

## 1978 – The CTC Centennial



The August issue of the Cyclotouring captured the proud centennial spirit of 1978. It featured congratulations from around the world, a pictorial tribute to the club's founders and event listings galore.

# CYCLETOURING

the CTC magazine

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*Gateway to the 14th-century 'stately home' and gardens of Penshurst Place in Kent  
Photographed by John Way during the BCTC Final*

CTC members free: non-members 2s. 6d.



CTC Birthday Rides took place, a tradition started in 1970 in anticipation of the centennial and which continues today.

## Birthday Rides experiment sets pattern for annual touring rallies



'LET's have a Happy Birthday wave!' smiled the girl photographer from the *Surrey Advertiser* to the groups assembling outside Cotterell House, the CTC's Headquarters at Godalming.

The cyclists waved, the shutter clicked, and the first Birthday Ride began.

It was the morning of Wednesday, August 5—just 92 years since Stanley Cotterell, the founder, had started the Club that was destined to become the pattern for the great touring clubs of the world which followed later.

That our anniversary should be celebrated with a series of planned rides is a new idea. It arose from comments in *Cyclotouring* on an editorial suggestion that the CTC ought to promote 'riding rallies' (as is done regularly in other countries) as distinct from the type of rally which is built around a programme of sports events.

'An organisation for the formation of friendships on a large scale' was how the founder visualised the Club. He would be proud indeed to find the extent to which the spirit of kinship continues to unite those who wear the badge, no matter how diverse their background.

## Many happy returns



Members assembling outside Cotterell House on the birthday morning, and (right) the souvenir plate presented by the Dutch visitors

Below: from Holland, both in their 70's, H. van Miert (light coat) and L. H. Wehrmeijer (dark coat) on a field near the Pilgrims Way. Below right: Bob Feyen and Bill van Ooijen keep Timothy Warner company in the stocks at Selborne

In the course of the five 'anniversary' days came members from as far afield as Lancashire, Oxford, and Somerset to join those from Surrey and neighbouring counties who included Bill Stiles, recently retired from the HQ staff and now an Hon. Vice-President of the Club.

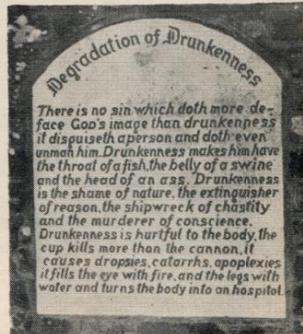
Most welcome, too, were a party of six Dutch cyclists who had come over specially for the event.

A vast age range was covered too. Apart from two of Secretary Les Warner's children who alternated on various days (Timothy as crew of the tandem, Sally in her basket-seat on the solo), the youngest rider was 13 years of

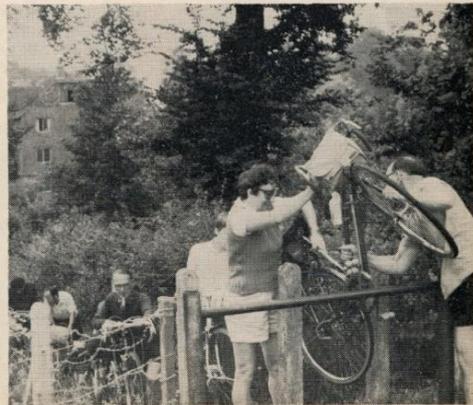




*Coffee-time at Shere, one of Surrey's picturesque villages. Left: warden Howard Piner greets the Editor at Holmbury St Mary hostel  
Right: an unexpected 'sermon in stone' in a quiet corner of Kirdford in West Sussex  
Below: after a visit to the National Trust mill at Shalford, Stephen Dallaway of CTC HQ (extreme right) gives a helping hand to Miss A. P. van den Boogaard. West Surrey DA president Bill Inder, in typical pipe-smoking pose, awaits his turn*



*There is no sin which doth more deface God's image than drunkenness; it disguiseth a person and doth even unman him. Drunkenness makes him have the throat of a fish, the belly of a swine and the head of an ass. Drunkenness is the shame of nature, the extinguisher of reason, the shipwreck of chastity and the murderer of conscience. Drunkenness is hurtful to the body, the cup kills more than the cannon, it causes dropsies, cataracts, apoplexies, it fills the eye with fire, and the legs with water and turns the body into a hospital.*



age and the eldest 77. Several, though members of long standing, were not regular riders 'with the Club' but had been attracted out by the special occasion.

Traffic-free lanes and tracks, the incomparable scenery of the 'great hills of the south country', and three counties well stocked with National Trust properties and villages of tourist interest, combined into a cycletouring mixture that was near-perfect.

Charterhouse School, its elegant mellowed towers gracing the hill above Godalming, had the photographers out

by the owners—the two daughters of the late Frank Patterson, whose drawings are still delighting a new generation of cyclists.

Waggoners Wells, a series of 'hammer' ponds in a sylvan setting, were reached as the rain ceased, and a steep descent to Shottermill brought us to our tea-place, after which a combination of bridleway and main road (with a glimpse of Hindhead's Devil's Punchbowl) led us 'home'.

The few who were discouraged by Thursday morning's heavy rain joined us later in the day. The remainder, who went out as planned, found that capes

stop south-east of Petworth, and in sunshine crossed the river Rother and the remains of the old railway line at Stopham Bridge. Swinging onto lanes which paralleled the Downs, we made a photo-stop at picturesque Burton Park lake before coming to Midhurst, known for the ruins of Cowdray Castle and its park now famous for polo.

A long, long climb northwards to Bexleyhill was amply rewarded by a superb view at the summit before a breathtaking descent—and the similarity (in miniature) to a French mountain pass prompted us to call this the 'Col de l'Anniversaire'.

Eastwards from the Guildford-Godalming road lies perhaps the most famous part of the Surrey Hills 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'.

Shalford's eighteenth-century water-mill on the Tillingbourne, St Martha's chapel on the Pilgrims Way, the villages of Shere and Abinger Hammer, Friday Street and Leith Hill were all mapped out for Friday's ride.

The route was liberally sprinkled with



of the saddle soon after the start of the first day's ride. Then through the villages to the south of the Hogs Back, we wound our way via Frensham Great Pond into Hampshire for lunch at Selborne.

Well-known for its association with Gilbert White, the eighteenth-century naturalist, Selborne has been holding special exhibitions this summer to celebrate the 250th anniversary of his birth.

We had time for a short walk around the village, into the tranquillity of the surrounding woodlands, and of course to the church whose outstanding feature is a stained-glass window (presented by local residents in 1920 in memory of Gilbert White) depicting St Francis feeding the birds. An identification key is provided to the 90-odd different bird species illustrated.

Rain caught up with us in the afternoon, but resulted in a chance meeting altogether in tune with the CTC's birthday. Stopping to cape-up outside a cottage near Whitehill, we were greeted

### Riding Britain's first 'Country Cycleway'

*Some ride, others walk, but all appreciate the freedom of the South Downs Way. Right: 'Down we go' - Les Warner and daughter Sally negotiate the descent towards Cocking*



could be dispensed with after the morning coffee stop at Dunsfold, one of the cosy villages in a part of Surrey that has come to be known as the 'fold country'.

Leafy lanes predominated as we rode into West Sussex, pausing in Kirdford to examine a wall tablet on the subject of drunkenness (none of us felt very guilty) and to read the history of the locality inscribed on a plate beneath the village sign.

With a fine view of the South Downs ahead, we sped downhill to our lunch

bridleways and woodland tracks and, although the day was fine and bright, the previous day's rain made it necessary to curtail one or two roughstuff sections.

For lunch we were welcomed at Holmbury St Mary youth hostel by the warden Howard Piner, who had expressed interest in the Birthday Rides when first suggested and had offered his co-operation. A nostalgic visit, this, for *Cycletouring* editor John Way who recalled that he had been among the earliest cyclists to book-in when Holm-



bury, one of the first purpose-built hostels, had opened back in 1935!

'This hostel is for cyclists and walkers, as it has always been', affirmed the warden, and 'How good to see so many bikes in the sheds', added his wife.

They both hoped the CTC would organise other events to encourage more members to 'show the flag' on the roads and help to put an end to the 'never see a cyclist' comments heard all too often these days.

It was difficult to believe that we were so near to the busy A25 as, in the warm afternoon sunshine, we followed an enchanting lane route to Leith Hill, at 965 feet the highest point in south-east England.

The view was widespread and clear, and some of us climbed the observation tower, being reminded that it was a CTC member, W. J. MacAndrew, who gave this highspot to the National Trust.

Coming down out of the hills, we avoided even 'B' roads as far as possible, by making detours via Southwood Common and Woodhill (the next best thing to our originally planned route via Madgehole) to reach Shamley Green and Wonersh, passing the house depicted on the cover of the August *Cycletouring*.

The final 'leg' was by way of Bramley and Thorncombe Street, some riders taking the bridleway down from Munstead Heath to Catteshall Manor instead of going through Godalming town.

The Birthday Rides culminated in a weekend focused on the South Downs Way, the first long-distance bridleway designated by the Countryside Commission and officially open to cyclists throughout.

The members who rode south from Cotterell House were joined by others at various places en route—though a group of cyclists mounted on Raleigh 'Chop-



Sunday morning on the bridge near Arundel Castle, and (left) the Sunday evening finale at Dunsfold





The CTC's Headquarters in Godalming, Surrey, where it was moved from London in 1966.

