

# SPOKES

The newsletter for you, the cyclists of Leamington C & A C

January 2000

## Ted Clifford (1909–1999) RIP

Ted Clifford passed away shortly before Christmas, a few days before his 91st birthday. The funeral was held at St Mary's Church, Leamington on 30<sup>th</sup> December where Club members formed a guard of honour for his cortege. Roger's obituary on page 6 appeared in several local papers. A full appreciation of Ted's life was written by George Phipps for his 90th birthday and featured in SPOKES last March. He had been an active member of the Club since 1932, and mostly as a cyclist. He will be missed.

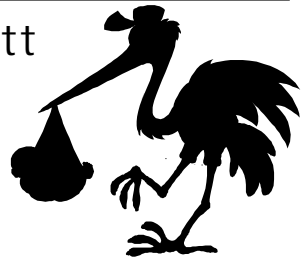
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Happy occasion for Bennett  
family

December 3<sup>rd</sup> 1999 –

Leamington's youngest  
"member" is born. Dave

and Anita would like to thank  
everybody for the flowers, cards  
and gifts received on the birth  
of Ryan Maxwell Bennett.



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## Fancy new shorts?

The Endura shorts have been received, completing the new livery, and they look the "bee's knees". Shorts are available in black, red or blue with the club name in a white side-panel. See inside for price list. I still have plenty of new tops in stock for sale at the ridiculous bargain prices, 25% off and no VAT!

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Members own contributions are always welcome.

## Pyrenees – another view

By Paul Preston

Phil Stowe and I also travelled to the Pyrenees but for a relaxed week of touring around Massat. Accommodation was simple in a farmhouse restored by a Nick Flanagan, sometime of Liverpool CC, and still talking of everything cycling. £20 per day, bed, breakfast and evening meal - as much food and red wine as we could manage. It is remarkable how much wine can be consumed without any affect when combined with climbing in the mountains. Nick does all the cooking. It was the first week in October and there was wall-to-wall sunshine and hardly a breath of wind. The roads are excellent and traffic outside the towns a rarity. Almost perfect for cycling.

Almost. There was just the matter of the Cols. Massat is at the foot of the Col de Port (1400m, 17km., 7%) and unless we went out and returned on the main road to St.Germain (itself a sporting road), there was a climb in and out. The Col de Latrape (1100m, 5k, 9%), Col de la Core (1245m, 12k, 6%), Col de la Cruzette (1250m, 11k, 9%), Col de Saraille (940m, 10k, 8%) and the Col de Peguere (1375m, 8.5%, 26k.). Pas de problème. Choose a gear and twiddle away. Unfortunately Phil's new bike had at best 43 x 25. It was also the week of the World Champs in Verona, screened on Eurosport and recorded by Nick. Cycle 10.30 to 3.30, return for tea, watch the racing, aperitif and dinner. Great holiday and very affordable. The flight from Stanstead to Carcassan and return with Ryan Air only £35+ taxes. Nick picks up guests and their bikes from the airport.

Finally, a technical puzzle. There are unlit tunnels on the old road to St Germain. One is just long enough to be in complete darkness. Why is it so difficult to cycle in complete darkness, so difficult that I fell off?

*(Good question, Paul, are you still feeling disoriented?)*

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## Subs due, new rates

Happy new year, give us yer money, *please!*

Yes folks it's that time of year again, Peter Chronicle is available to relieve you of your hard-earned dosh. Full members can renew for £21, increased from £18. The increase is offset by the fact that the Club is subsidising the cost of any racing tops bought by members; add to that the new RTTC levy on Club events, and the increase is soon mopped up. Social membership remains at £5, a bargain, really! Second-claim is half the full rate. New members since August, you are privileged to have paid up for 2000 already. A form is included for you to complete, this will help me keep up with any changes in your personal details on my list, including e-mail addresses.

# Postcard from India

The India Bike Ride in aid of MENCAP

Sunday 21/11

80 exhausted people finally arrive at Shimla, Northern India after the flight to Delhi via Dubai, followed by 5 hours on a train then 5 hours on a coach. Very first impressions are that there are hills in every direction, everywhere is very dry and dusty and the hotel has definitely seen better days.

Monday 22/11

We've all slept well and we collect our machines which are hybrids with anonymous frames but Shimano gears and brakes. They are fine throughout the trip. Unfortunately the organisers can only come up with 2 tandems when Blazing Saddles asked for 3 but we decide that we can manage. My regular partner, Mark is OK on a solo but needs supervision. Our group consists of John 1 and Paul, John 2 and Mark 1 on Tandems, Mark 2, Mick, Richard, Katrina and myself on solos. We cycle about 12 km uphill to the centre of Shimla which is teeming with traffic and pedestrians. It is a completely different world and Mencap cyclists in shorts and T-shirts look rather out of place. We look round Gandhi Square and various small shops and have lunch at a local café which costs all of 20 rupees (30p). An easy return to the hotel followed by a long briefing about what the rest of the week entails, in particular don't expect any vehicular traffic to give way for a cyclist no matter what the rules might be at home. At least India drives on the left (nominally) as in Britain.

Tuesday 23/11

7.30am start. Quite cold at 6500 feet but bright sunshine. 28km easy downhill then 20km climbing. Lunch from a field kitchen in a military base, then 30km undulating before a cable car ride (The longest in India) to the hotel at Paranwoo. This was easily the best overnight accommodation.

Wednesday 24/11

7.30am start again. About 1hr of climbing (most gradients are about 1 in 10) the 18km off road on a very rough and undulating track which took until the mid-morning 'banana-break'. The organisers had all 80 of us re-group 3 times a day, Not surprisingly 80 cyclists of widely differing abilities spread out over many kms of road and 1½ - 2 hours of time. Unlike Mike's venture, ours was not intended for experienced cyclists and was presented as a challenge to anyone who felt able to take it on. After another field kitchen lunch, we cycle 40km of very undulating road to a village in the middle of nowhere before a 3hr coach transfer to Mussoorie, altitude 7200 feet and cold. The hotel is damp and a bit grotty but the beds are OK, thank goodness. The food is the same everywhere, edible but monotonous – rice, dhal, chapattis and curried vegetables. (*What was the wind like, Pete?*)

Thursday 25/11

We're allowed a lie-in after the previous days tiring journey and start out quite late at about 10. We whiz 17km downhill in well under an hour to some waterfalls at Kempti. The scenery is spectacular but apart from the waterfalls and a few tourist-trap shops there is nothing else there. Another field kitchen lunch and we start back up. I suffer my only puncture of the week, the mechanical back-up arrives after a few minutes to replace the tube and I'm on my way again. The return climb takes 2½ hours and conditions are very hot but we are well supplied with bottled water from a support van at half way. The rest of the afternoon and evening we socialise

with the rest of the party helped along with the very palatable local beer.

#### Friday 26/11

Yet another 7.30am start. 24km mostly uphill and on very rough surfaces to a village called Sirhanda Devi on top of a ridge from which there are fantastic views to the snow-capped Himalayas on the India-Tibet border. Usual field kitchen lunch and we enjoy the return trip mostly downhill to the outskirts of Mussoorie, thinking 'easy-peasy', then we find the organisers have included a further 8km downhill loop which means a final climb back to the hotel on a main road – better surface but much more traffic. These four main cycling days so far have certainly become progressively more challenging.

#### Saturday 27/11 - Pay-off day

7.30 start again, and cold. 36km downhill to a banana-break at a Hindu temple then a closely controlled section through the big industrial town of Dehra Dun to visit the Raphael Centre – a voluntary organisation which cares for both mentally handicapped people and leprosy sufferers. We present them with gifts of clothing and non-prescription drugs and in return they give us a better-than-average lunch. Then another 59km of gently undulating and reasonably surfaced main road to Haridwar on the banks of the River Ganges. Traffic is the main problem:- scooters, cars, buses, trucks, ox-carts & camel-carts plus the additional hazard of monkeys which dash unpredictably from one side of the road to the other. We're thankful for two breaks as it's much hotter at the lower altitude of about 1000ft.

At the edge of the Ganges we take part in the ceremony of launching palm-leaf boats of flowers and a small candle plus a 'good luck' piece of thread we were given at Shimla, which we have had tied to our bars throughout, and we say goodbye to our machines. We eat yet another identical meal in a local hotel with no beer to help it down, this being a completely

'dry' region. Then 5-hour coach transfer No 3 to Delhi and we can't even see much of the passing scenery, it being pitch dark. This Delhi hotel is better than the previous one.

#### Sunday 28/11

Oh no, a 5 hour coach journey, No 4 to Agra. It's now quite hot and the surrounding countryside is absolutely flat, we pass through many small towns and villages with colourful markets and see examples of extreme poverty – people living at the side of the road in stick and plastic-sheeting shelters, and I also suspect that some of the other locals are pretty well off, judging by the size of their villas set in well-tended gardens. Today we have to buy our own lunch but the only place open is the Agra Pizza-Hut! This establishment is swamped by our numbers and Blazing Saddles are last to order. The pizzas are greatly enjoyed, though and we continue to the Taj Mahal much later in the afternoon. The Taj Mahal is more impressive from a distance than close to, and inside is much smaller than we expect. We can just see the amazing carved marble screens around the two tombs, but there is no artificial light and very little daylight. The site is worth visiting, though if only briefly, once in a lifetime. After being taken round a couple of bazaars, where no-one buys anything, we finally return to Delhi by train in 3 hours, more quickly, and much more smoothly than the outward coach trip. The train journey includes yet another meal of rice, dhal etc. We arrive back at the hotel at midnight.

#### Monday 29/11

We have a free day! After a lazy morning in the hotel, Blazing Saddles charter 3 motor tricycle taxis and we see a few sights. Delhi's population is 12 million so it's a very large city and

we only see a very small part of it. Again we tour a couple of bazaars and this time buy a few souvenirs – tea and spices, small carvings etc. we have a late lunch of assorted chicken dishes and all the trimmings at what must be quite an expensive restaurant by local standards but we still only pay about £6.00 each. In the evening there is a 'gala' event at a different hotel. We are entertained with traditional music and dancing, we eat another meal, the many awards are given out and the speeches last until nearly midnight.

Tuesday 30/11

Wake-up call at 4.30am, coach to airport at 6am – we'll be glad to get home for a rest. The return flights are mercifully on

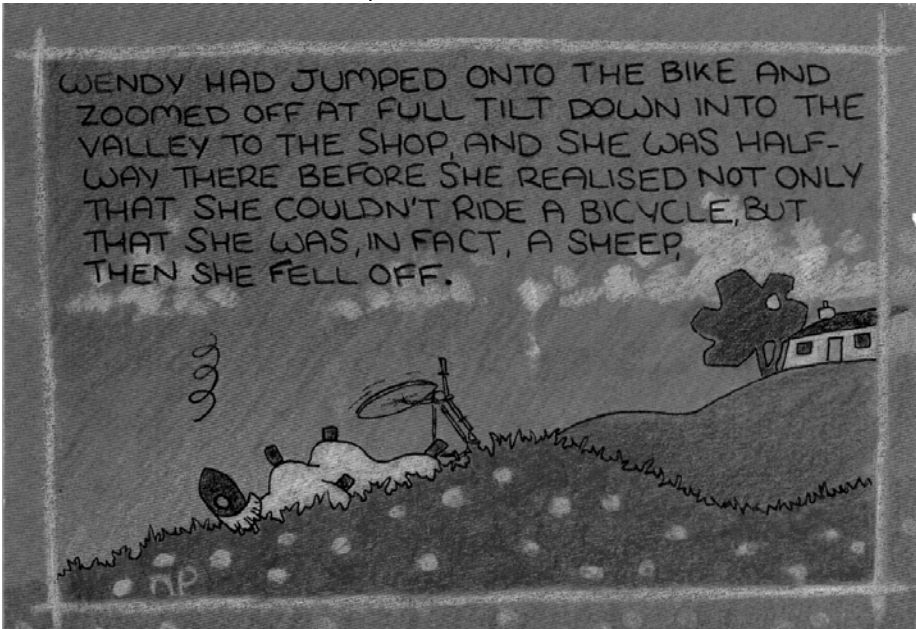
time and uneventful and we travel back via Dubai to Heathrow in only 21½ hours compared with the 31 hours outward journey. (*Obviously, it's downhill, Pete!*)

Altogether it was a fascinating if exhausting trip, I lost 10lbs in weight which wasn't a bad thing, I'm not sure though that I would want to undertake such a venture again.

Many thanks to those of you who sponsored me. The partnership between MENCAP and Blazing Saddles has benefited greatly from the challenge, both in terms of new experiences for everyone and financially.

Peter Chronicle

And now a postcard from The Dales



## Ted Clifford

By Roger Gardner

Ted was a very conscientious and hard working President of Leamington C&AC for many years. Long after retiring from the presidency he took a very keen interest in the Club and its members. Health permitting, he regularly attended athletics and cycling events to time-keep, a duty greatly appreciated by everyone involved. Until very recently he was to be seen cycling regularly around Leamington!

Ted and his late wife, Doris were liked and respected throughout the Club, and a "Ted & Doris Trophy" cycling and running event is staged every year, much to Ted's delight.

As both a cyclist and runner in his own competitive days, it was always his wish to keep the two sections together. Ted and I had many interesting conversations about the old days. He had a wonderful sense of humour, and was a quiet, modest man who put far more into life than he ever took out during his ninety years. He will be greatly missed, both as a friend and as an irreplaceable inspiration for our Club.

*This was featured in the Kenilworth Weekly News and other local papers*

## New style Club Clothing – Price-list

	Long Sleeves	Short Sleeves
Lycra tops (TT)	£23.25p	£21.75p
Acrylic tops (Road)	£21.75p	<del>£20.25p</del>
		Sold out
Lycra shorts	£23.25 (Black)	£26.50 (Red)
Ladies shorts§	£27.50	
Coolmax Bibshorts §	£38	
Roubaix Bibknicks §	£34	

All shorts are made with antibacterial pad, Ladies shorts have special pad with coolmax for better "wicking"

§ Available in Blue only

*If you have thought of buying new clothing this year, Endura can fit in a small order provided I can have your requirements by mid-February. Ask me for details of the extra styles I ordered with this latest batch, for example Roubaix jacket, bibtights; the tops can also be produced in a rainproof Gamex material which can be rolled up and tucked in a jersey pocket. Beyond this date we will not be ordering more clothes until the existing stock needs replacing*

## AGM – advance warning

Section AGM will be on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February, main Club AGM is on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Both meetings will be held in the Clubroom at Edmondscote Track, off Princes Drive, at 8pm.

## Exec meeting - Rule changes

After much work by Alan Edwards and Dave Potter a meeting of the Exec committee ratified the new rules. Major changes were necessary to reflect the changes in both sports since the rules were last changed, I think, in 1982. The executive meeting at the Old Leamingtonians Rugby Club earlier in January approved several changes to the Club's constitution. These will be presented in their final form at the AGM in March. The venue was much more comfortable than the room at the track and may be used for other events in the future, thanks to Paul Muddeman. Here is a summary of the changes affecting the Club

- The sections are now open to all sportsmen and women whether amateur or professional because there is no distinction between the two classes. The individual sections are responsible for rules governing their various competitions, we do not have to seek approval from the athletes and vice-versa.
- Families will benefit from a new membership scheme, only one full member needs to pay the full sub, other members of the family living at home can be full members for half-price (not counting Social members, that is fixed at a fiver).
- Honorary membership is abolished, this is due to foreseen insurance problems when officials representing the Club are not technically paid-up. We hope that the few honorary members who do have vital roles within the Section will appreciate this and join as social members for a fiver.
- And finally - the affairs of the short-lived, and now defunct, Triathletes Section were formally wound up, any residue from their section funds should be put in the Club's investment account.

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## Weekend Touring – Wiltshire/Avon

Roger is planning a weekend away in early April. The destination is Bradford on Avon, cycling around Bath and the locality. Interested? Contact Roger or Liz on 01926 613143, places may be limited.

## Sunday rides – more choice

Due to the increase in membership, particularly the Social riders, we now have three rides leaving the Town Hall on Sunday mornings. An intermediate group, for progressive riders has been formed. If you feel that the Fast group is too fast, or the Social group is too slow then this is what you need. The “Intermediates” do a few more miles than the Social group, and usually stop at the elevenses Café, so they have the best of both worlds.

## Winter Club Runs

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> February is a sad day for us, we are losing another favourite café. “Dee” Finch has fed and watered us with great charm at Crumbs Tea Rooms in Dunchurch for several years, but she has decided to hang up her apron and finish, she has been losing money due to falling trade. We shall not be able to enjoy her excellent cakes any more, the nearby cafés are only a poor second in comparison.

A version of this list below was circulated at the Christmas dinner. I have changed a couple of the runs due to the above note. Also the run on 16<sup>th</sup> April clashed with the expected date of our Hilly 22 mile TT.

Date	Leader	Fast Run	Intermediate & Social
Feb 6	Phil Cooke	Silverstone	Jenny's, Cath-de-Barnes
Feb 13§	Tim Cadd	Winchcombe	Shenington Glider Club
Feb 20	Pete Taylor	Stow-on-the-Wold	Shire Horse Centre
Feb 27	Tony Smith	Broadway	Farmer Ted's, Earlswood
Mar 5	Mick Ford	Banbury	Banbury Cross
Mar 12	Pete Taylor	Moreton in Marsh	Channings Diner, Halford
Mar 19	Phil Cooke	Brailes Road	Willoughby Cafe
Mar 26	Tim Cadd	Shipston	Shenington Glider Club
Apr 2	Pete Taylor	Stow-on-the-Wold	Warmington Herb Centre
Apr 9	Tony Smith	Broadway	Claydon House
§ - Feb 13 - 50-in-4			

### Stratford CC 50-in-4

Charlie Barnett is running the reliability ride again from Clifford Chambers, on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> February. Rides start from 10am, with groups at 10-minute gaps, choice of 3, 3½, 4 & 4½ hours. More details from me.

### Coventry BCF 100-in-8

Jean Bayliss is retiring from this promotion, so it would seem that this event will not happen unless another organizer is forthcoming.