



JOSIE DEW

CYCLE TOURING AUTHOR JOSIE DEW HAS BEEN CTC VICE PRESIDENT FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS. BUT HER ASSOCIATION WITH THE CLUB GOES BACK MUCH FURTHER

I was eleven when I made my first pilgrimage to CTC HQ. I had a silver five-speed Raleigh Misty (bought from A J Penny, the local bike shop) and I wanted to go everywhere on it. School was ten miles away so I would ride there and back, plus an extra 20 for fun. The day I first went to CTC HQ in Godalming, I rode 87 miles.

Every half term and school holidays, I would go cycling and camping around the Isle of Wight or down to Land's End. All the time on a bike so big for me that I sawed on the saddle to reach the bottom strokes of the pedals.

At the top of our lane lived another keen cyclist called James Shaw. He was a few years older than me, and a CTC member. He enlightened me to many things bike, including the joys of a well-lubricated headset and bottom-bracket. He also talked me into getting a proper road bike. So one day I cycled with him down to Bognor Regis where he led me mysteriously through a newsagents into a small back room packed with Italian frames.

Sometime later I emerged with a skinny-wheeled, Campagnolo-covered steed. I

launched into a busy burst of racing. But it was short-lived – I decided I preferred admiring the view while riding with a tent on board, and sleeping behind hedges and in graveyards.

When I was 15, I set up a small bike-trailer delivery cooking business in London, which I did full time when I left school at 16. For the previous five years, I had been sending off for CTC touring information sheets just to read and ponder. A year or so later, I rode to Africa and back.

“Round-the-world cyclist Ian Hibell fed me with tales of his amazing adventures”

Then it was back into cooking to make more money to go away to cycle.

During this time, when riding through Devon, I'd had a chance encounter with Ian Hibell, a CTC honorary member and round-the-world cyclist who had written

Into Remote Places. I stayed with him in his home in Brixham (a haunted one, so he said) and he fed me with constant tales of his amazing adventures.

For the next 20 years, I cycled in fits and starts around the world, no longer on my Bognor bike but on a custom-built pink Roberts, still with the same trusty Campag bits. I wrote articles and books and gave talks, and then a couple of years ago I was asked to become CTC Vice President. I said I didn't think I would be very useful as I had just given birth to a mini cyclist.

But they seemed keen, so here I am, riding around on my trusty Roberts (no longer pink but moody blue) with a Hamax reclining child-seat and a Burley d'Lite trailer. I now have two mini cyclists in tow. They get conveyed in a Danish Nihola trike: Daisy up front in the box, Molly rocking around and feigning to pedal on an Adams tag-along. My long-range cycling plans have come down a peg or two. But as they get older, we will hopefully go further and further. I tell them (and husband Gary!) that even if they don't like cycling, they have to like it – there's no other way!

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