



(Left) Margaret has never owned a car, so a tandem was always the family runaround. She still uses her solo bike to go shopping.  
(Below) Margaret was presented with a CTC Certificate, commemorating her 75 membership after the CTC West & Bristol Annual church service earlier this year.



# 75 YEARS A MEMBER

**CTC HAS BEEN PART OF MARGARET BOON'S LIFE EVER SINCE SHE WAS ENROLLED BY HER PARENTS AT BIRTH. SHE LOOKS BACK ON A LIFE A-WHEEL**

**C**ycling is in Margaret's family's blood. 'My mother's father was a cyclist,' she says. Her parents were CTC members, and Margaret cycled with them from a very early age, first in a sidecar on their tandem, then as a stoker, and later on her own bike. 'I can still remember my membership number,' she says. 'GLO 355. It was a shame when they all changed!'

Margaret's parents owned a popular and busy bicycle shop on Bristol's Cheltenham Road. It's still there, still under her father Fred Baker's name. The shop's popularity was the reason Margaret's mother learned to drive: 'I think that's because she had to, to deliver all the bikes at Christmas to customers.' Margaret herself never learned. 'I've never seen the point,' she says. 'My husband John doesn't drive either. We've never owned a car!'

As a girl, Margaret's holidays were cycle tours with her parents. 'I had cycling holidays to France, Switzerland and along the Pyrenees, a couple on the back of the tandem with Dad. The trip to France was after the war when food was still rationed.'

Margaret's parents also passed on to her a love of local club cycling. 'I used to do the dusting at home and would see Dad's Bristol Road Club badge on the dresser. It was

always my ambition to join them. Dad was a founder member of the Bristol Road Club, which was the racing offshoot of the DA, Hardriders being the DA section name. I did ride with the Hardriders, along with a little racing.'

A shared interest in cycling was how Margaret met husband John; he has now been a CTC member for 66 years. When they had children, the wheel turned full circle and tandems again proved the means of getting around. 'Our three children came cycling with us,' Margaret says, 'all starting

**“Our three children came cycling with us, in trailers, sidecars and seats”**

in trailers, sidecars, and kiddie seats, then riding the back of the tandems. At one stage the oldest was pedalling on the back of the tandem, the next in a kiddie seat, and the youngest was in a trailer behind. That was how I got around with three children.

'We passed a policeman on point duty at a crossroads one day, with our two tandems. "Cor, wagon train!" he said, as he waved us through. I do think as regards traffic we had the best years.'

When their own children were small, Margaret and John took cycling holidays in Cornwall. 'It was easy to get to and cheap with two tandems and a solo on the trains. We would travel from Bristol to Plymouth by rail, then get the ferry from The Hoe to Cawsand. We would cycle as close to the coast as possible, out to Land's End and up the north coast.'

Margaret and John also did long-distance rides in Scotland. 'They were planned by Andrew Manwell, who was the director of physical education at the University of Aberdeen,' Margaret says. 'We cycled the King's Roads, including General Wade's Roads, and that involved rough-stuff. We rode from Aberdeen to Ardnamurchan lighthouse, returning by a different route. There was a West Coast Challenge Randonnée between Ardrrossan and Dunnet Head, which was 1200km.' Riders had to send Andrew Manwell postcards as proof, and certificates were awarded by Audax UK and Les Randonneurs Mondiaux.

Margaret and John's last holiday on wheels together was in Scotland in 1997. Nowadays John doesn't cycle, but Margaret still uses her bike to do her local shopping. Her son Ian is a cyclist, and he has persuaded his wife to cycle.

Her two daughters still have their bicycles but don't use them: 'They married non-cyclists,' she says, with a tinge of regret. ☺