Nurses.

Tints

The Autumn Tints 2002 was considered by all to be a great success, both socially and financially. This was due to the event being organised in plenty of time and advertised in the Circular.

Champion:

Club Champion for 2002 was G. Catherall.

Marshalling

The Anfield promoted 100 mile and 25 mile time trials as usual this year. These ran without incident.

Marshalling duties have remained more or less the same during the year with West Cheshire events and also a BCF event in Birkenhead Park and The British Time Trial Championships at Beeston. Sufficient numbers were always found to fulfil our obligations. With the exception of the Anfield 100 and 25, where almost every member is involved, the same group undertakes marshalling duties. A few more available bodies would reduce the burden on those people. Volunteers are always welcome.

125th Anniversary

It will be the Anfield's 125th anniversary in 2004. A club lunch is planned in celebration. Plans are still at an early stage, although the venue is likely to be Chester and the date may coincide with the 100.

Obituaries

Peter Stephenson

The death of Peter Stephenson on 24th August at the age of 74 severs a link that spanned ninety-two of the Club's 124 years. I got to know Peter in 1978 at the time of the centenary when helping Frank Marriott update the *Black Anfielders*, which Peter's printing company published for us. I recall popping into the works in Prescot to collect "galley" proofs, and eventually the actual copies of the book itself, the production of which Peter managed; and of course we chatted about matters ABC.

The Stephenson association with the ABC started with Peter's father George who joined us in 1911 and remained a member until his death in 1955. In George's day the family home (Hill House, Huyton), became a great rendezvous for Anfielders, not least because there was a billiards room, and a library which included bound copies of the Circulars (now in the archive). Through the two wars, George found the paper necessary to enable the Circular to run without a break, his company printing each issue, and he stepped into the editor's chair too.

Perhaps therefore we shouldn't be surprised that the Stephenson printing company continued to produce the Circular after George's death, thanks to Peter's generosity. Given how important the Club had been to his father, Peter must have

been steeped in the Anfield's ways from birth. But by 1962 the cost of producing a type-set Circular had become far too costly to be subsidised any longer. At the time I was a cadet member on the Anfield committee, and can still recall Peter's sadness at confronting the need to economise. Nevertheless Peter continued to support us in other ways: revising the *Black Anfielders* was possible only thanks to his company's resources. And we recognised his contribution by electing him to life membership.



Peter Stephenson under starter's orders, Club 50, September 1946

Peter joined the ABC in 1943. Time-trialling resumed in 1946 and Peter competed for the fun of

it, until National Service. His times were modest, culminating with a ride of 5hrs 16mins and 54secs in the 1949 "100". Tom Sherman tells us that when Peter returned from National Service his "return thanksgiving present" was an MG/TC sports car (much to Tom's chagrin) which was the end of his "active" cycling.

Peter was a key influence on my own generation. In March 1962 the Circular published an article by Peter about an all-night ride that took him into the heart of Wales under a full moon for an ascent of the Bwlch-y-Groes. That article provided us cadets with the inspiration for our own all-night ride: in August of that year we followed Peter's tracks to Vyrnwy - and on to Four Crosses for breakfast. Other all-night rides followed more or less annually for the next ten years. Mentioning this to him when last we met at one of the Club reunions in the early '90s, awoke happy memories.

News of Peter's death reached us just before the AGM, too late for the Club to be represented at the funeral. The meeting observed a minute's silence to honour his memory. To Mrs Stephenson and family we offer our deepest sympathy.

DDB

Ira Thomas

Ira died on 27th October at the age of 90 years. He joined us in January 1937, adding to the ranks of our Shropshire section. His cycling started as soon as he had saved enough money for a second hand bicycle. His main love was touring in Wales. If he had not done 100 miles in a day he thought it not worth recording. He rode with the Anfield on Saturdays and the Mid Shropshire Wheelers on Sundays. He raced in ABC events for three seasons before the second war stopped competition. In the 1937 "100" he clocked 5.20.00, in the 1938 "12" 207 miles and 5 furlongs, and he regularly competed in club 25 and 50 events. After his ride in the 2nd 50 of 1939, the *Circular* laconically commented: "Ira finished with his usual 2.28".

In the war he served with the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, with a short interlude in the Anti-Tank Regiment. Not long after his return to KSLI, the September 1944 *Circular* reported, he was seriously wounded in the right shoulder. When he started cycling again it was on the back of fellow Anfielder and MSW Jack Pitchford's tandem. Jack had the handlebars converted so that Ira could ride with his damaged shoulder. Ira was a proud man and did not like depending on anyone, so was soon riding his own bike, probably in pain, but never complaining. He and Hettie also toured a lot by tandem with daughter Barbara in side-car.

Ira was a great worker for the sport. The mainstay in re-forming the Mid-Shropshire Wheelers, he held every office and was elected to life membership.



Ira and Hettie on tour: Ireland, 1934

He was also a 2nd claim member of the North Shropshire Wheelers. He was a Class-A timekeeper, qualified to time national events, a national handicapper and a course measurer. In his opinion, his greatest moment was when he was invited to promote the national time trial 50 mile championship which he did in the most professional manner.

The 100 will not be the same without Ira. He contributed to making the event a success and actively supported it every year, I think, without exception. He helped in many capacities: starting steward between 1955 and 1962, judge and referee 1963 / 64, and event secretary 1979 – 1984. He advised on course details and about safeguarding the event for the future. He served us as vice-president, and was a Life Member.

My earliest recollection of Ira is thanks to Frank Marriott, while I was still at school. Ira's enjoyment of cycling in Wales was enhanced by a wonderful book "*Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of Wales*" published in the 1830s. It describes every town and village, and beautifully engraved copper plate maps show the highways and byways of the day. Frank had his own copy, and recalled that he had found Ira another. "It'll be in his loft," said Frank, "I'm sure if I ask he'll give you it". The book was a generous gift, very much appreciated, and an act of kindness, so typical of Ira.

At the funeral in Shrewsbury on 5th November, Ben Griffiths, Mike and Stuart Twigg, John Futter, Keith Orum, Geoff Sharp and David Birchall represented the Anfield. We extend our deepest sympathy to Barbara and family.

Cliff Ash / DDB

George Longstaff: We sadly report the death of George Longstaff at the comparatively young age of 57. George built exquisitely beautiful frames and was well known to Harold Catling and John Thompson with whom he had many dealings and lively discussions about the finer points of frame design. In my experience George was always right, and the result without exception would be a celebration of his craftsmanship. David Birchall (who travelled with Dave Bassett), Dave Barker and Alan Rogerson were among the many hundreds who attended the funeral in Chesterton, Stoke-on Trent on 16th October. A cavalcade of some 200 cyclists (many on Longstaffs: tandems, trikes, tandem trikes, solos, machines large and small) processed from George's workshop to the cemetery.

Mary Barker: We are very sorry to record the death of Mary Barker after a long illness. Our thoughts are with Dave and family at such a sad time. David and Mary Birchall were amongst those who attended the interment in Mobberley on 17th October.

Racing Results:

- 22/03/03 (7) Mark Gibson (PT) 17.57; Geraint Catherall 18.14;
Ben Griffiths 19.55; Frank Newton Adair (PT) 20.35;
Gerry Robinson (PT) 21.32
- 12/04/03 (7) Geraint Catherall 18.02; Frank Newton Adair (PT) 19.09; Gerry
Robinson (PT) 21.23
- 17/05/03 (7) Geraint Catherall 18.37; Chris Edwards 20.28
- 12/07/03 (7) Ben Griffiths 18.01; Geraint Catherall 18.29;
Gerry Robinson (PT) 20.41
- 30/08/03 (14) Rik Wadden (PT) 36.01; Janet Hassall (PT) 38.49;
Geraint Catherall 38.49; Ben Griffiths 41.20

Geraint's Racing Report

I have enjoyed a very successful season this year with my new bike. I have recorded personal bests at 25, 50 and 100 miles. In June I set a PB in the Burton and District CA 100 on the fast A100/4 course in Etwall, Derby with 4.49.50. I was surprised to see other familiar faces from the North Shropshire Wheelers there as well. I hoped to do a fifty on this course as well but had my entry returned as I was not a member of a local club. In August I beat the hour at 25 miles in the Heanor Clarion CC event on the A25/11 course based on the A50 from Etwall with a time of 59.33; and on 3rd August in the Shropshire CCA 100 returned home with a time of 5.04.36. In the Chester RC 50 on 7th September I set another personal best with 2.23.34. During August I raced every weekend.

Geraint Catherall

Ben's Racing Season

All the events had good weather and I managed to complete the season without a puncture. I finished in 35 events mainly on the very local "D" courses. I only rode two of the Club 7s winning one, and second in the other. I also finished second in the one 14 that we ran. Didn't ride the hill climb. I rode seventeen times at ten miles best time 24.47 in the West Cheshire (six better than 26.00), average being 26.35. I also rode twelve 25s, best time 1.04.48 in the Rhyl CC (but managed 59.45 on Graham Thompson's wheel in the Vics 2-up). Five riders better than 1.07.00 for an average of 1.07.25, slowest 1.09.57. Only one 30 – 1.25.50 and two 50s best time 2.22.34 in the East Liverpool Wheelers event. I didn't ride any hilly events.

Ben Griffiths

Good Times, Bad Times – Chris Shorter

After an 18 year rest, I finally restarted racing on 15th March 2003 in the Stockton Wheelers 10. I had begun my preparation on 14th October last year when I had my first session on training rollers. The first couple of minutes were rather unsteady but I soon relaxed and managed ten minutes without falling off; having not sat on a bike for so long, this was all my seat could take. By the end of the first week I had amassed the grand total of two hours training and had extended my maximum session time to thirty minutes. I slowly got fitter over the following weeks and on Christmas morning rode a wife-timed 10 around a local course. The day was mild but breezy and I wasn't too unhappy to record 25:45 under the circumstances. Training in

the New Year had to be fitted around weekly trips to Paris. I managed 5 hours some weeks but my longest ride by the first race was only 29 miles. I had decided it would be a waste of time to attempt emulating my best performances in my earlier career and I wondered whether I would soon be defending my personal worsts (PWs).

PW's are an interesting thing. If you talk to cyclists you may find that some regard their PW's as dark secrets but others regard them amongst their finest performances, often achieved on days when just getting round was truly heroic, due either to appalling weather or physical condition. After all, if we really want to, any PW could be avoided simply by staying in bed or failing to finish. A cardinal rule, if you pack and don't want to do a PW, is to remember to take your number off before riding past the timekeepers! This year, I saw this rule broken by a star-rider who caught me in a 10 and who blew up shortly afterwards; no doubt he was subsequently none-too-pleased to see his name at the bottom of the result sheet alongside a 45 minute time. If it gets on a result sheet, it's a PW!

When my old friend Andy Fisher told me that his 25-mile PW was a 1:15 on the fast O25/2 course in South Yorkshire I could scarcely believe it. It transpired that snow had actually been lying on the A1 and that Andy had won the event from a small number of other lunatics. I had a similar experience winning a 25 on one of the old Boro courses, where I started off last-man in a snowstorm driven by a freezing northerly gale. It took me over 40 minutes to reach the half-way turn but the return trip was another matter and I returned to the finish for 1:01:30, not a quite a PW but pretty close. The 34 finishers, from a full field of 150 (it was a YCF Association Event), had never worked so hard for a cup of tea!

My 10 PW of 26:30 was achieved in 1985 in an open event near my old home in Beverley, East Yorkshire. The event was on the by-pass, which for much of its length was on an embankment across open fields. It could be quite quick but not on this day with a ferocious crosswind that made safe upright riding virtually impossible. The event would have been cancelled these days. I came second to a local 20-minute man who was somewhat bemused by his 25.

So it was with some trepidation that I reported to the timekeeper in March and put my old 10 PW on the line. It was pretty breezy and new figures didn't look impossible. I remarked to the timekeeper that it was my first go for 18 years and he joked that I would be unlikely to find that racing had got any easier in the intervening period. Soon I was shoved off in to the wind on my new bike. I might have been under-prepared physically but I had got myself plenty of go-faster technology, although the pointy hat would have to wait until later in the season. I had done my homework and knew that the rider behind me, Graham Carter, was one of the best local riders. I managed to hold Graham off for nearly 5 miles, just short of the turn, and I knew then that the PW was safe. I was surprised that Graham offered no encouragement when he went by but few people seem to anymore. One guy I met this year recalled that I had charged past him in the early 80's bellowing "Turbo! Turbo! Turbo!". Racers seem a much more serious crowd these days. Anyway, I nipped around the turn and back downwind to record a comeback 10 time of 24:55 and the PW was safe for another day.

My 10 times came down quite quickly in subsequent events and I first got back under 24 minutes on Good Friday. Soon it became clear that I would need a really bad day to achieve a 10 PW and so I turned to 25-mile-ing, where my PW was a far more risky 1:02:22, achieved in a Rhos-on-Sea event that was my debut at the distance. My first go in the Spring was on the local Tontine course featuring the notorious Clack Bank after about 5 miles, which on this particular day was made even tougher by a strong southerly wind blowing down it. I would undoubtedly have achieved a PW but I packed after 6 miles when my chain came off for the second time. Back at the car I gave the bike a good kicking and stuck my toe through the disk

wheel. I rarely lose my temper and, with other people around, my wife didn't know where to look. Back home, the damaged wheel didn't look too bad and I was able to effect a "repair" with some sticky labels.

Next I rode the Drighlington 25 (A1, North Yorkshire) on another breezy day. Again my chain came off twice but this time I kept my temper. Unfortunately, my legs were under the impression they were signed-up for another 10 and so decided to go on strike after the turn. The return trip into the wind was pretty slow, so slow that I enhanced my old PW by a massive 4:22 to record 1:06:44! I was really stuffed at the end; it was much harder than riding any of my PB's.

With an MDT chain-ring, I said goodbye to unexpected chain-offs. My next three 25s were all outside my old PW but at least there were no further "improvements". Not travelling to Paris meant I could now achieve a massive 7 hours training a week, even though I was working in Dublin quite a lot instead. My next 25 was on a really hot day and I recorded 1:00:45, a big improvement, although I was a bit disappointed as I was on a sub-hour ride until I faded badly in the last five miles. After this, things looked up a bit and the PW was never remotely under threat for the rest of the season.

All this brings me to yesterday when I put my 50 PW of 2:06:50 to the test for the first time in the "last chance", end of season, Harrogate Nova CC event in North Yorkshire. Ruth was confident in my abilities because she predicted I would be unlikely to beat 2:10, if I got around at all. I had an early start and conditions were cold and misty but with little wind. My minute man was Les Thompson of the Scarborough Paragon and Chris Goode, a mutual friend, had suggested that I would catch him in 10 miles and then be re-caught by him at around 30 miles, with plenty of time for him to get the minute back. But I caught Les before 5 miles - he was probably more affected by the cold than me. Things perked up at about 15 miles when the mist cleared and the Sun came out. I felt a bit rough between 30 and 40 miles (and had a few looks back for Les!) but managed to reach the finish in reasonable order in 2:04:16, without the reappearance of the Scarborough man. Of course, it was miles behind my 1:47 PB, but it wasn't a PW either and this year that was a minor triumph.

* * * * *

Open 25: 21st September 2003

For once there were no road closures or wide loads for our end of season open. The event was well run and our thanks are warmly given to Martin Cartwright who has certainly earned his rest after years of hard work for the ABC. Martin was helped by Bill Graham, Mike and Stuart Twigg, Duncan Rees, Tony Pickles, John Futter, Craig Clewley, Dave Eaton, Phil Mason, and Ben Griffiths, with Keith Orum and Bob McNamee timing (these names are who we saw - apologies and thanks to others if missed).

1 st	N Hughes, Deeside Olympic	54.10
2 nd	M Staden, Southdown Velo	55.16
3 rd	A Walsh, BNECC	57.36
Fastest lady:	Christine Roberts, NSW	1.03.27
Fastest Vet	T Horton, Warrington RC	58.01
Handicap	Ron Spencer Warrington RC	52.06 net (1.01.36 actual)

Clubruns round-up

Goshawk, Mouldsworth

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28th June 2003

The Club Run to the Goshawk marked the start of a return trip south to Cornwall, having broken the journey at Knutsford on the way back from Rosemary Farrington's in Edinburgh. Liz has already been inaugurated in the art of attending clubruns, and being a long standing Young Farmer is as well trained as any Anfielder in the art of a good pub lunch. I had not been to the Goshawk for a long time, but on entering, Dad's attempts to get to the bar were thwarted by a little chap who seemed to have over dosed on prozac who could not comprehend the desire to reach the bar over the need to book a suitable dining position. He accompanied the pulling of every pint with a flamboyant description but did not inspire confidence in his ability to keep good beer. His flowery descriptions of the menu were equally worrying.

Having eventually located ourselves at a table, we learnt that the new landlord had come from the Grosvenor. "The one at Aldford?" we enquired, to which the answer was an incredulous "No, *the* Grosvenor in Chester". Such a history explained a lot. The tone of the establishment was further brought down to earth by the arrival of the two-wheeled team.

The decking outside afforded a more normal, if chilly, place to enjoy the Anfield gossip, but the food did not match the descriptions on the menu - our ham, egg and chips being a poor imitation of real grub. The soggy chips were especially unforgivable. The company, though, was as good fun as ever and we miss the opportunity to join club runs more often.

Conclusion - it is no longer a pub suitable for the high standards of the Anfield or Young Farmers and Grosvenor trained chefs they might be, but they can't cook chips.

Adam Birchall

The Liver, Rhydtalog

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6th September 2003

For those not up before 8:00am this Saturday, the early morning was light rain, but it soon cleared to blue sky and fluffy white clouds. The roads were drying rapidly, the lad was encouraged to go to Tesco with the promise of a new Bayblade, so I had no excuses: to the shed and the bike!

With no more thought, I began ambling along the Denbigh road turning left and up to Cilcain. Now with my lack of exercise of late, my weight has increased to some 16 and a half stone (scales haven't got kg) so to say I climbed up to Cilcain would be a bit of a lie – I winched myself up! A brief respite in the village as I hurtled down the narrow road to the left hand hairpin and began climbing again in

fits and starts to the Moel Fammau turning on the Ruthin road. A new road layout made the junction a little tricky – I could see the main road but not get to it, a little exploring soon got me on the right track. Then a dash to Llanferris and left up to Llanarmon, more winching, I'm sure these hills were not this tough when I was fit.

Through a river of sweat I saw the now closed Rose and Crown at Grianrhyd and turned right, more winching and then a pleasant rolling downhill to the Liver. Like a Tour de France rider coming up to the finish of a lone breakaway I felt it necessary to zip up my top and preen myself before I was seen by any club members or perhaps the general public. For if I looked how I felt, it would have been very scary to someone who was unaware of my efforts.

However no bikes outside and no recognisable cars in the car park so all I terrified were the bar-staff. Whilst at the bar Lee arrived looking frisky and I made the decision that I would go the other way home to him. When we were eating it began to rain, then it rained harder and got very dark, then lightning and of course thunder and to cap it all hailstones. Not having a phone signal and not enough money to out last this downpour during a slight let up we convinced ourselves that it was dying away and dashed towards Tryddyn.

Now the weight that had had a detrimental effect on the way up came into its own. I managed to get my chain onto the 12 sprocket, accelerating and spinning the 53 x 12, I found that at this speed the increasing raindrops really hurt.

Turning left for a downwards dash of Tegid hill by now I was having to break quite hard as I could now longer see very well. Wet and greasy roads after the long dry spell made our descent breathtaking, we arrived by the side of Mold Alun School to be greeted by dry roads. At the traffic lights in Mold town centre we must have been a strange sight, wet matted hair, clothes dripping wet, and with blue skies they must of thought we had been through a car wash. Lee peeled off for home and I ambled up to Sychdyn.

On the climb of Shire Hall hill, I must have generated a similar output of a tumble drier, for when I arrived home I had little trace of wet clothing. My tales of riding through thunderstorms got a sceptical look; as if to say you do not go out in the rain, I bet you went to the pub in the village.

Tony Pickles

- While Tony was battling the elements in Wales, Keith Orum and his team were helping to marshal the 2003 British Time Trial Championships which this year used a course circumnavigating Peckforton Hill and Beeston Castle.

Personally, there's not much fun to be found marshalling, especially when



standing at a busy roadside or even worse a roundabout where dangerous driving seems to be the norm. Today though it was different: a quiet leafy lane above Burwardsley, with intense sunshine breaking through thunder showers, making the road surface steam. And there were glorious views over the Dee plain to the distant Welsh hills. A chatty couple of hours passed quickly in the company of Keith Orum and Chris Edwards. Down the hill Craig Clewley manned the junction near Tattenhall with help from his dad and Geoff Sharp.

The Raven, Llanarmon

27th September 2003



So where are the racing-men?

A perfect late summer's day attracted only three testers, with Geraint in number one position, Chris Edwards for whom the climb seems to be an annual test of fitness, and Keith Orum, who demonstrated that he's still a force to reckon with. Timekeeping were Ben Griffiths and Tony Pickles; while Bill Graham, John Futter, and editor supervised. Back at the Raven with the sun warming the day nicely, we lunched outside. Very pleasant.

DDB



Geraint Catherall 4.59



Keith Orum 5.21



Chris Edwards 6.09

For our visit to the Buck, the day was rainy, frustratingly so with bike in the car and ready to ride. But at Bunbury, the planned start, the weather was dreadful with no sign of conditions improving. Indeed just the opposite. At Worthenbury it was definitely not going to change. It is a long time since I last visited the church there. What a gem it is too, beautifully placed: at the edge of the village, on the brow of the flood plain. It is Georgian, classical in style, perfectly symmetrical outside and in. Indoors, there are a wonderful minstrel's gallery (where the church orchestra once played), box pews (with family crests), and a triple decker pulpit.

On leaving I caught a glimpse of two cyclists – John Futter and Ben. In the Buck's teapot lounge we were joined by Mike Twigg and Tecwyn Williams and as we were about to leave John Stinton.

Carden Arms, Tilston

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22nd November 2003

Today was the day of the Rugby World Cup Final between Australia and England; or alternatively the ABC Clubrun to Tilston. Of course the decision as to which to support was not a dilemma at all. It was the perfect day for cycling: with everyone else behind closed curtains glued to TVs the roads were quiet. It was a lovely morning with deep autumn colours and mist hanging on Burwardsley Hill.

I arrived at the Carden Arms with the game just over. With the celebrations in full swing you could tell who had won, so my question to the landlord was "Did we win cobber?" "No" came the reply "but here's a pint to drown your sorrows". If only Ben had known. When Ben ("Match? Wot match?") Griffiths did at last arrive with John Futter, Stuart Twigg, Geraint Catherall and Bill Graham, the pub was more or less re-assembled and food was back on the menu. Mike Twigg and John Stinton completed the party.

- Our spies tell us that only three attended the run to the Bull at Clotton (1st November). Ben confessed that after calculating the average age of the three (73+) he became too disheartened to put pen to paper. We know too that at least John Stinton attended the run to the Britannia, Halkyn (8th November); and Lee Nicholls, Mike Twigg and one other (Bill Graham?) reached the Beeston Castle Hotel (15th November), but arriving separately they did not meet, and so departed separately

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e-Clips

- Keith Orum writes: Congratulations to Adam Birchall and Elizabeth Tilly on their marriage which took place on Saturday 15th November. Pippa and I were privileged to witness the occasion. A sunny autumnal day enhanced the setting at the 13th century parish church at Ludgvan near Penzance. The Porthminster Hotel hosted the reception. I have to say, as a Yorkshireman, the roast beef supplied by Liz's parents who are farmers went down very well to the point that when asked if we would like more, etiquette went by the board and I was ahead of the queue. After a honeymoon walking on La Gomera in the Canary Islands, Adam and Liz will set up home in Truro. I am sure you will all join me in wishing them well.
Adam and Liz were launched in true Cornish style with great hospitality and many guests, with Rosemary Farrington also there for the ABC.

*Even before their marriage the young Birchalls had admitted to tandem riding, and they are now seriously considering buying their own. Adam reckons it is the true test of compatibility: "In company with St Columb Young Farmers on a lovely summer's evening, we hired a tandem and followed the cycle trail down the old railway line by the beautiful Camel estuary. Padstow, famed for Rick Stein's restaurants, was the destination for, appropriately, fish and chips." Reprising the groom's father, the film **Four Weddings and a Funeral**, starring Hugh Grant, was compulsory viewing, as a guide to country weddings for strictly educational purposes you understand.*



Dave Bettaney and Viv Sharp

- Amongst those attending the Annual General Meeting was Dave Bettaney, who obligingly posed for our photographer with Vivienne Sharp. Viv had travelled to Gatesheath with Geoff, Keith and Pippa in the Land Rover carawagon which is still going well for a 32 year old. Quite like old times really. Dave told of plans to visit John Moss in South Africa, on one of his business trips there. It was great to see Dave supporting the ABC and it would be nice to see John Whelan and Brian Whitmarsh more often too. What about it lads?
- In letting us know his new address, Phil Looby apologies for not having been in touch for a while: "having been something of a transient lately, I've not managed to get out on my bike much, but I am now in easy striking distance of some of the club runs - so you never know". Be warned.

Autumn Tints

Cain Valley Hotel, Llanfyllin

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17th to 19th October 2003

Weather, autumn colour and scenery were perfect; the company, food and hotel good; and the cycling excellent: all the ingredients for a successful weekend.

We arrived in ones and twos on Friday afternoon. Geraint was the only one riding the whole way. His route led over the Horseshoe Pass, followed by some serious climbing and very steep descents to Glyn Ceiriog and Llanrhaiadr-ym-Mochnant: “thankfully my brakes were up to the task” he said. With time to spare he also managed a ride to Vyrnwy, as did Stuart Twigg, Chris Edwards and David Birchall who circumnavigated the lake in the hour before dusk.

On Saturday, Bala was the destination for the roadmen. Vyrnwy provided elevenses for some while others climbed Cwm Eunant to the summit of Bwlch-y-Groes. The party regrouped on the descent to Llanuchllyn, but here again split – with the more leisured tourists lunching round a log fire in the pub, while the big hitters headed to Bala and a café. The circuit, described by Geraint as “demanding”, was completed over the Hirnant.

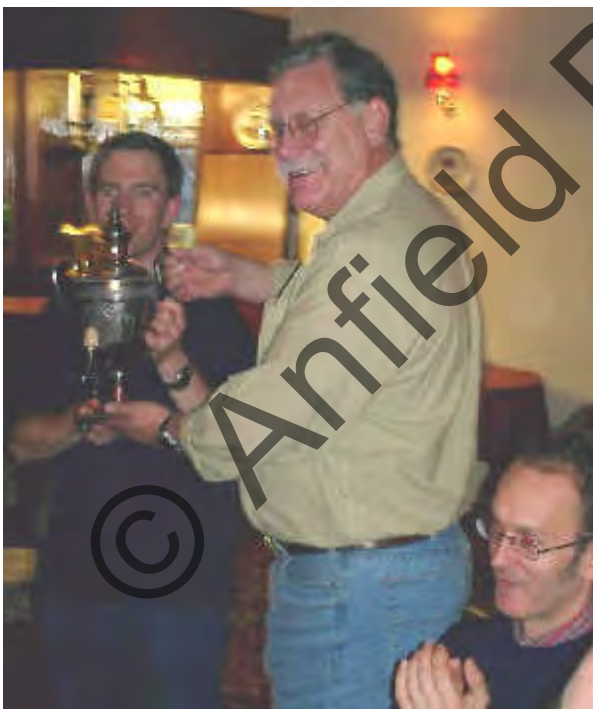
Meanwhile, John Futter and Mike Hallgarth met the off-roaders for lunch at the Lake Vyrnwy Hotel, in company with Mike Twigg and Tecwyn, while Tony Pickles searched for Mark Livingstone. Here Mike Hallgarth swapped sides for the return off-road ride over bracken hills and through forests, following drove routes and woodland tracks. For all, the day could not have been more enjoyable.

The evening excelled too with Master of Ceremonies Pickles handing out prizes with great aplomb. The hotel is under new management, and while the future may be uncertain, we were made very welcome and the food was excellent. A local male voice choir wandered in during the evening to entertain those who were still in the bar.

Sunday morning saw the parting of ways. John Thompson and Graham were quickly off with 130 miles ahead of them by the evening. Geraint was not far behind, riding back to Mold over the Berwyns and then via Llandrillo, Corwen and Bryneglwys: “A pity there were not more people riding out and back” he said. For the rest of the cyclists it was back to Lake Vyrnwy for a final circuit of the lake and lunch by the dam.

Attending were Tecwyn, (who did the organising), Mike and Stuart Twigg, Keith Orum, Geoff Sharp, Karl Nelson, Ben Griffiths, John Futter, Mike Hallgarth, Geraint Catherall, Tony Pickles, Martin Cartwright, Mark Livingstone, Chris Edwards, Graham Thompson, John Stinton, Hugh Dauncey and friends Ian Billington, Graham Smith from Bristol and Graeme Smith from Newcastle.

Autumn Tints, Llanfyllin October 2003



Geraint Catherall receives the Higham Trophy from Master of Ceremonies Pickles



John Thompson and John Stinton

With best wishes for Christmas and safe cycling in 2004