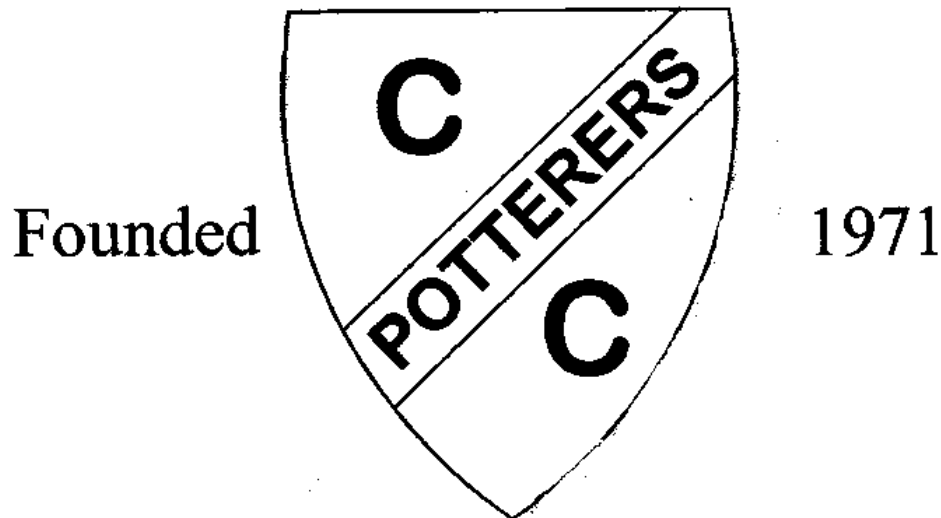


POTTERING
AROUND
March 2020



Usque Ad Mortem Bibendum

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

Betty Hook (13/3/1925-8/1/2020)

Betty was born in Hemel Hempstead, and grew up with her younger sister Rita. From an early age, Betty was confident and spoke her mind. At school, Betty could be relied on to give a comprehensive account of who had said or done what, and was a reliable witness to everything that went on. She had a happy childhood, and later worked as a secretary for her Dad. Amongst other things Betty was an accomplished pianist. When she was young she played in a swing quartet during the war. She took up cycling as a hobby and became really proficient.

Betty held a national cycling track record for over four years. She decided not to continue as she found her pre-start nerves too hard to bear. It was cycling that brought Len and Betty together.

Betty picked Len up from a ditch where he had fallen from his bike on the Brighton to Glasgow road race shortly after the war. Len used to tease Betty calling her Bossy Bet from Bedfordshire, and also told how her father's employees referred to her as the Boss's Bossy daughter! They got married and John was born in November 1949. Then Peter followed in 1953. There was a gap, and then along came the twins Simon and Dinah in 1959. The family were living in Eaton Bray below Dunstable Downs, a village in the Chilterns. It was always a bohemian style family, and while the twins sat in their high chairs, a pet hen, Higgledy Piggledy, wandered around tidying up after meals. Len worked as a toolmaker. Betty often worked outside the home doing market research and at one time running her own junk shop. She had a lifelong passion for bargain hunting and old and unusual furniture and bric a brac. One artefact, a stuffed crocodile, gave Peter nightmares for some time, after brother John hid it in his bed for a joke.

The family moved quite frequently from one renovation to the next at a time when most families wouldn't dream of taking on such projects. As a result they lived in a wonderful old forge, a large old farmhouse, an ex-pub (haunted) and finally, Athol Terrace, by which time they had a small but very lovely old house (renovated entirely by

themselves of course) in the Dordogne, Chancel. Len and the boys were put to work (somewhat reluctantly) but it was very much Betty's vision and determination that steered them. She was an amazing interior designer, and many of the features of their houses were really inspiring and unusual. She was also a passionate gardener, working tirelessly to create a place of beauty.

The whole family were passionate about cycling. John and Simon followed in Len's footsteps, joining the road cycling world and competing in races, Simon at professional level. Simon's life was tragically cut short when he died in an accident in 1995.

Before tourism got started Betty and Len were keen travellers driving all over Europe and camping. Betty was never happier than when she was staying in a different campsite every night – she always found someone new to talk to. Simon suffered with car sickness, and one of their cars was known as the Vauxhall Vomitorium. Then there was the family Land Rover, tended to by Len. In the back a bucket of washing that Betty said would wash as the car bumped and whizzed along. Then bits of it could be hung out of the window to dry as they sped ever onwards. Peter remembers Betty always cooking. At the end of a day travelling, the four children would be shut in the tent while Betty concocted a delicious stew for the family. Betty loved cooking and making amazing feasts and banquets for parties and dinners to whom everyone – friends, family, and anyone who happened to be passing, was always made welcome.

Betty and Len loved France, and spent much of their time at Chancel – their house in the Dordogne, travelling there in the Spring and returning to Athol Terrace in Dover in late Autumn. Betty continued various projects in France, including working alongside a house agent and finding houses for friends who also wanted to live in the area. Dinah also spent a lot of time in France, and for a long time worked as a guide at the Lasceau Caves.

Even in later years, Len and Betty still enjoyed travelling, always camping out of the back of their car. They enjoyed touring around

other parts of France and Spain, always keen for adventures and making new friends.

Her family were all important to Betty as well as her many friends.

Betty loved her grandchildren who have great memories of holidays spent with her and Len in the Dordogne. She loved her great grandchildren too. Although she didn't meet her youngest, Alexandra, she smiled whenever she looked at her photo. She knew her great grandsons, Fred and Rupert and loved to see them.

Towards the end, even Betty had to slow down eventually. Gradually she grew more tired and less able physically. She was confined to bed most of the time over the last two years, but still enjoyed a positive outlook, welcoming family and friends who visited, enjoying the view from her window and looking at pictures and her favourite magazines, house and garden – and always the Francophile, *Maison et Jardin*. Just before last Christmas, she said people probably thought she was lazy, staying in bed all the time, but she had so many plans for what she was going to do in the future. “There's a bit of yellow material...and I'm going to cover that chair with it.” Planning and creative to the end. Nicky Hook

Note this over view of Betty's life was read aloud at her funeral service held at Barham Crematorium on 3rd February. Most of the Potterers Committee plus Andy Jones, Sue and Brian, were present

No sense of direction? Why not try Komoot?

Even with a map I take wrong turnings. So I was interested to see what a cycling app might do for me. Komoot is one of several GPS navigation systems available, which are free and download to your phone.

And before you ask...how does it make its money? Well you can download regions or indeed the world for one off payments. This means that you can use the mapping 'offline' rather than chewing up

your data allowance whilst cycling. It also means if the signal drops off in more remote areas you still have the mapping. So I paid £8.99* for Kent Region.

The best thing about Komoot is you can work out a route on your PC or laptop and then with one tap send it to your phone. It is far less fiddly to do the mapping on your PC and there are more controls. So what differentiates it from the completely free and excellent Google Maps? The answer is control. With Komoot you can map out your route with wayfinding points (like pins you put in a map). By hovering over the route you can add in and alter the waypoints. When you are happy send it by Bluetooth to your phone.

You can alter the mapping on your phone instead but it is very aggravating, particularly if it is raining.

Of course Komoot talks to you but when relying on this in towns/heavy traffic I found I could not hear it. So I have invested in a £18 Bluetooth New Bee headset (fits a single ear only, like the ones you see delivery drivers wear). That seemed to be work initially but the headset later fell out of my ear when I was wearing a helmet, going over potholes. To try to stabilize the headset I bought a set of different size pairs of silicon Budloks for £10.99, from Amazon. These are crescent shaped hooks that are meant to lock into the whirls in your ear lobes.

Downsides? Well unlike your car satnav Komoot seems very slow to recalculate a route if you deviate from it. I spent a miserable five miles with it saying continually “perform a U-turn when possible”. I have not yet worked out how to reset the route whilst cycling.

Another fun thing (or irritating, depending on how you take to it) is Komoot’s desire for you to be part of its ‘community’. You will notice on the mapping there are little red icons – these are ‘route highlights’ submitted by other riders. These could be a good pub, a good view, a

tea shop or anything really. You are asked by Komoot to submit any you find on your route.

So far so good. In case you are interested you can find Komoot at www.komoot.com . The New Bee V5 Bluetooth headset I got is widely available online. Komoot also links into more sophisticated GPS systems such as Wahoo.

Martin Prestage

*Editors Note

Komoot offer worldwide, all region mapping for £29.99 that's valid forever, includes voice navigation, off line maps (no WiFi necessary) with free unlimited map updating and no recurring costs. I've been experimenting with GPS turn directions, delivered by Bluetooth wireless headphones, fitted as standard with rubber Budlok type fins .I find the headphones still refuse to stay in place in my ears!

Topeak Ratchet Rocket DX+ Multitool

I bought a Topeak Ratchet Rocket tool in September 2019 and have been using it on a regular basis since then, in preference to standard loose Allen keys. The Topeak DX+ tool comes in a nylon pouch with 2, 2.5, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 Allen key bits, T10, T15 and T25 Torx bits, a Philips PH2 cross head bit and 90mm long reversing ratchet tool body.

The ratchet tool has a thumbscrew and 60mm extension bar with a magnetic bit holder that also forms handle of a chain tool (up to 12 speed) and 2 nylon tyre levers. The nylon pouch with labels for each bit does a really good job of organising things as I don't have the patience as I get older, to sort through individual Allen keys that have no size marking stamped on them.

The small Topeak ratchet body is ideal for getting into tight spaces such as the back of the Allen key nut that holds the front centre pull brake which is on the bottom of the fork crown but right up against the sloping downtube, which means a normal Allen key can only turn a few degrees before fouling the downtube. Some accessory makers also supply handlebar attachment brackets with the bolt head under the handlebar instead of on top. A ratchet tool is much easier to use in these circumstances especially if you can't make complete revolutions with an Allen key and have to keep reinserting the tool into the fixing bolt. You are very likely to damage small Allen key headed bolts if an individual Allen key slips due to not being fully seated.

Another really useful place to use a ratchet tool is if any saddle position adjustments are needed as the Allen key bolts are upside down and often very small especially with twin bolt seatpost clamp designs. Double bolts allow almost infinite adjustment of saddle back to front angle (saddle nose up or down) in contrast to single bolt clamps.

The Topeak ratchet tool is lighter than many standard multi tools and only needs an additional small penknife to be taken with it to form a complete roadside tool kit providing your bike only uses Allen or Torx headed bolts and you don't need ring or open spanners. I've used a Topeak Alien multi tool for many years that contains a great, easy to use chain splitter but find the short Allen keys on a central shaft are very short and it can be difficult to position the tool in tight areas due to its width.

C.W

Camping in Belgium

I have always loved Belgium. It is a place that really understands people's needs and provides the main ingredients for a cycle tour; chips, beer, good cycle routes/paths, varied topography, friendly

people and lots of nice little campsites. My first experience of this Belgium was finding an ice-cream van stationed on a viewpoint overlooking the La Sambre. It had been a hard climb and it was hot. I approached the van trying to work out how ask for an ice-cream, when the seller said, "I know what you want" and gave me chilled bottle of Jupiler (then 35BF).

I am not sure how I located campsites then, I rather think I looked for triangles on a Michelin map or a local tourist information leaflet. I still have vague recollections of some campsites; one with a wild west bar, a static caravan site without showers and that campsite outside Namur, now under a supermarket, that had a brothel just beside the entrance, " That's handy I thought, having a bar so close . . . " .

After years of camper-vanning with family and dogs, now suddenly free, I went back to cycle-camping. My first trip was to follow the Maas/Meuse, go up the coast to Rotterdam then inland and follow it down to Verdun. Lots of campsites along the Belgian coast so no worries, I thought. Who cares if it is the Saturday night following a couple of weeks of fantastic weather and every Belgian is enjoying the sea-side. It is not easy to find a safe place to wild camp in this crowded country but I managed it. I was so thirsty the next morning, I found an early-opening paper-shop, grabbed the cheapest and nearest bottle of water and brewed up in the nearby park. Tea made from sparkling mineral water is not to be recommended.

I had the proper cycling maps for the Netherlands and list of campsites. I had the same for France. But at the end of my trip I was still unsure of Belgian campsites. I use a small Garmin GPS, an eTrex30 to be precise, a fantastic device, better than their newer models. I use POIs, points of interest, which are lists of interesting places that can be downloaded on a GPS and then you can navigate to what ever interests you on that list. Campsites, Camra pubs, hill forts (you can create your

own POIs), British mountains and you can find lots of these POI lists on the internet. If you use Open Street Map (OSM) based maps on your GPS then you can also search these maps for campsites and other sites of interest because the information is embedded in the actual OSM map. Information that is totally NOT reliant on the internet or phone signal. Just don't forget the spare batteries.

Of course all of this needs to be prepared before a trip. I plan my route and find out about campsites from the web:- www.ukcampsites.co.uk for GB; www.camping.info, www.anwbcamping.nl and www.alanrogers.com for Europe. These are not cycling specific and many of their **** sites do seem to offer outside discos that last until 4am. A few years ago I discovered Fietsers Welkom, a Dutch organisation that promotes cycling and inspects venues and assesses their suitability for cyclists. They also provide the Fietsers Welkom sign that ensures a welcome for the cyclist. The display of this sign outside a campsite means that cycle-campers can arrive and pitch their tents at any time (on the trekker field of course). The campsite is never too full for cyclists, fabulous.

When I search for campsites I use google.nl, the terms fietser and camping plus the country (even the whole phrase translated into Dutch). Thus I found a 'Google My Maps' page featuring over 200 cycle friendly campsites each with details and a short review. I have used about 15 of these sites and have found them excellent, for lightweight camping that is. Just one or two small problems, it is all in Dutch and the web address is 147 characters long. It is easy to make sense of each review by using Google Translate and often there is a link to the campsite's website. Some of the information is bang up to date but often of it is quite old, so do check.

I can always help with requests for further information and the full http internet search address of the link titles shown below. Just contact me on my email address (chris@cboucher.co.uk)

Happy camping!

Links

“OpenFietersMap” for GPS maps

Campings in Belgie

Chris Boucher

Birmingham Cycle Shops

Just before Christmas Peta, her daughter and son in law and I spent a couple of days in Birmingham taking a look at the extensive Christmas market stalls set up in the streets between New Street Station and Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in Chamberlin Square. In between a couple of enjoyable sessions at the sizable temporary Christmas ice rink I managed a quick tour of all the city centre cycle shops. These consisted of branches of Evans Cycles, Cycle Republic and Cycle Surgery. Recently Cycle Surgery announced they were closing many of their branches and the rest were being rebranded after making multi-million-pound losses in the last few years. They are owned by a group that also includes Cotswold Outdoor which has also been in financial difficulty.

I was hoping to see some really high-end expensive machinery equipped with electronic gear shifting but was very disappointed in the very ordinary machines on show in all the stores. Cycle Republic were the only shop with a single electronic gear bike on display. This was in contrast to cycle shops in Covent Garden, London area or Pedal Revolution in Norwich that I visited last year at around Christmas which both had really exciting machinery, some with significant sale discounts plus expensive wheels etc on show

Birmingham cycle shops had no discounts worth worrying about. The only thing of interest in any of them was a bike clamped into a £699 Wahoo Kickr Core smart rear wheel off, turbo trainer setup with Zwift virtual reality App on a large screen TV in front of it. Anyone could have a pedal, see how the trainer felt and watch the immersive animations showing a race course with riders including one representing you and your overlaid speed and power output change as you pedalled harder or changed gear, on the TV screen.

I was impressed with the feel of the trainer which felt much smoother and more like riding a real bike than the cheap wheel on basic trainer I'd tried to use some years ago. The smart part of turbo trainer means the machine measures your power output along with speed, cadence etc and transmits this information using ANT+ and Bluetooth Smart to Zwift and your Wahoo or Garmin GPS via the internet. You can actually ride a route you've ridden on the road with a Wahoo or Garmin GPS controlling the smart turbo. The turbo machine will adjust the pedal resistance and physically raise and lower your front forks if they are clamped into a £500 Wahoo Kickr Climb optional accessory, to mimic the road ride.

The Wahoo Kickr has a silent drive belt design so you only hear your chain running over your chainset and the trainer's cassette, there's no noise from the machine itself or wear on rear wheel as that is removed in the wheel off design. The turbo trainer set up I tested in Birmingham didn't have the Kickr Climb accessory unit attached, I'd loved to have seen what that felt like! I was slightly surprised at the amount of sideways movement you could generate if you put in some modest pedal effort so I would certainly not use a carbon frame bike in a turbo trainer. I also got hot pretty quickly so you need a good fan to keep temperature at a reasonable level.

C.W

Have Train, Will Cycle

Denmark joins up the dots when it comes to cycling. Not only are there cycle lanes almost everywhere but they integrate with the rail network. There is a lot for the UK to learn.

On a recent trip to Copenhagen I witnessed it for myself. Denmark's capital has a determined strategy to reduce congestion and carbon pollution by cutting the number of cars using its streets. They have targeted commuters from the outlying suburbs, to persuade them to use their bikes and the train to reach their work. Certainly, walking along Copenhagen's streets, it seems to be working.

So what have they done? Every train going into the capital and other cities has a dedicated cycle carriage. You can't miss it. It has huge bicycle logos on the side! In the carriage most of the seats are removed to make way for cycle racks, with a line of seats opposite so that owners can ensure their bikes are secure. Remember the old Guard's Vans on British trains? Well it's the same idea but more luxurious.

Britain's rail companies would be horrified. All that lost revenue from converting a carriage. But if Britain is serious about reducing carbon emissions it needs to help cyclists make their journeys. Cycling facilities on our Southeastern trains are laughable. During off peak cyclists are forced to stand with their bikes by the sliding doors and continually move in and out of the way, much to the aggravation of other passengers. On commuter trains if you don't have a folding bike you cannot travel in or out of London at peak hours. We have a long way to go in the UK.

Martin Prestage

Reasons To Dislike Modern Basic, Non GPS Cycle Computers

Recently Bob asked me to do the initial set up on a 10 function Halfords bike computer. The unit didn't have a built-in barometer so

couldn't record any altitude data. It took me a ridiculous amount of time and effort to get the cycle computer ready for riding which made me realise how much I dislike these outmoded devices. Most of the set-up problems are due to the small physical size of the cycle computer. That means there's only room for a primary CR2032 coin cell so when the battery dies you lose all the set-up information and have to start again from scratch. As the battery has such limited capacity back lit displays that illuminate the display in low light or at night are out of the question.

Halfords wheel circumference charts for Bob's old Halfords 5function computer gave different figures to the 10-function instruction sheet, for his 700*28 C wheels. That's not unusual. Set up procedure normally involves setting a single digit of multi digit odometer or wheel circumference at a time, confirming that setting then working through all the other digits before another confirmation is needed. It's medieval torture!

Basic computers normally have tiny buttons on the back of the unit which are awkward to reach but have to be used in set up procedure, while simultaneously pressing front buttons. It's really awkward! Limiting number of control buttons to a minimum means there are complicated sequences to go through to reach information you need spread across a number of screens.

More functions are used as a marketing device, 10 must be better than 5! Buttons also need pressing for different lengths of time to set up navigation through 10 functions rather than 5. Most basic computers only have space for 2 main display items on each page of their tiny screens.

Twice a year you also have to reset the clock on your basic computer for summer and winter time, which means more head scratching and getting out the instruction sheet.

Wireless basic cycle computers are even more of a headache to set up and use than standard wired types. You normally have to use a wireless computer or GPS on a folding bike as you can't fold the bike with wiring attached. Wireless computers also have a short transmission range between the fork sender and head unit which can be exceeded with small wheel folding bikes. The signal also seems to be messed up if you have metal cantilever mounting posts interrupting the path between sender and head unit.



Potterers Christmas Dinner At George & Dragon, Fordwich



Topeak Ratchet Rocket DX+ Multi Tool



Potters Christmas Dinner At George & Dragon, Fordwich GPS computers are becoming more affordable by the day and avoid all of these issues. As long as you can operate a smartphone App and know how to use a smartphone bar code reader there is

hardly any set up routine to go through. You don't need to worry about wheel circumference and can use the GPS on a second bike with different wheel size without any setting changes at all.

You can use a GPS computer to give the same information as a basic computer with altitude data added (from GPS data, barometer not essential) without using the more advanced car sat nav style navigation features or looking where you've ridden against a Google map background. Lower priced GPS may not include maps at all. Routable mapping is restricted to GPS's costing more than £150.

Most GPS units are significantly larger than basic computers to allow for a screen that displays up to 8 readable data fields per page so you don't need to keep changing the display to get the information you need. Cycle GPS's use rechargeable Lithium batteries that should last many years so can run backlit displays for your whole ride. GPS computers automatically reset local time shown on the unit providing you occasionally upload a ride to Garmin Connect, Ride with GPS or Strava.

GPS units normally come with "out front" handlebar mounting brackets that position the GPS in front of your handlebars with a reasonable gap for your hands between handlebar and GPS. This means you can look forward rather than straight down to view the GPS screen. Looking straight down at a handlebar clamped basic cycle computer is a good way of dropping into a pothole.

More expensive GPS also have the ability to display schematic diagrams of what gear you're in if you have 11 or 12 speed electronic servo motor gear shifting. Modern shift systems return to a central position after each shift so you can't tell what gear you're in by looking at STI control levers. The last practical gear indication system was the 9 speed Shimano Flighdeck computer from 20 years ago that had wired connections to each STI lever. Gearing information (chain position)

from the electronic derailleur's microprocessor is now sent to the GPS by ANT+ radio sender inserted in a Shimano electric wiring loom.

In summary I would say basic cycle computers should be consigned to history, they've had their day!

C.W

Bikes – For The Dutch It's Personal

We all know about the Dutch love of cycling, their wonderful cycle lanes and how everything is carried by bike, from dogs to DIY. But less known are the deeper undercurrents in Dutch society tapped into by the humble bicycle.

Did you know that when the Germans were abandoning the occupied Netherlands in 1944-1945 they stole huge numbers of bikes, to speed up their getaway? Some 4 million bikes were taken. A Nazi officer reported later that "no single measure has caused such bitterness in all ranks of society". Still today, and particularly on sporting occasions such as major football matches, the historic Dutch resentment of Germany flares up.

To the Dutch their bicycle is an essential everyday item, often unglamorous, unlike in Britain where bikes are often expensive and specifically for sport. After the war with so much destruction in Dutch towns and cities it was a priority to provide good cycle lanes everywhere. Today, more than a third of all short journeys in the Netherlands are made by bike, and it is the only European country with more bicycles than people.

The Dutch memory runs deep, and in 1966 when Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands married a German prince there was outrage. As the royal carriage proceeded through Amsterdam people threw their bicycles into the street in protest.

Martin Prestage

Attaching Seat Post Only Mount, Rear Lamp, When No Space Exists

A few years ago I bought an USE Exposure Blaze rear LED lamp that seemed to be solidly built and had good battery life. I've not used it much until this winter because the lamp with its semi-circular curved back plate, is designed to be mounted on a seat post. The back plate has 4 hooks which you stretch a red silicon strap between to fix the light in place. It's not possible to mount the LED on a seat-pack accessory, webbed loop, due to its curved back plate.

The problem with seat post mounting has been I don't have much exposed seat post projecting above my top tube to start with and the post is almost entirely obscured by a seat pack that contains spare inner tubes etc. There is simply no space to mount the LED on my seat post.

This winter it suddenly dawned on me that the seat tube itself on my steel bike was only slightly larger in diameter than my seat post. The silicon mounting band would stretch sufficiently to attach the LED high up on the seat tube, so that the lens faced backward between the top of the seat stays. I don't have a rack or anything else fitted that obstructs a clear backward line of sight so I seem to have solved my mounting problem.

Having a high-power flashing rear light that's visible in daylight seems to be a good idea with the current level of traffic. I've also started using the front daylight flash option on my normal rechargeable headlight system after I failed to see a racing cyclist with a very slim front profile, dark clothing and no lights.

C.W

Riding Alongside A Stoat

Cycling one afternoon last summer along the quiet lanes near to my home, my wheels took me along the coastal marshes route. The sea birds high in the sky, mainly the gulls and a few buntings in the reeds and hedges.

Returning home I went inland where there are some lumps and bumps! More bird life was seen and heard, especially the rapid knocking on wood of the Greater Spotted Woodpecker.

I suddenly realised something was accompanying me, along the road edge by the high bank. It was just in front of me, the faster I peddled the faster he ran. It was an adult Stoat, with a wonderful rich brown coat on his back from head to tail and the lovely black tip on his tail. His underside was snow white.

After a few minutes of high speed running or flying low, he darted into the field where the bank was broken and he left. I have never been so close to a Stoat. They are so quick. It made a lovely finish to the afternoon's cycling seeing this very secretive animal.

Jean Bomber

The Potterers Club

An abridged version (From Dave Rodd) of the original book by G Lacy Hillier

Chapter 1: Three cyclists by the sea.

It was a dull dismal day at Yarmouth – the rising tide tumbling in whitecapped rollers upon the beach – a sharp, cold, gusty wind from the sea. Heavy clouds overhead and heavier clouds advancing, the sea dark and menacing beneath them. Not a day for holiday-makers. Youths in flannels and straw hats shivered in the cold, while others hurried back to their hotels or lodgings. The week's holiday, awaited

so eagerly, was clearly not for holiday making, with every indication that it would get worse.

A number of cyclists made their way up and down the Drive; all types - solitary, pairs, groups and gangs, in a variety of dress. Amongst these could be seen a party of three, dressed in correct touring attire – dark grey suits with Norfolk jackets. One of these was identified by those in the know as Horace Sainton, the crack racing cyclist. Oblivious to their whispered remarks, he and his companions Ferdinand Smith and John Forrester, made their way up and down the front before concluding that Norwich had more and better attractions, and so determined to make their way hence.

As they came to this decision, the heavens opened, and donning their capes made their way out of the town towards Caister. After some miles, during which the weather became steadily worse, the sound of thunder was heard and the trio determined to find shelter. As they reached the bridge at Acle, an inn was seen and after putting their machines under shelter, they made their way indoors to the snug little parlour of the inn. The parlour was adorned with glass cases containing specimen fish, a deep fireplace and a small bar, where orders were rapidly placed and met.

Whilst the friends gazed out of the window, contemplating the weather and the prospect of another 11 miles to Norwich, the door swung open and in stepped a man clothed in oilskins. “Ghastly weather,” he said as he removed his waterproofs, then, “Hullo, Smith” as he recognised one of the three. Ferdinand Smith introduced him as Mr Iden to the others. Iden clearly knew of Sainton’s reputation and they fell into conversation about racing. After a while, he enquired as to their intentions for the rest of the day, and when the friends admitted they had no definite plan, he urged them to join him on his boat moored nearby, a wherry were there was plenty of room for them

all to make themselves comfortable. The weather looked set to get even worse, so after a brief discussion it was agreed to avail themselves of Iden's hospitality.

After arranging for safe storage of the machines, Sinton, Smith and Forrester joined Iden and they made their way to the wherry, which was, as Iden had promised, a snug well-found boat with room for six. Once inside, Sinton espied Iden's bicycle – a very neat rakish-looking Raleigh, fitted with road-racing tyres, dropped handlebars and very much a racing machine. "I thought you said you were a pottering tourist," said Sinton. "Well," replied Iden, "I have a fancy for all the latest improvements, as the catalogues say, and I use it when pursuing my hobby of collecting." "Collecting?" asked Smith. "Yes, I'm keen on moths, in fact I have rather a fine collection, nearly all my own work. The cycle enables me to get about, and the lamp is very useful for attracting the moths. I have got a lot of good specimens with it." Iden went on to describe how he caught his specimens with a mixture of beer and brown sugar spread on tree trunks, the haunts of rare specimens, the merits of a wherry as a base, and lamented the fact that his best specimens were now stored at his rooms in town.

Ferdinand Smith clearly knew something of the hobby, and asked many questions. Eventually Iden revealed that the prize of his collection was a Rosy Marsh, which had been found close to where they now sat. "As a matter of fact," continued Iden, "I have not sent it up to town yet, as I wanted to show it to another collector, who did not believe me." Iden then produced a small collecting case, carefully unwrapped it and showed his capture, reposing in solitary state within. It had glossy gray wings with a tinge of red and whitish brown underneath. "Never been seen in Norfolk before, and very rare anywhere in England. I shall come back next May and try to find the caterpillar."

The conversation turned to cycling, and Iden mentioned several places on the Continent that could be best visited by bicycle. After further discussion about the merits of the Broads as a holiday resort, and a game of cards, it was time for bed. As they drifted off to sleep, the sound of the rain pattering on the roof was all that could be heard.

Next morning, the rain had not ceased, the roads were wet and muddy, and the fields veiled in mist. The four strolled down to the inn in their waterproofs, where Iden found a letter advising him that his friends would not be able to join him until later in the week. "Why not spend two or three days with me?" he asked. "Think it over while I stroll down to the village. There's no fun in riding in weather like this." After Iden departed, the trio talked it over. "I don't mind riding in the rain if I'm in reach of home," said Sainton, "but there's no fun in going to bed in the middle of the afternoon while one's clothes dry out. I think we'd better stay." After a brief discussion, the three friends agreed. On Iden's return they set off in the wherry for Potter Heigham for some fishing, and to keep an eye out for the fellow collector, so that Iden could display his prize capture.

And so the days passed. The weather slowly improved. The doubter was seen on the second day and duly impressed, the wherry made its way up river, with various excursions until it was time to return to Acle. Iden pressed the friends to stay over the coming weekend, as he would still have room after his own friends arrived, but as they all had business to attend to, Sainton thanked their host and said that they would have to start for home on the Saturday.

As they packed their things, Iden approached Smith with a small package. "This is a rare nocturnal beetle, which may come to harm in the damp. I've packed it carefully in cotton wool. Would you mind taking this with you, and I'll call for it when I return?"

“Certainly,” said Ferdinand, and rolled it up in his bundle of clothing. The three then collected their bicycle from the inn, and after a farewell drink with Iden, set off in the direction of Norwich. They reverted to their original plan to spend the night in the Maid’s Head, rose early on the Sunday morning and made their way back to town via Wymondham and Newmarket, taking advantage of a following wind.

Chapter 2: The Potterers’ Cycling Club

The Club met at Sainton’s rooms. This was a large modern flat with spacious rooms, very comfortably furnished and decorated with various cycling prints, photographs and an original drawing from Cycling. The Potterers’ Club was not a formal body; no one could apply for election, there were no rules, no programme of events, not affiliated to the National Cyclists Union, in fact it was a group of Sainton’s friends. They joked that it was necessary to put in a number of qualifying runs to maintain membership, and one Saturday they rode down to Frensham Ponds where they ran into a cycling journalist, whom they teased with this fiction. Membership grew by recommendation; and thus reached the grand total of twenty members by its fifth anniversary.

On this occasion, most of the members were present, when a member proposed one Ripton, and another potential was rejected as unsuitable. After a song or two to piano accompaniment, Ferdinand Smith read a story of his own composition. Forrester could not stand Smith’s stories, but it was an unwritten rule that any member could offer criticism of another’s efforts, and it was accepted that this could be constructive. At the conclusion of the story, Forrester did indeed state that he had never heard such rubbish, whereupon after some discussion it was agreed that Smith would submit a story more to Forrester’s liking at the next meeting. Smith retorted that Forrester’s ideal story would consist of a list of public house and the drinks

consumed therein. Sainton suggested that Smith should try and introduce a cycling theme to his next story. The evening then passed in the usual fashion before the clubmen eventually dispersed.

Chapter 3: Mr John Shap at work

John Shap lived in a neat little house in Brixton with his wife. He was sat reading the paper when he suddenly exclaimed, "Hullo, here's another of them!" The paper contained a report of a jewel robbery, committed at the house of Mr Vincent Chester M.P. The jewellery, belonging to Mrs. Chester was valued at £6000. The settings were later found in a ditch some 5 miles away, but the stones had all been removed.

After some discussion about the likelihood of such a robbery being committed at their own home, Shap said to his wife, "The only thing worth stealing here are my fishing rods. I'm going out for a bit. Walker thinks he can get me some fishing down Newbury way." Shap sauntered out of the house, and then hastened to catch a tramcar. The burglary was of interest because it formed the latest in a series of such robberies, occurring at large houses up and down the country. The common feature was the removal of the precious stones and discarding of the settings. There was no clue as to the perpetrators. John Shap was in fact a private detective, partner in an agency, and his wife had very little idea what he was doing when he went away on one of his 'fishing trips'. His great success had been when, posing as an assistant butler, he had uncovered a fraud by the Head Butler who had been persistently diverting his employer's property to his own ends. Immediately prior to the latest burglary, Shap had been on a fishing trip in the vicinity of an earlier theft and had obtained some useful information, although the firm had not been employed in the case.

Ex-Inspector Lanchester, head of the agency, was pleased to see him. Mr Vincent Chester had that day consulted him in the matter of the burglary and Lanchester promised to send down a ventilation expert to examine the premises. "Bother the ventilation!" exclaimed the M.P. "Quite so," retorted Lanchester, but it would be better to send my man under cover. We find that gets better results."

Shap, under the name Walker visited Mr Chester's house The Larches, and stayed for a week, dividing his time between the ventilation and fishing. He spent much time wandering about the grounds, and engaged the gardener in conversation, seemingly in ignorance of the jewel robbery. "How do you think they got in?" he asked the gardener. "Well he didn't come through the gates, and there's dogs in several places in the grounds. Perhaps he flew!" Carrying his fishing tackle as a disguise, Shap's explorations confirmed the dogs' presence, and as he reached the herb garden his attention was drawn to a fruit tree whose branches overhung the wall. The whole area was secluded and made more so by several large bushes. He examined a low brick wall, but showing no sign that he was in any way interested in what he found. Gradually, he worked his way round to the outside gate and made his way along the line of the garden wall until he found a wide ditch and sat down in the grass to think.

After taking in the general landscape, Shap followed the ditch until he found a place where it could be crossed. Then, using his bait tin as a distraction, he crawled along the path to a point where the tree could be seen over the wall. Examining the ground around the ditch, he discovered a piece of fencing that seemed to have been used to cross the ditch, and using this he crossed to the wall and examined it with a view to climbing it. Finally, he made his way to the river to commence fishing in earnest, noting on his way where a piece of fence had been removed. During the morning, as he waited for the fish to bite, he

made the acquaintance of a keeper and took his refreshment in the village inn, before returning to The Larches for lunch. He seemed pleased with his morning's work, although the half-dozen roach in his basket hardly justified his mood.

Dave Rodd

Bluetooth Wireless Headphones Suitable For Use On A Bike

I've recently been experimenting with audible turn by turn instructions transmitted from my GPS to Bluetooth wireless headphones. If you pay for area, region or world-wide off-line mapping from Komoot (described by Martin in an earlier article in this Pottering Around) loaded on your smartphone or use a more capable, standalone GPS head unit, you can receive this information.

Audio information can be picked up from sports (sweat resistant) wireless headphones or single earpieces used in conjunction with mobile phones. A single earpiece lets you hear more ambient traffic noise but sports headphones with 2 earpieces often deliver higher quality sound. Sports headphones usually come with a connecting lead between earphones containing volume controls etc. The lead can add a bit of security so if one earpiece falls out it doesn't fall into the road but may be held at the side of your head by the cable.

Considerable difficulties can arise with persuading the headphones to stay in place while riding your bike, depending on the shape of your ear lobes and ear canal. Standard in ear Bluetooth headphones rely on 3 sizes of conical silicon ear tips that go into your ear canal plus silicon hooks that are supposed to fit inside your ear lobe. This system simply doesn't work even indoors let alone bouncing about on a bike.

I bought a pair of JBL Harman, relatively cheap, headphones that hook partly over the back of your ear (between skull and back of ear lobe) and then drop vertically from the top of each ear to position the ear tip in your ear canal. I'd hoped the headphones would stay in place due to the partial hook behind each ear. Results so far have been strangely mixed with the headphones staying in place for some time but then constantly falling out later in the ride.

You can buy silicon ear tips that have 2 cones perched on top of each other, instead of a standard single cone. I might try those next! Much more expensive Bose Bluetooth in ear headphones have rectangular shaped silicon ear tips rather than the usual conical type. The ear tips come as units complete with an integral silicon ear hook, in 3 different sizes. I'd like to try these but due to health and safety regulation shops can't let you sample the fit of these in ear headphones.

The combination of spoken directions plus clear screen mapping is very appealing and much better than either option on their own C.W

Problems Contacting Customer Services At Chain Reaction Cycles & Wiggle, Internet Retailers

Wiggle took over Chain Reaction Cycles and both companies have decided they will no longer provide a Customer Service phone number to discuss any problems with orders. Customers are limited to internet "Live Chat" 2 way typing interaction. My response is to try to avoid ordering from either company again.

C.W

Faversham Wednesday Meets For Mar, Apr & May 2020

<u>Mar</u>	4 th	The Alma, Painters Forstal	01795 533835
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	11 th	The Castle Inn, Oare	01795 533674
	18 th	The White Horse Inn, Boughton Street	01227 751343
	Thur19 th	The Five Bells, Eastry Potterers 2020 AGM, Raffle & Saddle Bag Sale. Please order food at the bar as soon as you reach the pub & ask if it can be served after the AGM finishes at approximately 1.15pm	01304 611188
	25 th	The Black Lion, Lynsted	01795 521229
<u>Apr</u>	1 st	The Queens Head, Boughton Street	01227 751369
	8 th	The Rose & Crown, Perry Wood	01227 752214
	15 th	The Three Horseshoes, Staplestreet	01227 750842
	22 nd	The Chequers, Doddington	01795 886366
	29 th	The Shipwrights Arms, Hollowshore	01795 590088
<u>May</u>	6 th	The White Horse Inn, Boughton Street	01227 751343
	13 th	Railway Hotel, Preston Street, Faversham Committee Meeting. Members Please Gather In The Bar.	01795 533173
	20 th	The Alma, Painters Forstal	01795 533835
	27 th	The Castle Inn, Oare	01795 533674

Thanet Thursday Section Meets For Mar, Apr & May 2020

<u>Mar</u>	5 th	The Rose Inn, Wickhambreaux	01227 721763
	12 th	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250

	19 th	The Five Bells, Eastry Potterers 2020 AGM, Raffle & Saddle Bag Sale. Please order food at the bar as soon as you reach the pub & ask if it can be served after the AGM finishes at approximately 1.15pm	01304 611188
	26 th	The Red Cow, Sandwich	01304 613399
<u>Apr</u>	2 nd	The Rose Inn, Wickhambreaux	01227 721763
	9 th	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250
	16 th	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	23 rd	The Red Cow, Sandwich	01304 613399
	30 th	The Haywain, Bramling	01227 720676
<u>May</u>	7 th	The Rose Inn, Wickhambreaux	01227 721763
	14 th	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250
	21 st	The Red Cow, Sandwich	01304 613399
	28 th	The Crispin, Worth	01304 612555



Thanet Section Sunday Meets for Mar, Apr & May 2020

<u>Mar</u>	1 st	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392
	8 th	The New Inn, Minster	01843 826142
	15 th	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	22 nd	The Gate Inn, Marshside (Mother's Day)	01227 860498
	29 th	The Five Bells, Eastry	01304 611188
<u>Apr</u>	5 th	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	12 th	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392
	19 th	The New Inn, Minster	01843 826142
	26 th	The Crown, Finglesham	01304 612555
<u>May</u>	3 rd	The Half Moon & Seven Stars, Preston	01227 722296
	10 th	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392

	17 th	The New Inn, Minster	01843 826142
	24 th	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	31 st	The Crown, Finglesham	01304 612555

Peter asks if you phone a pub for a dinner reservation please mention you're a Potterer so you're seated with other members.

