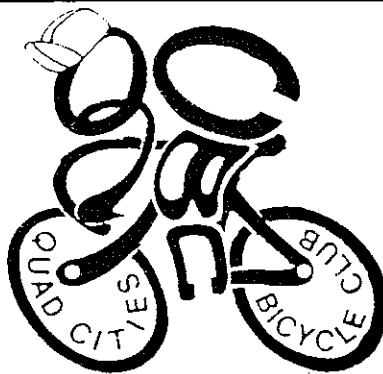


QUAD-CITIES BICYCLE CLUB

JAN. 1992 • Jim Deal — Editor
Deadline for Articles 10th of each month



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Biking in England is 'bloody' good

By Chuck and Diane Oestrelch

Last June, we flew with our bikes to London's Gatwick Airport, and after three days on foot in London, we took off for fifteen days of glorious biking on a swing through the south of England. It was grand and bloody wonderful, especially if you have a literary bent; and it was especially satisfying on a bike.

Here, without further ado, are 20 things we wouldn't have experienced if we hadn't been on bikes:

1. On our first day out we discovered a campground, Beal's Barns, off on a soggy track almost unknown by four-wheeled vehicles. We were the only campers on a beautiful green plain overlooking a distant lake, with rabbits jumping all around and real English sparrows begging for spare pieces of bread. The price for the night — two pounds (about \$3.50).

2. English "A" and "B" roads are not for bicyclists. These are not super highways, but heavily traveled two- and four-lane roads. Avoid them. Drivers on these

roads all take an oath to go as close to and as fast around bicyclists as possible. Also, most English roads are completely closed in by impenetrable hedges abutting the pavement, allowing you no saving shoulders whatsoever.

3. We were true Chaucerian pilgrims, riding to Canterbury through "shoures soote" (sweet showers). And just like those ancient pilgrims, we ate delectable bakery through wet paper bags, and stopped at a pub for steak and kidney pie (Please see ENGLAND, page 2)

Snowtime good time for picnic

By Gabe Verstraete

You are invited to join club members for our annual wintertime picnic Sunday, Jan. 19, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Scott County Park Pavilion.

The club will provide hot dogs, buns, coffee and hot chocolate. Members provide camaraderie, a dish to share and their own tableware.

Your president, Dave Lefever, will lead the January "ride of the month" from the Eastern Avenue entrance of the bike path to the picnic at the park. Departure time is noon. Let's give Dave lots of company since he hates to ride by himself.

Meanwhile, your past president will get the fire going and the hot dogs roasting at the park. I hate eating by myself, so be sure to join us.

Of course, driving out to the park to cross country ski or just to join the fun is also legitimate. Most importantly, let's make this a picnic to remember. See you on the 19th.



January program takes members way down south

By Errol McCollum

There actually is someplace colder and less hospitable to bicycle riders than the Quad-Cities this time of year — the Antarctic.

Errol McCollum of On Two Wheels will take club members way down under Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 7 p.m. in the David D. Palmer Library Auditorium at Palmer College.

McCollum will present a slide show of his recent trip to the world's most unusual continent. It is the only continent with . . .

- No trees
- No grass
- No shrubs
- No land mammals
- No cities
- No national sovereignty
- No sea ports

At times, it is entirely covered by ice and snow.

Join club members for a memorable evening that includes door prizes and refreshments. After this, the Quad-Cities will seem a much warmer place to be.

Hardy riders find new mayor on cold, windy day

By Leon Van Camp

It was a cold day, and, at 8 o'clock, only Mary Brus and I showed up at Eastern Avenue. At 8:01, we decided no one else was going to show and moved westerly toward Spano's Restaurant at the end of the bike path.

All of a sudden we were honked at by some crazy guy. It turned out to be Carter LeBeau, who apparently was one minute late and had to catch us. We had a nice breakfast at Spano's and decided to move on to Eldridge at the suggestion of Carter.

You don't think of Tomberg's as a place you are going to meet famous people, but, lo and behold, who is there but the new mayor of Davenport. We didn't recognize him because he was taking a coffee break after having been hunting with his son and a friend. He did, however, recognize Carter. We had a nice conversation with him and decided to move on for a few miles, even though the wind had picked up to at least 30 mph.

The next destination also was suggested by Carter. In Donahue at the Legion Hall, they were having a Wild Game Dinner. We didn't get there until 1:30 and

found out that when they say 12 o'clock, they mean it. The only thing left was the wild game — no salad, potatoes, bread or anything else. I told Carter we shouldn't have made our donation before we went through the line, but he didn't listen. It was interesting, however, and we will have to try it again next year, only we will arrive on time.

The return was great. Hardly had to pedal at all. Stopped again at Tomberg's for a Mountain Dew. The mayor had left and there weren't any other interesting people, so we concluded our day. It was a memorable one.

England

(Continued from page 1)

— with an elderly waitress who insisted we dry out over a roaring fire in the grate

4. At a bed and breakfast within the ancient walls of the original city of Canterbury, we covered literally every surface with wet clothing, panniers, shoes, and even saddles. Yet the rain surrendered to a blazing sunset in the evening, illuminating a radiant Canterbury Cathedral.

5. We discovered that the farm out-buildings in this part of the country that were surmounted with structures resembling nuns' headpieces were actually hop kilns. Sure, you can see these from a car, but can you see the areas' sparrow hawks, hovering like fluttering kites over the hop fields?

6. We found out that the word "downs" (as in Churchill Downs) means just the opposite. These chalk hills of southeast England are lovely, but impossibly more "up" than down.

7. Coming down from the last of the "downs" (indeed it was the sharpest descent of the entire trip), we snapped a spoke. One of the thrills of biking is watching bewilderingly as your pannier-loaded front wheel starts acting like an out-of-control gyroscope.

8. We bought a book of good maps and really discovered England by going where touring motorists would fear to tread — rural, unmarked lanes, back of the back-roads. Actually we started using them out of sheer desperation — traffic is horrendous on normal highways. But saving our skins is what really made our vacation. Off-the-track England is extraordinary.

9. Actually, it's much fun to work out routes that use completely obscure roads and avoid highways entirely.

10. How many motorists use a compass, much less carry one? We, thanks to a joke Christmas gift, had a tiny keychain compass that got a real workout in England. ("No, dear, that lane goes west, not north. Remember when the road turned at that big uphill.")

11. The bedrock reality of rural England is hedgerows. Iowa has its corn, Kansas its wheat — but England has hedges. (Although, behind the hedges there's an enormous number of sheep.) Country lanes with their hedgerows make it seem as if you're traveling through a gigantic formal garden maze with the anticipation of hidden vistas at every turning.

12. England is also still very much a place where one's home is one's castle. Property privacy is paramount. In addition to hedges, most rural homes have gates, many of them classic wooden sight barriers. They've given up moats, however.

13. Tired and soggy after a day riding in the rain, we waived the half mile walk or bike to the restaurant area from our B & B, something we wouldn't have done if we had a car. Instead, we walked half a block to a seaside cafe and discovered a wonderful local fish (plaice) caught just a few hours before.

14. English rain is ubiquitous, always present; a fact of life as sure as Big Ben, boiled vegetables, and bold cathedrals. However, even on a bike, you can become used to it, even halfway enjoy it. For one thing it is gentle, never pelting or icy. And although we had some rain every day on our trip, it usually didn't last that long — very fortunate for us because our evening's rest was usually in a tent.

15. However, biking brings out what the

rain brings out — a verdantly lush countryside. The pervasive rain seems to make the vegetation grow not high, but compactly. We were surrounded not just by the thick green of the hedgerows, but by forests of flowers, blossoming rhododendron and thick azaleas seemingly at every turn.

16. On a lane near Thomas Hardy's cottage, we got immersed in a sea of cattle. ... Soon after, down another lane, we met an authentic Thomas Hardy heathcropper — a free-roaming donkey who was watching us intruders on strange two-wheeled vehicles.

17. Unfortunately, Hardy's memorable Egdon Heath has been taken over by Her Majesty's Tank Corps. While biking through it, we went head to head with an actual tank. We gave ground.

18. Serendipity is riding into Salisbury and finding out that our campground (which was right under Old Sarum Hill, by the way) had a direct link via bikepath to the Old Town and the cathedral.

19. Just north of Salisbury is Salisbury Plain, which holds one of the most awesome sights in England. Stonehenge is even more moving when approached by bike. On a bike you become a part of the landscape, a part of the primeval past.

20. We stayed in about equal numbers of campgrounds and B & B's, and invariably the owners were helpful to us as bikers. They found dry and secure space for our bikes. They gave us realistic food advice. And they were a font of useful road information. Britain is alive to bikers.

Oh, and one last reason — It's nice to bike through a foreign country where your native language is spoken by all.

Calories burn too slowly in winter

By Jim Deal

The weather outside is at times frightful, and the inside is so delightful that my outdoor activities have come to nothing, and the 10 pounds I lost bicycling this summer is once again taking up residence around my middle.

My indoor workouts somehow fail to produce the same weight-loss benefits derived from 100-mile rides in the great outdoors; however, the indoor workouts take a lot less time.

I climb hundreds of steps on a Stairmaster, swim dozens of laps in the YMCA pool, and frantically pedal for miles on a Lifecycle that goes nowhere in a never-ending battle against flab and middle-age spread. I'm losing the battle.

I've also started pushing my weightlifting workouts, and, while my biceps seem to be handling some pretty heavy weights, my right shoulder is objecting strenuously to heavy bench-pressing

workouts.

Nevertheless, preparations have begun for the next cycling season. My two-wheeled vehicle now sports a nifty two-cushion seat. The promotional brochures claim the Easyseat will eliminate my saddle discomfort. I have my doubts.

I wonder if the unusual seat will cause me to rest too heavily on my arms or if it will hinder the function of the hamstring muscles in the back of my legs. I also wonder about the seat's durability. I look forward to my next ride with the spirit of an adventurer exploring the unknown.

In the course of a year, I occasionally get some interesting items in the mail. One such item came from former newsletter editor Cindy Mohr who forwarded to me a copy of an article that ran in the Oct. 22, 1990, issue of "Fortune" magazine.

The article concerns a new bicycle-production development from our friends in Japan. The National Bicycle Industrial Co., a subsidiary of electronics giant Mat-

sushita, makes bikes under the Panasonic brand.

The company has developed a method of combining computers, robots and people to produce custom-made, hand-assembled bicycles one by one in a process known as "flexible" manufacturing.

The process begins when a customer walks into a bicycle shop and is custom fitted on an adjustable frame. The specifications are faxed to the company and are punched into a computer.

The computer then creates a blueprint for the bike and assigns it a bar code which controls the other steps in the manufacturing process from the length of the tubes to the color of the paint.

Three hours later, a custom-made bike rolls off the assembly line as compared to the 90 minutes it takes for a mass-produced model. Prices run from \$545 to \$3,200.

I wonder what my goofy body would do to their measuring equipment.

Blustery day blows riders away

No sunbathers sighted during island tour

By Mike Smith

On a blustery Saturday morning, I headed from Davenport to meet the ride group at the Ben Butterworth Parkway near the Case works. This is usually a 45-minute ride for me, but with a 30 mph tailwind, I arrived early.

I expected to see quite a few riders and some vehicles in the parking lot like last year with Island music playing and Gabe passing out leis. To my surprise, no one was there.

Maybe I read the ride schedule wrong and the ride was on another day. Oh well, Alpina, Pro and myself decided to ride some of the Islands anyway as it was too cold to stand around.

Another fast tailwind ride to Campbell's Island and a sheltered ride around the island watching for sunbathers on the beach.

As we left the island and turned onto the parkway, I almost came to a stop in the headwind. Alpina took the lead in a low gear, and we headed downstream toward Arsenal Island.

Even the ducks and a pair of Canadian geese were smarter than the bike riders today as they huddled on the banks out of the wind.

Arsenal Island was quiet this morning so we took a leisurely ride around the golf course before following the river down to the bridge. No sailboats were out today in the white caps off the Davenport Sailing



Club.

After a hasty consultation, it was decided to forego the ride around Big Island and head to Credit Island instead.

We crossed the river into Iowa and rode the bike path down past the President's landing on down to John O'Donnell Stadium. The bike path is now completed

as far as the stadium.

The Credit Island tour was uneventful, but the break from the wind was welcome. Again, no sunbathers on the beach, and no one was playing golf today.

For everyone that stayed home, you missed a great ride into the headwind and a lovely Tour of the Islands.

Be sociable; get a patch

By Charlie Sattler

As an organizer of a ride, you try to speculate how many people will come so you know how much food and hot cocoa to bring

Our first guess was that no one in their right mind would show up for the Thanksgiving Day Patch Ride. The wind chill was below zero, and there were slippery spots on the road

Of course, we know better. After all, the patch ride is a social event where we always have a few come.

You are probably asking yourself if everyone comes on a bike. The answer is

no, only a few do. The others come by car.

The best part of these rides is that no matter what the weather, after a cup of hot chocolate and brownies or cookies, you find that you have completely forgotten the elements. After a half hour or so of socializing, most of the group heads for McDonald's for more eats and hot drinks

The shock of the day was seeing Tom Bisinger ride up on his bike. His wife Mary wasn't far behind in the truck with their favorite RAGBRAI drink in hand, which to everyone's amusement froze

I know that it sounds absolutely crazy to come out on a bike ride in the winter, but it really isn't, so please come and join

us

We will keep you warm with camaraderie, hot chocolate and homemade treats. Plus, you have a patch to take home with you

The next patch rides are as follows:

- Feb. 16 — Valentine's
- March 15 — St Patrick's

The following people received Thanksgiving Ride patches: Tom Bolton, Tammy Bolton, Mike Smith, Tom Bisinger, Mary Bisinger, Leon Van Camp, Don Barchman, Linda Simander, Ron Schmidt, Margaret Paulos, Dick Paulos, Jesse Neitzel and Charlie Sattler.

Start 1992 with a bike ride

Wednesday, Jan. 1 — New Year's Day Patch Ride

1 p.m. — Duck Creek Park entrance, Davenport Bike Path. Free patches to QCBC members who ride. Refreshments available.

Regular Ride: First Century Ride of 1992

8 a.m. — Eastern Ave. entrance of the Davenport Bike Path, riders choice 100 miles

Shorter option

8 a.m. — Eastern Ave. entrance, Davenport Bike Path. Rider's choice for those of us who took time off the bikes over the holidays (a much shorter distance, I'm sure).

XC Ski Option: 9 a.m. — Whispering Pines Shelter, Scott County Park

Saturday, Jan. 4

1) 9 a.m. — Ben Butterworth Parkway, Case/IH plant.

2) XC Ski Option: 7 a.m. — Ross' Restaurant, Bettendorf (park on city streets). Leave at 7 a.m. and car pool to Mississippi Palisades State Park, Savanna, Ill.

Sunday, Jan. 5

1) 9 a.m. — Clock Tower, Rock Island Arsenal.

2) XC Ski Option: 9 a.m. — West Lake Park, Davenport.

Saturday, Jan. 11

1) 9 a.m. — Eastern Ave. entrance, Davenport Bike Path.

2) XC Ski Option: 7 a.m. — Ross' Restaurant, Bettendorf (park on city streets). Leave at 7 a.m. and car pool to Eden Valley Wildlife Refuge (Rt. 136 west of Lost Nation, Iowa)

Sunday, Jan. 12

1) 9 a.m. — Ben Butterworth Parkway, Case/IH plant.

2) XC Ski Option: 9 a.m. — Middle Park Pool, Bettendorf.

Saturday, Jan. 18

1) 9 a.m. — Clock Tower, Rock Island Arsenal.

2) XC Ski Option: 9 a.m. — Middle Park Pool, Bettendorf

Sunday, Jan. 19 — "Snowtime For A Picnic, But We're Having One Anyway!"

1) 1 p.m. — NINTH ANNUAL Q.C.B.C. WINTER PICNIC. This event will be bigger and better than ever! Hope for temps above zero!

Monday, Jan. 20 — Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday

1) 9 a.m. — Village Inn Pancake House, 53rd St. and 23rd Ave., Moline.

2) XC Ski Option: 9 a.m. — Duck Creek Park Lodge, Davenport.

Tuesday, Jan. 21 — QCBC Monthly Meeting

7 p.m. — David D. Palmer Library Auditorium, Palmer College, Davenport

Saturday, Jan. 25

1) 9 a.m. — Eastern Ave. entrance, Davenport Bike Path.

2) XC Ski Option: 9 a.m. — Whispering Pines Shelter, Scott County Park

Sunday, Jan. 26

1) 9 a.m. — Ben Butterworth Parkway, Case/IH plant.

2) XC Ski Option: 9 a.m. — Saukie Golf Course, Rock Island

February

Saturday, Feb. 1

1) 9 a.m. — Clock Tower, Rock Island Arsenal.

2) XC Ski Option: 9 a.m. — Saukie Golf Course, Rock Island

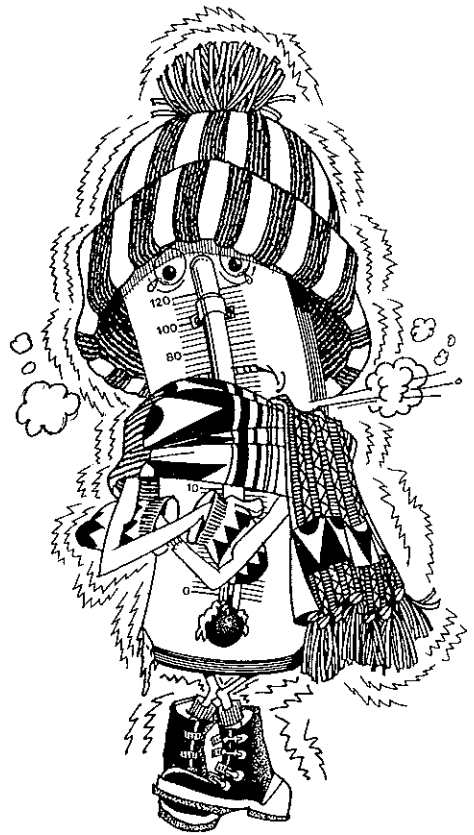
Sunday, Feb. 2

1) 9 a.m. — Eastern Ave. entrance, Davenport Bike Path

2) XC Ski Option: 9 a.m. — Duck Creek Park Lodge, Davenport.

Saturday, Feb. 8

1) 9 a.m. — Ben Butterworth Parkway,



Case/IH plant.

2) XC Ski Option: 9 a.m. — Whispering Pines Shelter, Scott County Park

Sunday, Feb. 9

1) 9 a.m. — Clock Tower, Rock Island Arsenal.

2) XC Ski Option: 7 a.m. — Ross' Restaurant, Bettendorf (park on city streets). Leave at 7 a.m. and car pool to Heritage Trail, Dubuque, Iowa.

Saturday, Feb. 15

1) 9 a.m. — Eastern Ave. entrance, Davenport Bike Path.

2) XC Ski Option: 7 a.m. — Ross' Restaurant, Bettendorf (park on city streets). Leave at 7 a.m. and car pool to Mississippi Palisades State Park, Savanna, Ill.

Warm memories of Tucson

By John E. Greve

As I sit here, gazing out at the 6 inches of snow and realize that it is zero degrees outside, I am reminded that two short weeks ago, I was riding my bike in sunny, warm Tucson, Ariz.

Tucson is one of the cities that has gone to the biking fraternity to raise money for health. The "Doctor's ride for Arthritis" is now in its 9th year. The ride is limited to 3,000 bikers as that is all that the mass start facilities can support. The start reminded me of my BIX days. Where I was positioned, I never heard the starter's gun but after waiting 4 minutes, did cross the start line at 10 mph while accelerating my bike.

Effective fundraiser

Each rider must pledge \$100 minimum to ride the course. For the past 5 years, the leading fundraiser has raised in excess of \$10,000 for arthritis research. If you multiply 100 by 3000, you see that at a minimum, the Doctor's Ride raises \$300,000. Most of the expenses are paid

from donations, keeping expenses to a minimum. Now to the ride.

I have ridden several large, mass-start rides and found none that matches this ride for organization and support. For the first three hours, the roads are completely protected, i.e. no cars are allowed. After that, the intersections are protected by a minimum of two police persons. Imagine shutting off Kimberly and Brady at Northpark so riders could cross that intersection!!

And, the 110-mile course has unimaginable support along the route. There are aid stations every 10 miles and food stations between. There are 80 bike-patrol persons riding the course offering assistance if a biker breaks down. There are two vans that patrol and are called by amateur radio for major repairs.

Moderately difficult

The course is moderately difficult. Tucson is in a bowl surrounded by mountains and the route teases the foothills. This makes for some interesting ascents and descents with attendant sharp hairpin turns.

My host and I rode for three days prior to the ride to get acquainted with the region. It takes some to get used to riding in a T-shirt in mid-November.

Tuned in to biking

Tucson is tuned in to biking. Most of the city streets have biking lanes and signs warn motorists of right turns into the bike lanes.

One of the unique features of the ride is forging the rivers. There are three places where the rider must get off the bike and walk across the river bed. Two were damp sand, and the third was rock strewn. I was afraid of turning an ankle while walking across this river bed. Tucson has had little rainfall for several years, so the rivers dried up long ago. Forging the rivers is a tradition of El Tour de Tucson.

If you are interested in getting away from the cold, blustery Midwest and have two weeks to spend (Driving time is three days.), I heartily recommend the El Tour next year. The event occurs the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

Lonely rider makes most of nice day

By Carter LeBeau

I know in the past I have said that it is normally a good group that meets for the scheduled rides. This was an exception, because the writer was the only one on this beautiful day.

I am sure no one expected a beautiful day because it was Dec. 8, a warm 50 degrees, and — believe it or not — by mid-afternoon, it got up to 67 degrees. I would imagine that everybody who would have participated was either shopping for Christmas gifts or must have been at Church. Certainly couldn't be any other reason.

Off to Buffalo

I decided to ride to Buffalo, so I crossed the Arsenal Bridge and got a good view of the ice jam. You felt, going over it, like you were in the Antarctic. A slight head wind, which is always enjoyable because you are then assured of an easy ride home.

Stopped at Clark's and had their famous hash browns with onions. Talked to the locals, read the newspaper and — due to the weather being so good — moved on to Montpelier.

Stopped at Dipple's and would recommend to anyone that likes taxidermy to view the two huge turkeys he has. One is

a hen, and he claims there is some justification as to why it was legal to shoot it. I don't want to mislead anybody that this is the Field Museum, but for a town the size of Montpelier, it is an interesting exhibit.

Moved on to Fairport, passing the fish hatchery and all of a sudden heard shots to the right and to the left. Realized this was the deer season, and the hunters were doing their best to keep the deer from starving this winter. Seemed like it was a good shooting day as the trap shooters were out in force in Fairport. Having hit 30 miles, I decided to turn back and enjoyed a great tail wind into Buffalo.

Visit from misfortune

Stopped at Casey's for a Baby Ruth and a pint of chocolate milk and actually sat in the sun outside as I relaxed. Just ready to leave when I discovered a flat tire. For most experienced riders this is just a detail, but for me it is a major calamity.

Then, all of a sudden, the weather changed. Started to pour rain, but I was fortunate to get under the canopy to change the tire. That was the bad news, and the good news was that it stopped raining, and I was off and down the road about 3 miles when it started to pour again.

There was a small bulding near a truck

scale that appeared, and I can't remember noticing it over the years of traveling this route, but — believe it or not — the door was open, and I walked in and waited out the rain. Even had a telephone which could have been used if the rain hadn't stopped.

Pleasant ride on the way home, and the closest thing I ran into that reminded me of a bike ride was meeting Mike Smith in downtown Davenport who was doing some shopping.

Oh, well! I enjoyed it, and, as a bicycling philosopher once said, "There is no such thing as a bad bike ride — only some are better than others."

QCBC classifieds

FOR SALE: Santana kid back conversion kits with or without Phil Wood bottom brackets. Call Bill Langan at 386-3058.

FOR SALE: An Excalibur recumbent bicycle. Features 18 speeds, an adjustable seat and backrest. It is adjustable for leg length and handlebar height. Thumb shifters and a cat's eye mirror. Asking \$525. Call 326-9117 or 355-0840.