



SUMMER Edition - June 2020

**Editor: Bill Hauxwell, 18 Hollyhock Close, Basingstoke, RG22 5RF
tel: 01256 472035 mob: 07767 613071 email: whauxwell@aol.com**

EDITORIAL

During lockdown I have been catching up with a couple of jobs which I have wanted to do for some time, such as scanning my 35 mm negatives from the 50's and sorting my model railway (00 &N gauge) bits.

But it's Circular time again and I'm much saddened that we've lost one of our stalwart members, Johnny Read; and I'm grateful to David Durose whose tribute to Johnny leads this edition. I'm sure that all of our thoughts will be with Janet.

Also in this publication I've included some photoshops from a time when we were all moving a lot faster than we are now. I've told my cycling story and there's also detail of a great cycling week next year, assuming of course that something like normality has returned by then; and also assuming that Brittany Ferries are back to normal service

VINCENT JOHN ('Johnny') READ - 1934/ 2020

David Durose pays tribute -

Johnny died on 1st June, after a long, complicated, often painful, series of illnesses. His period of woes started, as they only could with Johnny, over 15 years ago through a cycling accident. He was on his way home to Weymouth, after the lunch stop at Lodgers, with a group of 'Wednesday Wanderers' (he had inherited responsibility for its organization from its founder, George Fox), when he happened to hit a stick lying innocuously across his path. The stick went into Johnny's front wheel and he ended up in an ambulance going to Dorchester Hospital's A&E. His recovery was slow and subsequently he was found to have prostate cancer. Then he developed a very painful throat cancer. He had to give up riding his bike twice a week with the West Dorsets and his company was sorely missed by his many friends. Janet took over his daily care and companionship on his frequent hospital visits. Nevertheless, Johnny still played out his quiet, mischievous sense of humour in his e-mails to friends near and far. Johnny raced with the club in the 50's and 60's, mainly in club events and the former interclub '50', with modest success. Touring holidays with Janet were his delight, as were his so regular outings with the West Dorset CTC. Our condolences go to Janet whose nursing and caring undoubtedly prolonged Johnny's time with us, and to his son.

A LONG RUN

- Bill Hauxwell describes his life awheel

I started cycling at the age of 4 1/2 years. We moved house from Darlington to Thornaby on Tees side and I found an old rusty large wheel tricycle in the coal shed. A drop of oil and I was soon riding it around the backyard of our terraced house. Then it was on to two wheels, the third wheel being held in the air. I had my first of many crashes, I put my head through a sheet of glass that my father used as a cold frame - he was not pleased. The next phase was riding my fathers full-size gents bike, this was achieved by putting my leg through the frame and pedalling. One of my jobs was to collect a bag of coke from the local gasworks and wheeling it on the bike. My first sports bike was a BSA, (Bits of Scrap All sorts), this was about 1956 hub gear, converted to fixed using 65 to 70 change gear . I was soon up to 50 miles a day .

I got my first job in a radio repair shop and two things were in my favour. I had some knowledge of radio and I could ride the carrier bike which was used to collect and deliver radios. We did aerial works which involved carrying a large wooden toolbox in the carrier and a double, wooden extension ladder over my shoulder.

I was due for national service in December 1952 but wanted to go into the Royal Air Force and the radio trade, I was persuaded to sign on for five years (later extended 10 years) - I think the recruiting sergeant used to get Green Shield stamps for the number of years. In 1954 I bought my first lightweight bike with the latest equipment including my a cotter less splined chain-set (Gnutti?)

Posted to Germany on the Dutch border near Aachen, I met other cyclists who introduced me to Dutch cyclists. I combined RAF time trials with Dutch racing round the houses on single free wheel. They were very fast so I did not finish in many but I recall, was 13th in one. Started in the Tour of Limburg which included two climbs of the Cauberg at Valkenburg, packed on the first climb. Rode from the Danish border to London in 5 days. My first 100 mile was with the Andover Wheelers. Left the RAF in 1962.

Moved to Wool, joined the club 1967/9.

Moved to Basingstoke, joined the North Hants Road Club

Bought a tandem, joined The Tandem Club, was Publicly Officer, held display stands at Liverpool and NEC.

Tours, six countries in 10 days.

Round the Ijsselmeer (Zuiderzee) in 10days.

This is my cycling history, how about telling other people yours?

This was my first race in Germany, a 25 round the air field, borrowed the bike which was put together in the morning. I remember Tom Oldfield coming passed me.



**Irrespective of your cycling category - racing; touring; commuting, etc. -
some bad 2020 news but good 2021 news, from VALOGNES
(a very accessible 20 kms south of Cherbourg)**

The 82nd Semaine Fédérale Internationale de Cyclotourisme was due to be based at Valognes during the week 2nd – 9th August.

This huge event attracts more than 10000 participants the majority French but also a strong global contingent including many from the UK - particularly so given the ease of access into Normandy. The bad news is that it's been cancelled – another Covid-19 casualty. The good news is that the organisers, the Fédération Française de Cyclotourisme, have rearranged their future dates in such a way that Valognes will now be the nerve-centre during July 25th-August 1st 2021

The 2021 version of this annual event was intended to be based on Pont-à-Mousson in the Meurthe-et-Moselle department in north-eastern France, with 2022 destined for Loudéac (Côtes d'Armor, Brittany). Presumably these have been pushed forward a year but no such confirmation seen at time of writing.

The following was noted online being from a survivor of the 2019 event centred on Cognac (Charente). I can't say better really -



"I've been to the New Forest Cycling Week, the Birthday Rides, numerous sportives and Cycling UK Challenge rides to name only a few, but nothing had prepared me for the enormity of the Semaine Fédérale. The sheer numbers of riders: stretching out along the roads, whizzing about in between the rows of motorhomes at the campsite, milling around the trade village and filling the long tables in the massive dining marquees. This is a gathering of cyclists on a truly grand scale.

It quickly became apparent to us just how much organisation had gone into it but I guess it follows a very similar format each year so there is a tried and tested template for success: the location may change but the marquees and shower blocks are portable and re-used each year. Also ever present is the slick army of nearly 2,000 volunteers, who do everything from serving food and drink to marshalling the routes to registration, lost property, first aid and much, much more."

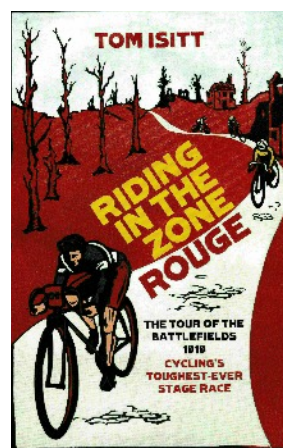
Now, for those quiet lockdown moments - here's a BOOK REVIEW

***RIDING IN THE ZONE ROUGE* by TOM ISITT**

Isitt's subject is described as "cycling's toughest ever stage race" and it would be difficult to argue with that description. He's referring to the little known 1919 Circuit des Champs de Bataille, (The Tour of the Battlefields) which traversed the battlefields of Ypres, the Somme and the rest of the western front less than six months after the Armistice was signed.

Like many other big cycle races it was the idea of a newspaper, Le Petit Journal, but agonisingly the terms of the Treaty of Versailles were released just after those original riders set off, obliging the supporting newspaper to knock their own race off the front page!

The 2,000 km route, divided into seven long punishing stages, passed through blasted towns and villages, on ruined roads, in the most appalling weather despite the start date being April 29. Snow, mud and gale force winds made movement difficult for the official race vehicles, let alone the riders.



Isitt combines the story of the preposterously gruelling tour itself with an account of his own cycling trip along the same route nearly a century later albeit with a leisurely touring schedule. He has hardships of his own and the weather was only marginally better.

Isitt does a great job combining the historic event with his own experiences on tour

— Bill takes us down **MEMORY LANE** —



DAVE ALLEN



MARK BOLTON



WILLIE KIRKLAND



NICK FRIEND



STEVE MOORE



KEITH YOUNG



MARK WHITE



BOB PATTEN

*Photographs were taken by Phil O'Connor
during the Wessex 100 on 29/7/1984.*



The late Ivor Jones & Arthur Moss taken about 1970 during a club 25



Christine & John Read during a British Heart Foundation Charity Ride

.... and another BOOK REVIEW

THE CALL OF THE ROAD by CHRIS SIDWELLS

The book is sub-titled *The History of Cycle Road Racing* and you're not long into the book before you're thinking 'this man knows his subject'. Longstanding readers of cycling journals will likely recognise the author's name – he has been a contributor to many publications over a very long time and seems to be well-known in the racing community itself.

Sidwells takes us back to 21st May 1868 and records the first race held in Paris and won by an Englishman, James Moore. This fact is arguable but if there was an earlier 'first' candidate it certainly couldn't have been much earlier. In fact we Brits were very successful, home and abroad, in those original events but then of course that bunch of racing cyclists (the North End club) caused milady's carriage to overturn, she complained, the police sided with the Establishment and we had to make do with time trials under NCU (National Cyclists' Union) rules until the BLRC (British League of Racing Cyclists) came into being and eventually after many years of bickering, we were back into bunch racing.

Sidwells doesn't confine himself to the British story. The book is a scholarly work covering the world-wide story of the sport. It is consistently interesting and very readable

