

## **This is a collection of some thoughts from Sharon Clifford who rode with the Club around 1986 – 92, including some thoughts on the 'Birthday Rides'**

### **Background**

I live near Bolton these days and very much still cycle.... think it's part of my DNA. I mainly rode with Coventry CTC from around 86-92, though I did join rides when I was back 'home' visiting relatives. My participation in the in the Birthday Rides with CTC Coventry was my first experience of the birthday rides

### **Background to the Birthday Rides**

A District Association would volunteer and would be selected to run it each year. The prime requirements were to supply indoor accommodation and campsites.

The DA would develop a selection of daily rides and routes, these would be A, B, C, D, standard though sometimes there would be a 'rough stuff ride'. Also there was always a Birthday Rides 200 Audax for which the Audax UK organisation produced a special badge.

Rides followed standard CTC rides with 11's, Lunch and 3's organised.

We had village halls and WI enlisted to run the stops. The longer rides would have fewer riders generally so it was usually considered okay to use a regular cafe for these as they would not be so overwhelmed. When booking you could choose your rides and book tickets for each stop in advance... though often I only booked 11's and 3's taking packed lunch.

I believe there has been a major change these days as the Birthday rides are run more by the holiday side of CTC and these days when booking you have to book tickets for all meals.

We also had evening events which included things like disco, and or barn dance etc. There is also a separate (or was) Birthday rides sit down evening meal. And on the day of the 5th August there would be a Birthday tea, all rides would come together at a venue where a buffet tea and birthday cake would be available to all.

As a small DA we had the assistance of Birmingham DA with the rides. In those days we had each ride split into smaller groups with a ride leader.

Hope this gives you some insight into the Birthday rides.

### **Other Memories**

Gordon Mead and Geoff Collins were regular attendees on the rides when

I rode with the section. Sadly I ended up being the first person the hospital contacted when Geoff was taken in after his heart attack and with no family anywhere near I went and ID'd the body. I am nurse / midwife (or was now retired) so not too traumatic as it might have been for someone else.

Following on from Geoff's death a regular Rough Stuff tourist ride was developed because Geoff was a keen rough stuff rider. As we called off road riding in those days.

There was a 75k ride that was run for the 75 year anniversary.... which, as a family, we came down to ride.

We also used to have a two weekly winter clubroom through the winter months where members showed their slides from trips over the year and Dave and Margaret were in charge of the tea urn and biscuits. It was a good social evening with older non-cycling members being able to attend and keep in touch.

*Sharon*

## Photographs

Not many photos from my CTC Cov days but these are a few. Leading a Birthday Rides group from Warwick uni. Malvern hostel trip. York rally I still have that CTC top.









