

Fife Wheels

CTC Fife and Kinross Newsletter. Summer 2013. Issue 76



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- Ladies Weekend



What a great Summer it's been.

With a packed CTC Fife & Kinross calendar there's been a lot going on in 2013. After the results of the web survey (and also what we've been hearing by word of mouth at the Saturday rendezvous meets) there has been a real effort made to tick the boxes in everyone's 'wishlists'.

To date this year we've had monthly Sunday group led runs, a Dusk to Dawn ride, the annual 5 Ferries... held on a weekend for the first time (as requested), Ladies Weekends, the occasional further flung Saturday meet to tie in with the camping weekends... all that and there is still the fast approaching Club week at Fochabers to come in September. We've even had a trip to the Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome (courtesy of our friends in Talking Tandems), Phew, what a year! By squeezing in the odd tour and trip between all of the above it must really be adding up the cumulative miles cycled this year by CTC Fife & Kinross members.

Get well soon.

Unfortunately due to some 'coming together' of cars and bikes we have a few "Get Well Soons" to dish out in this edition..

Hamish Dempsey, who was on a solo, was involved in one incident, Nan and George Shepherd on their tandem trike in another.

Good to see you all out at the runs despite your injuries.

AGM notice.

Yes it's that time of year again... already!

This year the AGM will be on a Friday evening and will be held at 7:00 p.m. on the 8th November in Falkland Village Hall.

As ever, don't be afraid of coming along to the AGM... no-one is going to have their arms twisted to join the Committee against their will... however if you do wish to be proposed at the AGM to the Committee please see the form on page 9 (or ask a Committee member for one at the rendezvous meets)

There will be a short slideshow with tea, coffee, biscuits and time for a blether afterwards.

Thank you from the Editor

Thank you once again to all of the contributors for sending their articles and photos of tours, events and meets, without which there would be no newsletter.

The cover photo is from the Pitlochry Ladies Weekend. Kaye tells me it was a lucky random shot taken over her shoulder whilst cycling... good skills! More photos from the Ladies Weekend later in the newsletter.

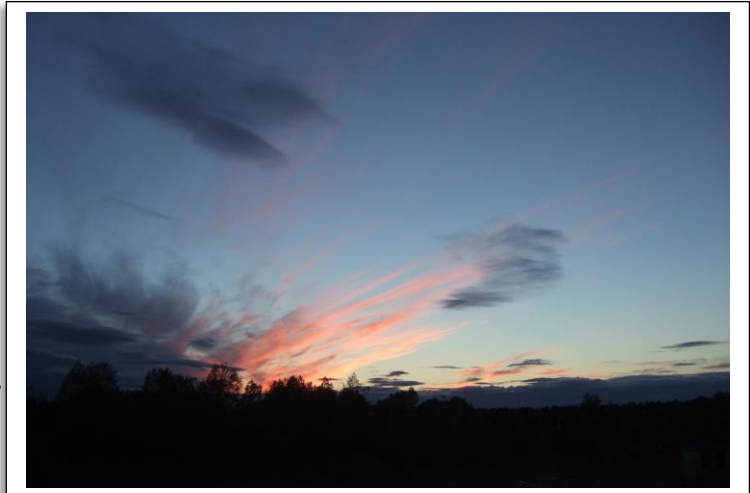
Out into the cool darkening air
We pedal.
Lonely at first, then joining tandems
We together meet, and together ride
To Falkland Town where waits the group,
And side by side
Head into Dusk, the sun going down.

As darkness sets, bright bands on clothes
Reflect the light.
Spots on road and red glowing tails
Are like fireflies dancing on forest roads
And from the skies as if to catch,
Swoops darkness, pitched too high to hear,
The bats, flying near.

A quiet stop in sleepy village
Brings out the night hunter,
Careful at first.
Padding its way through legs and wheels
Purring softly now, hunting no more
As primal darkness turns to pet,
Then encounter over, as if never met.

Along the Tay comes a glowing sense of light,
The moon, shimmering behind thinning clouds,
Shines down on our final bite to eat,
And on we go, all around now growing ever silent,
Except for chains slowly turning
And quiet talk of bed
And when next we'll meet.

To the end, though still in darkness,
We pedal.
Lonely again, as all paths diverge
We slip apart into our own, hidden realms.
But stop! We alone see the Dawn,
And hear, as the world itself awakes,
The growing chorus of early birds' song.



Pitlochry Youth Hostel was the destination for this year. Kaye, Linda G, Nan, Linda B, Jessie and Lorraine B all met up in Perth,..cars all suitably parked around Perth.

Light rain didn't last too long as we headed north out of Perth...cycle route up to Luncarty...rain jackets soon tucked away again...sun joined in the party.

Quiet roads to Bankfoot...Dunkeld café stop for tea and cakes...Some of us had carrot cake!...North bound cycle route to Ballinluig then over the lumps by Logierait (almost rhymes with carrot cake) to Pitlochry...that last grunt uphill to the hostel... The view from the top was worth it though...3 to chip shop and 3 to co-op for provisions...all set for the weekend.

Sunday...Sunshine and no panniers... Killiecrankie then House of Bruar for a tea stop. Someone had carrot cake! Nan decided she would return to Pitlochry from here and would meet us all later. She insisted we all continue our route over by Trinafour...Lumpy...very lumpy...but all enjoyed the long freewheel into Tummel Bridge... The south side of Loch Tummel is lumpy too but all agreed heading east is the way to go...All together again in Pitlochry....time for another café stop....more carrot cake!

Monday was even hotter as we loaded up and headed home....basically back the way we came. Stopped at Dunfallandy Stone...walked up steep track off the road.... worth dodging the sheep poo for...pedalling resumed, next stop Ballinluig.

Lots more carrot cake here!! Voted best of the weekend, cyclists take note!!

Planned to stop at pub in Bankfoot...Closed. Local shop sold teas so headed to park with sandwiches. Once back in Perth we planned to stop for cuppa at Bell Centre cafe...Closed...Farewells said...all headed for cars...another great weekend in great company.....all home to think where we'll go next year.



Most sensible people attempt the "Five Ferries" tour on a week day when there are options should anything unexpected crop up. But oh no, not 3 mad cyclists from Dysart!

Sunday 14th July 2013 and the 3am alarm was the first killer. We had to be on our way by 4am for the 2 hour drive to Ardrossan. The weather forecast was excellent, so despite it being the middle of the night, we were dressed in shorts and a couple of light layers on top. I packed my windcheater, thinking it might be required on deck and then threw in a slightly heavier jacket at the last minute. Just as well I did, because it was pretty cold as we unshackled our bikes.

As George and I set off, we met Dougie who had just parked his car. Rather than hang about in the cold, we said a quick hello and got under way again. We knew Dougie would catch us up, and he did, 10 miles up the road.

The run between Ardrossan and Wemyss Bay is reasonably picturesque (if you ignore the bit around Hunterston) and also predominantly flat (if you ignore the minor bump in Largs), but I was so glad we were there on a Sunday at stupid o'clock. I can imagine it would be a tad precarious at peak times.

After 18 miles we arrived at Wemyss Bay - far too early. The place was like a ghost town. With no open toilets nor ticket office and no indication of when they might open we just had to amuse ourselves.

I read some of the literature about the Wemyss Bay station and the early vessels that operated from the pier. Quite interesting really. For instance, did you know that Caledonian Macbrayne is the amalgamation of two steamer companies: the Caledonian Steam Packet Company and David Macbrayne's?

Several young-looking jackdaws seemed to have made the Victorian concourse their home and were strutting and squawking about very happily. Surprisingly, these were about the only "wildlife" of any note all day.

A few more cyclists turned up, from the Fullarton Wheelers Cycling Club, not the Fair Weather Cycling Club as Dougie had surmised when we first saw the FWCC logo. They were soon followed by the CalMac ticket office lady. With Hopscotch tickets 4 and 5 in hand we ventured out into the fresh morning breeze (*we discovered that the 'FW' cyclists were about to embark on their own 3 Ferry ride via Dunoon, ed*)



Deserted Wemyss Bay terminal at "stupid o'clock"



Ferry 1 of 5

The first ferry left bang on time. The scones, bacon rolls and hot beverages on board were much appreciated. As were the toilet facilities.

Now, the evening before, as I was double checking all the ferry times (we do trust you Dougie, honest) I happened to mention to George that since the stretch between Rothesay and Rhubadoch was quite flat and only 8 ½ miles there was a possibility that we could catch the earlier ferry. Well, what do you know, we made it with about 3 minutes to spare. This set the tone for the remainder of the tour.

By the time we reached the other side (Colintraive) we were 30 minutes ahead of schedule and the sun had come out. The run along the old road was gorgeous and eminently preferable to the new road which was just a massive climb stretching off into the distance. There would be plenty of time for killer hills later. Only 30 minutes later, to be precise.

Luckily I hadn't looked at the route in too much detail prior to that day, certainly not on a contour map at any rate. So I was unaware that there was a 3-mile slog in front of me. George kept shouting out gradients from his Garmin every few minutes - very reassuring. Fortunately, physics dictates that with every climb there comes a descent (although it doesn't always feel like it) and the one into Tighnabruaich was worth it.

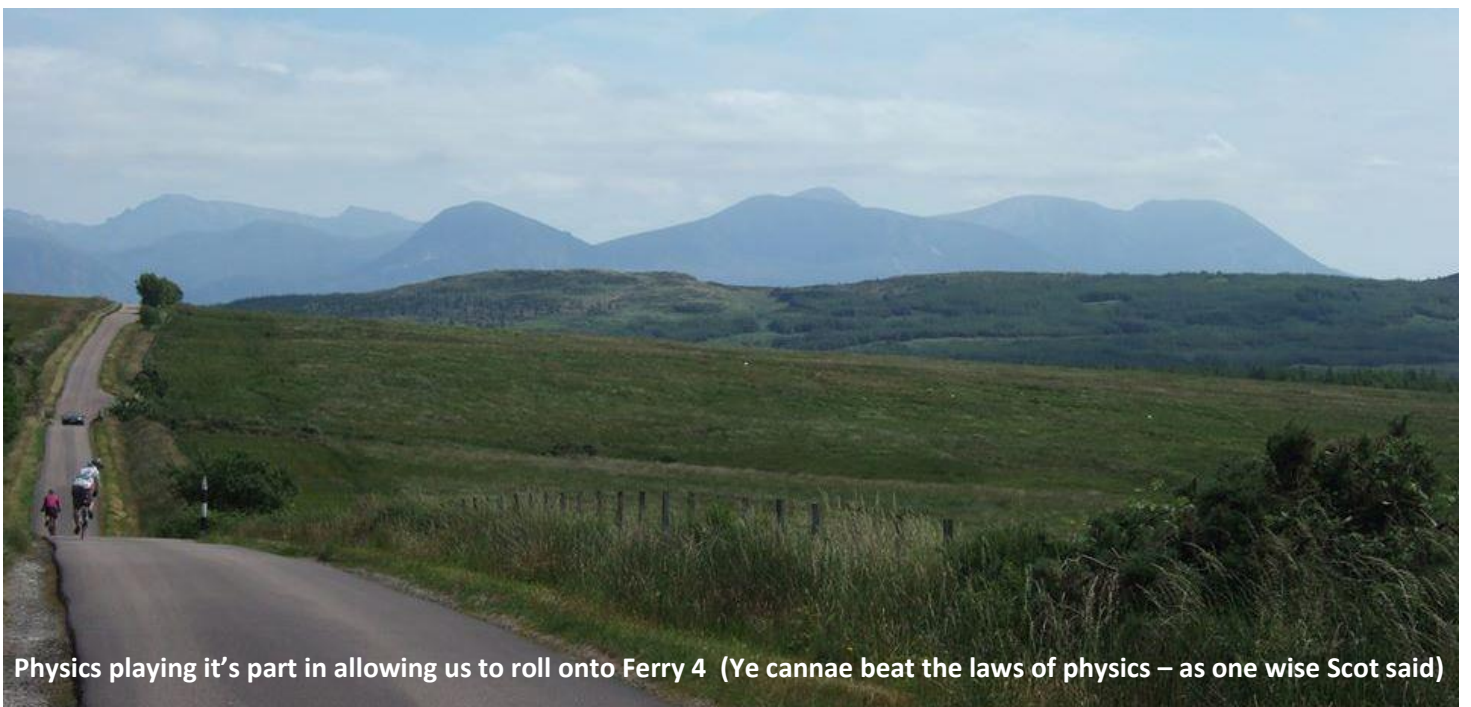


Looking over the Kyles of Bute...
From (almost) the top of the 3 mile slog!

We were so far ahead of time when we arrived in the town that we decided to treat ourselves to a leisurely brunch. It didn't occur to us to check alternative ferry times from Portavadie. The second significant lump of the day came next, shorter but definitely sharper than the previous one. As we drew into the port we could see that a ferry had just left. We were kicking ourselves that if we'd just been five minutes earlier ... Not to worry, this was not the one we'd planned to catch and it meant that the first pint of the day was possible.

I was so glad I'd packed the heavier jacket, as the next crossing was particularly cold. Where was the sunshine and soaring temperature we'd been promised? Turns out, they were 5 miles out of Tarbert. Significant lump number three came next. And it was hot hot hot. "15%" shouted George courtesy of Garmin. "Only 15%" I thought to myself.

Physics played its part again and the run down to Cloanaig was particularly rapid. I clocked my fastest speed ever. I won't say what it was because it's embarrassingly slow in comparison to most people. As we rounded the last bend there were several cars coming towards us all of a sudden. "Ferry" we all shouted in unison and put on a spurt for the final mile. We casually rolled onto the boat just behind some other cyclists, looking like we'd deliberately timed it that way.



Physics playing it's part in allowing us to roll onto Ferry 4 (Ye cannae beat the laws of physics – as one wise Scot said)

We were now an hour ahead of schedule. The sun was out in full force making the crossing to Lochranza particularly pleasant. We checked the ferry times for the final leg.

There was no way we could catch the earlier ferry. We'd have to average 15½ mph and there was the small matter of the Boguillie in the way.

Significant lump number 4: The Boguillie. Not a steep hill, but the baking sun and tired legs made it hurt. All the way up, Dougie kept joking that it might be possible to catch the 16:40 ferry after all. "Go Away" was my reply (I might be paraphrasing here) as I eeked out every bit of effort I could muster. The sense of achievement and relief at the summit was immense. It was all downhill from here on – but in a good way.

The final 8 miles hugged the Arran coast and it was pretty much flat. We didn't get the help from the tail wind that I'd expected, but that didn't matter. I was dreaming of chips at the pier in Brodick and possibly a pint in one of the local hostelries. We'd have plenty of time to kill before the 5th and final ferry. The boys obviously had other ideas. "Look, the only way we'll make the earlier ferry is if it's running late" I stupidly said. Red rag to a bull.

We rounded the corner into Brodick Bay. The ferry was still at the pier. It was running late. Challenge accepted.

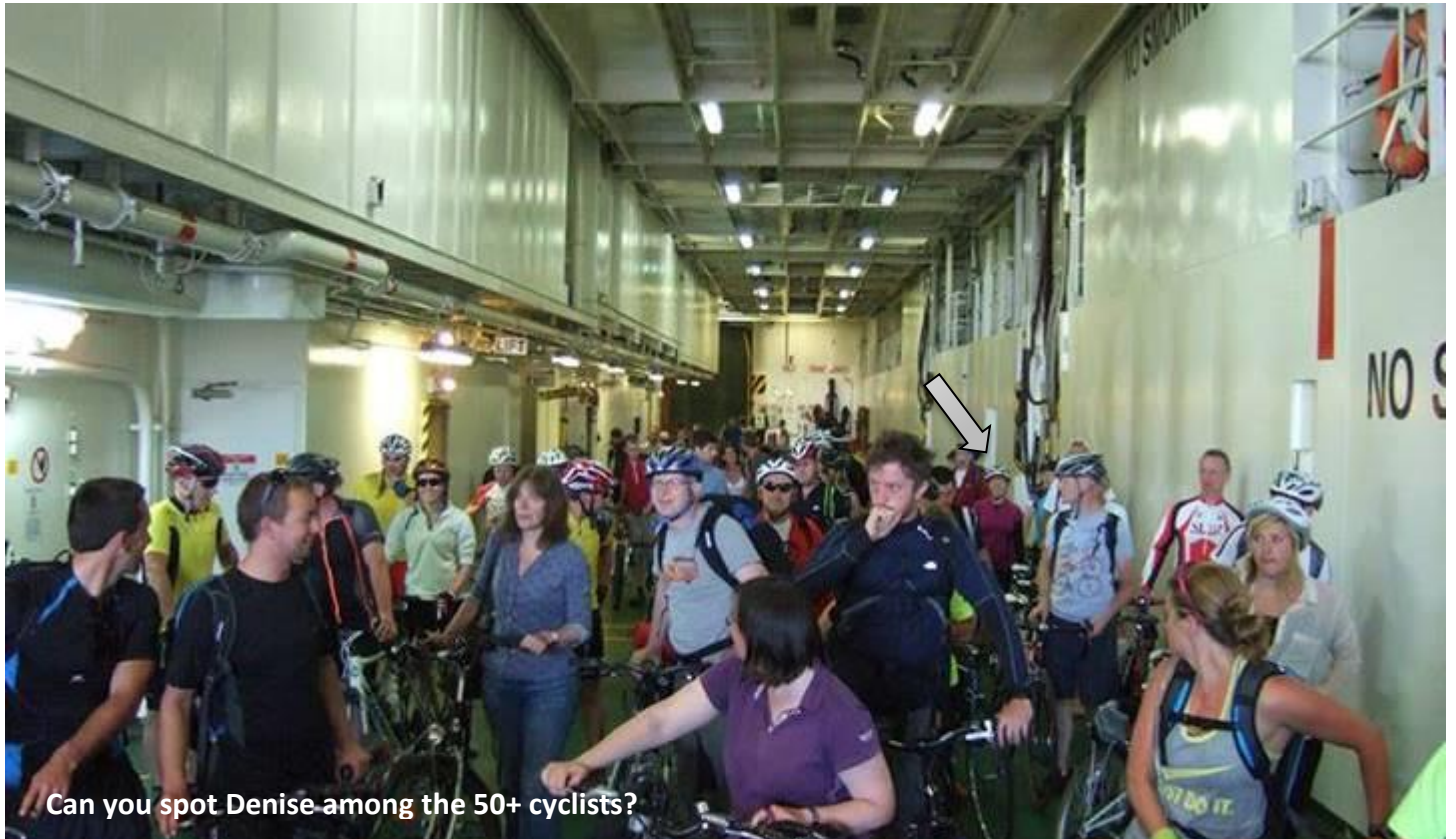


Ferry 5 (of 5) looking like it's about to leave without us!

We tanked it along Brodick main street. Had there been women and small children in our way, I wouldn't have fancied their chances. The boys left me for dead. I literally had nothing more to give. I could only manage 23 mph - not a match for the 29 mph of my colleagues. However, as we screeched to a halt at the terminal it was gradually dawning on us that we'd done it - we were going to catch the earlier ferry after all. We were ushered on frantically by the CalMac staff as they waited to close the bow doors.



10 minutes later, up on deck with pint number two in hand, we must have looked so chuffed with ourselves. We disembarked with about 50 other cyclists, then there was the minor inconvenience of the drive home.



Can you spot Denise among the 50+ cyclists?

So that's the **5** ferries, the **4** hills, the **3** cyclists and the **2** pints, but where was Chris Froome?

He was up Mont Ventoux.

But that's just one hill.

We did 4 and ours were steeper!



DAVE'S BIKE SHED

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Sustrans volunteer ranger; Fife CycleStart ride leader and Bikeability/Cycle skills trainer - kids and adults.

I understand the needs and requirements of the touring cyclist! Tandems and folders - no problem. Visit the website; phone, email or call at workshop to discuss all your bike needs.

"My mission is to look after your bike so it gives you the performance you expect." David Seaman



@davesbikeshed



Qualified



CTC Fife & Kinross AGM 2013

Please note that this year's AGM will take place in FALKLAND VILLAGE HALL at 7:00 p.m. FRIDAY 8th NOVEMBER 2013

There will be tea, coffee, biscuits and a short slide show afterwards

Members are reminded that notices of motion for the AGM should be in the hands of the Secretary, Kaye Lynch, 25 Upper Greens, Auchtermuchty, Fife, KY14 7BX by no later than Friday 1st November 2013.

Nominations for election to the Committee should be made using the form below.

Forms may also be available at some of the Rendezvous rides.

Committee Member Proposal Form

I wish to propose as President / Secretary / Treasurer / Committee Member (delete as necessary) to represent CTC Fife & Kinross for one year 2013 – 2014.

Proposed by Seconded by

I agree to the above and if elected will serve on the CTC Fife & Kinross Committee for the stated period. (Proposal forms to be in the hands of the Secretary by Fri. 1st Nov. 2013)

Seven Ferries; “The Crinan Canal for Me” article and pictures from Douglas & Lorraine Allan

Having postponed Shetland (AGAIN), due to possible logistical problems in getting back in a hurry, if first grandchild arrived early; we decided to head West and do a circuit of Arran, Islay, Jura, Knapdale, Cowal and the Isle of Bute.

Solo bikes suitably packed we left Ardrossan on a Tuesday 12.30 ferry and were the only cyclists on board. It was a rainy arrival in Brodick and not really too promising as the South road was advised as closed to traffic with a horrendous detour coast to coast and back across the island. A chat in the tourist office convinced us bikes could get through so we were off.

First trip on solos for a while, a light drizzle and wobbly arms controlling the low riders made for an interesting start up the hill from the ferry, but things soon settled down as we headed for our first camp-site at Seal Shore Kildonan. A great wee place down a precipice with a view of Pladda and the lighthouse with Aisla Craig in the distance.



Darkness brought a Southerly storm that battered the tent all night but we were nice and cosy and the sun came out in the morning; now to test if we could get past the roadworks.

The route just before Lagg was interrupted by some cows on the road trying to get to the bull; should have been the other way round! They finally gave up and charged through the hedge and into the wrong field. Coffee at the Lagg hotel and then up the hill. The roadworks at Corriecravie were the result of a major land slip which needed a whole new section of road; but the workers were laid back and we pedalled through the machinery on a fine new surface then some gravel to rejoin and follow the coast to Lochranza. Fine camp-site at the golf course with resident stag and good food in the local hotel; the Stag restaurant at the site was closed on a Wednesday.



Thursday was new ground for us over the ferry to Claonaig a visit, in sunshine, to the castle at Skipness and coffee in posh cups at the post office offering views of Goat Fell that we had never seen before. The road to Kennacraig, is very even, apart from one hairpin, and the final drop made us glad we were not going the other way.

We camped at Kintra on Islay and settled into the dunes. Friday had us at the petrol station in Port Ellen to refill the stove fuel bottles as the petrol from the can down the back of the garage at home had got water in it, LOL, and then the world got seriously small as a local chap who came in was going to visit relatives in Kelty for the coal carrying competition!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Suitably fuelled for further feeding we went up the East road past the distilleries to the Celtic cross at Kildalton, watched the seals and avoided the navy boys and girls who had taken over the Ardbeg restaurant on the way; seriously cheap buns and coffee at Ardbeg!

On the way back we visited the lighthouse opposite Port Ellen where the weather deteriorated on the final run back to Kintra and so the evening meal was prepared under a tarp as the wind had gone round 360degrees and brought squally rain straight into the tent door.

It was still drizzling next morning so we dithered on the beach watching the seabirds and their young, and, as discussions with locals got the info that, at the moment, camping wasn't allowed on the hotel lawn at Craighouse, we decided to give Jura a miss and head back for Tarbert. The ferry, Finnlagan had a very interesting cycle based sculpture, from gear sprockets, on the main deck. Off the ferry and up the road to the co-op in Tarbert for supplies and then back South to the junction for the road down the West side of West Loch Tarbert and to Kiberry and Port Bahn camp-site. Another great spot with fantastic views of Jura and a “nearly” finished super deluxe toilet block.



The plan from here was to go to Ellary and take the hill road to Kilmory and then to Tayvallich,. This keeps you on the coast and slices off a huge piece of inland scenery. We had been unable to find any real info on the state of the road and had anticipated, from the map, the usual bulldozed estate road and had brought "suitable footwear" for the walk.

How wrong we were, the road was two strips of tar with a better surface than many of the proper roads and apart from the super steep bits we managed to pedal most of the way.



Sween residential camp-site was a bit of a blot and, on discovering Tayvallich may not take tents, we pressed on to Crinan and, in glorious evening sunshine, along the canal tow path to Lochgilphead; the camp-site and a fish supper. Next day was a quick dash down the road back to Tarbert and the Portavadie ferry onto Cowal, through Millhouse and round Ardlamont to Carry Farm. A midge free place with views up the Kyles to Tighnabruaigh. Wednesday was very warm and sunny; so after a pit stop sitting out on the pavement at the Bistro in Tighnabruaigh we set off up the hill to Glendaruel and the Colintaive ferry to Bute; the solos proving very much easier than the tandem and trailer on the hill We diverted onto the very quiet B886 coastal road for the final miles to the ferry.

Arriving on Bute the road was deserted and flat to Rothesay; apart from one small hill where we got tangled up with local traffic in both directions; how does that always happen?

Arriving at Rothesay the prophecy of the ticket collector at Colintraive proved true and the camp-site was at the top of the Serpentine hill. We pedalled all the way there though but via the golf course.

Next day was a circuit of the island in lovely weather visiting Kilchattan, Scalpsie and Ettrick Bay.

Escaping Rothesay next day involved a, purely tourist, visit to the Victorian toilets on the pier (still cost 20P though!).

Returning to Ardrossan was a run down the coast from Wemyss Bay via a coffee shop and occasionally dodging the traffic with good sunny views over to Arran.



A 'first' for Fife Wheels... a public toilet! (20p for your thoughts!)

A good time was had by all and, with really only two iffy days, we never actually pedalled with water proofs on.

Douglas & Lorraine Allan

Photo Album

with photos from the past and present



Tony modelling his Fochabers (Bob the Buidar) loungewear?



One of 70+ similarly decorated bikes at Pitnweem Arts Festival



Another cracking shot from Douglas and Lorraine's tour



**How brave are you?
Would you sit on this saddle?**



You don't see one for ages then three arrive together!



*Dunfermline District CC
Public Park 1938*

Charlie Brown's Dad (on the upright bars) and a young John Elder on the front



C2C signpost



Another shot from the Ladies weekend



Happy and weary after completing the C2C challenge with Talking Tandems (the majority of the group are CTC members)



Waiting for the Dusk to fall. Falkland



Charlie and Lorraine on a past tandem mini-tour



A few of these type of photos are cropping up... but have you seen this one sent by Gordon Paterson ? It looks very useful indeed ... although a couple of optics and a Draught Guinness tap wouldn't go amiss!

RUNS and EVENTS - AUGUST to OCTOBER

AUGUST

Wed	21	Map 58 ref. NO 035002	The Inn, Crook of Devon
Sat	24	Map 59 ref. NT 492996	Elie Harbour, Elie
Sat	31	Map 58 ref. NO 118030	BBQ at Gordon & Beth Paterson, 4 Muirs Grove, Kinross *Bring lunch as normal and anything you want cooked on the BBQ (see note below)

SEPTEMBER

Sun.1 - Sun.8.		Annual week away - this year it's at Fochabers (more on website 'Trips' page)	
Wed	4	Map 65 ref. NS 988859	Red Lion, Culross
Sat	7	Map 58 ref. NO 134102	Glenfarg Picnic tables, Glenfarg
Sat	14	Map 59 ref. NT 081790	Abercorn Church, by Hopeton House
Wed	18	Map 58 ref. NO 185107	The Well Inn, Scotlandwell
Sat	21	Map - sorry no map ref.	John & Betty King, 6 East Mill Court, Strathmiglo (see note below)
Sun	22	Meet Kincardine for Group Ride - meeting point & time, leader, route etc. will be published on the website.	
Sat	28	Map 59 ref. NO 369247	George & Margaret Berwick, Midcraigs, Balmerino (see note below)

OCTOBER

Wed	2	Map 58 ref. NO 120046	Heaven Scent, Milnathort
Sat	5	Map 59 ref. NO 418152	Kemback Village Green, Kemback
Sat	12	Map 66 ref. NT 182751	John & Margaret Bean, 602 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh (see note below)
Sun	13	Map 58 ref. NO 096262	Meet Tiso Car Park, Perth, 10am for Group Ride. Leader - David Gibson
Wed	16	Map 59 ref. NO 417026	Crusoe Hotel, Lower Largo
Sat	19	Map 58 ref. NO 134039	Burleigh Sands, North Shore, Loch Leven
Sat	26	Map 65 ref. NT 103839	Townhill Loch, Dunfermline
Wed	30	Map 65 ref. NS 888884	The Pineapple, Dunmore Estate, Airth

Note when a run is to someone's home, please try to stick as close to the agreed meeting time as possible. If you are too early, they might not be ready for you and if you are too late, they may have gone out! Bring your own food as with a normal run, but you will be offered tea or coffee by the hosts. There is no need to say in advance if you are going, all cyclists will be made welcome on the day.