

Issue 564

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Cranks

Volume 47

The magazine of
**Deeside Thistle Cycling
Club**
Sponsored by:

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Current Membership 578 (589)
SCU Membership 293 (331)

Editorial:

Steve Walton is very keen to see our competition back up and running. He's not hanging about and has prepared our 2021 Evening League calendar.

Starting on the last Tuesday of April there are 15 weeks available for the time-trials.

Whether it can start on that date will be dependent on the relaxation of restrictions currently in place.

There is hope. The tight rein holding us all in check from the start of this year has started to loosen. Non-contact sports are permitted from Friday 12 March but with only 20 participants. That probably rules out an immediate start to cycle racing but with guidance reviews regularly taking place I can see our events being given clearance in a matter of weeks.

However, even if events are permitted how will the public perceive our activities? Care must be taken how we conduct ourselves.

Steve has created a detailed list of procedures to be followed which should ensure little reason for complaint once we are allowed back on the road.

This includes avoiding the use of halls as HQs and updating the PPE used by volunteers. Personal protection will also include riders being issued with a one-off number and timekeepers not sharing timepieces.

PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

"Life is a shipwreck, but we must not forget to sing in the lifeboats" — Voltaire

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

On 09 March, the Scottish Government announced various easing of restrictions. How they will affect our sport and activity will be determined by SportScotland and Scottish Cycling. Their pontifications are wated on.

It looks like non-contact sporting competitions may take place from Friday 12 March – but with no more than 15 participants. If only that meant racing could restart. This is unlikely for the only type of competition which easily falls into this category is time-trialling and with a limit of 15 riders, few clubs will see it worth-while to begin promoting. Further easing is necessary.

We don't know how the easing will impact on clubruns. If the 15-rider limit is also imposed on this activity there may be avenues to reinstate these – following the official guidance.

The up to date COVID-19 Guidance is available here: <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/scotland/article/20200313-Scottish-Cycling-Coronavirus-COVID19-Guidance-0>

Please take care to follow the rules, to not offend.

While we remain under Tier 4 restrictions no Group Cycling Activities will take. 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, overall, 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*

Sports Motivation and Attitudes to Cheating in Zwift

I am a keen cyclist currently doing a psychology degree with The Open University. As part of my final year, I am conducting a survey on the motivations of cyclists and the link to their attitudes towards cheating in the context of Zwift racing.

The survey is short - it should only take 8 minutes to complete, it is completely anonymous - not even the IP address is recorded, it is phone and tablet friendly.

Please note that it is only open to over-18s for ethical reasons. The link to complete the survey is: [Online Survey Software | Qualtrics Survey Solutions](#).

Any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on james_f_robertson@yahoo.com *James Robertson*

Zoom Sessions

Thanks to all those who sent in suggestions.

We now have several potential speakers for future sessions. These include Alfie George / Brian Smith / Dave Brailsford / Alan Campbell / Danny MacAskill / Mark Beaumont / Graeme Obree.

Covering a wide range of disciplines, we can look forward to some interesting evenings.

Club Development Co-ordinator

We are delighted to welcome Julie Erskine as the Club Development Co-ordinator for Grampian.

Most of you will know Julie as a local racer. She previously worked for the sportsotland Institute of Sport as an Exercise Physiologist. She was then fortunate to take a career break to follow her dreams in Road Cycling.

After retiring from competitive cycling, she decided to have a change of direction and began working as a Project Activator in a partnership programme between Sport Aberdeen and the charity Action for Children, where she supports vulnerable families in the city to be more active.

She is now very excited to be involved in cycling again and is delighted to be joining the team at Scottish Cycling as a Club Development Coordinator for the Grampian region

Colin Allanach

Webinar Survey

Your club has featured several well-supported Webinars in the last few months, and we are wondering how well they have gone. Below is a link to a very short survey which we hope you will participate in. It will only take minutes to complete.

[Deeside Webinar Survey Link](#)

Peter Smart

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.

Activities on Bennachie

I am getting in touch from the Bailies of Bennachie as we have identified you as being part of a group who regularly visit the hill.

We are starting the process of more integrated visitor management on Bennachie seeking to understand different needs, opportunities, and constraints. The first stage is really a scoping exercise to gather information and set things up effectively. This phase has several parts: We are conducting an audit of paths and usage on the hill, consulting with user groups and looking at how similar sites are managed. We hope to identify the situation in terms of visitor use of Bennachie and make a start in finding any potential problems/conflicts arising and looking towards sustainable visitor management for the future.

The Bailies have been awarded a grant from NatureScot for this stage of the project and have engaged local consultant Chris York from 'Walking-the-Talk' to lead it. The work needs to be completed by 31 March 2021, which makes things quite challenging.

We are very keen to engage with people and organisations that regularly use the hill during this project. This last year with the COVID restrictions has been different for many in the activities they have been able to carry out but the sort of things we would like to know are:

- In a typical year how often do you organise visits and events on Bennachie?
- What are the reasons you come to the hill range?
- Have you any suggestions on how this experience could be improved?
- Do you have any areas of concern about how people currently use Bennachie and any potential conflict between different activities?
- Do you have any suggestions about how these issues could be addressed?

Please let us know anything else you think would be helpful. We are planning a meeting of user groups to outline the ideas around integrated visitor management and discuss these issues on **Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 24th March at 7.30** (aiming to finish by 9pm at the latest).

Would you or someone from your organisation be able to take part? If so, please let us know their email address and we will send them an invitation. For obvious reason of managing a virtual meeting, we need to keep numbers relatively low so would appreciate if only one person represents each group. There will be further opportunities for more people to be involved, but this is an important first step in the process.

Fiona Cormack

outreach@bailiesofbennachie.co.uk

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](#)

Synopsis of Meeting 08/03/2021

A Finance and Management Committee meeting took place on-line, on Monday 08 March 2021. In attendance were Andrew Harrington, Sandy Lindsay, David Eastwood, Colin Esslemont, Sam Long, Laura Sarkis, Peter Smart, Neil Stables, Jon Strachan, Mark Walker, David Walton, and Steve Walton.

Agenda

Apologies – Anna Liversidge

1 Minutes of Previous Meeting – Accepted as correct record

2 Business Arising from Minute

- a) **Annual Trophies** – Return of trophies on hold
- b) **Events Calendar 2021** – Aberdeen Exhibition Centre is to be contacted re the use of its carpark as a possible race circuit. Grampian Transport Museum also to be contacted
- c) **Social Media Person** - Request to fill this position failed to get a response

3 New Business

- a) **Youth Coaching** - Revised contact details: Sam Long, Lead Coach for Youth & Junior: youthandjunior@deeside.org. Sarah Rowe will be contactable as youthcoach@deeside.org. Guidance regarding a return to Coaching is awaited. Anticipated date for Face-to-Face sessions to resume is provisionally scheduled for after Easter Holidays
New fees have been introduced to Youth and Junior, costing between £15-40pm. Members have been requested to confirm continued membership by 15.03.21
Volunteer for Y&J rider representative to F&M to be called for, via Spond
- b) **MTB Update** – Colin Esslemont and Neil Stables attended the SXC AGM. Return to competition may still be some way away because of the number of competitors. Efforts to reformat fields to accommodate the numbers may be made. A request to organise an XC event at Kirkhill; was turned down but an alternative venue at Pittodrie House Hotel is being looked at. There is also a possibility of an MTB event in Glentanar
- c) **Evening League** – Some sort of league in 2021 is proposed with up to 15 events. This will depend on restrictions being eased. There will be a break mid-season. There are several new courses which could reduce the number of marshals. HQ and toilets are a problem but using a gazebo for administration was suggested. SC Guidance says that over 18s and under 18s should not compete in the same event. Updated guidance is waited on. Marshal kit/signs/laptops/watches will need to be handled

with care and disinfected between uses. It was agreed to purchase more watches and the new recommended Hi-Viz outfits

- d) **Potential Speakers** - Several names were put forward: Alfie George / Brian Smith / Dave Brailsford / Alan Campbell / Danny MacAskill / Mark Beaumont / Graeme Obree
- e) **Casual Wear** – It was agreed that hoodies from suppliers other than Pactimo should be looked at. The Pactimo shop window for race wear is to open soon

4 Next Meeting – 12 April 2021 at 7.00pm

Club Officials

We're in a bit of a quandary. Your Finance and Management Committee (that's the group of members who work to keep your club running) are not up to strength.

To ensure all our Championships are properly calculated we need a Championship Secretary. This person looks after the race results during the year and works out who wins what.

Then there's our Events Secretary. This position works hand in glove with the Championship secretary and can even be the same person though two folk helps spread the load. This official ensures that all the club promotions follow correct procedures and assists in sourcing race personnel and equipment.

Finally, there's our Social Media Person. We're looking at this position taking over the Press Secretary duties. He or she will be expected to have regular input to the various social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, etc) as well as releasing notes to the press.

If you are interested, why not drop a note to info@deeside.org to let us know.

Virtual Cycle Event - Tour De Forth

It's free to register online for the Tour de Forth 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=IwAR37rgijhI7E37qYVvu0yKGOAdgQwW2Rnb8O9jkg9LnA2TFeafcdsfQ3ViiY>

We are a local charity which supports children who are sick, disabled or disadvantaged within Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

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*

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

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](#)

Youth Free Membership

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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.** There are still a few members who haven't updated and it would be good to get 100%.

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**).

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.

Div Y' Min'? (Lottie Sinclair)

Div y' min' on Cocky Hunter's
'n' his junk on Castle Hill?
Div y' min' on Soapy Ogston's,
Reid & Pearsons, Watt & Milne?
Div y' min' on cha'k an' inkwells,
Slate pincils at th' school?
Div y' min' on Copie Divis,
'n' checks ties up wi' wool?
Div y' min' on Bookie's Runners,
Crown & Anchor at the Links?
Black-leeded grates an' ovens,
Brass taps in cast iron sinks?
Div y' min' on wash-hoose bilers,
An' mungles sair tae ca'?
An' squares o' P&J hung wi' string
On a reed-ochered lavvy wa'?
The watch an' chain that Gran-dad wore
'n' Grannie's crooshied shawl?
Div y' min' on a' these things?
By God.....yer getting' aul'!
Div y' min' on Lucky Tatties,
Fin y' whites got back y'r maik?
Div y' min' on Fairy Cycles,
Solid tires 'n' just one brake?
Div y' min' on Wordie's horses,
'n' message loons on bikes?
'n' Bantam Sodgers on parade -
W'd never seen the likes!
Div y' min' on boots wi' tacketts,
Itchin' combs an' han' me doons?
Fin naebody at a' had trouble -
Tellin' th' quines fae th' loons?
Div y' min' on gas-lit lamp-posts,
'n' the leery wi' his licht?
Like moths aroon a cun'le -
Kids a' githered there at nicht!
Div y' min' fin chunties 'neath the bed
Saved journeys in the caul'?
If ye admit t' minin' 'at,
Like me.....yer getting' aul'!
Div y' min' fin Woolies were busy shops,
On' a Seterday aifterneen?
'n' ye couldna walk on the pavement,
Fae Loch Street tae th' Queen?
Div y' min' on th' games we played,
Wi' twa three yards o' rope?
'n' tellin' y'r ma ye'd seen Jesus -
On a screen - at Band o' Hope?

Div y' min' on collar'd jerseys,
Worn wi' a strippet tie?
'n' jam jars fu' o' tadpoles,
That ye'd gaiter'd fae Cairncry?

Div y' min' fan a pal wis a loon wi' an aipple
That aye gave you the core?
Div y' min' on the smell o' coffee,
Passin' Andrew Collie's door?

Div y' min' on the things we used tae eat,
Like skirlie, skink an' spaul?
Will the youngster gaun about the day,
Min on junk food when THEY'RE aul'?

25 Years Ago

SCOTS IN GOLD MEDAL VICTORY

The Paris-Brest-Paris results showed that the Scottish contingent which included our own Ian Curphey and Adri Elgersma did rather well. Indeed, so well that they were awarded the Medaille d'or de la Ville de Paris for the largest group to have a 100% finish rate.

David Briggs, for Audax Ecosse, was presented with the medal well after the event and he has been left in an embarrassing situation. He thought of keeping quiet and retaining it for himself. The bother of passing it round everyone would have led to all sorts of complications. But give the guy credit. He's going to take it along to the first two Audax events of 1996 and put it on display.

Afterwards he suggests that it could become an annual award for Audax riders in Scotland.

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 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 30)

The Stock Mount heads over the hills from Knockburn. It starts from Moss-side, near Strachan and ends at West Bogton near Dellavaird.

Also known as 'The Foggy Road' among locals in Durris, fog being the Scots word for moss, it is not a difficult route though some of the paths are narrow and run close to fences. It made for an interesting journey on a mountain buke tandem, careering through with a concerned stoker!

Used mainly as a drove road by drovers, this to avoid the toll at the Bridge of Dye on the better-known Cairn a' Mounth.

ARB Haldane's The Drove Roads of Scotland, tells us that the Stock Mount was an important route to St Palladius' Fair (Paldy Fair) on Herscha Hill north of Auchenblae, by Fordoun. A tryst of some importance in 1795, it was said that up to 3000 cattle were sold at this Fordoun cattle fair each July, and that most of them had come from the north.

Roy Cromack, the first man to beat 500 miles for the whole day time-trial, rode admirably well at the other end of the scale.

Shortly after his epic ride of 507 miles, in July 1969 I met him in Forres. Roy, a member of Clifton CC, on holiday, had entered a North 25TT.

I can still visualise him, tall, lean, muscular, his hair cropped close. It was the first time I'd seen a stirrup pump being used. Roy, conserving as much energy as possible for the event ahead, didn't use his arms to inflate his tyres. Instead, he held onto the pump handles and bending his knees performed what looked like shoulder presses in the weights gym.

Riding from the green wooden house with white framed windows of [Dostoevsky](#) a soldier joined our group. He explained, in detail, how he was so fit. His training regime placed him head and shoulders above the ordinary man and well in advance of all the others riding with us.

He demonstrated his riding skills by doing a speedway turn. His left foot went out and slid along the sand. Jamming on his back brake he shifted his weight forward and the rear of the bike swung out before slithering to a halt.

Gasping in astonishment I indicated how amazed we all were. He grinned, squared his shoulders, and raised his chin as we rode on.

In the heat of the day the soldier sat up and rode no hands, stripping off his t-shirt. This he draped over the handlebars. Promptly, the shirt dropped into his front wheel instantly stopping it.

The rest of the bike kept moving and, to everyone's delight, he summersaulted over the handlebars.

Our Politsiya escort soon hemmed us in. Operating from the ubiquitous Lada, not only did they control our movements, but that of other road users.

Drivers of heavily laden articulated lorries, as soon as the light baton appeared at the passenger window, would veer their twenty tonnes of produce off the road. More than once these Knights of the Road lay broken in the drainage ditch.

Approaching Moscow and starting to thread our way over the Ring Roads our police companions blocked junctions and allowed us free travel through red traffic lights.

A circuit of the Boulevard let us enter Red Square from the north. Sweeping onto the cobbled plaza round the ornamental minarets of St Basil's Cathedral we pedalled into a wedding party.

The bride and groom, far from being offended, ensured our welcome wasn't spoiled by joining in our celebrations.

That evening, incongruously, we ate at a Macdonalds. The burgers, chips and sides looked and tasted the same as Macdonalds anywhere.

Our bikes, packed in cardboard boxes, sat in the hotel foyer. Time to head home. Approaching the taxi rank on the corner of the street we asked if a larger vehicle could be available to take us, our bikes and luggage to Moscow's Domodedovo Airport.

One driver said that a vehicle would soon arrive. We were told to return at 2.00pm and ask for Boris.

Everything in place, we spent our remaining few hours sightseeing. We'd already been through the Kremlin with its amazing collection of horse drawn coaches; the KGB HQ, now a giant shopping centre, had also been visited. We'd toured along the Moskva River.

Now we watched the street vendors on the steps leading down to the Metro. The Metro stations are ornately decorated, glorifying the technological progress of the Soviet Union. They are famous for extravagant and unique interior designs and are called the 'Palace of the People'.

Those street vendors were selling domestic pets. Each held a cat, a small dog, rabbits, even caged birds. As soon as I lifted my camera to take a photograph, they all, as one, turned their backs on me.

We'd saw a street salesman on Red Square being lifted by the Politsiya. Our enquiries solicited the information that he'd failed to pay protection money of a few hundred roubles.

Returning to our bikes we lugged them to the taxi rank. *"We're looking for Boris."* The taxi drivers turned with

blank stares. *"Chto vy skazali?"* came the reply asking us what we'd said. Articulating carefully in the hope someone spoke English, we repeated, *"We're looking for Boris."* One driver stood up from his seat on a low wall, stubbing his cigarette out as he did so. *"Boris?"* he said, *"Boris? Everyone called Boris,"* a big grin breaking across his face.

In the 1960s Highlands and Islands found enough money to upgrade the roads on Skye and other islands in the Inner and Outer Hebrides.

The old roads, narrow and twisting were a joy to cycle on, but the bulldozers moved in. Dynamite laid and soon the hillsides had been blasted apart to form new routes.

On Skye, on the climb from Loch Sligachan, the demolition experts had done their job and red granite glazed the edge of the road. On one of these polished surfaces a graffiti expert had spray painted in white, two-foot-high letters, *Jesus Saves*.

Underneath in black spray paint some clever graffiti wag had added in foot high letters, *Green Shield Stamps*.

The Buddhist pilgrim prostrated himself once more. He carried a long staff and had a grey plaid wrapped round his body. Silly, green, plastic, open-toed sandals did little to protect his feet.

Lying prone for a few seconds he levered himself to his feet with the staff. His arms were bare and bruised, blood oozed from a bashed toe.

Only yards further on he repeated the exercise. How far had he travelled in this fashion? Where was he going?

Emerging from behind a rock I adjusted the waist tie of my shorts and stepped round the prone form. Assuming on a trek to the shrines at Muktinath I marvelled at his perseverance.

My head boomed with a hangover like pain. The dehydration from constant visits to hidden spots wasn't the best way to spend a Sunday. Brown legs and arms protruded from my clothing and my face, too, was browned but peeling. Every hair had a pollen like coating of dust. My shoes were almost white with the same dust and my bike nearly blended into the grey terrain.

Alastair sat on another rock, waiting patiently. His limbs were equally bronzed. He was equally cloaked in grey. A bottle of water swung from his right hand. The liquid, bitter, tasting of iodine, was nearly undrinkable. His chin rested in the palm of his left hand, elbow on his knee and his bike lay on the ground. The front wheel turned slowly in the cold wind.

I crossed the track to take the water bottle and drank a little.

Chattra said there might be a tea-house in half an hour. Or maybe not. He wasn't sure for this featureless countryside was unfamiliar to him.

Getting back on our bikes we continued the slow journey northwards. Looking across the plain the route appeared flat but lurching rut to rut we wondered why on earth we'd started this foul slog.

Though the wind blew cold a burning sun blazed from the clear blue sky. In the distance a small peak poked above the horizon. Its white feathered upper slopes indicated great height. It was still at least two days away.

There's a hill crossing from Charr in Glen Dye to near Fettercairn. It goes over the saddle between Whitelaws and Houndhillock; it has been there for ever and takes you into the ancient deer park west of Clatterin' Brig Restaurant at the foot of the Cairn.

I've been over there umpteen times, the earliest maybe as long ago as 1966. The path goes by Loch Muchrae. A puddle insignificant enough not to be named on the OS 1:50000 maps it is identified on the 1:25000. Situated at the end of the narrow Glen Muchrae things will have changed little in thousands of years.

Folk may have lived in that area. Overall, population was sparse, and it is unlikely that whoever did live there had to suffer a great deal of intimidation or oppression. They would have lived peacefully.

By Loch Muchrae are several hut circles dated to seven hundred years BC, proof enough of habitation. They would have eked out an existence.

On one of my visits to the area I supervised a Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expedition. A fellow supervisor had walked in from the Cairn to the saddle. By chance he kicked at some peat and there at his feet was a stone arrowhead. Absolutely perfect it looked as if it had been fashioned only days before from a flake of flint.

Think of those families heading up the hillside with their bows and arrows in search of game that could be dried and kept as food for the winter months that lay ahead. Think of the wounded deer stampeding away and dying unseen, the tip lost forever in the heather. That is until now.

I'm as jealous as hell that I wasn't the one to touch that bit of history for the first time in nearly three millennia.

On a cycling holiday in the 1970s I pondered on how I could improve my personal for 25 miles.

John Davidson, a Fife rider, and I, had a regular head-to-head at that time. He'd come out on top as often as I did. Both of us searched for that elusive sub 60 minutes (which was a bit more difficult to come by in those days).

On the Monday, after leaving a Youth Hostel on the west coast, I bought a paper to check the results. John had returned a 57 on the Saturday and repeated the performance on the Sunday. Devastated? Of course, I was. That special day had passed me by.

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. 170 cranks 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. 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, malcylwilson@me.com 07970 227548 (1)
- 4 Whyte T-129 RS - 2017 awesome trail bike. Mint condition. 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 (2)

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)

Free

I have several well used bikes that I wish to dispose. Free to anyone who collects them from our house in Aboyne. Bikes include Specialized Roubaix road bike, and a quality youth road bike with little mileage, youth mountain bike plus others. Please contact John Bergeland on johnbergeland@yahoo.com



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 Saturday 9 am - 5.30pm
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**Workshops, Musical Theatre,
 Performance Class, Exam classes**

**Rhona Mitchell, BA (Hons), Dip S&D,
 TQSE, LGSM, LLAM (Hons), MSTSD.**

CORONAVIRUS

Stay Safe Stay Home

**Follow the rule on
 social distancing**

Wash your hands often

**Do your bit to
 keep it at bay**

**Have you paid your
 Club Fees? Go here:**

<http://deeside.org/join>

Ian Grant

- Gardening: - Grass Cutting
- General Tidying - Rotovation
- Pressure washing - Tree Surgery,
- Welding (electric) and small repairs

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

Membership Application

Name:

Address:

.....

Phone Number:.....

Email:

Date of Birth:

Please complete and return to Sandy Lindsay,
 Rowan Cottage, Inveramsay, Inverurie, AB51 5DQ
 Telephone 01467 681330 or email:
knockies@aol.com

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