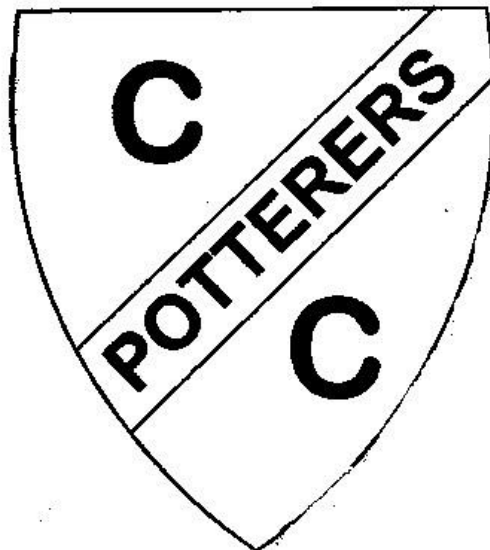


**POTTERING**

**AROUND**

**September 2018**

Founded



1971

*Usque Ad Mortem Bibendum*

Founded by Jim Catt, Ted Harrison, Arthur James Ted Upton

President Bob Friend

Club Chairman Dave Rodd

Club Secretary Stephen Pollard

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FOR SALE

A Red Brompton folding bicycle

6 speed H bars Schwalbe tyres with standard and extension seat post.

Brooks saddle, dynamo lighting

Both front bag and carrying bag

Cost £1600 would like £ 1100 ono

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### Advance Notice Of Potterers Christmas Dinner

At the Potterers Committee Meeting at Wingham on 16<sup>th</sup> August it was decided we would try to hold the Potterers Christmas Dinner at one of the two pubs in Minster on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December. We will aim to publish prices and menu options in the December issue of Pottering Around that should be distributed in early November.

### Fun And Games On The Beach

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>.July had been designated 'beach hut meet'. Chosen as it was high tide around midday for any Potterer who wanted a swim.

I was a bit nervous as the day approached. The past two years had not been a complete success. Two years ago on the arranged date, I was on crutches having broken my ankle cycling in France, so getting

to the hut was impossible. However being the enterprising group they are, the meet was held in the local pub. Then last year we had early rain and although it cleared by lunch time it was still very cool to sit on the beach, so only five hardy souls turned up.

This year our hot dry summer continued, and the day looked perfect with a slight sea breeze, and a flat calm sea that was positively inviting. Colin and I got to the beach early to erect the gazebo and get the tables and chairs out. I bought scones, jam and cream and aimed to provide tea and coffee. Richard and Paul brought beers and Norman brought more cakes so the food and drink were well covered.

Five of us went in swimming and later two took the kayak out, the other six stayed in the shade chatting. The sea was incredibly warm and not a jelly fish in sight. The games continued back on the beach using Colin's Guinness tin as target practise while we were drying off in the sun.

The party finally broke up about 4pm after a really enjoyable meet, good company, nautical tales from the sailors and fun and games on the beach. It was good to see Bob back after his epic ride to Gloucester, and Derek managed some miles after his accident with Peter, Pat, Hugh and Brian making up the participating members.

P.I.M

### 80<sup>th</sup> Semaine Federale Held At Epinal, Near Nancy In NE France

Stephen Pollard and I have just returned from an interesting week's cycling and sight-seeing trip to Epinal in NE France where this year's edition of the annual French Semaine Federale(Federal Week) was held from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> of August. Over 10,000 cyclists from 26 countries registered for the event.

We travelled to Epinal on a European Bike Bus, joining the vehicle at Dover at 9.30pm. Passports were checked with hand held scanners while we were still on the bus. However we did not leave port on the super-ferry "The Pride of Britain" until 11.45pm. The coach carries most standard racing or touring bikes, resting on their back wheels, fully assembled and held in a vertical position by aluminium cycle racks, in a large 2 level trailer towed behind the coach. Handlebars were turned at 90 degrees to minimise bike width. The upper level of the trailer was reserved for tandems, recumbents or large ruck sacks. Travelling by European Bike Express has always been frustrating due to their inability to provide any information on facilities on board a coach when you join it or any provisional timetable of the forthcoming journey. Bike Express office staff don't give the coach driver's any route planning information for special destinations like Epinal, where they are only going to and coming back from, a single time per year. Bus drivers rely on Tom Tom GPS for navigation. Something went wrong with HGV GPS programming on our trip and the coach left the motorway far too soon, resulting in a long, difficult excursion on minor roads, that had weight restricted bridges, to reach Epinal.

Bike Express accidentally passed the vast Semaine campsite. A very assertive lady who led parties of cyclists that used Bike Express twice a year persuaded the driver to unload her group of riders at the campsite. This delayed everyone else as the coach and trailer had to be re-secured. Due to Bike Bus lack of preparation my fellow passengers, reading local signage, had to direct the coach driver to the ride headquarters (Permanence) located at an out of town conference centre.

After being deposited in a large, open carpark I had to get my tools out and release my front brake cable before I could fit my front wheel. This had been removed as some bikes, including mine, were

carried attached to front axle clamps mounted on the floor, in compartments under the coach itself, instead of the trailer.

I'd printed out a Google map of where I'd booked to stay so set off down the steep 160m high dog-leg hill down to the River Moselle. I was carrying a hugely heavy rucksack on my back so was soaking wet with sweat in the 35 degrees Celsius temperature, before I found my accommodation. This turned out to be on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of a block of flats overlooking the Moselle.

My next task was to try to find the sports centre where I could pick up my dossier package. Dossiers contain security passes, map packs with breakdowns of most of the distances between villages on each route plus height profiles and a wrist band with electronic chip. This was loaded with credit for Permanence or refreshment point food and drink. The army of locally recruited volunteers (Benevoles) that handed out all the refreshment point food and drink items and checked people had pre-paid for restaurant meals, used battery powered hand-held scanners to interrogate the wrist band electronic chip. Wrist bands meant only a small number of people actually feeding the bands with credit at any refreshment point (Accueil) or Permanence main hall, needed to handle cash or payment cards.

I cycled up to the Permanence restaurant hall after collecting my numbered dossier. The menu that night was pate Lorrain (pate in flaky pastry), beef stew and carrots, cheese and Ile Flottante (floating island meringue). Stephen Pollard said one cyclist asked for a vegetarian starter course and was given a plate of carrots followed by the main course carrot and small portion of beef stew. The vegetarian probably didn't try any more meals at the Permanence! I didn't appreciate all the sugar content and lack of refreshing fresh fruit so had an evening meal at my lodgings with the French lady owner, her partner and another local French couple for the rest of the Semaine, except for

going to the Fete de Cloture, (final elaborate dinner) on the last Saturday evening.

The Semaine Federale ride program ran from Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> August to Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> August. Every day there were at least 4 arrow marked routes varying in length from 49km to 178km. Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> rides ranged from 49km (510m climbing) P1 to 135km (1860m of climb).P4 On Tuesday 7th August and Friday 10th August, 8 different length courses were provided as lorry transport for bikes, and buses for cyclists were arranged so riders could start and finish nearer the high Vosges mountains and source of Vittel bottled water, instead of riding all the way from Epinal. Paper arrows, colour coded for each day and measuring 8 inches long by 4 inches wide, were glued to the vertical edge of kerbs or stuck to the road surface at junctions or turn points to mark routes. Blue boards with white lettering mounted on vertical poles marked split points between different length P1, P2, P3 etc routes. Paper arrows were soon destroyed by traffic at busy points so I had to follow a route on the day the arrows were laid down. The sensible strategy was to start a route at the same time as thousands of other cyclists (8am-9am) and simply follow them to the first refreshment point (Accueil) normally only 20 miles distant. Routes tended to split after that first Accueil so I saw fewer riders on longer routes but more and more on the return as everyone joined back together again. I rode 250 miles and climbed 4600m over rolling countryside in 4 days on my bike.

On 2 scheduled ride days I had a break from cycling and bought train tickets to Nancy and Remiremont. Nancy was an hour journey by train or motorway and had a very impressive central square with town hall, art museum and opera house grouped around it. There was also the 14<sup>th</sup> century Porte de la Craffe, the oldest fortification in Nancy that looked like a chateau and Ducal Palais of the dukes of Lorraine. Remiremont was an attractive small town situated on the River

Moselle south of Epinal. I'd ridden through it earlier in the week on my way to a refreshment point but it was absolutely packed with motor traffic and cyclists at that time. Remiremont has an arcaded main street with shops tucked inside supporting pillars, providing long passages shaded from the sun.

I met Stephen at the Permanence bar on the final Saturday evening before we took our places at the closing Fete de Cloture dinner. We joined a long queue, but soon found ourselves processed and seated on benches in front of a long cloth covered table, with an elegant starter course in a small glass at each place setting. We were right on the end of a table. On our left was a large floor area for dancing, right in front of a raised platform on which a very professional band with a vast array of instruments were getting ready to perform. The band started off playing a mixture of English and French lyric songs using a female lead vocalist. Halfway through the dinner the singer



Epinal Central Café And Restaurant Area





Epinal River Moselle Frontage Towards Centre Of Town



Epinal River Moselle



Nancy Porte de la Craffe



Nancy Stanislas Square Arts Museum



Nancy Arc de Triumph



Nancy Stanislas Square Gold Embossed Railings



### Epital Semaine Federale Closing Parade

changed to an Elvis Presley/Johnny Hallyday type male singer dressed in black from head to foot with sun shades and attitude. The volume level from the sound system became physically painful after this point but the male singer certainly got many people up on their feet doing French style line dancing. Multiple courses of extremely tasty food arrived throughout the evening but the interval between their delivery was lengthy. We were seated by 8pm, first course arrived at 8.45pm and pudding hadn't been delivered by 11.30pm when I left to ride back to my accommodation and Stephen had to go and get the last bus back to the campsite. Stephen persuaded the driver to drop him off at his hotel that was on the way.

A traditional fancy-dress cycling parade is a final event that closes every Semaine Federale. Blocks of French cyclists fall in behind senior riders with placards bearing their cycling club's name and physical props representing their part of France. For example, cyclists from Normandy wear one-piece cow costumes while Breton ladies sport traditional black and white lace dresses. One club always dress

up in very colourful “Three Musketeer” type garments. The procession along the bank of the River Moselle lasted for well over an hour. Like any carnival, things were rather stop/start with participants calling out to friends lining the route. The only sad note about the parade was the English were represented by a very elderly couple wearing union jack costume with union jack umbrellas. There have been up to 100 British cyclists in previous Semaine Federale processions.

I found a nice restaurant situated on the River Moselle bank for lunch then packed up my belongings ready to meet the European Bike Express at the Permanence, for the journey home. The coach was 30 minutes late then had to wait another 30 minutes for a couple who failed to turn up at anything approaching the advertised departure time. Jason, the main Bike Express steward failed to explain why we were waiting, what time we would stop at motorway services or what our projected arrival time in Dover was likely to be. The coach had travelled up from Narbonne to Epinal on its return journey to England with more seats filled than on the outward journey and seat allocations on our tickets had not been updated to reflect this. I just had to sit where I could. Jason had all his tea making and meals ready for microwaving spread over seats that were needed by passengers joining at Epinal so there was lots of chaos and passing of large catering boxes overhead down the coach central aisle before everyone could sit down.

Eventually we got underway, arriving at Calais, where it was raining, at 4am. We had to queue for an hour to clear passport control so boarded the 5.45am Pride of France (one of the large, modern P&O ferries) for the return to Dover. I thoroughly enjoyed my Semaine Federale week. The weather from Saturday to Wednesday night had been well over 30 degrees Centigrade but I'd still covered good distance and climbing at a high average speed (15-17mph). The second part of the week from Thursday to Saturday was cooler (25 degree

Centigrade) and windier after lightning on Wednesday night. The final Sunday parade day was warmer with cloudless sky and 30 degrees Centigrade heat. The traditional picnic on Thursday (I didn't attend) was hit by lightning and very strong winds. Mike Stouling, a very experienced Audax rider I know well, told me the local police stopped anyone sheltering under trees and moved the whole picnic into a hall for safety reasons.

To sum up, I thought Epinal was a little run-down and had no buildings of any architectural interest or distinction while the Vosges countryside was pleasant enough with many quiet, rolling lanes but had no outstanding sights. Road surfaces were in a generally good condition in the countryside but extremely poor state in Epinal. The other surprising feature of Epinal was the totally deserted River Moselle, unusable for navigation due to weirs positioned in the direction of the centre of town. The canal port basin was virtually empty too, with only 3 small boats tied up all week. This was a huge contrast to Narbonne that's situated on a spur of the Canal Du Midi and is packed with pleasure craft and house boats.

Mike Stouling also said he wouldn't use the European Bike Bus again as the journey, especially the return trip when the coach suspension seemed to have broken completely, was so uncomfortable. Bike Express used a route on poorly maintained N roads that skirted the Belgium border area with France and then passed through Luxembourg. Motives for this rather odd route may have been to fill up with cheap fuel in Luxembourg and to avoid French motorway tolls. I was surprised with the lack of organisation displayed by European Bike Bus considering they have been operating the same sort of service for many years but don't seem to have become any more professional.

I was disappointed with my first ordinary Saturday night meal at the Permanence but very impressed with the final gala Fete de Cloture

event. Once again Mavic, Shimano and Rose Bikes who used to send a full range of their products to the Semaine Federale, were absent from the cycle exhibition hall. Semaine food, drink and meal prices remain extremely good value and haven't changed in years. The Permanence exhibition centre was an excellent base for the Semaine Federale rides with all usual facilities (cycle, tourist information and local produce exhibition, restaurant and bars) concentrated in one area. The indoor and outdoor bar were both of generous size and service very slick.

Participants at the Epinal event did seem to be generally older than I remember from the last Semaine Peta and I attended 4 years ago at Saint Pourcain near Moulins. Next year's event is going to be held at Cognac, in the Dordogne area of France, near Bordeaux from 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> August.

C.W

### Single Front Chainring Chainsets

There has been a recent trend to adopt single chainring front chainsets for mountain bikes and even some road bikes, rather than the traditional double chainset and front derailleur. Front derailleur operation is quite likely to result in your chain jamming under the derailleur when you try to shift or the chain falling off either side of your chainrings, especially if you are riding over rough ground.

There have been 2 market changing developments to make single front chainring operation a practical proposition. The first important invention is the "narrow-wide" chainring. This ring has to have an even number of teeth that are alternately narrow and wide. This means they precisely fit the successive narrow, wide gaps between the rollers on a standard bike chain. You can't use a front derailleur with a narrow wide chainring as the chain grips the chainring so tightly but this is what stops the chain jumping off the single chainwheel, however rough the ground is.

The second development is extremely wide range 12 speed, 1045 teeth, dinner plate size, rear cassettes. The 9 or 10 tooth smallest cog gives the high gears normally produced by a large front ring while the big 45 tooth cog gives a sensible low climbing gear when used with a moderate size front chainring. Dedicated rear derailleurs with very long arms and special hubs have to be used with these huge cassettes.

The rear derailleurs can also be fitted with switchable clutches to keep a really firm grip on the chain so it cannot leap off under extreme conditions. Using a 12 speed block gives 12 distinct gear ratios. A normal 11 speed double chainset and 11 speed block gives 22 gear ratios but some of these are repeated as you switch between rings. All-out racing bikes need very high gears so that's why they may use a 9 tooth rear cog as part of the rear cassette.

C.W



Epinal Semaine Closing Parade & Accueil Bike Parking





**Faversham Wednesday Meets For Sep, Oct & Nov 2018**

<b><u>Sep</u></b>	5 <sup>th</sup>	The Queens Head, Boughton Street	01227 751369
	12 <sup>th</sup>	The Castle Inn, Oare, Faversham	01795 533674
	19 <sup>th</sup>	The Brents Tavern, Faversham	01795 532282
	26 <sup>th</sup>	The Three Horseshoes, Staplestreet	01227 750842
<b><u>Oct</u></b>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	The Alma, Painters Forstal	01795 533835
	10 <sup>th</sup>	White Horse Inn, Boughton Street	01227 751343
	17 <sup>th</sup>	The Chequers, Doddington	01795 886366
	24 <sup>th</sup>	The Freewheel Graveney	01795 538143
	31	The Queens Head, Boughton Street	01227 751369
<b><u>Nov</u></b>	7 <sup>th</sup>	The Alma, Painters Forstal	01795 533835
	14 <sup>th</sup>	The Castle Inn, Oare, Faversham	01795 533674
	21 <sup>st</sup>	The Freewheel Graveney	01795 538143
	28 <sup>th</sup>	White Horse Inn, Boughton Street	01227 751343



Epinal Semaine Closing Parade

Thanet Section Thursday Meets for Sep, Oct & Nov 2018

<u>Sep</u>	6 <sup>th</sup>	The Haywain, Brambling	01227 720676
	13 <sup>th</sup>	The King Ethelbert, Reculver	01227 374368
	20 <sup>th</sup>	The Hare and Hounds, Northbourne	01304 369188
	27 <sup>th</sup>	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250
<u>Oct</u>	4 <sup>th</sup>	The Rose Inn, Wickhambreux	01227 721763
	11 <sup>th</sup>	The Red Cow, Sandwich	01304 613399
	18 <sup>th</sup>	The Crown, Finglesham	01304 612555
	25 <sup>th</sup>	The New Inn, Minster	01843 826142
<u>Nov</u>	1 <sup>st</sup>	The Anchor Inn, Wingham Committee Meeting-Members please gather in the bar	01227 720392

	8 <sup>th</sup>	The St Crispin Inn, Worth	01304 612081
	15 <sup>th</sup>	The Rose Inn, Wickhambreux	01227 721763
	22 <sup>nd</sup>	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	29 <sup>th</sup>	The Red Cow, Sandwich	01304 613399



Thanet Section Sunday Meets for Sep, Oct & Nov 2018

<u>Sep</u>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	The New Inn, Minster	01843 826142
	9 <sup>th</sup>	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250
	16 <sup>th</sup>	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392
	23 <sup>rd</sup>	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	30 <sup>th</sup>	The Half Moon & Seven Stars, Preston	01227 722296
<u>Oct</u>	7 <sup>th</sup>	The Five Bells, Eastry	01304 611188
	14 <sup>th</sup>	The New Inn, Minster	01843 826142
	21 <sup>st</sup>	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392
	28 <sup>th</sup>	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250

<u>Nov</u>	4 <sup>th</sup>	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	11 <sup>th</sup>	The Half Moon & Seven Stars, Preston	01227 722296
	18 <sup>th</sup>	The Five Bells Eastry	01304 611188
	25 <sup>th</sup>	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392

