

Slide Show

Enid Brown will be presenting slides of her expedition to Nepal at Baldridgeburn Community Centre, Baldridgeburn, Dunfermline, on Saturday, 13th April at 7.30 p.m. Tickets are £1.50 for adults, 75p. for under 16s. Get your tickets from any committee member or pay at the door on the night.

Change to Runs List

Please note that the Myrehaugh Hut maintenance weekend has been changed to the weekend of 20th/21st April.

Run to Sma' Glen, Crieff

There is an ambiguity in the runs list on 29th June. The lunch venue is the picnic area near the Stuart Crystal Works, not the Sma' Glen itself. Anyone wanting to participate in the longer run to the Sma' Glen should contact Margaret Lauder, Tel. Dunfermline 735135, nearer the date.

Annual Invitation Meet, Vicars Bridge

Do not forget the annual invitation meet and sausage sizzle at Vicars Bridge on 15th June. Meet Kirklands Garage, Kinross, at 1215 hours, or Glen Car Park, Pittencrieff Street, Dunfermline, at 1230 hours, if you would like to cycle in company. Everyone welcome - bring your friends.

Mid Week Runs

The following list of runs has been organised for retired or unemployed members and will take place on Wednesdays, meeting at 1.00 p.m. For further information contact John Elder, Tel. Cowdenbeath 510021.

10th April	-	Forestmill Cafe.
8th May	-	Balgedie Toll Inn, near Kinnesswood.
12th June	-	Gartmorn Dam, Sauchie.
10th July	-	Craigmead Car Park, Lomond Hills.
14th August	-	Culross.
11th September	-	Ladybank Tavern.

Fife Discovers the Bicycle

Fife Regional Council is at last showing some interest in cycling issues. Robert Mason and John Sumpter represented the D.A. at a meeting held in Glenrothes on 31st January. Peter Oldfield, Fife's Depute Director of Engineering, chaired the meeting. Other groups represented were the Scottish Office, the Scottish Development Agency, Sustrans, Spokes, the Countryside Commission, the Scottish Tourist Board and the three District Councils. Throughout the meeting Mr. Oldfield adopted a very positive tone, admitting that Fife had been slow off the mark in provision of cycling facilities, but promising that more attention would be paid to cyclists in future. Peter Milne, a senior engineer with the Roads Department, has been designated as Cycling Officer for Fife.

/As usual

As usual, the problem is likely to be lack of money. One purpose of the meeting seemed to be for Fife to sound out the various funding agencies as to what extra cash might be available for cycle projects. Most of the replies were suitably vague. Fife Region promised to draw up a list of priority projects. Another meeting will be held in November with a view to inserting specific items in the Roads Department programme. Thereafter, yearly meetings are promised to review progress.

A Tale of 2 Coins - a Penny Farthing, or a Year on a High Bicycle by Dereck Batty.

I acquired my high bicycle this time last year with the main intention of competing in the annual High Bicycle Championships which were to be held this year as a series at Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dumfries in Scotland. The initial learning curve was pretty steep but I found that once the utter fear and panic was overcome, it really was quite fun. I have also realised that it helps to be (or at least seem to be) slightly eccentric and at times thick skinned!

Inevitably, the bicycle has been developed almost out of all recognition from its early beginnings but the basic principles of riding remain the same. However, in this year I have developed an increasing admiration for the men who rode their machines in the 1890s for they most certainly possessed strength and stamina to enable them to cope with the roads and conditions of their day. (By way of comparison, while I could do a ride of 50 miles at 15 mph on my modern bike, I could hardly climb the two hills near my home on the Penny!)

I did, in fact, take part in the Championship series and whilst I cannot claim to have been anywhere near winning, I did not finish last either! There were some 30 competitors in all who came from Holland, Switzerland, Germany and the U.S.A., as well as from the U.K. If I did not win, I did improve my riding skills and confidence and was proud to have taken part.

During the year, I was invited to attend the centenary celebrations of Aberdour railway station (where the whole village dressed up in Victorian costume) and a couple of pageants surrounding the Forth Railway Bridge anniversary. In October, I participated in the Tour de Forth, a local charity ride of about 50 miles, which I completed in a riding time of 5 hours. Presently, while I am sitting in my armchair filled full of Christmas cheer, I am contemplating the London to Paris charity rally in aid of the N.S.P.C.C. in May next year or is this just wishful thinking??

Cyclists Agree to Pay Road Tax

A letter which appeared in the 'New Scientist' provides a rather neat reply to those who claim cyclists should pay road tax. Referring to an earlier article about the damage done to road surfaces by 40 tonne lorries, the writer notes that the damage done to the road surface is proportional to the wheel load raised to the power of four. A 40 tonne lorry has a wheel load of 4000 kg. This compares with a typical bicycle wheel load of 50 kg (assuming a rather heavy rider). It follows that a lorry does 40,960,000 times as much damage to the road surface. A lorry owner pays a road tax of £1230. A bicycle owner should consequently pay about .005 pence.

Bicycles are More Dangerous than Buses

Cambridge, which has one of the highest bicycle populations in the U.K., is trying to ban cyclists from certain areas of the town centre. The following quote was attributed to the Regional Director of Transport by the Guardian on 5th January, 'Bikes are fast and silent and are a real menace to pedestrians. In a way they are more dangerous than a bus which moves slowly and noisily through narrow streets'. I know which I'd rather have run over me!

Rights News

The meeting with Fife Regional Council is reported separately. As noted in the last newsletter, the Fife Structure Plan contains some very encouraging statements on cycling. Also published recently was the draft Dunfermline District Local Plan. This is fairly strong on recreational paths but weak on definite suggestions for cycle facilities. In my written comments, I made several specific suggestions for cycle routes in and out of the city centre. All members are encouraged to keep up the pressure for better cycle facilities either by writing with suggestions to Fife's new cycling officer, Mr. Peter Milne, Engineering Department, Fife House, Glenrothes; or by writing to their District Planning Office. As one example of member's action, Willie Nelson's letter to Fife Region on the Forth Bridge cycle path (reported in the last newsletter) received a very prompt response with the Engineering Department promising to put things right 'in the near future'.

Margaret Elder

Our sympathy is extended to John Elder in the loss of his life-long partner, Margaret, who died in January. Margaret, the late Anne Fairgrieve, Rita Cramb and Elizabeth Lynch, formed "The Ladies' Select" who enjoyed many a mile together. Margaret was a great supporter of club cycling and both the Dunfermline and West Fife C.C. and this D.A. will miss her.

KM 151

KM 151 takes place at Drumlanrig Castle from 23rd May to 27th May. There will be a campsite, four days of touring rides, slide shows and a ceilidh. Further details available from John Taylor, Monksmill, Castle Douglas, DG7 2NY, Tel. 055 667 395.

Scottish Councillor

Jim Brown, the new Scottish Councillor, visited the Fife D.A. committee meeting at the end of January. He reported on various issues discussed at C.T.C. Council. It is encouraging to note that the turnout for the Scottish Councillor election was very high (18%). The result was close too - Jim Brown 235, John Roxburgh 220, Hugh McLachlan 77.

Adverts

Trike for sale - apply Stuart Illingworth, 7 Forteviot Village, by Perth, PH2 9BT (note that Stuart is not on the telephone).

22" Vitus Racing Frame for sale - also selection of wheels, tyres, hubs - contact Enid Brown, 0592 782413, for more details.

21½" Peugeot Frame (Renolds 531) free to good home. This is a complete bike - old but serviceable - only bit missing is the derailleur - contact John Sumpter, 0383 722119.

Next Issue

Contributions and adverts for the next issue to John Sumpter, 23 Linburn Road, Dunfermline, by 31st August please.