



Issue 563 February 2021

Cranks

Volume 47

The magazine of
Deeside Thistle Cycling Club

Sponsored by:



Current Membership 592 (639)
SCU Membership 302 (338)

Editorial:

Last month's thought provoking Burnsian verse – *The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men Gang aft agley* - has certainly come to haunt me. Determined not to let my efforts to stay fit, healthy and to lose a few pounds, be thwarted, I've steadfastly been going out three times a week.

Careful to follow the rules much of this has been lone riding. Without stretching the radius too often, January gave me what I wanted – and then the weather proved a handicap.

Ice bound roads might have been rideable with spiky tyres or a lot of luck. The studded tyres weren't an option and attempts to stay upright on the slippery slopes convinced me my luck might run out.

Looks as though in the prevailing conditions my sojourns will be curtailed a bit. Looks like I may just have to ride the forest trails though they, too, are churned up and frozen with walkers.

Once upon a day I'd have been out regardless the conditions and revelled in it. Even though I'm not afeared to take a tumble I am ever mindful that injuries have got to be tended to. Though you can look after a lot of the bumps and scrapes yourself, in the current situation, let's avoid burdening the NHS any further.

PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

Don't knock the weather; nine-tenths of the people couldn't start a conversation if it didn't change once in a while - Kin Hubbard

Do you have a view on life? Why not submit your favourite few words of wisdom for public consumption in this exclusive corner of your magazine. Send now to Sandy Lindsay, Rowan Cottage, Inveramsay, Inverurie, AB51 5DQ or email knockies@aol.com

Coronavirus Update

Following the announcement by the First Minister, Scottish Cycling has updated the COVID-19 guidance to reflect the latest Scottish Government legislation and sportscotland guidance. **Please take care to follow the rules, to not offend.** Go [here](https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/scotland/article/20200313-Scottish-Cycling-Coronavirus-COVID19-Guidance-0): <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/scotland/article/20200313-Scottish-Cycling-Coronavirus-COVID19-Guidance-0>

Resumption (not) of Club Activities

With COVID-19 restrictions tightened from Boxing Day it has been decided no Group Cycling Activities will take place until Tier 4 restrictions have been lifted. Depending on updated Guidelines from Scottish Cycling arrangements for U18s may differ and are being reviewed.

Saturday Virtual Rides

The club's first virtual ride using "local roads" on the RGT Cycling platform went quite well. We had a couple of technical problems as you might expect on the first go but, on the whole, it was quite a successful event with everyone getting a good workout.

We're going to run additional events like the full Classic route (Banchory, SDR to Dinnet, Ordie, Tarland, QV, Lumphanan, Torphins, Glassel, Banchory), and we can maybe have a coffee over Zoom afterwards.

If you'd like to join in, please email me at DTCC.Banchory.Saturday@outlook.com *Steve Brechin*

Zoom Sessions

Thanks to all those who sent in suggestions. The club is delighted to welcome Bob Lyons of Ardoyne Performance Coaching to talk about training, nutrition, and coaching, with specific focus on special populations (youth, old sticks, wifies).

Bob has 30 years' experience of elite sport performance coaching and supports many club members in achieving their sporting goals, and this will be a session with something for everyone.

The plan is to have this session in late February, and a Zoom invite will follow in which you can submit questions in advance. *Laura Sarkis*

Drum-Up Once It's All Over

Andy Kerr says that once this Covid show has abated sufficiently to allow cyclists to ride in groups and congregate again, he'd like an "all clubs" drum-up.

He's willing to do the organising and is looking for an iconic location where a big bonfire can be built with a supply of fresh water. The individual's responsibility to bring a tea bag, a spoonful of coffee and a cake.

Colin Allanach says the thought of this just about makes him cry at the state we are in just now; He is missing the club runs.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: Friday 29 January 2021

Venue: On-line at 7.00pm

Agenda

1 Chairman's Remarks:

2020 was not what we expected at all. There were no outdoor events at all. The club and society in general have never seen anything like this before. However, as a club we have had to look to new ways of communicating and engaging with club members.

Online meetings, webinars, talks and instructional seminars have helped us get through the past year. It would seem that online meetings and good broadband are now essential even in the cycling world. All of this would have not been achievable without a fantastic bunch of committee members and volunteers.

Therefore, I would like to thank all those involved:

Peter Smart for all his IT work, including web talks, helping to get a new website in place and the transition to Office 365.

Neil Stables for assisting with the online talks.

Alan Campbell for arranging some fantastic guests and chairing these talks

Laura Sarkis for also arranging an online talk

Our Youth section was still able to run to a limited degree following the COVID-19 rules.

The coaches involved put in a huge amount of work and in no particular order I would like to thank

Gavin Baxter, Bob Lyons, Sarah Rowe, Simon Stromberg, Sam Long, Fiona Thomson and Philippa Murphy

An increasingly popular cycling activity during the past year has been Zwift. Both Simon Stromberg and Sandy Wilson have been instrumental in organising online Deeside events and raising funds for charity. More and more cyclists are turning their attention to this form of cycling as they hope to keep fit throughout self-isolation and social distancing.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sandy Lindsay for his weekly updates, Cranks and being essential to the smooth running of the club.

I think that we are all hopeful that 2021 will be a better year and we will run outdoor events and that there will be a renewed enthusiasm for taking part and helping make these events a success.

2 Apologies: Mike Brown, Stewart Mitchell

3 Minutes of Previous AGM:

Moved as a correct record

A Campbell and A Harrington

Business Arising from Minute

To Review the Purpose and Structure of the Club

On hold due to the current pandemic and restrictions on activities

4 Annual Report

a) Membership

Sen	468 (518)	Life	87 (84)	Family	130 (145)
Jun	8 (8)	Vet	393 (420)	Assoc	21 (22)
Juv	128 (129)	Lady	147 (153)	Hon	13 (12)
Total	604 (655)	New	63 (78)	SCU	315 (341)

127 members failed to rejoin from last year, which is just under 20% (15%) of our total. This is a dramatic change which may be as a result of the current world-wide COVID-19 pandemic. The under 18 category of Membership is the only category to see little change. After new enrolments the Senior age category of membership dropped by just over 11%. The Youths comprise over 21% (19.7%) of the total Membership. Veterans take up the largest proportion of members with 65% (64%) in this group. The average age of members is now 43.07 (42.25) yrs. For 33 of the past 34 years we have won Scottish Cycling's John Bull Trophy (Traders Trophy). Even if we did have a reduction of 7.6% in BC membership we still managed to stay ahead of Edinburgh RC with our 315 BC members with their 268, a decrease of 13.5%

b) No Championships were contested during the season with only a few Senior Members and our Youth Section able to ride races towards the end of the year

- c) Support continues for training courses to assist members become First Aiders, Coaches, MB Leaders, etc
- d) In the prevailing pandemic circumstances, it was felt appropriate to not request the annual sponsorship from MPH and Tierney-Strachan. They have both offered to continue sponsorship of the club
- e) Even in the absence of competition, Club Coaches continued to support the development of our Youth. Principal among these are Gavin Baxter, Bob Lyons, Sarah Rowe and Simon Stromberg
- f) The Youth Section of our club has remained strong and vibrant during the year. Sam Long leads things but with close support from Fiona Thomson and Philippa Murphy. Many parents also commit time to help coach and look after the youngsters
- g) Club clothing stocks are managed by Jon Strachan
- h) Ian Wilson and Anna Liversidge, our Welfare Officers, continues to assist where necessary
- i) Early in the year we lost member, Sandy Whyman. He, sadly, collapsed and died while cycling in the borders
- i) Cranks, the club's official magazine, is over 47 years old and though content has sometimes been difficult to source in the current climate still no issue has been

missed. Other means like emailing and social media are used for distributing club information but the magazine is still welcomed each month with issue 562 just off the press

- u) The club's web site, deeside.org, is looked after by Peter Smart. During 2020 a professional rewrite of its content took place. This is a valuable resource of information. Club memberships, social event bookings, etc, are processed here using PayPal. Much of the club's administration has been transferred to Office 365

5 Treasurer's Report

Balance Sheet

	2018-19	2019-20	
Fixed Assets		6745	4661
Current Assets			
Stock - Clothing	4840	4085	
Funds	<u>74830</u>	<u>71039</u>	
	79670	75124	
Current Liabilities			
Accrued Charges (2000)		0	
Sponsorship Ac (<u>23776</u>)		<u>(21689)</u>	
Net Current Assets	54296	<u>54296</u>	<u>53435</u>
Total Assets		<u>60639</u>	<u>58096</u>
Represented by			
Accumu Fund	59140	60639	
Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>1499</u>	<u>(2543)</u>	
	60639	<u>60639</u>	<u>58096</u>

Income & Expenditure

Income	2018-19	2019-20
Membership Fees	8346	7505
Donations	734	724
Reliability Trial/Sportive	265	46
Presentation	113	652
Racing	<u>1011</u>	<u>339</u>
	10469	9266

Expenditure

Administration		
Communications	767	752
Hall Rentals	2785	2546
Affiliations	340	441
Website	143	314
Secretarial Expenses	480	480
Consumables	45	112
PayPal Charges	405	261
Trophies	538	1156
Presentations	0	895
Depreciation on Equipment	2758	2520
West Lothian Cycling Facilities	0	1000
ZOOM Talks	0	1026
Webinar Licenses	0	201
Garments Written Off	492	0
Miscellaneous	217	105
	<u>8970</u>	<u>11809</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year	<u>1499</u>	<u>(2543)</u>

6 Championship Report

	2020
Youth Awards	None
Novice Championship	Men None Women None
Snr BAR	None
Vets BAR	None
Ladies BAR	None
Juvenile BAR	None
Youth BAR Girls	None
Snr RR BAR	None
Vets RR BAR	None
Ladies RR BAR	None
Junior Road Race BAR	None
Juvenile Road Race BAR	None
25 Mile Champions	None
50 Mile Champion	None
Alex Anderson Memorial	None
Ian Brodie Memorial Award	None
Ian Brodie Youth Cup Award	None
Cyclo Cross Championship	None
XC Championship	None
Evening League	None
Leili Clarke Memorial	None
Dave Anderson Award	Sandy Lindsay
Alan Campbell Chairman's Award	Peter Smart
Mary Lindsay Award	Gavin Baxter

7 Propositions Affecting Constitution and Rules

None

8 Propositions Not Affecting Constitution and Rules

None

A presentation highlighting the progression of the club's Youth Section was given by Sam Long

9 Election of Officials

It was proposed that one of the youth riders should be invited onto the committee, this to give an important perspective from the younger members and to be considered in more detail at the next F&M meeting

Hon President	Alan Campbell CBE
Hon Vice-President	Alan Gibb Mike Brown
Chairman	Andrew Harrington
Vice-Chairman	Dave Walton
Secretary	Sandy Lindsay MBE
Treasurer	Sandy Lindsay MBE
Event Secretary	Vacant
EL Secretary	Steve Walton
MTB Secretary	Neil Stables
Cyclo-Cross Secretary	Vacant
Road-Race Secretary	Mark Walker
Championship Secretary	Simon Stromberg

Final call for Fees – if you have yet to pay this could be your last copy of Cranks. Go [here](#)

Press Officer	Vacant
Clothing	Jon Strachan
Youth	Sam Long
Webmaster	Peter Smart
Welfare Officers	Ian Wilson
	Anna Liversidge
Committee	Colin Esslemont (Volunteered)
	Laura Sarkis
	David Eastwood

Annual Subscriptions

Some members have still to pay their Annual Subscription. Are you one of these? We'll soon be assuming that you are no longer interested in the club and we'll start deleting your details. To stop this happening please go here to renew yours: <http://deeside.org/join>

- or do a Bank Transfer to TSB Sort Code 30 10 01, Account No 00802182
- you can telephone 07867 857221 when a card payment can be taken over the phone
- you may also pay your fees by cheque (made out to Deeside Thistle Cycling Club) and sent to Sandy Lindsay, Rowan Cottage, Inveramsay, Inverurie, AB51 5DQ

You may have children and spouse/partner listed as members so don't forget to include them when renewing - or if they are not already listed now's your chance to get them on the club register.

Fees are as follows:

Over 18	£23
16 – 18	£12
Under 16	£ 7
Spouse or partner of an existing member	£ 2
Each child (under 12) of existing member	£ 2
Associate member	£ 7

Youth Free Membership

Deeside Thistle Cycling Club is delighted to offer free membership to new youth riders for their first year. If you would like to take advantage of this offer, please see: <http://www.deeside.org/membership.html>

Notes for Cranks

My ability to find suitable material to fill the pages of your monthly magazine, Cranks, becomes more and more difficult. With the Coronavirus curtailing most of the regular activities there has been little to write about.

You may be able to help. I'm sure there are many of you who have been involved in all sorts of things during lockdown which might be of interest to others.

How about penning a few lines and sending it through to Knockies@deeside.org.

SCNEG Update

Firstly, with the roll out of the vaccine I'm beginning to start to think we might get some racing this year.

I've registered the popular Massie Shield for mid-summer. You will probably know this race in 25-mile TT format is for the fastest commutative time for a team of three racers.

This year there will be a ladies team race run in exactly the same format. I'm looking for an organisation or individual to donate the cash to buy a trophy for ladies race. If you know of anyone, please get in touch.

Grampian has been given their £1000 funding from SC for 2020, we usually just receive it automatically but this year we had to apply for it with details of why it was needed. This means we can get on buying stuff such as the full Hi-Viz gear we now need for marshals.

I had hoped to announce the new SC club coordinator for Grampian. We now have one, but I can't officially say until SC announce it. As soon as they do, I'll set up a meet and greet zoom call for you all to get to know her. Oops!

Speaking of meetings, I've probably broken all sorts of rules by not having an AGM. There will be one soon.

Colin Allanach (colinallanach@aol.com)

Virtual Cycle Event - Tour De Forth

I wanted to get in touch to let you know about a virtual cycling event we are part of that you may be interested in.

It's free to register online now via the link and all the information regarding distances etc. is in there. For anyone who raises £100 for NorthSound Cash for Kids they will gain free entry to the actual event on the 6th June 2021 (COVID restrictions allowing).

Please note that if you follow the link and do want to sign up make sure to click on the "To enter NorthSound Cash for Kids set your page up **HERE**"

<http://www.tourdeforth.com/virtual?fbclid=IwAR37rgijhI7E37qYVvu0yKGOAdgOwW2Rnb8O9jkq9LnA2TFeafcdsfQ3ViiY>

We are a local charity which supports children who are sick, disabled or disadvantaged within Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. Everything raised here stays here. As a tiny team of two we cannot do this without the support of local people and groups like yourselves.

Tour De Forth is such a great event and we are excited to have to opportunity to still do this virtually and get it out there to all our local cycle groups.

Louise Douglas
Charity Fundraising Executive
NorthSound Cash for Kids
01224 337010

KNOCKBURN LOCH MANAGEMENT

John Huston Knockburn Site Manager, Knockburn Loch, Strachan, AB31 6LL info@knockburn.co.uk, 01330 822234 / 07741314999 www.knockburn.co.uk. You can like us on [FaceBook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#)

Final call for Fees – if you have yet to pay this could be your last copy of Cranks. Go [here](#)

Zwift Sunday Club Endurance Ride

Created and administered by Simon Stromberg

We now have a Sunday Club Endurance Ride on Zwift, with different groups at a different pace. Details [here](#). This is run in partnership with ZwiftScotland group.

There will be different groups formed on ride each at a different pace. Regrouping at top of KOMs.



ZWIFT.COM

New Members

The following new or returning members have joined in recent weeks

2992	Nicholas Good	Westhill	5
2993	Jelena Good	Westhill	42
2994	Cole Peddie	Bielside	13
2995	Jay Peddie	Bielside	11

Any friend, family member, work colleague, who is interested in cycling but not involved with a club, should be dropped the hint to look at www.deeside.org or to email members@deeside.org asking for information.

Car Clinic Offer

A special offer has been made to companies who want to set up staff discount schemes for their employees which allows them to register their own details and get discount automatically when they visit Car Clinic. It has been a roaring success and I thought that maybe I should extend to include members of the Deeside Thistle. Please follow this link for register detail <https://www.car-clinic.co.uk/employee-discount/>
Sandy Wilson

CTT Events 2021

See below a link for a list of events proposed for 2021 Handbook

Can you all please note that we will be compiling a Short Distance BAR in 2021 but we will not be asking the organisers for the district levy of £1 as was proposed and accepted for 2020.

Attachments available for download: [CTT Scotland 2021 Events](#)

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Ride The North

Half price places available for anyone interested in fundraising for #TeamAC.

Aberdeen Cyrenians is a local, independent charity that has been tackling homelessness for over 50 years. We provide valuable support and assistance to individuals and families that are homeless or at risk of losing their home. Tickets can be purchased through the following link: [Ride the North for Aberdeen Cyrenians Tickets, Huntly | Eventbrite](#)

Updating Information

If you've not replied with updated information please let me have the below - **this, even if you think the information I have is correct.**

Due to the current situation with the Covid-19 pandemic it may be a requirement for NHS to contact members. Though the club does have a comprehensive record of club member details this is only guaranteed correct at the time it was submitted to me (sometimes years ago when you may not have had a mobile phone and addresses, and mobile numbers do change).

In order to meet our responsibilities please reply to info@deeside.org with your up-to-date details - this should include other members of your family who are also members:

Name:

Address:

Post Code:

Date of Birth:

Email Address:

Home Phone:

Mobile Phone:

Emergency Contact Name:

Emergency Contact Relationship:

Emergency Contact Phone(s)

Sandy L

Ride Etiquette Document

You are reminded that a paper detailing the etiquette to follow when on club/training runs has been prepared and is [here](#) for your interest. The document is posted on the club's website and links will start to appear on club publications so that you can refer to it. It will also be highlighted to new members.

The Night of Claire anonymous

A ride in the woods in the dark of the moon
Was no challenge or so it was said
So I mounted my Schwinn and I turned on my lights
And away in the evening I sped.

Slicker than owl snot my drive train did run
As I reached the first tulgey glade
Completely at ease I passed under the trees
Breathing deeply and yet unafraid.

A sudden light clicking then came to my ear
And I wondered if it was the bike.
The volume and frequency seemed to increase
And something just didn't seem right.

My crankset? My pedals? Perhaps the rear wheel?
But my spokes were stress relieved.
I'd checked all the torques and examined the forks
No fault could be conceived.

But then I remembered the horrible squirrels
That run in the woods at night.
More cunning than weasels and faster than bats
My blood ran cold with fright.

My mirror was useless, it bounced up and down
I carefully looked to the back.
Not one running there in the LED glare, not one
But the whole freaking pack!

I knew in an instant the danger I faced
For the squirrels of the East are unreal.
Like furry piranha that scamper like rats
They wanted my brand new wheel!

I knew in the morning they'd find my bones
spread out by the side of the trail.
If I couldn't pull off a quick finesse
I had to deliver the mail.

I spun and I sweated and pulled a huge gear
In the face of imminent death.
The grade was intense and my terror immense
I smelt their squirrelly breath!

Just then I remembered that in my valise
Which I'd strapped to the top of my bars
I had peanuts and trail mix and Gatorade
And a couple of candy bars.

I unzipped the bag and flung out the tools
Which only impeded my hand.
An anvil, a tow chain, a hacksaw and such
And a brand new truing stand.

I hated like fury to throw out that stand
But I needed to get to the food.
I whipped out the trail mix and tossed it back
It halted that Hell spawned brood.

I sat at the top of the hill and wheezed
As the squirrels devoured the nuts.
I'll never again take a ride on that trail
No ifs, no maybes, no buts!

25 Years Ago

ROLLER MARATHON

Our Roller Marathon, about to be reinstated after an absence of a few years, has been postponed. The two members with the organising task were just about to put a lot of effort into the event. However, when they went to make a check on the rollers they had disappeared.

This is disastrous. Not only will the elected charity not benefit from funds raised but also it will be more difficult for the Club to meet its promised commitment to members during the coming year. In addition, because the rollers are the property of Aberdeen & District, other clubs in the area will be also deprived of their use.

Apparently during the refurbishment of part of the building where we meet someone had taken the decision to skip all that remained in that particular storeroom.

We don't yet know the full story behind the disappearance but can only assume it was a tragic mistake. An effort is being made to locate a manufacturer of similar sets and ascertain the cost. Then we will be in a position to make some sort of insurance claim.

Zwift and Strava Participants

Many folks are continuing their involvement with cycling on Zwift, Strava and other media platforms. Some of these events are being promoted by your club.

Many of the participants will be non-club members. Given the nudge, they might realise that clubs are able to offer a broadening of their involvement.

If you are a virtual cyclist and are in contact with any of those non-members you should feel free to pass on club details. This is the page: <http://deeside.org/members/> or tell them to drop a note to info@deeside.org

Welfare Officers

Club Welfare Officers are Ian Wilson and Anna Liversidge. They can be contacted by telephone on 07919 280656. The email address to use is welfare@deeside.org

Club Clothing

A sizing facility is available for members who wish to order new club clothing. There is also a small stock of garments available for emergency needs. Contact clubkit@deeside.org. There is also a small stock of clothing with outdated logos at discounted prices.

Club Kit Order

Pactimo kit orders may be collected from Tierney Strachan, 12 Greenbank Place, East Tullos, Aberdeen, AB12 3BT. We are not receiving persons at our reception.

Please ring the bell at our Goods-In door and announce that you are here to collect Deeside Kit with your name. Wait outside the door and your kit will be brought to you.

If the small roller shutter door is closed - please telephone the office number, 01224 295000. If the main gates are closed, we are closed.

Our policy is that non-essential personnel may NOT enter the building – so we have no facility for you to try on. If you are in any doubt about the sizes you have ordered, let me know and possibly we can do a swap or refund.

I can post out to those that want it. Let me know and I can arrange. You can easily buy postage online and send it to me; I'd need to give you weights and dimensions if you want to do this.

Any queries contact clubkit@deeside.org **Jon Strachan**



Britain's National Cyclists' Association

Working for all Cyclists

Newcomers are welcome particularly on the Morning/Slower Full Day runs.

Medium and Faster Full Day runs are for the more experienced

For more information visit our website:

<http://www.ctcgrampian.org.uk>

Chairman	John B	01224 571984
Secretary	Sheila	01224 639012
Runs Co-ordinator	John S	01224 790269
Social Secretary	Heather	01224 699399
Treasurer	John C	
Membership	John T	01224 639012

Right to Ride Representatives

South Aberdeenshire	Vacant	
Central Aberdeenshire	Vacant	
North Aberdeenshire	Rod	01467 623317
Aberdeen City	Jean	01224 315222

Runs Co-ordinators

Try Cycling Rides	Moira D	
Morning Runs	Cindy	01224 310719
Slower Full Day Runs	Heather	01224 699399
Medium Full Day Runs	Sheila	01224 63901
Faster Full Day Runs	John S	01224 790269

Historical Reminiscences

(Part 29)

Mentioned some time ago, in this column, was the fondness some folk had for attempting records on Deeside.

Pete Crofts of Surrey RC may have been the first. He came north in 1971 to attempt the straight-out Road Records Association's 25- and 50-mile records.

George Hunton, his timekeeper, and mentor set him off from Cairnwell and timed him into the Pass of Ballater at under 45 minutes. Approaching Banchory and nearing the 50-mile point George became a bit concerned about the distance.

The 50 miles, according to schedule, ran out on Banchory High Street. Hurriedly George added distance and timed Pete through a new point at Banchory Ternan Church. Both the times recorded were well inside the old records.

This ad hoc arrangement wasn't good enough and when asked to remeasure the course, in utter mortification I reported back that the 25 had extended some hundreds of yards into the Pass of Ballater and that Pete had not gone far enough to complete 50 miles.

Give the RRA due respect, it calculated the time Pete would have passed the 25-mile point and awarded him a nominal 45 minutes for the distance. They could not do anything about the 50.

My name and findings were splashed across the cycling press with implication in most of the reports that I was at fault. For ages I shunned the company of record breakers.

Pete Crofts probably nursed a grievance and had bitter memories about his visit to Deeside. Eventually things quietened and returned to normal. Pete went on other record-breaking rides, solo and on tandem.

25 years on the Deeside Thistle had clubrooms in the North of Scotland Agricultural College on King Street. Here we stored Aberdeen & District Cycling Association's set of 4-man competition rollers.

Unfortunately, a change of tenancy saw NoSCA move premises and the new incumbents cleared out all the cupboard space. The rollers disappeared to a landfill site.

Then one evening, sitting down to get on with Cranks, the phone rang. This would be something else to take up time and delay the lengthy process of finding enough to fill the pages.

An English voice from the past said he'd been staying the weekend with Richard and Margaret Nicholl at Park. They'd told him the tale of the despatched rollers. He knew that a club in his area had recently obtained a Belgian set through Geoff Wyles Cycles (the 1960s pro).

Chuffed to bits that someone outside our area should show concern I asked who he was and where he was phoning

from. Peter Crofts came the reply, from Surrey. After 25 years I've at last been able to make my peace with the guy!

The ancient drove roads out of Deeside still exist. Some are more passable than others. The Causeway Mounth, the Slug, Cairn o'Mount and Cairnwell are tarmacked. Jock's Road, Capel Mounth, Firmounth and Fungle are well-trodden. The others, less well-travelled, include Elsieck Mounth, Builg Mounth and Stock Mount.

Then there's the Cryne's Corse Mounth.

[James Thurber](#) had nothing on us as we looked towards the River Dee from Kirkton of Durris. Fluttering just above the trees could be seen a flag, an English flag, St. George's Cross.

In Kirkton of Durris the house on the corner has the name of the Old Post Office and it was here as a primary school kid I'd often spent a few pennies. It was here I'd first tried to use a phone and failed. It was here I'd watched a shoemaker at work. That shoemaker had soaked his leather soles in the Burn of Sheeoch overnight to make them more pliable. It was here in the 50s I'd stood glued to a window and stared at my first television screen and saw a puppet frog silently play a saxophone.

South from here Alastair and I pedalled. Staying on tarmac we passed the old manse and Balladrum before climbing the steep Slug past Inchloan. At the top of the climb on Cairn mon Earn the tea-shop has been demolished. Burned a couple of years before it could no longer provide the oft-needed bread roll or icicle.

Heading towards Stonehaven we took first right into the trees and navigated round the Hill of Three Stanes. This gives access to the Cowie valley. Here a number of dwelling places exist. Over the years they have been lived in at times. Some are now derelict, others wasted to grass covered heaps of stones.

Hobbs Seat, a place often spoken about as a howff deep in the trees had stood silent by the edge of a clearing. Sinister in the shadows and eerie inside with a lot of debris from crumbling walls and torn up floorings it had been systematically vandalised by visitors.

Then, descending by Tillybreak we crossed the Cowie Water and climbed again on Hill of Trusta. Keeping to the tracks we circled the east side of the hill looking over Clachanshiels and Burn of Dey. Through Hurlie Bog and to the south of Swanley Hill we re-joined tarmac to descend to the Auchenblae Road.

Heading west and topping the drag to Quithel road end, wood smoke could be smelt. A haze of blue filled the horizon. [Walter Mitty](#) like, we knew not what to expect. It was with great astonishment to see, just in front, where Tannachie Croft should have been, a giant horse clad in a flowing white blanket with red crosses around the edges. The rider sat stock still looking towards Glenbervie Braes.

Dressed in medieval armour the horseman watched what looked like thousands of medieval soldiers assembled in

columns ready to march. In front of them, trudging northwards, hundreds of peasant like folk carried huge bundles strapped to their backs.

Behind the forces, many more peasants were busy pulling down tents and extinguishing fires. Much of their stuff was being loaded onto carts with large wooden wheels.

The unbelievable sight filled the fertile valley, from where the hamlet of Hill View Cottages should have been, towards the Delavaird junction and Goosecruives. We began to count and after a while estimated an army of 10s of thousands. A huge number of horsemen had also appeared from behind a wood towards Jacksbank. We counted again and once more made thousands.

Who were they, from where had they come? I edged forward and the giant horse snorted. It looked at me and shook its head. The chainmail around its ears rattled. The rider looked round and down. His hand moved over the hilt of a huge broad sword at his waist.

Suddenly another rider came into view from the Quithel road. He hailed the first and they trotted off towards Jacksbank.

Remounting we headed to the bridge at Cleuchead. This was to be our starting point on the Cryne's Corse Mounth. Gently climbing the brae past the kennels our route curved gently to the corner of the trees on Bogjurgan Hill and along the edge of the field an obvious remnant of the old path remains.

Climbing a gate into the forest the old route lay parallel to the modern forest road. A depression in the wood just yards off the track showed where the old trail had led.

We watched as women and children, bent low under the weight of cooking pots and foodstuffs, struggled along this path. Their rough clothing and weather-beaten features made them look as if they'd stepped out of a history book.

A horseman galloped by shouting something about a good fair at Paldy Kirk and he was looking forward to the wine at Durris Manor. We shrank back into the trees as he charged past in a cloud of dust.

Behind us we could hear horns blowing. Looking back down into the valley a mass of waving flags and a huge spread of colour heralded the march of the soldiers.

In front of us one of the women tripped and dropped her load. She sat down to rest giving Alastair the opportunity to speak to her. A minstrel ran over and started to play tunes on a lyre. With difficulty we eventually understood that this was King Edward's army. She'd been enlisted at Kincardine Castle for the journey to Aberdeen. Most of the others carrying loads were also local people. Those at the rear with the horse and carts had come from Montrose and further south.

The soldiers were English except for a few thousand that King John had been ordered to supply.

Baliol had been defeated at Dunbar a few months earlier and eventually capitulated in a churchyard at Stracathro.

The woman talked about a terrible war at Berwick where 50,000 people had been killed. She'd been told that an attack on Edinburgh Castle had succeeded.

Gob-smacked we realised that this was the start of the Scottish War of Independence, the year 1296.

35,000 soldiers and 5,000 horsemen were heading north across the Cryne's Corse Mounth to Durris Castle before marching on Aberdeen.

Cycling on we passed Lady's Leys, a derelict shell of a building with ghostly images of a kept woman.

Searching for the ford that crossed the Cowie below Stonehouse we guessed where but likely failing headed towards Hill of Mossmaud.

This hill is just about the most well-known around for it has the ITV transmitter on top, its red lights visible across much of the north-east. It can be seen for miles. But not this day. The cloud had lowered and swept in cold wreaths down the hillside enveloping us in icy sleet.

Now following closely, the route of the old drove road, the wind buffeting us, a low-pitched drone filled the air.

We wondered what it had been like on Wednesday 13 July, 1296 when Edward's army had made the crossing. Even if wet, it would have been warmer. Now, in February 1996, the comfort of Auchterturra was longed for.

The drone increased in intensity. The strong wind blowing through the anchor cables of the transmitter mast thrummed them like a giant musical instrument. As we approached the summit these cables could be seen stretching up and disappearing into the cloud.

Joining tarmac we descended rapidly to the Slug, icy sleet stinging cheeks, eyes closed to slits.

Returning to Kirkton of Durris we arrived at the same time as the rider on the giant horse. He looked down on us. His visor pushed back revealed a worried face. A plume fluttered red and white from his helmet. A tabard on top of his armour had a St. George Cross, front and rear. Adjusting the angle of his sword he forded the Sheeoch below the gorge and turned towards the River Dee and motte where stood a wooden castle flying the red cross on a white background. It looked like the Hammer of the Scots, though maybe not welcome, would be getting a bed for the night.

The Tuesday to Forfar castell, a good toune; the Friday after to Fernovell; the Saturdaie to Monorous castell and a good toune, and ther abidde Sundaie, Mondai, and Tuesdaie; and ther cam to hym Kynge John of Scotlande to his mercy, and did render quietly the Realme of Scotlande, as he that had done awys. Also ther cam to merci therle of Marr, therle of Bochan, Syr John Comyn of Badenasshe, and many oder. The Wednesdaie went to Kynge Carden a faoiur manour; the Thursdaie to the mountaigne of Glowberwy; the Wedeninesdaie to a manour in the Dounes amonge the mountaignes; the Saturdaie to the cyte of Dabberden, a faire castell and a good toune upon the see, and tarried ther v daies.
Roughstuffer

For Sale

Items will appear here for three consecutive issues. If the item sells before the final appearance, please contact knockies@aol.com so that the details can be removed.

- 1 Cervelo R3 - New bike build – 56cm – new components (excl. wheels & cassette are used). Delightfully light and nimble machine. £2,200 without, £2,450 with wheels & cassette. Contact Jon Strachan on jas@tierney-strachan.co.uk (1)
- 2 a) Cougar road bike: Red frame. Acciaio 18 MCDV6 H.T steel. 8 spd Dura ace groupset. Fir Quasar wheelset (Ultegra hubs). Tubular. Sis downshifters. Excellent condition. [Photo](#) (1)
b) Battaglin Road bike (silver/red) Steel. Dura Ace groupset. 170cranks 9spd sis shifters. Shamans clincher wheel set. 1 small scratch otherwise excellent condition. [Photo](#) (1)
c) Cannondale TT bike. Red. Campag Chorus chainset. Dura Ace rear mech. Dura Ace downtube shifters. Dura Ace brakes. Syntace TT bars. Time clipless pedals. Look Ergostem (highly adjustable). Zipp 808 wheels. Excellent condition. [Photo](#) (1)
All bikes suit rider 5'7" +/- . Offers to Norman Hatton on norman_hatton@hotmail.com
- 3 16-inch Islabike, red. Excellent condition. Suitable for age 4+. Widely accepted as one of the best quality brands. Ideal for the young cyclist who has mastered the balance bike and wants to pedal! 50% of the sale price will be donated to charity. Cost £350. Sale price: £200:00. Contact Malcolm Wilson, malcywilson@me.com 07970 227548 (1)
- 4 Whyte T-129 RS - 2017 awesome trail bike in mint condition. Spec: Fork: FOX 34 Float Performance 29 110x15, Rear shock: FOX Float DPS Performance, Brakes: Shimano XT M8000, Drivetrain: Shimano XT M8000, Seatpost: RockShox Reverb Stealth (170 mm), Stem: Whyte Gravity Stem 40 mm, Handlebar: Whyte Custom 760 mm x 15 mm rise, Wheels: RaceFace ARC-27 with Hope PRO4 Rear Hub, Weight: 13.8 kg. Pictures and details on request. £1250. Contact Glenn Brown on glennrbrwn@gmail.com (3)

Wanted

- 1 A couple of pairs of a V brake callipers that are laid round doing nothing. Just trying to get a friend's bike back on the road. Please contact me on richard4750@hotmail.co.uk (3)

Found

- 1 I found a pair of ladies black and yellow gloves at the Glassel junction some time ago. They can be collected here at MPH, Birchmoss **Bert**



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CORONAVIRUS

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Ian Grant

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This small area has been reserved to persuade each member who has read this far, to invite anyone showing an interest in cycling to apply for membership of Britain's biggest cycling club

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