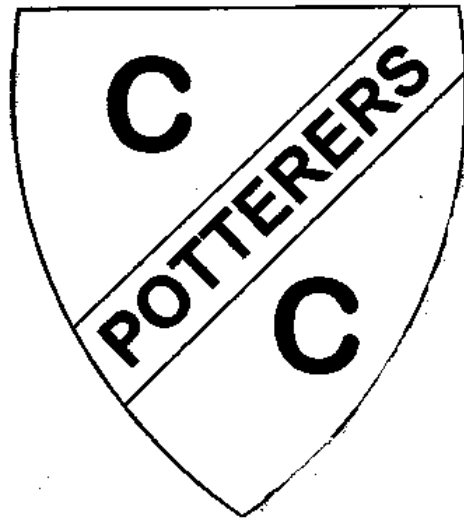


POTTERING
AROUND
December 2019

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

Club Treasurer Peta Masey

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The Potterers 2020 Annual General Meeting, Raffle and Saddlebag Sale will be held at The Five Bells, Eastry on Thursday 19th March at 12 noon

Recent Deaths Of Potterers Members

We are sorry to report that three Potterers members Owen Harden, Roger Gibbs and John Stockley have recently died.

John Stockley used to own a PC repair business in Faversham. He organised meets for the Faversham section of the Potterers from 2006-2011, taking over from Ron Walton.

Owen Harden served on the Potterers Committee as Membership Secretary and Thanet area meets organiser from 2008 to 2018. Dave Rodd wrote a detailed account of Owen's life that follows immediately below. The Potterers President, Chairman, Treasurer and Editor plus Brian and Norman attended Owen's funeral service.

Owen Harden (1939-2019)

Owen Harden started as a teenager with the East Kent Cycling Club, where Joe Duncan took him under his wing. At first he rode a solo, usually on fixed wheel. He did his National Service mostly at Shorncliffe Barracks, where he managed to persuade the powers that be that he was in training as a cyclist, and spent most of his time there cycling home and back.

He became attracted to the tricycle and spent many years riding his collection of machines around the Kent countryside. He also turned out for marshalling duties at time trials, usually at distant places and unsociable hours. The CC Bexley at this time had a strong tricycle section, and Owen also joined that club. Owen was Captain of the SE Region of the TA (Tricycle Association), which is a national body. As such, he organised and led runs for trike riders in the area. The CC Bexley is a local cycling club which had a strong trike section, whose

members were also members of the TA (The information came from Roy Canning, secretary of the Fellowship of Kent & Sussex Cyclists, a trikee and member of the Bexley).

He was elected to the Fellowship of Kent & Sussex Cyclists, whose membership is by invitation, and served on that committee for many years.

As a Potterer he attended many rides on solo trike and latterly as his health declined on an E-bike. He took over the job of runs secretary for the Thanet section of the Potterers, a position he held for around 10 years. He was always an enthusiastic cyclist, his only other mode of transport being a motorcycle, although at one time he drove a Reliant three-wheeler, never having passed his test to drive a car.

Unfortunately, some of his previous occupations, including that of paint sprayer, affected his health, and this led to COPD as well as emphysema, and he also had a heart condition. This gradually worsened until at the start of 2019 he was warned that his days were numbered. He fought off several attacks of pneumonia, but eventually his lungs could absorb no more oxygen, and he died in the night of 14th October.

Dave Rodd

Owen Harden's Life Story, Read At His Funeral Service

Owen was born on 5th October 1939 in Hemel Hempstead. He was the second child born to Reg and Vera and had an older sister and a younger brother.

The family moved to Thanet when Owen was twelve and he attended Hereson school for boys. It was whilst he was growing up in Hemel Hempstead however that he fell in love with the idea of cycling. He would often walk past a local pub where there was a huge collection of bikes outside and he decided he would like to try cycling himself. So once in Thanet he joined the Cyclist Touring Club and would go out with them on rides. He was still young at the time so he was watched

over by Joe and Sylvia who went on to become life long friends of Owen.

On leaving school, his father secured Owen an apprenticeship as a cycle mechanic at a small local firm but he only completed two years of this as, at 18 years of age he decided to join the army – serving with The Buffs. He really enjoyed his time with them, with postings in Germany and Kenya. He met his first wife and married and together they had three children – a Son, Owen who sadly passed away, and two daughters, Vanda and Tanya.

Over the years Owen worked hard in various jobs as a paint sprayer, a baker and as a storeman.

After nineteen years Owen and his wife went their separate ways but a new chapter was to begin when he and Carol became a partnership, marrying five years later. Carol tells me they had thirty six wonderful and blissful years together with so much happiness. With Carol having four children from her first marriage and Owen three from his, they decided not to have children together but they did bring up their grandson Peter and they loved having him and would go to lots of places seeing many things including Peter's favourite - Steam trains.

Owen's passion throughout his life was of course bikes. He cycled with a number of different groups including the Thanet Road Club and The East Kent club too as well as the Potterers... a club for the retired.

Of course Owen also enjoyed Motorcycles and would travel around on a motorbike and side car. He loved motorcycle grass track and speedway and enjoyed following this sport.

Tricycles were also important in Owen's life and the Tricycle association became a big part of his and Carol's life, going to many social events and meeting lots of lovely people. They took part in marshalling for races and this took them all over the country. Back at home, Owen himself had an extensive collection of bikes which at one

stage numbered 21 bikes and 7 trikes and a tandem trike too that he and Carol would use.

In recent years, when Owen's health hasn't been so good he still kept his love of bikes alive... he was a member of the Queen's Regimental Riders Association (QRRA) being known as Grandad Buff (QRRA are an official branch of the Queen's Regimental Association) and he made so many friends through them. You see Owen loved people. He was a sociable person always enjoying a trip out.. usually to a café to drink lots of tea and have a good chat...he did love to talk! Even recently Owen could be seen going out and about with his bike, carrying his oxygen in his side car!

Owen was quite a joker! He loved a laugh and a banter and if you didn't know him, well you would be forgiven for not knowing whether he was joking or serious sometimes! But that was just his sense of humour and you couldn't change him.. you wouldn't want to! He was, however a man of strong principles and would do anything for anyone if you could. Today we are deeply sad that Owen has gone but we can take comfort that he is out of pain and at peace. So let us celebrate his wonderful life today.

Kate Crosher

Independent Funeral Celebrant

Roger Gibbs

Roger was a member of West Kent RC, a club affiliated to the British League of Racing Cyclists, so an early exponent of Massed Start racing as it was known, i.e. the sort of racing we now take for granted, as exemplified by the Tour de France on the open road.

Historically there was much opposition to this type of racing in Britain. The activities of racing cyclists back in the 1890s nearly resulted

in cycling itself being banned. This was because races were organised on a handicap basis, the slowest starting first and the ideal finish being a mass sprint. Even worse, the riders were permitted to have pacers, often tandems. The resultant congestion led to Police action, and the National Cyclists' Union banned such races on the open road, and so time trials were developed, all other racing being restricted to the track.

During WW2, the absence of private vehicles on the roads led a number of racing cyclists to start promoting Continental-style racing, and they were promptly banned by the NCU. So the BLRC was formed, leading to considerable hostility until the two groups merged in 1959 to form the British Cycling Federation (now British Cycling). League members scored some notable achievements, including wins in the Tour of Britain and the Peace Race, although they were barred from competing in the Olympics and World Championships.

This is a very brief background to the racing scene back when Roger started his cycling career. Road racing men tended to follow Continental trends in equipment, and Roger had a lifelong passion for the best Italian machines and equipment.

Roger also became very interested in Sailing Barges, and for many years was associated with the barge museum in Sittingbourne.

Unfortunately, Roger's outdoor activities made him vulnerable to skin cancer, and he spent much of his declining years receiving treatment. He later developed Amyloidosis, a rare disease caused by abnormal protein in the bone marrow, leading to progressive organ failure.

His funeral was well attended, by friends, neighbours and other associates, including 6 members of The Potterers.

Dave Rodd

A Trip From Swansea To Fishguard

I try to cycle with my cousin Kitty and her husband Tim every year. This year's adventure was to be from Swansea to Fishguard following

NCR 4 – The Celtic Trail around the SW wales coastline, a distance of 140 miles.

On a Wednesday in early September I travelled by train from Canterbury to Swansea. Train travel with a heavily loaded bike is always problematic with different rail companies having different arrangements and stowage amenities; most require advance booking. This time, after a somewhat hair-raising cycle ride between St Pancras and Paddington, the journey was negotiated fairly easily. I was joined by my fellow riders at Reading and we, our bikes, panniers etc were delivered to Swansea by mid-afternoon.

We set off immediately into a stiff SW head wind across the Gower Peninsula arriving at our pre-booked accommodation in a converted barn attached to a golf club on top of the highest bit of this promontory.

Thursday was also breezy but warm. We followed the coast around Llanelli then turned inland to follow the river Towy up to Carmathen. The cycle route was largely very rural on cycle paths, redundant railway lines or minor country lanes. We were rarely lost assisted by excellent signage and rewarded by wonderful views but the ups and downs were relentless. Every day was hard riding which was exacerbated by the 18lbs of luggage I was carrying in my panniers. Spent the night in a modest hotel on the main street of Carmathen, a small but pleasant county town. Supper at Pizza Express.

Friday started damp. Wet weather gear required. Today's ride was once again very rural. Little arable farming here which makes for very attractive countryside; small grassy green fields, thick hedges and abundant bird life. Cows everywhere together with their aroma and by products which stuck to our bikes and ourselves. We strayed from the NCR after 18miles to visit Laugharne where the Welsh writer/poet Dylan Thomas had lived, worked and drunk for the last 15 years of his life; his work "Under Milkwood" is assumed to be based upon the

village and its inhabitants. We saw his lovely seaside cottage, The Boathouse, his writing room (a converted garage) and his local watering hole, the eponymously named Brown's Hotel, so had a beer and a welsh rarebit here for lunch. Weather now sunny and pleasant so onwards for a night in the seaside resort of Saundersfoot. Fish and chips for supper, and some beer.

Saturday was a lovely day warm, sunny and a lighter breeze. A lot of up and downing again today. Tenby first then Pembroke and across the impressive Cleddau bridge which spans the estuary. The towering structures of the redundant Milford Haven oil refinery strike an incongruous chord in this countryside now, ironically, off set by numerous giant wind turbines - visual evidence of the move towards renewable energy. Onward a further 15 miles via Haverfordwest to our destination of Broad Haven a small seaside village at the south end of St Brides Bay. A wonderful beach where we swam. Spent the night in a Youth Hostel, my first visit at the age of 72! And jolly good too; the three of us slept in a bunkroom for 4. Clean, lots of hot water and cost us £18 a head. Pub grub and beer for supper.

Sunday. Our final riding day was fine, sunny and windless. The first eight miles up and down around St. Brides Bay knocked the stuffing out of us. But what wonderful beaches terminating in the 3 mile long perhaps 300 yard wide Newgale beach which was almost deserted. Climbing out of Newgale we met kinder country and were in St. Davids, the UKs smallest city, by noon for coffee and cake. A sniff around the small touristy town and cathedral then a turn to the North as we had reached the western extremity of Wales. Pleasant country cycling now with the wind at our back for the first time in four days and onwards for the 20 mile ride up to Fishguard. This modest town is spread out over a couple of miles and we spent half an hour of illconcealed irritation trying to find our B&B. Good humour returned

once we were settled scrubbed and clean. A happy pub grub supper sealed our successful trip.

Monday saw us travelling home. It's harder to get out of Wales than it is to get in. Fishguard is, in every sense, at the end of the line. After an untidy departure from our B&B, when we inadvertently locked my panniers inside the house after having carefully posted the house keys back through the letter box, we just managed to catch the 0750hrs train from the docks to Cardiff. This train was advertised as accepting only two cycle bookings which my companions had secured. I was cycle booking less. This had been a worry as the next train was some 3 hours later. It was a needless worry as there were only five people travelling on the 3-coach train and the guard, who noted my ticket for Canterbury, was distracted from my un-booked bike as he reminisced happily of his early life in Whitstable. The rest of the trip home proved easy although I spent a confused 10 minutes on the Regent's Canal cycle path somewhere near the Meerkats and the Lemurs enclosures of London Zoo trying to suss out my route to St. Pancras. Safely home by 1700hrs.

Richard Brown

Bike Liveliness

In my opinion liveliness of a bike primarily depends on the length of its wheelbase, steering response speed, frame wall thickness, bike weight and how much feedback from the road surface the bike is passing over is transferred back to the rider.

Touring bikes have long chainstays to allow heel clearance for a bike that would normally be equipped with a rear rack and panniers. They have a slower steering response than sportier machines to avoid bad road surfaces or rider fatigue causing the bike to veer off in an unexpected direction. The long wheelbase and slow steering plus burly

frame to deal with touring luggage loads, make these bikes hard work to ride in an unladen state.

Audax or endurance racing bikes are far more rewarding machines to ride providing you don't want to carry the kitchen sink with you! Both these bike types have mid length to tall headtubes and shorter reach top tubes than race bikes, so you can ride an endurance race bike without bending your back right down to a low race bike position. As I've found in the last year as you get older your back gets less flexible. All new bikes have larger tyres and wider wheels fitted than ever before, even race bikes are starting to adopt 28mm wide tyres but more racy machines still have shorter wheelbases than tourers which gives sportier bikes a more flickable feel.

Fork design has changed radically for sport bikes in recent times due to carbon fibre designs being universally adopted above a minimum price point, even for custom steel frames. This is due to carbon forks being one third the weight of steel forks and the road vibration damping properties of carbon if it's interleaved with Kevlar fibre. Less vibration coming through your handlebars makes it safer and more comfortable to ride at speed. Fitting larger tyres helps, if frame and brake clearance allow, but developments in fork design are just as important in improving bike feel without adding lots of weight.

One further factor in how lively a bike appears to be is how high the gearing is. New endurance road bikes normally come with 50/34 chainrings and 11 to 30 rear cassettes. Bikes from years ago tended to have higher gearing with a large 52 or 53 tooth chainring. Smaller chainrings are easier to turn more quickly than larger ones and increased pedalling speed gets you more involved with enjoying a ride rather than grinding through it.

New steel alloys with very high tensile strength were developed from the 1990's onwards. Reynolds 853 frames lose much less of their strength after brazing than traditional Reynolds 531 ones so thickness

of tubing walls can be reduced to give a really smooth, subtle ride. I know from personal experience how an 853 machine can have a wonderfully floaty feel, almost as if suspension of some kind was present.

How fast you appear to be riding is often rather different from reality. Turning a smaller gear over more quickly makes it appear you're making faster progress but pushing a bigger gear more slowly will still get you to your destination in the same time. It's just not so enjoyable an experience. A livelier riding style does get you over rolling countryside more quickly for the first part of a ride but you may tire more quickly than taking things more sedately, staying seated in your saddle and pushing a higher gear.

Bike weight is important if you want to tackle steep hills rather than rolling ones and weight becomes more significant as you start to tire. I use Strava to record my rides and my fastest times on a gently sloping uphill 15-minute drag are identical on a 10kg steel bike and lighter carbon bike. On a longer route or one with steeper hills a carbon bike will always be quicker.

C.W

New Garmin 530 & 830 & Wahoo Roam GPS Units

In May 2019 Garmin announced 2 new, mid-size, full colour screen GPS units the 530 (£259.99) and 830 (£359.99). Both have built in, detailed maps of all western European countries or Australia or North America depending on where the units were purchased. European Garmin customers have to pay extortionate sums to buy American or Asian maps and vice versa. Wahoo allow worldwide, free digital maps to be downloaded to their products.

Garmin 530 and 830 battery life should be much better than the outgoing 520 and 820 models due in part to adoption of more efficient Sony chipsets. The new GPS's both have a dedicated, waterproof

socket arrangement on their bases that allows the compatible Garmin Charge supplementary battery to be plugged in underneath them, doubling their run time. This connection has only been available on the top of the range Garmin 1030 up till now. Connecting an external battery via a standard USB lead if it's raining can lead to short circuits that can destroy a GPS unit.

Both new GPS's come with more features than any other device Garmin have ever built. New road metrics include ClimbPro which gives the metres you still have to climb plus remaining gradient on significant ascents. There's a huge pile of new mountain bike stuff including Trailforks data and maps of thousands of mountain bike trails loaded into the 530 and 830 memories with details of degree of difficulty of paths, how well you're riding them and how much time you spend in the air on jumps!

The 530 is button operated whilst the 830 has a touch screen. Other significant contrasts between the 2 units are the 530 can only route to a map position you select on its screen but the 830 will guide you to a full postal address as it is loaded with a point of interest data base. The 830 can work in a similar way to a normal car satellite navigation. With car sat nav your destination is usually the priority rather than worrying about a particular routing path. Cyclists are normally more concerned with details of circular journeys following a particular predetermined set of roads.

The Garmin 830 should be a really useful device if you arrive in a strange location without mobile data coverage. This is exactly what I needed at the 2018 Semaine Federale when I had no idea where my accommodation was located as phone mobile data was not working. My Wahoo Elemnt or Roam if that had been available, could not accept a postal address like a car sat nav system.

Both Garmin units can generate turn by turn directions from their internal maps and a faster processor than older devices possessed.

Turn by turn instructions are essential for Audax or Sportive riders who want to achieve a fast finishing time. They allow cyclists to concentrate on badly maintained UK road surfaces rather than trying to read instructions and fall into the next pothole. Sensibly designed cycling GPS sound loud audible alarms before each turn so riders only have to worry about turns when they hear a tone.

Both Garmin units have a built-in bike alarm feature that's activated if your bike is moved while you're having a coffee stop. The GPS also notifies your mobile phone that the alarm has been activated.

The current large screen Garmin 1030 flagship has just been updated (September 2019) with firmware to match the features of the 830. The 1030 will still have a slower, less efficient processor that drains its battery more quickly. The Garmin 1000 previous flagship will not receive any future updates.

Garmin have lost many customers in recent years selling cycling GPS units that didn't work as their specifications suggested they should and that suffered constant hardware and firmware problems. Some cycling magazines advised readers to avoid the more expensive Garmin GPS units as they were so unreliable. The existing 820 touch screen model seemed to be especially awful. Every time Garmin issued a firmware update to try to correct problems Garmin seemed to break another function that had worked until that time.

Many Audax riders including myself, ditched their Garmin GPS's and adopted the Wahoo Bolt or Wahoo Elemnt GPS. Black and white screen Wahoo Bolt and Elemnt units don't have built in full street level mapping so Elemnt/Bolt routes have to be generated from the internet in advance. This situation has changed to some extent with the introduction of the Wahoo Roam which has built-in mapping and processing.

Problems with previous Garmin GPS's included faulty touch screens, touch screens that would not operate in wet conditions or when wearing gloves, firmware that crashed repeatedly when attempting to produce turn by turn directions, frequent requests to make a U turn, unwanted diversions to any cycle paths when a current road was perfectly usable and altitude statistics that were 100's of metres in error.



A Small Sample Of Owen Harden's QRRR Motorcycle Club Friends At His Funeral Service At Thanet Crematorium



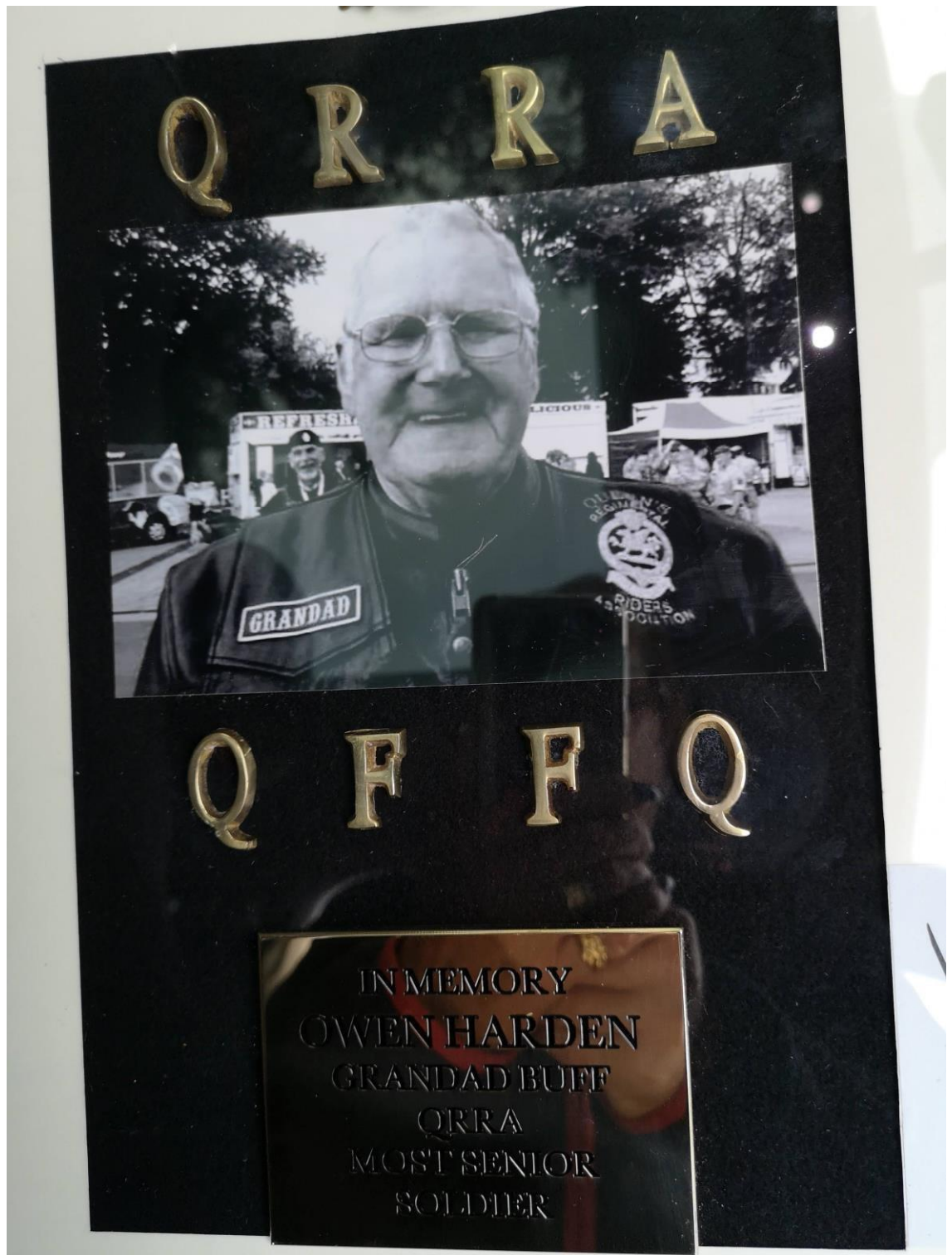
Notre Dame de Clemence De La Verne Monastery.



Cape Camarat Lighthouse, Near St Tropez



Old Railway Line, Now Gassin to Croix Valmere Cycle Path



A Tribute To Owen Harden Prepared By His QRRR Friends

A couple of days after the new Garmin GPS devices were announced, Wahoo their main competitor in the cycling GPS market, released details of their new colour screen, Roam GPS. This is operated with buttons not a touch screen. The Roam will replace the black and

white screen Wahoo Elemnt but the Elemnt will continue to receive updates. The Roam contains a built in detailed routable map set so it can internally generate turn by turn routing to another point selected on its screen mapping without mobile WiFi being needed. The Wahoo Roam is unable to internally generate a route to a postal address or point of interest but can redirect you back to your route if you stray off track, using its built-in mapping & processor. Although the screen is described as full colour display only 7 colours including black and white are actually used.

There has been a rather disappointing initial reaction to the new Wahoo Roam from the first reviews on the internet. It's expensive (£299) for the limited upgrades from the Wahoo Elemnt. Round trip routing, waterproof supplementary battery provision, heatmap trend routing data to improve auto route suitability, vibrant screen colours and new non mapping extras like built in theft warning alarm are all absent.

Elemnt turn by turn instructions are displayed in a black and white, thin, faint typeface which cannot be expanded, at the top of the screen. I find them difficult to read on my Wahoo Elemnt. Things may be slightly better on the Roam due to the display being directly behind Gorilla glass but rather more sunken on the Elemnt. Garmin turn instructions seem rather more vivid than Wahoo Elemnt and Roam. Roam screen resolution is more detailed 240*400, compared to 246*322 for the Garmin 530 and 830. Garmin GPS's are notorious for ignoring pre-prepared Audax route instructions. It's simpler to load a gpx file from another mapping site into an Elemnt/Roam and generate turn by turn instructions than to do that with a Garmin unit.

For Wahoo devices these routes simply have to be generated by "Ride with GPS", or "Komoot" mapping sites (to include turn by turn instructions) before synchronising with the internet via Bluetooth and popping up on the Wahoo GPS unit. Track files from any other source

can be opened with the excellent Wahoo mobile phone App and then appear in the Wahoo device memory. Basic recorded ride data such as altitude, seems to be more accurate and reliable with Wahoo than Garmin products but Wahoo only offer a part of the new Garmin feature set.

Looking at the official Garmin 530/830 forums where customers raise any problems with their devices the new Garmin's still suffer from many of the old problems. These include not being able to maintain a Bluetooth radio link between the 530/830 and a Smartphone (therefore no "Live Track" reporting your ride to friends/family), GPS's locking up in the middle of a route, unexplained battery drain, very poor quality re-routing instructions (lot of "make a U turn") if you deviate from the track you're following and the 530/830 generating very torturous routes using every possible diversion from quiet backroads onto inappropriate cycle tracks or paths. Many forum reports say the off-road trail guidance simply doesn't work or at the very least is very complicated to set up. The buzzer for audio navigation prompts is very weak and non-volume adjustable. The same buzzer is used for the theft alarm feature so that's unlikely to deter thieves! The only noticeable improvement over previous Garmin's and all Wahoo GPS's seem to be a greatly extended battery life.

The Wahoo Roam had an initial problem with mounting brackets snapping due to handlebar vibration but that was fixed by Wahoo sourcing mounts from another supplier. Initial rather route generation appears to have been speeded up.

In September 2019 Wahoo also added full Garmin rear facing radar compatibility to the Bolt, Elemnt and Roam so all the Wahoo units will mirror the Garmin GPS radar display information output format. You need to buy the Garmin Varia RTL510 Radar/Cycling light to source radar data that will be displayed on the Wahoo GPS screens. Any moving vehicle travelling faster than your bike up to 153m behind,

will be indicated by a bleep and icons (multiple cars can be detected simultaneously). Icons climb up the side of your GPS in a red strip if the following vehicle is travelling faster than normal or yellow strip if travelling at normal speed, then go to green when it's passed. The Roam GPS uses colour bands on the edge of its screen plus LED's. Rear radar is useful in country areas with low traffic density and when strong headwinds prevent you from hearing traffic behind you. It's less useful in busy towns but traffic should be slower in those circumstances.

If I was in the market for a new GPS I would probably chose the Wahoo Roam rather than a Garmin product as in my experience Wahoo products work without fuss and provide reliable ride data. The features I'd really like added to the Roam are the ability to route to a full postal address on the unit itself plus automatic round trip routing.

Garmin always have long lists of features many of which don't work as well as they should or can be disabled by frequent poorly tested firmware updates. Garmin typically support their products with firmware updates for 2 years but Wahoo with their more limited product range provide updates for longer periods. The Wahoo Bolt introduced in March 2017 still gets regular updates.

C.W

Swinging the Lantern

Sunny, beery ramblings at a Thursday meet at The Haywain, Bramling led me to confess that I had once been involved in a collision between a ship and a car. I have subsequently been approached by the Editor to commit those ramblings, (without prejudice), to paper. Herewith....

In 1976 I found myself appointed to the charity The Sailing Training Association (STA), which was a marine version of the Outward Bound Trust. This was to be a fifteen-month secondment from my employers P&O Cruises. I was a 29 year old bachelor, fit as fiddle and

as slim as whippet. I had been in the MN for 11 years and was a fully qualified mariner; additionally, I also had considerable coastal and some deep water sailing experience acquired from a childhood and youth spent “messing about in boats”, initially around Poole Harbour then the South Coast, Channel Islands , Brittany, the Bay of Biscay and the north coast of Spain.

The STA ran two purpose built tall ship schooners; the Winston Churchill and the Malcom Miller. The sister ships, (and they were ships), were 330 tonnes displacement, 150 feet long and had a considerable draught of 15 feet. They were three masted, (each 100feet high), square rigged on the foremast, and carried 9000 sq. ft. of sail; there were two auxiliary engines used for berthing and when the wind was contrary.

The sail arrangement of 14 sails was complex and had been intentionally designed to be demanding of both labour and understanding of operation. The inner, outer and flying jib were set from the bowsprit which was a substantial 18-inch diameter round steel spar that projected 15 feet forward of the bow of the ship. It was supported by inboard steel work and braced by the forestays, side stays and a heavy link chain bobstay which was tensioned by a vertical spar called the dolphin striker and then secured to the bow at the waterline (see picture).

There were no winches to assist the hoisting or handling of sails (a minimum of 10 hands were required to hoist the fore, main or mizzen sails), so that team work, willingness, effort and enthusiasm were essential to the running of the vessel – the development of these qualities were the primary purpose and ethos of the STA.

The ships operated mainly 2 week cruises, often foreign going, but generally starting and finishing in a UK port.

There was a permanent crew of five attached to each schooner. The Captain, Chief Officer (myself), Engineer, Cook and Bosun. We were the only professional seafarers onboard. We had to be alert in this

potentially dangerous environment with our very inexperienced and young charges.

For each cruise three further adults were drafted in to perform the functions of Watch Officer. Some were able, some were not. None were allowed to stand a watch alone requiring either the Captain or myself (and often both of us) to be up at all times whilst at sea.

One or two adult “Pursers” were appointed for each cruise. Much like their professional counterparts they enjoyed talking, eating, drinking, sleeping and not much else. Their minimal responsibilities included the issues from the slop-chest, and the bond (cigarettes and booze) together with the associated accounts. The accounts were frequently up the creek and had to be imaginatively adjusted by myself at the end of the cruise to satisfy the scrutiny of the charity’s treasurer. Occasionally we carried an additional professional seafarer, either RN or MN, who would be a very welcome addition.

The “crew” were 42 trainees. Young people between 16-21 years, never mixed sexes. Five of the trainees would have sailed with the STA before and, because potential had been spotted in them on previous cruises, they were offered heavily discounted cruise fees to assist with the onboard organisation. That still left 37 lads (or lasses) who had never set foot on a boat before this experience.

Life was exciting, unpredictable, sometimes dangerous, frequently uncomfortable and great fun.

Early on a fine morning in late August 1977 the Malcolm Miller slipped her overnight moorings in Dartmouth and set full sail up Channel across Lyme Bay for Weymouth. It was a sparkling day with a fresh SWly wind and by 1500hrs we had rounded Portland Bill and found quieter conditions in Weymouth Bay. Here we stowed the sails, started the engines, prepared the mooring ropes and tidied the decks prior to entering Weymouth harbour.

The Captain briefed me of his planned approach and manoeuvre into the harbour. Mindful of how busy the town and quay side would

be at the height of the summer holiday season he reminded me of the necessity for our berthing to be as slick and as neat as possible. He also required that the rigging and yards were to be manned by the trainees as we berthed which made for a brave sight. Following his instructions I briefed the trainees, got all hands into clean uniforms and up the rigging to their allocated stations.

We passed safely through the pier heads and into the confined inner harbour, here the Miller appeared even bigger with her masts dwarfing the waterside buildings. She looked at her very best with the rigging and yards manned by our youthful smart crew, brasswork shining, clean flags flying.

The Captain had been right; Weymouth quayside was packed with happy, pink faced holiday makers and there was increasing chatter and expectation at our unheralded arrival.

Then a hush, of what I imagined to be admiration, fell upon the ice cream licking hordes.

The Malcolm Miller was the centre of attention.

At a broad angle and slow speed we quietly glided towards our allocated berth. All was going to plan.

I was stationed forward ready with a heaving line to pass moorings ashore when I stepped forward involuntarily. The ship had touched bottom and, almost imperceptibly slowed.

We were aground some 100 feet off the berth. This fact had also become apparent to the Captain who immediately instructed the engineer to give full power ahead on both engines, his intention being to push the deep keel through the muddy harbour bottom. The grounding must have only been momentary for this order had an unfortunate, undesired and immediate effect. The former measured and stately headway of the ship towards the quay rapidly became an urgent powered surge forward leaving no time to reduce speed or swing the vessel's bow. A spectacular collision with the quay was now inevitable. The magnificent bowsprit, levelled like a tilting knight's lance, led the assault on Weymouth.

The quayside spectators took a few seconds to recognise the impending catastrophe, then cheerfully cleared the area where the impact was about to take place so that they could enjoy the exquisite pleasure of the unfolding drama without risk. The public's safety was now assured but their rapid evacuation now revealed a previously hidden bright orange VW beetle parked close to the quayside. With unerring accuracy the bowsprit was aimed at the car's turtle shell shaped bonnet.

The watching crowd were silent in their eager anticipation of the impending disaster. The ship's company were silent as the horror of impending collision became obvious.

The bowsprit chain bobstay was the first contact point between the ship and Weymouth. It rode over the top of the wooden quay face and then sawed through the front bonnet of the orange Volkswagen much as a cheesemonger cuts a wheel of cheddar with a cheesewire. There wasn't a lot of noise considering the extent of the resultant damage. The ship's forward momentum was finally arrested by Dorset.

There was a short period of stunned silence then the assembled audience burst into noisy appreciation. They had just witnessed a unique and very satisfying disaster which wildly exceeded their initial expectations. A collision between a ship and a car.

It was a triumph of live "end-of-pier" seaside entertainment. And at no cost - free.

Once we had extricated ourselves from the wreckage and secured the ship alongside the Captain wasted no time in departing the vessel; in company with the VW's owner he made for the sanctuary of the Submariner Inn on East Street. It was reported later that he had been querying the pertinence of the small print of 3rd Party, Fire & Theft Motor insurance policies with regard to marine collisions. Knock for knock perhaps? Richard Brown.

September In Southern France

At the end of August Peta and I returned to her mobile home at Gassin, near St Tropez for a last bit of sun. The Ashford International to Marseille Eurostar train was actually on time for a change so we were able to catch a new, very comfortable double deck regional train to Toulon and then step straight onto a local bus for the long ride to Peta's van. Unhappily for us the bus driver declared he'd reached the end of his service run when we were still a couple of miles from our destination. We had to call a friend from Peta's site to come and pick us up as we were weighed down with luggage.

I normally spend most of my time in Gassin cycling to the attractive village of Collobrieres. Recently I've ridden a Reynolds 753 steel frame bike while at Gassin, fitted with couplings that split the frame in half for easier storage. The bike is equipped with a Shimano triple chainset and 10 speed Shimano gearing. Collobrieres is on the quiet, well maintained and very hilly D14 road full of hair pin bends that links Grimaud and Pierrefeu-du-Var. This road section includes a long maximum gradient 8% climb over the Col de Taillude at 411 metres before the winding descent into Collobrieres. A direct return ride to Collobrieres from Gassin involves climbing for a total of 1060 metres. The highest point on any maintained road around Collobrieres is at 520 metres. An access road with a 10% gradient serves a communications tower and Notre Dame des Anges church, that are at 776 metres.

Among many good reasons for visiting Collobrieres is the attractive main street lined with Plane trees and cobbled stone pavements. The River Real Collobrier with its' 12th century stone bridge runs along the back of several excellent café's serving reasonably priced coffee. Collobrieres lies in the middle of the forest of Maures. It's well known for producing sweet chestnuts plus cork oak for the wine industry. Chestnuts are used in preserves, paste and to flavour ice cream.

On this latest visit I had some lower back problems so started off doing rather shorter, less strenuous rides to a couple of local sights that I'd not visited before. The lighthouse at Cape Camarat was one new destination. The lighthouse dates from 1829 and is built on the wildest of three headlands that jut out to sea around St Tropez. As there is a coastal radar installation next door to the lighthouse visitors are not allowed to have a tour of the site but are free to wander around the rocky headland paths that give panoramic views over the bays below the lighthouse.

The other destination I'd not seen before was the monastery of Notre Dame de Clemence de la Verne. The monastery is situated way up in the hills on a dead-end road off the D14. It was founded in the 12th century but most of the structure still standing today dates back to the 18th century. I had to push my bike a kilometre along an incredibly rough, boulder strewn, unpaved road to reach the monastery entrance after the properly surfaced access road finished at a car park. I was hoping for some good views over the forested hillsides and Lake Verne in the valley below but was disappointed by the completely empty rooms and lack of viewpoints on a self-guided tour around the site. The original Carthusian (Italian order) monks had been thrown out of the monastery during the French Revolution of 1789. The buildings were then sold by the state. Although the monastery was declared a historic monument in 1921 restoration did not begin till 1968. An order of nuns resides in part of the building and generate income by selling religious themed, painted wooden carvings. No café refreshments, beer, herb flavoured spirits or honey were on display, much to my surprise. They were obviously a much more-hard line group of nuns than the ones at Saintes on my Cognac holiday. The Saintes nuns had lots of traditional monastic food and drink for sale, really welcomed visitors and children and seemed to run a much happier, progressive establishment.

Peta and I also drove further down the D14 to the small town of Pierrefeu-du-Var that we hadn't visited before. I scrambled up a long

series of steep flights of steps to a couple of viewpoints that looked out over an airfield, on the plain below the hilltop I'd climbed.

The airfield had an interesting history linked to airships. A rigid Zeppelin type airship arrived in 1920, followed by a second Zeppelin called Mediterranean in 1922 and construction of 2 hangers to house the craft. The first airship named Dixmude had been built for the German Navy but not completed till after the end of the first World War. It was presented to the French as part of the reparation Germany had to pay to France under the Treaty of Versailles. The Dixmude was one of the first airships to be involved in a tragic accident when it exploded in mid-air off the coast of Sicily in December 1923 with the loss of 42 crew and 10 passengers. There was a memorial to the disaster with an explanation of what had occurred, in the town square.

When Peta & I returned to Gassin in late August we were told that a French family had taken the gorgeous kitten we'd been feeding earlier in the year, home with them. That was really disappointing as we'd got very fond of the kitten and her mother. The mother still comes to Peta's van for food but she roams over much longer distances than before.

I returned from Gassin to the UK using a TGV French high-speed train from Marseille to Lille, then Eurostar to Ashford International. I'd been looking forward to a comfortable ride home in a double decker TGV like the one I'd caught coming home from the Cognac Semaine but unfortunately the Marseille TGV was a very crowded single deck train with no leg room at all. It's final stop after Lille Europe was going to be Brussels. The high-speed line from Bordeaux must join the line from Marseille as we stopped at Marne La Vallee and Charles de Gaulle Airport TGV stations, on the way back from both Cognac and Marseille.

C.W

[Exporting Garmin Connect, Automatically Generated, Circular Routes.](#)

Most recent Garmin GPS's can generate automatically created circular cycling routes up to 310 miles long, from any starting location. The only things the user has to do is create a Garmin Connect free account, find the training option in Connect then go to "Courses" and enter the length of route required plus the compass direction the route should follow. This automatic route creation is also available on the laptop PC version of Garmin Connect. You don't need to have a Garmin GPS to use the PC version of Garmin Connect to generate circular routes but Garmin make it awkward to export them to another make of GPS or to a mobile phone mapping app. This is because Garmin don't appear to offer a menu option to export the course that you've just created, as a gpx file (option is buried under 3 horizontal dots opposite "send to device" on screen button) only to send it to a Wi Fi or Bluetooth enabled Garmin device.

Luckily there is some free software bookmarklet code on the internet (GOTOES Utilities from Strava at gotoes.org/strava). This internet site provides very clear, simple instructions of how to request a Garmin course and convert the information pointed to by the internet page URL (Universal Resource Locator) "web address", to gpx code, understood by any GPS or Smartphone mapping app.

If you want some fresh ideas on where to ride provided you know how far and in what direction you want to proceed you can create a circular route and transfer it to your smartphone or nonGarmin GPS in minimal time by using the GOTOES bookmarklet with very little effort.

C.W

Mini Pump Woes

I've had problems with a quality Specialised screw on connector mini pump. Screw on pumps are popular as they are less likely to bend Presta valves than conventional short barrel, valve clamp type mini pumps. This is because it's difficult to use a clamp style short barrel

pump, that requires a lot of pump strokes to inflate a tyre in a smooth manner without jerking, when your hands are so close to the valve.

Unhooking hose type mini pumps can result in accidentally unscrewing removable Presta valve cores and totally deflating the tyre, when you try to uncouple the hose from the valve. The only solution is to tighten the valve core as much as possible, with a dedicated tool before screwing on a mini pump hose.

C.W

Faversham Wednesday Meets For Dec, Jan, Feb 2020

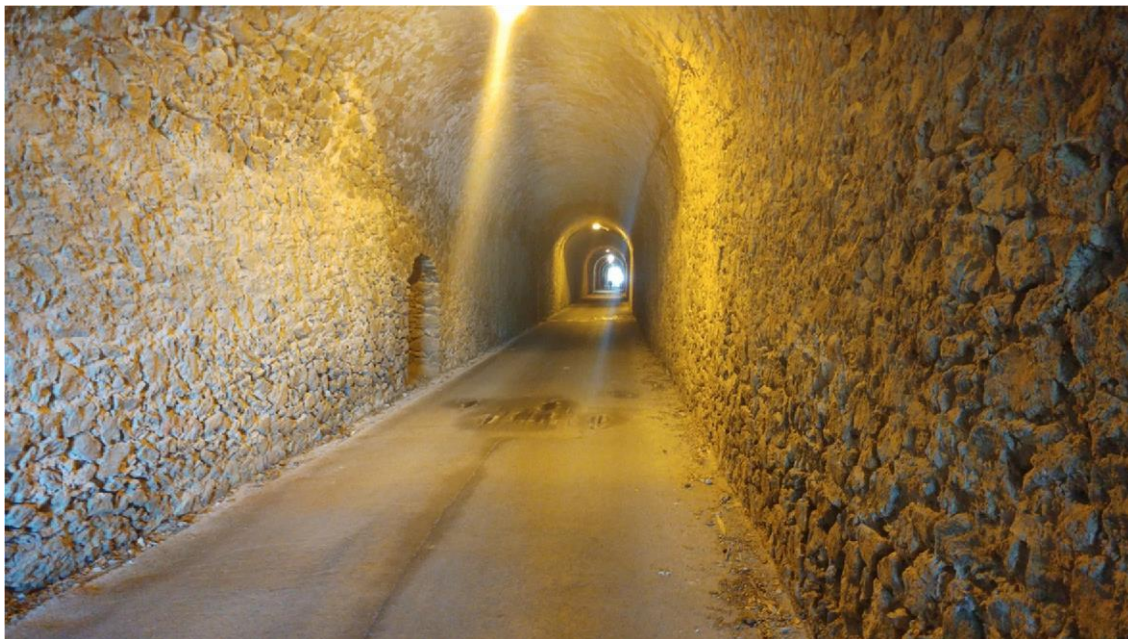
<u>Dec</u>	4 th	The Brents Tavern, Faversham	01795 532282
	11 th	No Faversham Ride-Potterers Christmas Dinner George & Dragon, Fordwich 12.30pm	01227 710661
	18 th	The White Horse Inn, Boughton Street	01227 751343
	25 th	Christmas Day-No Ride	
<u>Jan</u>	1 st	New Year's Day-No Ride	
	8 th	The Queens Head, Boughton Street	01227 751369
	15 th	The Alma, Painters Forstal	01795 533835
	22 nd	The Castle Inn, Oare	01795 533674
	29 th	The Black Lion, Lynsted	01227 521229
<u>Feb</u>	5 th	The Three Horseshoes, Staplestreet	01227 750842

	12 th	Railway Hotel, Preston Street, Faversham Committee Meeting. Members Please Gather In The Bar.	01795 533173
	19 th	The Shipwrights Arms, Hollowshore	01795 590088
	26 th	The Chequers, Doddington	01795 886366

Thanet Thursday Section Meets For Dec, Jan, Feb 2020

<u>Dec</u>	5 th	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250
	11 th	Potterers Xmas Dinner, George & Dragon	01227 710661
	12 th	The Red Cow, Sandwich (Election Day)	01304 613399
	19 th	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	26 th	The Rose Inn, Wickhambreaux (Boxing Daymaybe no food)	01227 721763
<u>Jan</u>	2 nd	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392
	9 th	The Red Cow, Sandwich	01304 613399
	16 th	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250
	23 rd	The New Inn, Minster	01843 826142
	30 th	The Rose Inn, Wickhambreaux	01227 721763
<u>Feb</u>	6 th	The Chequer, Ash	01304 273680

	13 th	The Red Cow, Sandwich	01304 613399
	20 th	The Gate Inn, Marshside	01227 860498
	27 th	The Haywain, Bramling	01227 720676



Former Railway Tunnel Now Part Of Cycle Path Near Gassin, France

Thanet Section Sunday Meets for Dec, Jan, Feb 2020

<u>Dec</u>	1 st	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	8 th	The Gate Inn, Marshside	01227 860498
	15 th	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392
	22 nd	The Crown, Finglesham	01304 612555
	29 th	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
<u>Jan</u>	5 th	The Rising Sun, Stourmouth	01227 721364
	12 th	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392

	19 th	The Chequer, Ash	01304 273680
	26 th	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
<u>Feb</u>	2 nd	The New Inn, Minster	01843 826142
	9 th	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392
	16 th	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250
	23 rd	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723



Presta Pressure Monitoring Valve Linked By Bluetooth To Smartphone App