

The
Coaster



the magazine of the

EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT ASSOCIATION
CYCLIST TOURING CLUB

CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB
East Sussex District Association

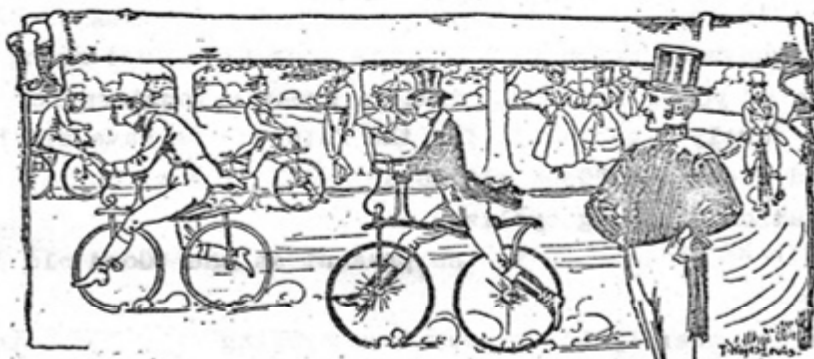
'THE COASTER

Issue 2. November 1981

PRESIDENT FRED MENEW

Secretary : Iris Stevens, 3 Lansdowne Crescent, Hailsham

Treasurer : John Bainbridge, 4 Hawks Road, Hailsham



The D A committee wish apologise to our readers and contributors for the late production of the magazine . Unfortunately the editor Dennis Jakeman has been unable to produce it sooner due to pressure of work outside cycling. We thank him and his typist Maggie for all the work they have put in .

Our thanks go once again to Esther and Maurice Carpenter who have generously arranged the printing.

Your President.

You will recall that at the Annual General Meeting of the District Association held in November 1980, I was elected as President. It was a totally unexpected honour and it was certainly an "on the spot" decision on my part to accept nomination.

Since then I have pondered from time to time on the precise duties of a President of an organisation such as ours: I have come to the conclusion that as well as opening and closing D.A. functions with suitable short speeches, it is important that the President should be seen as much as possible and show as much interest as possible in all that is taking place.

With this in mind, I attended a committee meeting of the Seaford and Newhaven Section earlier this year and found among the predominance of young members present a great enthusiasm for cycling which surely augurs well for the future. We have all heard or talked about the "Good old days" and I am sure our present generation of young cyclists will be looking back on their youth and referring in turn to the present as the "Good old days."

Maybe temporarily lured away from cycling by other interests and commitments, or both, I shall be surprised if they don't return. Eventually they youngsters of today will decide the future of the D.A. and it seems that we need have no fears about the outcome.

Fred Mehew

The day is very hot; but I have been in the shade. In one place I rode above a mile completely arched over by the boughs of the underwood. What an odd taste that a man must have who prefers a turnpike road to a lane like this.

William Cobbett (1762 -1835)

'Rural Rides.'

Good Bye 1980.

Hello 1981.

There we were indulging in our favourite pastime - tea and cakes at Mrs. Osgoods' when the old 'uns amongst us started on the "Do you remember?" tack. Well of course most of us don't, but when they came up with the idea of a New Year Supper we were all ears. If there is one thing we appreciate it's the thought of food. Talk soon livened up with "Where shall we have it?" or more to the point, "Who will have us?" "We will have a supper, then ride in the New Year." This from Dennis, but where? "How about a do it yourself affair at Blackboys hostel, if Dave will have us?" said Iris. Well there was one way of finding out - straight there now and ask.

At the hostel Dave was all enthusiastic despite us having just got him out of bed (Ken's version which Dave denied), his first comments being "What are we going to eat?" Everyone then looked at Iris, who after floundering about a bit said she would give it some thought. After all it was only early October! Asking about estimated numbers (we said about 15!) Dave soon got wound up - "We'll have baked spuds cooked in the Aga, I'll supply them along with some beer and we'll have a bonfire. Do you really need to go for a ride? We could see the old year out around the fire." This met with unanimous agreement by the dozen present and we were off homeward. Climbing up the hill towards Blackboys, Brian and Iris came up with an idea of a mini-quiz next morning (1st January) in the lanes around Blackboys, which Iris agreed to do promising it would not be difficult.

With a flurry of D.A. events in November and December, the close of the year was suddenly upon us. All day Wednesday cyclists arrived, each weighed down with a glass bottle. From the original estimate of 15 the ranks had swelled to 34, 28 of whom were staying the night.

All Wednesday afternoon food was prepared. Under Iris's supervision and the interference of Brian, the two Susans made four enormous spotted dick puddings. "What fun" they said when up to their elbows in flour and suet. "Just like making mud pies" At six o'clock the puddings were put on to boil and bubbled away merrily for the next five hours, with Ken getting the men to give them the occasional poke "just to test them," In his kitchen Dave wasn't having much luck with the Aga - the spuds just weren't cooking. This on top of the failure of his last barrel of beer was nearly too much. Supper was delayed while the spuds were transferred to the electric cooker but eventually everything was ready and everyone had managed to squeeze around the tables. After a large helping each of ham and pickles came even larger helpings of spotted dick. Second helpings were the order (there was plenty) and some who shall remain nameless had three (to the chorus of 'pig, pig'), while Harold Coleman tried it with pickled onions and beetroot, having had his bluff called he admitted it tasted awful.

During the evening Dave had sold out of YHA song books in readiness for a riotous evening of lusty singing led by Dennis and Maggie. It is amazing that an Aussie should know more of our traditional songs than we do! Harold Coleman had some very original versions, whilst Pete Smith hid behind a copy of Rambler & Climber mouthing the words. The younger element of the party looked on the rest in a mixture of disgust and disbelief.

There was a break for the washer-ups while the old year was disposed of; Andrew Attwood having to be prised away from the sink. Then with a smouldering bonfire (another disappointment for Dave, but we had had rather a lot of rain) under a brilliant starlit night 1981 was duly toasted in..It seemed that signalled off rather a lot of kissing all round. It was quite an unusual thing in cycling circles, but out of 34 there were 17 of each sex and some certainly took advantage of this. Back inside, amid popping corks, the singing got underway again and Dave's voice was certainly getting slurred while some couldn't seem to read the right verse. Roy Humphrey was telling

everyone that although he couldn't walk when drunk he could ride his bike ! So finally after coffee some started to call it a day, with six heading homewards and the last of the revellers getting to bed about 2.30p.m. A great end to 1980.

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Letter to the D.A. Secretary from the Warden of Blackboys Youth Hostel following the two working parties there.

11th February, 1981.

Dear Iris,

Now that the hurricane has passed and the dust settled I am taking the opportunity to write to thank you for the East Sussex D.A. C.T.C. work party which you organized for the weekends of 31st January and 7th February, 1981, here at Blackboys Y.H.

Words really cannot express my gratitude and admiration for the way the whole marvellous team tackled any job, small or large about which one was injudicious enough even to whisper. With a great Clerk of Works like K. Stevens on the job I was made enjoyably redundant (Ken really should take up plumbing - he's pretty good) and the Solomonian qualities of Chairman Dennis were always happily in evidence.

From Heather's young years to the venerability of Yub and Phil this group of all ages helped each other without one unkind word and this is a noticeable characteristic of all the real cyclists I have met.

I have attached a list of all the jobs done, insofar as I can recall them - undoubtedly there were many more carried out without a word by the super masters and apprentices and for the omissions I apologize, but in defence I can say to you honestly that I'm more than a trifle overawed by the whole exercise.

Not least, I want to acknowledge the invaluable and cheerful help of those who are members of other D.A's - another example of the friendship of the Knights in cycle clips.

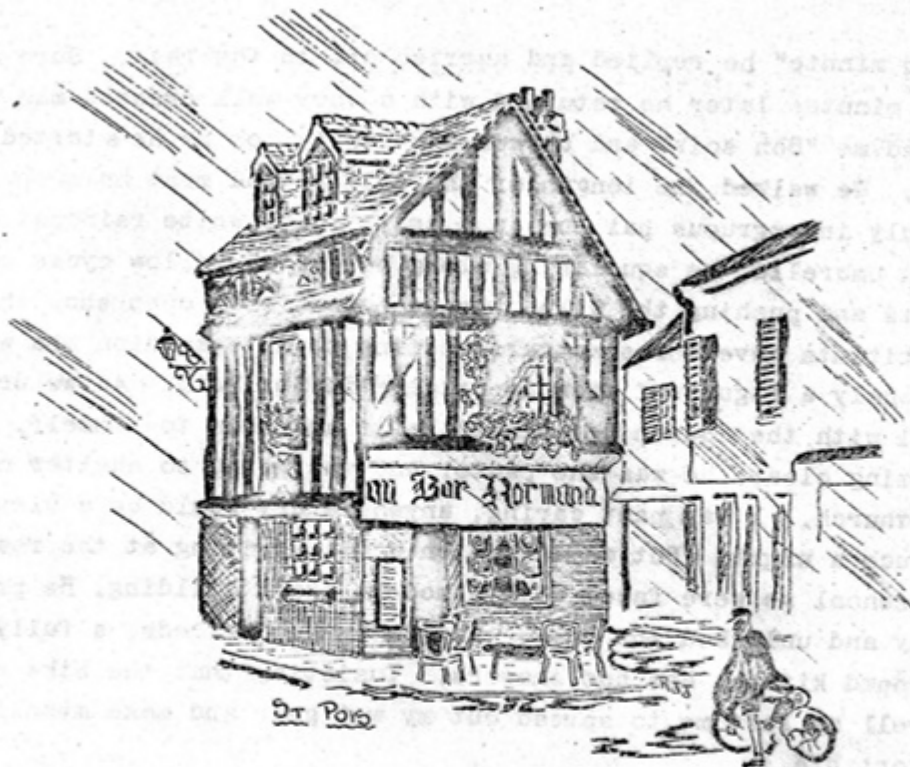
As you know, at Blackboys it is open house to you all. In or out of season, open or closed, you are welcome at any time. It is my privilege to know each one of you.

As ever,

David.

D.A CALENDAR

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| December 13th | CHRISTMAS LUNCH . Ripe V.H 12.30 for 1pm.
bookings £3.25 to John Bainbridge by 3rd Dec. |
| 31st | NEW YEARS EVE SUPPER Blackboys YH 9.00pm
bookings £1 (plus hostelling fee) to Iris
Stevens by Dec.20th. |
| January 24th | FREEWHEELING Sandy Cross Heathfield 11.0am
PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION (3 slides per entrant)
& MEMBERS SLIDES, TEA £1.25 3pm. |
| February 27th | SLIDESHOW by Richard & Margaret Nicholl 7.30pm
Hostel bookings direct or to David Rix . |
| March 27th | 'Another Year in the Countryside' by Brian
Hoath , slideshow at Hellingly V.H 7.30pm |
| 28th | 30 mile reliability ride in 2½ - 3 or 3½hours
organiser David Rix . |



SOAKED IN ST. POIS

If it had not been for the rain I would have ridden through St. Pois with hardly a second glance. It was just another village in the Normandy heartland with the usual scattering of shops and bars beside a narrow main street and I asen many similar during that holiday in France.

But rain had been falling intermittently all afternoon, and now as I wheeled into the main street it had settled into a steady downpour. Rain had seeped through shoes and socks and was starting now to trickle down my neck, for there comes a time when the best of capes will keep out rain no longer. Camping was out of the question and I was becoming desperate for any sort of firm roof over my head.

I rode the length of the village from the 'Ecole' at the top of the hill to the 'Marié' at the bottom, looking for any sign of accommodation. There was nothing and the nearest town was Vivre nearly 20 miles away. Just as I was giving up in despair I saw a villager at work in a carpenter's shop (was he building an ark?). In a mixture of sign language and a few French words I was able to convey what I wanted.

"Cinq minute" he replied and hurried off in the rain. Sure enough, five minutes later he returned with a very well dressed man who wished me "Bon soir" and beckoned me to follow as he started up the hill. We walked the length of the village and must have appeared a truly incongruous pair, he in a smart suit, white raincoat and black umbrella, me squelching along beside in yellow cycle cape, shorts and pushing the bike. As we passed each open shop the inhabitants gave a respectful greeting to my companion who was obviously a figure of much importance in St. Pois. As we drew level with the church he pointed to it and then to himself. It was becoming clear; he was the pastor and was going to shelter me in the church. I was past caring, anywhere dry would be a blessing on such a night. But we walked on until arriving at the rear of the school we were faced with a modern brick building. He produced a key and unlocked the door. Inside were bunk beds, a fully equipped kitchen and hot showers. Insisting that the bike came in as well he left me to spread out my wet gear and make myself comfortable.

After a good night's rest in a room with about a dozen empty bunk beds, I awoke to find a clear day dawning. My spirits, damp as the rain the night before, rose with the sun. The pastor, for that is who he was, came round to see if I was alright and stayed for a cup of coffee. Then he walked with me to the edge of the village and wished me "Bon voyage".

A little incident perhaps, but the sort of thing that raises cycle touring far above mere pleasure.

Ray James

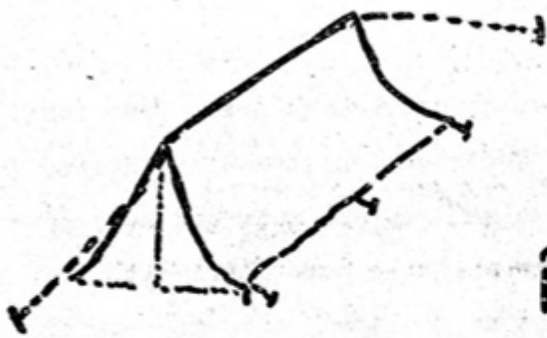
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Calling all REAL cyclists, young, old, and in between.
For a better way to see your village, town or countryside.

High Roads, low roads, hard and easy rides .

HILLS and MUD a speciality: Contact Ken Stevens

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Camping as seen by. Brian Wilkins.

During the early part of last summer I was persuaded by some people whom I laughingly refer to as friends, to "sample the delights of cycle camping", and being completely mad, I readily agreed to try it; the only problem being that I did not have a tent. However, I soon put that matter out of the way by pleading poverty. This ploy had the desired effect and I was soon offered the loan of a suitable tent.

Now, although there are no rules regarding cycle camping, it should be pointed out that there are certain aims and laws governing this activity. You know - like the third law of thermos flasks or whatever it is called!

The first aim seems to be to load your cycle up with as much gear and equipment as possible (the heavier the better) and then to cart this stuff around the countryside, up hill and down dale, whilst at the same time telling all and sundry what a wonderful time you are having. Absolute masters at this are Phyl and Yub Moore, who, somehow, manage to pack the entire contents of their home on to a tandem and trailer.

Actually getting to the camp site can be considered quite an achievement, but do not get too excited when you arrive, for your troubles are only just starting and if, at this point you knew what was to come, you would hightail it out of there without further delay

The first task that faces you is, of course, to erect your tent. Now, if you happen to be young, good-looking and called Susan, then there is no problem, but if, like me, you are male and have none of these advantages, then things are a little more difficult. A beginner trying to erect a tent he has never even seen before, never fails to give amusement and pleasure to the more experienced campers who assist your struggles with unwarranted comments and advice interspersed with outbursts of muffled laughter. Somehow, despite all this, you manage eventually to get the thing into roughly the correct shape, only to be told that the fly sheet is supposed to go on to the outside of the tent and not the inside - as if things like this were common everyday knowledge!

Eventually some sort of order is established out of all the chaos and you begin to stow away all that gear. This is when you meet the first law of camping which says that, no matter how much stuff you take with you, you will always leave some essential item (such as the tine opener) behind.

The next task is to organise a much needed cup of tea - and here we come to the second law of camping which states that, thou shalt not make a cup of tea yourself when you can just as easily scrounge one from somebody else. This can be achieved in various ways, the most common being to announce in a loud voice so that all can hear "Oh damn ! I think I've forgotten the tea bags." If this fails to work then an alternative method is to wait until somebody has got a brew going and then to saunter nonchalantly over and start a conversation about some item of equipment you are thinking of buying. This should bring forth some advice plus the required offer of a cuppa. Now, after all this you are naturally hungry and

here unfortunately, you are on your own - but be careful, there are hidden dangers for the unwary. The third law states that no matter where you place your stove it will always try to fall over. There is also a second part to this law which is that, whichever side of your stove you place the windshield the wind will always blow from the other side.

If, despite all these hazards you manage to get some sustenance you are then faced with a great pile of washing up! Before this is completed however, someone is sure to suggest going for an evening constitutional around the local countryside. This should on no account be missed as it is one of the more pleasant rituals of camping and can, in fact, be quite entertaining, especially when one of the less agile members of the party contrives to fall over a gate.

The evening usually finishes with a last cup of tea or coffee plus the usual natter, before everyone retires to their respective beds. At this point, law number four comes into play. This says that no matter where you place your sleeping bag there will always be a strange lump underneath and you soon find out that these lumps are very peculiar, for even if you decide that it is too uncomfortable and move your bed, you will find that the "lump" has moved with you. (What is more, you will discover as you become more experienced, that these strange lumps actually follow you to other campsites).

Anyway, you eventually come to terms with this lump only to discover law number five. This is, that no matter who is sleeping in the next tent to yours, they will be skilled in the art of snoring, and that, together with the fact that the ground acts like a loudspeaker and transmits every sound to your ear, will be enough to send you into near hysteria in no time at all. You lie there cursing, swearing, tossing and turning, and finally, Miracle of Miracles, you manage to drop off to sleep, only to be awakened five minutes later by a blackbird who decides that your ridgepole is the ideal perch upon which to announce to the world that dawn has arrived. Grrrr!

When at last you decide to give the idea of sleeping up as a bad job and get up, you are first of all moaned at for getting up too early and then told that it is quite normal to have a bad first night; for even regulars have a restless time the first night out. I therefore have devised a fiendishly clever plan to overcome this problem. In future I am going to stay at home on the first night and only go camping on the second. See, I'm not as mad as you think I am!

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Books in the D.A. Library

Winged Wheel - the history of the club.

A Centenary Route - details of the round Britain ride.

The Great Bike Race - an account of the Tour de France.

The Penguin Book of the Bicycle - a history of bikes and cycling.

England by Bicycle - a springtime tour.

If you wish to borrow any of these books contact D.A. Secretary, Iris Stevens.

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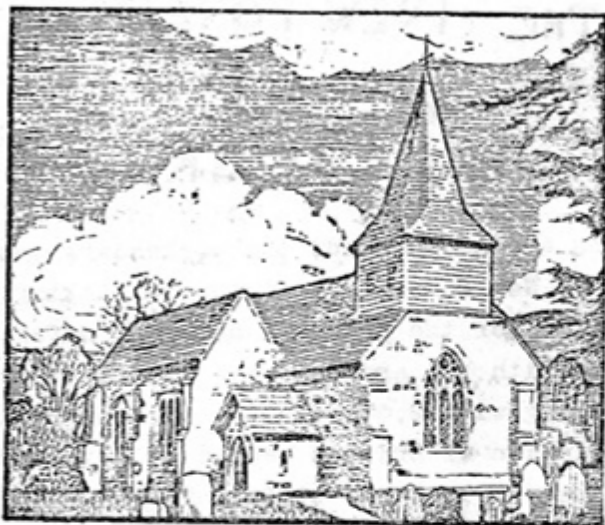
Sale of C.T.C. Goods

A selection of goods, Tee shirts, saddle covers, water bottles etc. are held by your Secretary, Iris Stevens. Why not purchase from her and help D.A. funds. She is also willing to order any goods you require. This not only saves you postage but donates 5% to our funds.

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Clubroom

At the recent A.G.M of the Seaford & Newhaven and Camping & Hostelling Sections the members decided the D.A. needed a clubnight. Alfriston Youth Hostel's warden Mike Hume was approached and he willingly agreed to let us have one night a month in the gamesroom. We start February 24th 1982 at 7.45pm.



AS WAS BOUND TO
HAPPEN "CHURCH
CRAWLER ENCOUNTERED
A VICAR WHO
SUPPLIED THE
FOLLOWING POEM.

Once I'm there, there's nothing going on,
I step inside, letting the door thud shut
Another church: matting seats and stone,
And little books: sprawlings of flowers, cut
For Sunday, brownish now; some brass and stuff
Up at the hold end: the small neat organ;
And a tense, musty, unignorable silence
Brewed God knows how long. Hatless I take off
my cycle-clips in awkward reverence.

Move forward, run my hand around the font
From where I stand, the roof looks almost new -
Cleaned or restored? Someone would know: I don't.
Mounting the lectern I peruse a few
Hectoring large-scale verses, and pronounce
"Here endeth" much more loudly than I'd meant.
The echoes snigger briefly. Back at the door
I sign the book, donate an Irish sixpence
Reflect the place was not worth stopping for

Yet stop I did.....
.....For though I've no idea
What this accoutred frowsty barn is worth
It pleases me to stand in silence here.

Taken from "Church Going" by Philip Larkin.

EASTER IN THE NEW FOREST. OR. MOORE IN ^{THE} A MUCK.

With the weather promising a fine weekend, the weekenders set off by various means to the New Forest - half a dozen taking advantage of the Persil, two for the price of one rail offer. The Stevensmobile complete with Yub and Phyl was the first to arrive and set up camp, along with 2,000 others, at the Roundhill site. Half the population of Britain seemed to have made a beeline for Hampshire, but fortunately it is a very large and roomy site at Roundhill and after the usual agony of finding a suitable spot we settled down to wait for the other campers.

The train assisted group having disembarked at Southampton station had a minor setback when it was discovered the Hythe ferry doesn't run on bank holidays. However this was soon overcome and they quickly cleared the hectic confines of Soton and were soon pedalling in quiet lanes to Bucklers Hard where a pleasant hour or two was spent. Here was the parting of the ways as the hostellers headed to Norley Wood and the campers to Roundhill. It took them three-quarters of an hour to find us when they arrived on site. As the main site was at its capacity they made John pitch in the lightweight section (about 10 minutes away from the rest of us); Susan Jacques was sharing the van with Heather.

Saturday dawned a beautiful day, though a bit cold, and we soon set off on a quiet forest track to Lyndhurst. Good roughstuff - even Yub approved! At Lyndhurst a pleasant surprise in the form of Brian (I.O.W.) Brodhurst greeted us along with what was to become a familiar sight - David with his bike upside down changing his tyre. He had already stopped twice since leaving Norley Wood that morning. "Bad maintenance", says Brian. The tyre was bald!

Replete after coffee and doughnuts we quickly left the madding crowds and congested roads for Emery Down and the forest lanes.

Lunch was taken at the Portuguese Fireplace, not before David had pumped his tyre up again - with Greg's pump, he had left his own at home! Here we were treated with our first display of Greg's manly !! physique as he shed his racing jerseys and was soon down to his skin shorts then to be promptly terrorised by big brother Paul. On and off again down the Ornamental Drive as David stopped to pump up his tyre and Iris to mend! a puncture (for Iris read Ken). The next unscheduled stop was to help a motorist who had tried to go where he wasn't supposed to, and had put himself in a ditch that had been dug to keep him out.

The motorist laughed when Ken, who was slightly off the front with Heather asked if he wanted a tow. "What, with a bike?" he said. At that moment 10 others came sweeping down the hill and in no time had bodily lifted the car out and back on the road, leaving a very apologetic motorist. Yub waved his cap under the fellow's nose saying "A contribution to club funds" but to no avail.

Another unscheduled stop for David and Greg (that tyre again!) and we were at Knightwood Oak and David was instructed by Ken to mend his puncture properly this time. In between advice given by Brian Brodhurst to David, the rest were entertained by Greg and Paul cavorting about, Greg trying to see how long Paul's braces would stretch and David mending (?) and re-fitting his second tube. An icecream was the next excuse and then it was over the ford into Brockenhurst and a quick stop for David to buy a new innertube. "I'd better get two just in case!"

The roughstuff through to East Bodre Church had sprints-and-tubs clad Gred out-running us and then it was farewell to Brian and a promise to meet the four hostellers in Lymington on the morrow for elevenses. More rough-stuff, a bit loose this time, then back on site.

Next morning we were greeted by Brian Wilkins and Susan who had come down the previous evening but had been unable to find us in the dark. It was good rough-stuff and quiet lanes to

Lymington (full of yachting types and freezing cold) where all the cafes were full. So , off through the lanes and on to a bit of rough-stuff recommended by Brian B. (I.O.W.) as good and rideable. It was in the summer of 1976 - today-it was a series of mini lakes. Undaunted and with the assurance from a local that we would get through on bikes we skirted the first stretch of water after manhandling the bikes and tandem over a barbed wire fence. The next stretch was rideable, only an inch or two of water if you kept close to the edge, and then it came - deep water. While the rest of us inched our way through it, Yub and Phyl had shoes and socks off and were wading , accompanied by the click of cameras. Phyl, who had been unwell for the last two days with a heavy cold, reckoned she would get pneumonia. We eventually reached Milford on Sea, where after a hot cuppa and a few 'aliens' shot on the space invader, we sat on the beach out of the wind for lunch and a magnificent view of the Needles.

Yub having got his feet wet once, persuaded Iris that a paddle would do her bunion good. (She never felt her feet again for the rest of the ride!) Not to be outdone, Greg was soon in up to his shorts and in great danger of falling right in as he performed on the edge of a groyne, while John sedately paddled insisting that it was quite warm. Leaving the sea, it was off into the cold wind and lanes where Ken turns down a No Through Road. "Oh, no." says Greg, on a spare only, and David "It'll probably end up in a field." "It's an R.U.P.P. and looks alright," says Ken. So it was off over a stream and up a track, so far so good, then around the corner MUD. Half the group eased their way around it without putting a foot in, then it was the tandem, Yub making good progress when a cry from Phyl, "I've lost my shoe" as she waded a muddy shoeless foot about. After fishing about in the mire she produced something that vaguely resembled a shoe. "I can't get it on." "I shouldn't think so "says Ken removing handfuls of mud from the toe.

While Phyl was cleaning up, Paul Cornford had gone ahead and now returned saying the track was impassable further up. Not quite believing him we pushed on only to be confronted with a sea of oozing mud - and the end in sight a quarter of a mile away.

After a war council a route was sorted out through two fields, but just as we re-immersed the enemy appeared in the form of an irate farmer's wife, accusing us of trespass. However, Ken managed to soothe her down, pointing out that we had got to a point of no return and as we had come from East Sussex we were not to know the state of the track. Around the last of the mud, where several managed to put a foot in, including Susan Jacques who had it half way up her leg. It was then discovered the field's holly hedge had taken its toll Five punctures! David fitting his fourth inner tube and Greg left with no spare! "I don't care if it's 40 miles round but no more rough stuff," says Paul C. So a lane route was picked back for dinner followed by a wash and brush up for the bikes not to mention the shoes.

It was unanimously decided to go for a walk (NO MUD) next morning, before packing up and going our individual ways, Greg and Paul having already left for Swanage to join Mum and Dad. Leaving Yub and Phyl on camp, both having slept like logs the night before, (it was all the excitement of yesterday) the rest took a couple of hours' walk in the forest and were rewarded by the sight of two deer not to mention some enormous ant hills. Susan J. managed to put her foot in the mud again!

After lunch farewells were said and despite everything - mud and punctures - it was voted another great DA weekend. Maybe it was the number 13 that had something to do with it - or was it in spite of!

IRIS.

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After the purchase of a new tandem at 70, Yub and Phyl Moore are rumoured to be starting on a new savings campaign after they return from France. A new Tandem Trike for their 80th birthdays! "So as we don't fallover head when we stop," says Yub.

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ON BUYING A TANDEM

Hello.

Oh, Hello. I'm ringing about the tandem you're advertising for sale in the Evening Argus.

Pardon?

It's about your advert in the Evening Argus.

Oh yes ?

Well, I'm interested but would like to know a bit more about it.

What do you want to know?

Well, what size is the frame ?

The frame ? Well I'm afraid I don't know.

I see. Well, I want it for myself and my wife but she's much shorter than I am. Do you think it might be suitable ?

Well, I imagine so, it's a normal sort of size.

Do you know what make it is?

No. I think it's been re-varnished. It looks very nice. Why don't you come to see it ?

Yes, that would be best, but I live in Hailsham and I'm at work at the moment. I don't finish till 6p.m. and then I'll have to go home to get my wife. It will take us about an hour to get to you in Hove. You will probably have sold it by then anyway.

Well you're the only one who has rung so far. I'll keep it for you if you think you'll definitely be interested. Do you both play ?

Do we both play what ?

The piano of course !

I'm ringing about a tandem !

After a bout of uncontrollable laughter the lady then said, I'm sorry I'm selling a piano, but my father-in-law has a tandem he wants to sell and must have used my phone number for his advert as he isn't on the phone. I don't know anything about his tandem but I'll give you his address.

AND THAT IS HOW WE GOT OUR TANDEM.

John Bainbridge.

'CROWS YOGA'

Yoga is an activity practised by middle-class European ladies whereby they get themselves up in strange attire and taking up blankets and bedrolls travel like so many refugees to a hall or room where a teacher - usually of the same sex - instructs them in forming unusual configurations with their bodies; these are often executed whilst on their posteriors and are thus known as asanas. These are aided by strange breathing rituals followed by a doze after their labours.

For this the ladies lose some tenseness and hang-ups - possible; pounds avoir-du-pois - probably and pounds sterling - certainly. Spin-off benefits (if that is the word) include inducing their families to eat natural (i.e. meatless and insipid food): keeping infuriatingly calm during arguments and reading weighty tomes written by thin, bearded authors with unpronounceable names usually suffixed 'anda'. These are Yogis except to those of extreme political persuasion, in which case they are known as 'bloody wogs.'

A more insidious aspect of Yoga consists in the practitioners hiding themselves away and sitting on the floor with their eyes closed doing nothing for half an hour or more at a time. This is called meditation and is a crafty way of getting the other members of the household to do the chores.

Yoga seems a mixed blessing. On the credit side the time spent practising Yoga, which sometimes becomes considerable, cannot be spent in having affairs with the milkman, commercial travellers etc., but the aura of tranquility and inner happiness attained can become quite unnerving and maddening when one feels like a good row. On the other hand, the sight of so much horizontal crumpet is almost an inducement to take it up oneself.

"PROGRESS"

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BRIAN WILKINS.

The other day I chanced to meet my elder brother and, as is usual on such all-too-rare occasions, the conversation turned to things past. We are both countrymen and country lovers, being born and raised in the very heart of Sussex. Our unusual youth was spent at a time when the country was engaged in war; I say unusual because all the men of serviceable age were away and we spent most of the time in the company of the older generation of our day. And what grand old men some of them were - real characters always ready to entertain us boys with stories from their youth. This sometimes creates the illusion in us that our memories go back farther than they really do. One of the very real memories that we both have, is of being allowed to take charge of a team of shire horses and of leading them round the fields at haymaking time whilst the men, and sometimes the women, loaded the hay carts with great pitchforks of sweet smelling hay.

Memories like this made us ponder on the great progress that has been made since we were young ; all the way from the horse to today's sophisticated farm machiner, from the abacus up to today's most complicated computer. Whichever direction you look we have advanced by leaps and bounds. But what has all this so-called progress cost? Perhaps we shall never know; but one aspect of it that we can, and should, be aware of, is the cost to wildlife and the environment. By far the biggest culprit is, of course, pollution. The trouble is pollution is for the most part invisible. I am not referring to the litter on the grass verge, or the oil on the beach - though these things are bad enough. No, I am thinking of the detergents that we pout into our rivers and the deadly sprays we use on our farms and gardens

The big problem is, that whereas we can see for ourselves the effect of oil on sea birds or the demise of a poor animal hit by a motor car (and never forget that as far as the animal is concerned the mere presence of the motor car is a form of pollution, even without consideration of the effect of their fumes), and although countless thousands of creatures die by such means, the effects of the sprays and detergents are far more insidious and deadly. They cause infertility in both animals and plants, they cause birds to lay soft shelled or infertile eggs. Take, for example, what happens when someone innocently sprays some aphids on their broad beans. Along comes a ladybird that likes to eat aphids and by the evening, she, with her belly full of aphids and poison, is in turn eaten by some insectivorous creature such as a swallow, frog or bat. However she goes, she inevitably passes on the poison one more step up the food chain, and from the insect eating animal it passes to a carnivorous one and so on, ad infinitum. That oh so innocent spray, intended for the aphids, can, before you know it, be having disastrous effects on a whole host of creatures.

I am not here concerned with the rights and wrongs concerning the use of such chemicals, but rather their effects, which unlike the squashed hedgehog on the road, does not become apparent until we suddenly realise that there are no more sparrow hawks or buzzards around, (both these birds were once common in Sussex) or that a particular flower can no longer be found (flowers like the oxlip and the cowslip were also once common. How many people today have seen a marsh gentian growing in the wild, and yet when I was a boy they were not thought particularly unusual or rare. It is also worth noting that flowers which we today regard as common are, in fact, on the decline. An example of this is the primrose (Latin *prima rosa* or first rose). This flower has been reduced by an estimated thirty percent in the last 25 years and although it is fair to say that some of this decline is due to a change in habitat, it nevertheless serves to point out that we cannot afford to become complacent, for should this trend continue, this popular spring flower will, in its turn, become rare or even disappear.

One could go on and on listing butterflies and birds and flowers that have become rare or are no longer here. How many people realise that the all too familiar oak tree could just as easily follow the elm into near extinction? (There is at this moment a disease prevalent in America which is attacking their oaks in very much the same way and unless we are eternally vigilant this could easily happen here) Just try and visualise Sussex without an oak tree!

The trouble is that in writing about such a subject as this one is preaching to the converted, but I make no apology for this, for we must be constantly aware of the enormous price that the flora and fauna of this lovely country of ours, and indeed the whole world has to pay for that thing we laughingly call "Progress". I must confess that there are times when I sincerely wish that we could go back to that time of my boyhood, but therein lies the real tragedy of what we have done and are doing, only in very rare cases can it be undone. Man, for all his technology, or perhaps because of it, is losing the art of living in harmony with his environment and in that respect at least, I feel that we are losing the most valuable thing we have. Let us hope that we can somehow find it again before it is too late.

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Happenings on a clubrun

On a recent clubrun Brian Wilkins turned fireman when he leapt off of his bike and charged into a house to douse a chimney fire. After a few minutes he emerged covered in ash having instructed the lady of the house to ring the fire brigade. The rest of the club stood outside and watched the spectacular smoke signals issuing from the chimney. They reckoned that by the time the fire brigade arrived everything would be normal thanks to the brigades newest recruit. We didn't wait for the engine!

WINDY AND SOMETIMES WET.

We set off for our mini tour of Sussex, Hampshire and Surrey in October optimistically thinking that the awful weather beforehand must improve dramatically - we were wrong, at least for the first two days.

With four days cycling ahead we made for Arundel Youth Hostel in good spirits. Despite a gale force head wind and heavy showers we found some shelter in the lanes around Ringmer, Barcombe and Offham, before we made our way to Fulking for lunch. Plans for roughstuff had, in the main, to be discarded but after leaving Amberley we did take a track to Burpham, before finding the road again to the hostel. Here we met an American cyclist with a fascinating story to tell. Next morning complete with crash hat, eighteen gears and a mountain of equipment he took us on a pleasant ride through Arundel Park before departing to keep an invitation to visit a small brewery!

Our route led us through the lanes via Graffham, Cocking, Buriton, East and West Meon to Winchester. Although the wind had eased, the rain became more persistent, spoiling a ride through some splendid wooded country. Winchester Youth Hostel proved to be disappointing and not just because of the school party who were staying there: but we were compensated to some extent by a walk around the city in the evening.

Sunday dawned bright and somewhat windy and stayed that way. We followed the River Itchen for several miles through some delightful country, before turning to New Arlesford for coffee. We then 'wiggled' our way through Selborne, Rake, Fernhurst and Ifold to the splendid hostel at Ewhurst Green. Altogether a good

day with some marvelous lanes. The route on the final day took us along lanes in the wooded country east of Ewhurst and then to Rusper, Faygate, Ste Leonards Forest and Slaugham for lunch. Once on the road again we were soon at Haywards Heath, from where we found our way home past Wivelsfield Green and Barcombe.

Despite less than ideal weather, we voted it a good weekend, during which we made tentative plans for another one very soon; it has yet to come to pass.

Fred Mehen.

HOSTELLING

The following weekends are planned :-

December 31st -		
January 2nd 1982	Blackboys	Working Party Weekend.
January 30 th	Truleigh Hill	Saturday
February 5th	Beachy Head	Friday
February 6th	Guestling	Saturday
February 27th	Alfriston	Saturday night slideshow
March 19th	Telscombe	Friday
March 20th	Ewhurst <u>or</u> Holmbury St. Mary	Saturday
EASTER April 9th -		Good Friday
10th	Kemsing	Saturday
11th	Goudhurst	Easter Sunday

CLUBNIGHTS

These will be held on the 4th Wednesday in the month starting 24th February 7.45pm at Alfriston Youth Hostel.

Our thanks to Mike & Sheila Hume for making this possible.