

BOMK!

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EAST SUSSEX CYCLING ASSOCIATION



President Les Hayman

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William Hickey

Making my way through the continuous traffic hold-ups of Broadwater, passing the Salvation Army Hall (sorry, ed, the Worthing clubroom), I felt the urge to breakfast at the Bike Store. I was too late for the hot meal but Martin managed to locate some fruit and biscuits, after I had had to buy the milk and make the coffee. However, it was at that point that Andrew, who by this time was in a somewhat excited mood, stutteringly requested as to whether I could respond to the SCA main speaker at the Dinner & Prize Presentation. No fee was mentioned but I was assured that I would receive some special award for my efforts. Come the 8th december and I sat down to another four course extravaganza prepared by Mrs. Rotweiler with various other members of the family behaving in a somewhat obsequious manner. No Excel waiters could be seen, this was a bonus, I seem to recall last year that dinners were misplaced, crockery was damaged and it seemed they all needed hearing aids as polite requests for knives and forks and glasses were all ignored.

Oh, horror of horrors, as I glanced at the ensemble it could not have gone unnoticed that the top table seating was occupied by the Star Chamber (sorry, ed, I mean the London South RTTC. Head honcho was Warwick Dunford, a member of the RTTC hierachy. Lord Malcolm Pink (Chairman), My Aunty, the Levy Marshal, Mr. Courses for Horses dressed in Crawley livery, and there was more. Strewth, I thought, had I made a big mistake, was this an SCA Dinner or a late, late show of the RTTC Xmas Meeting - no, I was reassured, there were no pantomimes in Wivelsfield on a Sunday.

After a reasonable meal, on a scale of 1 - 10 I gave it 6, notable absence was decent coffee and I felt the sweet was a little bit of an afterthought, I would have preferred some honest spotted dick with an abundance of thick custard. I'm not sure about the cracker. I was able to share some brief intimate conversation with the lovely Judy Budgen. After a lifetime service with the Alliance & Leicester, Judy has now left and hopes are held that between putting the finishing touches to Chateau Budgen in Normandy and signing on the Social, she will have passed the final exams to become a nun (sorry, ed, what am I thinking about?), a Social Agony Aunt. In other words, if you have any hang-ups, perhaps some money troubles, or you may have been a little promiscuous, or perhaps indiscreet, well Judy can help you relive your fantasies. Judy does say she cannot spend too much time on postal inquiries, can you send an s.a.e. plus a photo.

The East Grinstead were barking away, ostensibly so that Steve Elms could publicise another quiz evening at the not too easy to get to clubroom in Turners Hill. This time folks, not only is he setting the questions, his mother is again participating and I suppose his wife as well; since Steve dennis is engaged to Steve Elm's sister, I fear any chance of an outsider winning is remote to say the least.

The pity once again is that for all the hard work to make the luncheon a worthwhile effort, it is not unreasonable for the prizewinners to show some awareness that for them to win a particular event, other people have given up their time and probably spent money. For the prizewinners not to appear or to give a reason or offer an apology, is not only offensive to the organisation but casts a doubt as to why they bothered to participate at the inception of the racing season.

The lucky draw was a brilliant piece of Excel engineering, they had six coloured books which were handed table by table. The trouble was that somehow only 50% of the books were evenly distributed, which meant that because only a small number of the lesser tickets were sold the preponderance of the prizes were won by the people who bought most of the tickets on three colours (nice one Excel).

In all, a nice afternoon, and Vanessa, have you mended my Bike Store track top? It's getting cold and I can't keep on pinching the snapper's.

I don't know if it is me but I feel a darn sight less warm these days than I did in the seventies and eighties. I couldn't even contemplate racing in January, February or March these days, and migrating to warmer climes is becoming more of an obligation than a luxury these days. Lippy is now training with Alex Zulle and the Rabobank trade team, coming back at easter for a few ghost (whoops, sorry, should be 'guest'. Ed!) appearances. Ronnie and Jill Rogers have torn themselves away to the Algarve for seven weeks, together with 'The Leader' and Julie plus golf clubs. The Snapper did a week in Tenerife and I believe the Blooms are re-establishing themselves in Majorca. In any event it is better than spending miserable days cursing the east coast where virtually all the bad weather seems to gather.

And what does the 1997 racing season hold for us? Do I hear the words 'amalgamation of the two Associations'? No I don't but I just wonder whether it will happen. If entries take a nosedive in Association events the reality of amalgamation may be that much more appealing. In fact if you consider the practicalities of it makes sense all round. Perhaps in the past there were considerable reservations and with every justification, but I don't think the same criteria operates now. Sussex cycling must be centralised, a single corporate body can quite easily improve the situation and justify the elimination of certain anomalies whilst creating a whole host of new ideals. The incorporation of all Sussex clubs a partnership with both triathlon and other organisations is the way forward.

We simply have to recruit now, failing which the number of vets actually racing will represent 95% of the entry in all time trials. My plea for 1997 is why not set up a working party to discuss the total unification of all the disciplines. Make it a weekend seminar with food provided for a modest return. Delegates from all clubs and other interested parties could fill any medium sized hall, an agenda could be drawn up and a committee formed to consider the feasibility of advancing our sport. There is sufficient now to take advantage of current facilities, we can no longer afford to be complacent, unless we manage our affairs in a more comprehensive manner, our credentials will be buried in a matter of a few years.

The Regent, have, I see, got into the overseas market. Simon Birstingl is doing a 'Go It Alone and Friends' trip to that lager paradise Magaluf. Whilst the Spanish appear to have cleaned up most of Majorca, Magaluf still seems to attract the rougher element. Simon has set a modest itinerary, self catering, get to the hotel under your own steam, any queries, Simon will welcome you on internet on [HTTP://W.W.W.Pavilion Co. U/K Regent](http://www.pavilion.co.uk). He welcomes photos; if the girls are posing in Baywatch livery, who cares about Majorca. Adios amigo.

On January 16th, accompanied by the Snapper and young Alison, the writer on behalf of the Sussex Nomads, spearheaded a team to contest another East Grinstead quiz night at Turners Hill. We felt we had a chance as Steve Elms mother wasn't present and Fiona appeared to be sidelined. We all had a very pleasant evening and just lost out by a point due to the Snapper giving out some 'best guessed answers'. However we all shared out boxes of Roses chocolates. Wooden spoons were presented again to the Lewes, which seemed to be about right since the fourth member of their team hasn't mastered some of the questions. We believe the S.N. will host the next Quiz Night on Friday, 25th February to round off the current Social Season.

Due to a number of lost flu days my social calendar this year (1997) has been severely curtailed, however I was able to join the Sussex Nomads for their Annual Jamboree, the Ray Douglass Memorial Sunday Tea and the Crawley Wheelers Lunch on February 9th.

Nomads as usual hosted a sprinkling of international celebrities too numerous to mention, cross toasting and present presentation. Preceding the by now legendary Prize Presentation, eggs were presented to Barbara Atkins for work undertaken above the normal course of duty. Seymour the Elder received the much acclaimed Balloon of Honour for his '59' in 1996 and Monsieur Alain, Patron de Honeur, finally wound up the evening with a much anticipated display of his sartorial elegance - we did however notice the absence of the yellow shirt, Snapper felt it a pity that such a time related item had been discarded.

Brother Don Lock the Elder was in charge of activities at the Ray Douglass Memorial Tea. Some one hundred and forty people turned up in respect of Ray's memory, a nice afternoon. Don quickly handed me a Worthing Wheel for free, and refused a donation on the premise that he got a mention in my column. Nice touch, Don. Tea, sandwiches and cakes were provided by the ever present Bike Store. There was just a moment of concern shortly after 1.30 when the Bike Store staff failed to put in an appearance. One interested wit in the throng felt the delays might be due to Vanessa getting the dates wrong and thinking it was another S.C.A. bash at Wivelsfield. However all was well, the delays were it seems, due to the pick-up of Judy's brick pudding (*sorry Judy, I'm sure that's what he's written. Ed*) the piece de resistance of any well stocked table. Chris and her R.T.T.C. London South cohorts were seen scurrying around with armfuls of L.S. time trial lists for 1997, unfortunately no free copies are available [rules are rules!]. I was also able to pinhole Peter Swetman, another L.S. stalwart telling me had once again completed over 15,000 miles for the year with little racing; another soul who is benefitting from early retirement [how depressing] prior to returning home for a spot of Ivanhoe. I did manage a quick word with Dr. Jones, Dee and Andy Paine cloistered on the stage in deep consultation with Bob Stapley of the Epsom R.C. I was reminded that perhaps Doc was widening his poaching net to cover the Surrey border. Bob I suspect was quite receptive to an offer, there was much nodding but no brown envelopes were seen. However don't be surprised if Bob turns out in Stella colours. Lock the Junior was spotted in his new company car and tells me that he has upped his training in order to beat W.H. at any or all events in which they clash. Mike Gibbs says he now prefers the company of his dog, the two seem inseparable when seen picking over the Bike Store provisions, noses sniffing out those pre-prepared goodies delicately poised on various trestle tables and the dog was behaving himself for once.

Accompanied by Snapper, we found ourselves once again at the Crawley Wheelers Lunch & Prize Presentation at Pease Pottage. I missed last year's function, what a pity, since I believe the Chairman of the London South was speaking, never an act to miss. As usual Paul Spenceley, Dave Stokes and Dave French put on another very pleasant lunch, that much sought after, much travelled beaux esprits, bon ami, Alan Hale, was also in attendance, looking very elegant in Armani made to measure, blue shirt [no tie] but just enough colour to complement his overall elegance. Alan tells me has served the Crawley Wheelers, man and boy, for over thirty years, this roughly is what Ronnie Biggs got for pinching the Royal Mail. We missed the presence of the Bloom family, out there hunting in Spain. Phil Hitchcock I hear is also out in Spain looking after the Blooms and generally assisting with both language and training schedules. What a player! In all a nice day. Thank you Crawley.

Au revoir

W.H.

TO ALL THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE E.S.C.A.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the gifts which were presented to me at the Luncheon & Prize Presentation. The R.T.T.C. Certificate and the Helms cartoon are already on display. The excellent garden chair will be well used come the warm weather when I can sit in the garden.

The presentation came as a complete surprise and I was lost for words at the time. But to you all, very many thanks for honouring me in this way. Little did I think that what took place at Ashburnham way back in November 1947 would see an Association still expanding 50 years on.

Roy Humphrey

EAST SUSSEX C.A. ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The weather on the day of the Annual E.S.C.A. Spectacular, held once again at Framfield Village Hall, had improved enormously when I left home, and although the car park at the hall was completely covered in hard packed snow there was only a smattering on the roofs and the pavement between the hall and the pub was perfectly clear. However, most of the guests had played safe, travelling by car, and there were only a handful of bikes on show; some who rode to the venue shamefacedly admitted to having a lift arranged for the homeward journey.

Before the proceedings proper started, those present were asked to remember friends who had died during the past months, particularly Stan Shirley who had instigated the Points Competition and run it for so many years.

Cross toasting was then invited and SAGA Lout of the Year Award (female) was won by our editor (humorously and aptly referred to as 'Mrs. Bonkers'), with Gwyneth Hollands a close second - well done Southborough Wheelers! - although the Guest of Honour, Ethel Brambleby, V.T.T.A. President, made a late bid for the honours and Chris Watts, London South D.A. Secretary, showed promise for the future. In the absence of Geoff Boore there was only one contender for the male award and Sussex Nomad Alan Limbrey's contribution to the proceedings gave him almost top marks; the Nomads definitely have strength in depth. The expected challenge in this class from Dick Jones, Brighton Excelsior, disappointingly failed to materialise and, probably because his daughters, Janet and Frances, had arrived to support him, Roy Humphrey was uncharacteristically quiet.

The catering was excellent, with 'seconds' of both the soup and main courses, and a generous helping of the delicious sweet.

After the coffee and the Loyal Toast, Ethel rose to propose the toast to the Association. She cunningly interwove information from Mike Rabbetts' booklet with comical reminiscences from her own cycling career - surely none of us will forget the description of her first racing kit which was a little ensemble thrown together from items of a jester's suit hired from a theatrical costumiers, a borrowed Norfolk jacket and a pair of plimsolls which she had ingeniously dyed black. Ethel is a credit to cycling and to herself; now in her eightieth year she is still riding a bike and collecting age records and shames many people half her age. We were proud that she and Les agreed to attend our 50th anniversary lunch and enjoyed themselves with charm and humour.

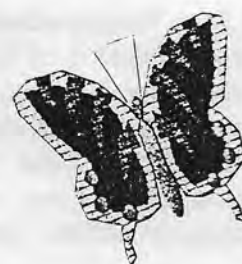
The prize presentation was monopolised this year by the Eastbourne Rovers, led by B.A.R. Simon Prior. Gill Tree (S'boro) and Bob Taylor (East Grinstead) were Ladies and Vets Champions respectively for yet another year; Les Hayman (S'boro) and Richard Shipton (Worthing) both received awards and Steve Dennis was King of the Hardriders once again (how he'll miss that trophy if someone else ever manages to beat him)

Before concluding that part of the proceedings, presentations were made to Roy Humphrey - a certificate from the R.T.T.C. to thank him for his work over so many years, a framed Helms cartoon, and a garden chair from the Association. I wonder what we'll give him when he celebrates a few more years work for ESCA? We owe Roy a huge debt of gratitude for everything he has done to promote our sport in this area and hope that he realises how much we appreciate him.

It remained only for Sylvia Burgess to hand her chain of office to the incoming President Les Hayman and for the couple to kiss to the satisfaction of the photographers.

I had a last look at the photographic display before it was dismantled and was struck anew by the imaginative presentation of all the events that had taken place in East Sussex during 1996. I understand that not only does Charles Robson provide the boards and assemble the photos he takes most of the pictures himself, begging only a few from the archives of the club that is providing the President for the current year.

For an organisation with only fifteen clubs, about half of which actively contribute to the Association, East Sussex C.A. puts on an impressive show! Here's to the next fifty years!



Butterfly

TRIKE NOTES

Earlier this year I recounted one of my anecdotes of life in the GPO as a messenger boy. That, I am told, went down very well. I must surely have plenty more like that. Yes indeed! None of them have anything to do with cycling and I do not see myself as the James Herriott of the GPO. Try this and see.

It was the summer of 1967, the Summer of Love. Feelings of love and peace were very distant on a certain Saturday morning as I, a 19 year old adult postman on a junior's pay went out with the early morning delivery. A weekend off was an unknown luxury to most of us. I was, in addition to the normal mail, carrying about half a dozen registered letters. I was a relief officer then, covering holidays, vacancies and sickness. I probably had more experience and district knowledge than blokes twice my age. However mistakes are made by all of us, however experienced.

The first registered letter was for an address in St. Michaels Road, Stockwell. It was about 8.00am. I rang the bell, no answer so I hammered on the door. The door of the basement flat opened and a girl about my age stepped out. I looked down at her and said to hang on as I was coming down. Down the steps to the street and down the area to the basement. I then saw she was wearing only a pyjama top and damn' all else. I dropped my pencil and just about hung on to the bundle of letters. Eventually I retrieved the pencil and the situation. She was in a state of sleep walking, or so it seemed. The "reg" was signed for and I carried on. The next reg was for an address in Hangwyne Street, the other side of the Stockwell Road. It was here that I discovered the faux pas. I had mixed up the receipt slips for the reggies and the lady in the pyjama top had received the right letter but signed the wrong slip. I lost about ten minutes getting the right slips with the reggies or "stirs".

After I had finished the round I went straight back to St. Michaels Road for the right slip to be signed. This time I went straight to the basement flat and hammered on the door. No answer, nothing. I hammered longer and harder. I then heard a strange, thumping sound getting nearer and nearer until it was the other side of the door. The door opened and this time it was a chap who answered. He was wearing a sleeping bag and a pair of metal rimmed glasses and was practising the sack race. With a straight face I explained what had happened and that I had brought back the right slip to be signed. The chap took the slip, jumped up and turned round and hopped off into the house. I leaned against the wall and had a good laugh. The chap in the back hopped back with the correctly signed slip and joined in the laughter. Alls well that ends well and I went back to the sorting office and had a nice, greasy breakfast. As before, this tale has nothing to do with cycling but does concern an item of camping equipment.

The Mid-Week Section of the East Sussex D.A. had their A.G.M. on October 23rd, 1996. They met for elevenses at the Old Loom Mill, Hailsham. Dave Copping, that chap with the Midas touch in reverse just went for 11s. Debbie Gearing had the same idea. She was taking baby Hazel swimming and stopped en route for tea and a chat. Arriving later than dave, she took Hazel out of the kiddie seat on the bike, dropped her on dave's lap, ordered her tea then pulled up a chair next to Dave, who was still making a fuss of Hazel. Now it seems that although everyone knew Dave, not all knew Debbie and the makings of a great farce began.

Christine Dallas, a fairly recent member, thought Dave was the father. A quick laugh, no, not related at all. Laugh and 11s over, Debbie and Hazel met another family and departed for Hailsham Lagoon and their swim. I am indebted to Esther Carpenter for the rest of the story which follows.

At the AGM Tony Palmer asked Esther if she had met Dave Copping's wife and youngest child. She at once said yes thinking of Maureen and daughter Caroline. Tony was sitting at the next table at 11s. After some conversation it became that they were talking at cross purposes, Tony had made the same assumption as Christine. Unable to contain it Esther had to sit down. When dave was advised of this latest twist in the tale he at once contacted Debbie to apologise for any embarrassment. Debbie was having none of it, thought it was a great hoot and started making plans to milk the situation further. I wonder what on earth Ray thought about it all.

May I be permitted to continue the story that Baggy Shorts' deputy started in the Xmas Bonk. Dave and Maurice did indeed meet up with John Bainbridge just before Arlington. He was intercepted coming away from the Yew Tree and turned around. He was, he said, going to try the other Yew Tree. As lunch was beginning Rob Russell arrived. I think I am right in saying it was the first exclusive trike lunch for some time. The two nurses were not seen by the TRs or MSR on that day, unless that is where Len was off to in such a hurry. Maurice's white axle has nothing to do with speed. It is a Ken Rogers conversion and has remained unpainted from the original colour which, strangely enough, is white. The traditional ride is so named because it is the sane alternative to a white knuckle ride.

Hickey's history lesson on the Third Reich was remarkably short on fact. I have read extensively on this fascinating period of history. The youth organisation referred to would, in my humble opinion, have thoroughly enjoyed taking part in any sporting competition, not wrecking it. The Brownshirts, or Sturmabteilung, were perceived as the threat to public order and their activities were abruptly curtailed on the Night Of The Long Knives. Finally, what divisions of the SS were required to guard PoW camps? The Death's Head of Totenkopf has no sinister undertone. It has had a place in German folklore for centuries. It means 'faithful into death' and rings with this motif were exchanged by most German couples.

Finally I am sure you will join me in wishing Peter Bratt, the Mid-Week and MSR stalwart a continuing return to good health. At the conclusion of Ray Gearing's Afterburner (so called to burn off the XS of Xmas) on December 28th, 1966, Peter was on hand at Polegate Old Station to greet us. Dressed for dinner he had cycled up from his home in Eastbourne.

Threewheeler

BRIGHTON MITRE

At last we seem to see some signs of resurrection after extensive efforts in advertising, mainly by Frank Blake with assistance from Robert Cooper and others.

Regular attendance at the club room (Fridays at St. Richard's Social Centre, Hove). now we will no longer fit into a telephone box, and we have re-started Sunday runs, including an inaugural MTB run over the Downs from Woodingdean. A recent ride had a turn out of ten, including three ladies. We may even be able to raise a team for some ESCA events this year.

Club dinner was held at Princes Marine Hotel, Hove, in December, and although it was restricted to the old and faithful, we had a good time.

1997 events are a repeat of last year's, starting with Robin's energetic Easter, a Hilly 10 on Easter Saturday and on the Monday the only 25 with an ambulance phone number for a course key, finishing up Saddlescombe Hill. The well known October 25 completes the open events.

Last season had a few high spots, one of which was a personal best, and second time under the hour, from Brian James at the age of 65. For many years his best was a 1.4 recorded in 1948, in Brighton Clarion colours.

Tony Stubbins made yet another come-back and gained enough points in Surrey League events to upgrade to a second category in his first season as a vet.

Our presence on the track was limited to schoolboy Spencer Lievens, but we were well represented on the official bench as well.

Pearl and I managed a few miles in diverse parts, including on 18 speed MTB in Austria, the Tissington Trail in Derbyshire and sundry canal tow-paths.

Regards

Ken Wells

BRIGHTON EXCELSIOR C.C.

Well here we are in 1997, and by the way, a Happy New Year to ALL readers.

The pre Christmas lunch at the White Lion, Thakeham, was as usual a raging success; we drank two barrels dry, much to the pleasure of Bill the Landlord (and us, of course). There was meant to be a small raffle but owing to the fact that I left the prizes and tickets at home no one lost and no one won (you can tell grammar was my BEST subject). However Christmas came and went and we arrived at the New Year's Day 10 - and it was pretty nippy. Still six braved it, four solo and one tandem. Lawrence Clifford turned out a 28.12 with Paul Cook second with 29.51 closely followed by Alan Robinson in 30.01. Well done to all who braved it. A good crowd gathered after the event at The Star in Steyning, where, unbeknown to Bert our President, much signing of his 50 year celebratory card took place. The pub always makes us very welcome and is our after evening 10s refreshment stop, well done Bob & Judy and everybody.

Next came the 'DINNER' at Windsor House Hotel, Worthing. The OCCASION this year was to celebrate Bert Absolom's membership of fifty years in the B.E.C.C. He joined on January 24th, 1947, a young budding cyclist, clubrun leader, race marshal, club captain, avid Preston Park track supporter and still doing it, committee member and President for the past thirty years. He met his wife Pat in 1957 and they married in 1958. Pat has also been a loyal member for nearly forty years. A very big thank you to both of them for their loyal support. We thought it just the right moment to bestow Life Presidency on Bert at the Dinner and wish him well and many more cycling years to come.

The rest of the evening went very well, with the Bumper Bike Shop Store promoted Raffle, a big THANKS to Andrew and Vanessa. Extravagant entertainment by 'Bill Posters will be Band', their style is intriguing and versatile to say the least?1? Congratulations to all prizewinners of B.E.C.C. club events; certainly it's always a boost to see club records broken and Chris Lord took the 50 with a very creditable 1.51.10 on July 21st in the S.W. London Combine 50 on the H50/14A course, a grand effort. Also our Vets have done well in the 1996 season with Peter Fray, Keith Balcombe and Terry Wood listed in the Sussex B.A.R. results. Keith's 25 of 1.2.00; Peter's 12 hour of 223.46 miles and Terry's 50 of 2.19.59 to list a few. Their overall ratings - Peter +1.154; Keith +.853; Terry +.429. Keith Balcombe also took our club Vets B.A.R. with a plus of 4.35mph. Keep it up Keith. Our new lady member Sally Rogers did well in her first season, winning the club's Novice Shield and Ladies' B.A.R. with 19.61mph. Well done. Our other prizewinners were ... Chris Lord (50 Miles - 1.58.07); Paul Cook (100 miles - 4.45.25); Matt Carr (Hillclimb [Steyning Borstal] - 4m27s); Lawrence Clifford (Junior B.A.R. - 25.93mph); Graham Wood (Road racing - 9 points); Jim Clewlow (Track B.A.R.); Dave Percy (Track 2nd place) and John Tomkins (10 mile series - 21.41). And now to get fit for 1997!

Training rides are being taken by Paul Cook on Sundays at 7.30am, Red Lion, Shoreham and by Mark Radley, 9.00am, Old Steine, Brighton. So look out, especially people like Geoff Boore (no they DON'T, well I suppose he's harmless).

Note: Our evening events start on Tuesday April 29th, 7.00pm. First 10 miles note Washington/Ashington course G10/42 (was G918). Thursday May 8th, 7.00pm, 10 miles G10/97 (was G917). Tuesday May 13th, 7.00pm, 16 miles, GS/982 [Steyning- Shoreham]. Then 10 miles on - Thursdays May 22nd/June 5th/June 19th/July 3rd - 7.30pm G97, and Tuesday May 27th, 7.30pm, 10 miles, G98. Tues June 10th, 16 miles 2 up, GS/982 and Tuesday June 24th, 25 miles, 7.00pm, G25/93. Details from Dick Jones 01273 770047. Evening 10s, etc. continue until mid August.

The club 50 in 4 in the wind and wet, as Rick well remembers with seven others (Pete and Bobby on tandem), they braved it. The first hour and a half was not bad, then it rained and by the halfway mark, Andy had disappeared. Iron man Beckingham left ten minutes early and proved hard to catch and the tandem 'blew up' at Ashington. They finally made it to the Elephant & Castle at West Chilton with six minutes to go and then had to undergo the ordeal of forcing down K&B Old Ale to face the rain again on the journey home.

And now, by some mysterious coincidence the 100 in 8 is to be revived, namely on Sunday, February 23rd. The course designed by Rick Stringer will use mainly B roads and lanes with a stop at 50 miles at a Little Chef. Good luck to all who take part. Rick will well remember the last one. He and I rode on our own on the day of days (I think we've just about dried out) after twenty years.

Lastly but by no means least, several of us went to Washington Village Hall on January 26th to remember our great friend in cycling - indeed, everybody's friend - Ray Douglass, at his memorial tea. It certainly was a happy occasion, just as Ray would have wanted it. Everyone met up with many old friends from near and far and a grand tea was laid on much to the pleasure of all.

Safe cycling to all in '97. See you up the road.

Excelsiorian

ESCA RELIABILITY TRIAL (Response to W.H)

Having read the diatribe from W.H. Does this mean Wimpy Hickey? I feel a response is necessary.

I have ridden about eight of the ESCA's reliabilities completed four in time, finishing the remainder out of time.

Perhaps we should examine the meaning of RELIABILITY TRIAL. According to my dictionary RELIABILITY means: Able to be relied on, good in performance and consistency.

TRIAL means: A test of individual ability by a process of testing quality or performance. This of course is what the event is all about.

I see no merit in changing an event which challenges both the riders and their machines. So please SIR Charles and ESCA do not alter the character of what is recognised by the majority as a damn good event.

I can suggest an easier ride for W.H. if he wants one, how about Hove promenade (but watch out for Charlie King the beach patrol). He doesn't like bikes on the promenade. Or how about a real challenge!

The Crawley Reliabilities:

February 16th. 50k & 100k. Crawley/Holtye/EastGrinstead/Crawley and Crawley/Charlwood/Brockham/Newdigate/Rusper/Colgate/Crawley. The 100K combines both of these courses.

March 9th. Petworth and back, approximately 55 miles. Or Selsey and back approximately 100 miles. Clashes with the National 200k Audax.

East Grinstead CC usually ride these events, so how about it, Nomads?

Jack Harris, Crawley Whs
(NB. I don't need an alias.)

SUSSEX NOMADS

Another winter has come and gone [I hope] with not too much snow?!! We have been able to get out most weekends although the ESCA Reliability Trial was only three miles for some of us. It seems that some riders at the mention of ice, put their brakes on; only the previous week some of us had had a Wednesday off and ridden round the circuit and it was a very enjoyable day.

The Club Xmas 'do', i.e. the Fish & Chip Supper went well (although the fish did not think much of it). Whilst G.B. went for the fish & chips we played table tennis [HA-HA] with some nice children [little horrors]. We sat down to fish & chips out of the paper with wine or coke followed by G.B. coffee.

Clubruns certainly came to a halt with the snow and bitter cold. It is not worth risking life and limb for a few miles, it's much better to get on the turbo in the garage. Now it's better we can get out regularly at the weekends. I know a certain o.a.p. gets out mid-week for a crafty sixty miles (100k to some) although spaced out around coffee and lunch - it's all miles and good for you.

The Nomad Dinner went well this year. We were at the Hollingbury Golf Club again. The food was good and plentiful. Mr. President [Vernon Hyde] even had meat in his veg. soup in the form of an earwig. During the meal cross-toasting was in order and during this period a small presentation was made to Graham Seymour [a regular visitor to our Dinner] in recognition of his '59'. At the Prize Presentation the following awards were made:

5 mile time trial	Barry Smith
Fastest 10. Bennett Sprint Award	Adrian Morris
Fastest 25. Tidbury Trophy	Dan Bennett
Reg Porter Sportsman Trophy	Adrian Morris
Christmas 10	Barry Smith
VETS B.A.R.	Geoff Boore
	(possibly for the last time)
SENIOR BAR	Adrian Morris

Amongst the guests was John Bennett, although as he had paid his subs was a member and not a guest. He has had his bike sorted out and is starting to ride again. This means clubruns will be harder and yours truly will need a bungee hooked to his saddle.

Well that's it. It looks a lot on my paper but in BONK appears to be very little. Never mind. See you.

Nomadicus Pensionarius

Closing Date for Summer Issue of BONK is MAY 14TH.

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME FROM ALL

SOUTHBOROUGH WHEELERS

The club dinner at the end of last year found less than fifty sitting down - the lowest figure ever - but proved to be an excellent function. Mark Nightingale gave a fine 'first' speech welcoming the guests and John Harding's witty and humorous response to the toast of 'the Club' set the pattern for a lively atmosphere that lasted all evening.

The low Dinner numbers do not mean decline and apathy. The A.G.M. was very well attended, the same officials elected and the same full programme agreed for 1997.

The reliability ride season continued but with a disastrous start for Les Hayman in the ESCA event. He was part of the pile up on ice at four miles when the Boores practised their 'Torvill and Dean' act. Tim Chacksfield started late and although within three and a half hours allotted riding time he lost out to a harsh Roy Humphrey who wouldn't allow for late starts. Pete Crofts did not officially enter but made a rare appearance to ride round the course. The Club's own reliability event - a very hilly fifty one miles - was held on a much more benign day. A dozen or so riders were headed by the tearaway younger element with Gareth Robb, stat of the roller racing, determined to hold off the challenge of newcomer Andrew Harvery. The cost to Andrew of keeping up could be judged by the unbelievable rate with which he consumed a vast sandwich at the finish. Brian Whitehouse rode an extra ten miles off course showing signs of new found fitness to remind him of halcyon racing days in the sixties in road bunches in the Midlands. John Watson limped home on a remarkable 'shredded' rim when one side of the metal started to peel off!

The freewheel competition was held on Wierton Hill near Maidstone. Pete Holland, using one of his fifty three bikes (twenty seven in immediate usable condition!) won by a record fifty eight yards. It was amusing to hear terry and John Watson argue over a two yard margin for second place as if it was a major road race victory. John again had the best excuse - balked by horses.

The winter roller racing continues to add spice to some winter evenings. Two victories have been recorded - over Medway and Dartford - but our most exciting was our match lost to the Fairies 5-7. Both Peter Watson and Andrew Harvey were involved in very tight matches. A packed SFA. clubroom throbbled to the many exciting races that could have seen the final result go either way.

The club was well represented at both the KCA and ESCA lunches which, despite falling attendances at both, were enjoyable events and a chance to fete the prizewinners.

The New Year's Day Open 10 was cancelled due to the snow. This is only the second time in twenty four years that cancellation has been necessary. The club's fun Boxing Day 10 had attracted twenty two competitors, many in festive mood and attire. Malcolm Martin won the event with 30.06 - still well outside Paul Woodman's record from the 1970 era. David Watson and Colin Nightingale put in commendably fast times on their mountain bikes whilst John Watson and John Harding rode old upright 'shopping' bikes. John Harding was undoubtedly the day's star as he rode complete in 1920s style tweed suit and flat cap with fashionable silk scarf wrapped round his neck. Add to this tri-bars on the roadster and his thirty five minute ride (halfway in the field) was a remarkable performance.

Another fun evening saw Southborough competing against the San Fairy Ann at indoor bowls and in May we hope to have a fun re-union of all present and past club members at The White Rock, Underriver to celebrate our 65th birthday. There are many ex-Southborough in ESCA clubs. Please note the date - 18th May.

Several club youngsters are at present in Lanzorate for winter training. They learnt that Bjarne Riis was to be there. "We should be fit enough by Friday to hang on to his back wheel" said Colin!!

What a lovely party for Ken Griffiths 80th birthday. Congratulations to Iris and her helpers for laying it on. And congratulations too to Maurice & Esther for the elegant and tasteful cover of the Christmas BONK

Roamer.

Southborough & District Wheelers
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CELEBRATING 65 YEARS OF CYCLING

BIRTHDAY FUN DAY

Sunday 18th May 1997

at the White Rock Inn, Under River, nr. Sevenoaks

- 2½ mile circuit ride with prizes to match three mystery times •
- Barbecue lunch from 12.00 midday •
- **Interclub "It's a Knockout" tournament** •
(in village hall if wet)
- Interclub bat and trap competition •
 - Old style birthday tea •
(old time tea at old time prices!)

Come and join us!

Stay all day or just drop in for a chat

• PUB OPENS 11am AND CLOSSES 11pm •

C.T.C. EAST SUSSEX D.A. MID-WEEK SECTION

Three weeks abstinence from Mid-Week cycling, because Christmas Day fell on a Wednesday, the weather on New Year's Day was treacherous and the weather on the day of our our Festive Lunch was discouraging, meant that it wasn't until January 15th that the Section hit the road again - literally in the case of Roy James and the leader John Merckx, both of whom slid on the ice sustaining bruising - John confessed that he had enjoyed the experience and we were pleased that he was out the following week in his usual good spirits.

In fact, high winds, blustery showers, the 'flu epidemic and other minor ailments, the escape of some of our stalwarts to warmer parts of the world, all have contributed to the curtailment of our programme. Nonetheless, we have only cancelled one ride and even then Ian Jamieson travelled to elevenses from his home in Ruislip.

Tony Palmer, recovering from a heavy fall he suffered on a local jaunt in Seaford, led an abbreviated ride from the Old Forge, Halland to Arlington. Although the rain held off, conditions were sufficiently threatening for the Heathfield Gang to dine elsewhere. Even so twenty or so riders converged for lunch at the Yew Tree after enjoying a gentle potter through the lanes.

John Taylor is enhancing his reputation as a runs leader with every ride he leads. His latest, on paper a gentle dawdle from Drusilla's at Berwick crossroads to The Kings Head at Horsebridge - just right for venerable gentlefolk whose winter mileage has been erratic to say the least - was reported by the survivors to have been an arduous experience, in spite of having had a back wind all the way to lunch. Thirty or so people were present, including Peter Bratt, who, much to our relief and pleasure, seems to have made a good recovery from his illness.

News of the other Peter (Lee) is disappointing. After three months he is still caged within the frame supporting his broken neck and at the time of writing is desperately hoping that when he visits the hospital in a few days time the metal contraption around his head will be removed and a collar fitted; at least he may be able to accept lifts in a car and join us at the pub sometimes.

Saturday rides enjoy modest support but some very enjoyable rides have taken place, especially those shared with the Tricycle Section.

We look forward to the warmer weather and in anticipation of sunny days Iris Stevens is starting a Forty-Plus Section in East Sussex. Rides will be on Thursday, meeting at the Cuckoo Trail car park in Hailsham. Further details can be obtained from Iris on 01323 844703.

Baggy Shorts

"KEN GRIFFITHS"

On February 16th, fifty one people gathered at the Union Corner Hall to celebrate Ken Griffiths 80th birthday. Ken is a very popular figure in East Sussex and is one of the very earliest people to feature in the Association annals. In recent years he has been best known for his marshalling duties at the Boship roundabout, innumerable event secretaries have made use of his services and it was an opportunity to try and thank Ken for his kindness in turning out so reliably. Before Ken took up full time marshalling he was a formidable competitor and even as a veteran he featured near the top of the result board. A number of his Uckfield clubmates were able to attend the party and his friends in the local C.T.C. Sections were well represented. Les Hayman, Association President, made a super speech, officially wishing Ken many happy returns and remembered some of the escapades that Ken had been involved in!

Ken is a truly kind and gentle man and we wish him many more happy birthdays.

ESCA LUNCHEON 1997



ESCA LUNCHEON 1997



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