

GENTS' WEEKEND – OCTOBER 2004

The Gents' weekend took place at end of October. The morning was a little damp, with a following breeze, as we set off at 9.30am for our destination – The Stags Head, Bowness on Windermere.

At the start there was Sid, Roy, Jack, Bev, Joe and Mick. We then picked up Gethin, who didn't seem to know whether he was coming or going. After a brief discussion he decided to retrace the few miles he had come, and go back to Withy Trees searching for the younger members of our group. We six pressed on to pick up Geoff and Dave around the Garstang area. This all went to plan so now we had a motley crew of eight, who proceeded to the Truck Haven Café at Carnforth. We took the scenic route over Quernmore and The Kelletts (not afraid of the hills us lads!) After a light lunch, by which time Gethin had caught us up, still not having found his companions. However this was soon to be put right as the three of them appeared hot on his heels having taken a slightly different way from the starting point – Obviously not as organized as us Vets!! It was time for our group to get a head start on the youngsters so we set out on our planned route to the Lakes via Levens, Underbarrow and Winster, going slightly wrong when Jack Stokes took off at a tangent, but nevertheless, remarkably, we arrived at Bowness at the same time as the younger and faster riders. After a wash and brush up we hit the town, going our separate ways from pub to pub but all ending up in the same restaurant for a very well-earned meal. After a few more beers at various pubs we ended up at the Stags Head ready to turn in for the night and some well-earned sleep.

Following a hearty breakfast, we set out on our Saturday run at about 10 a.m. The weather was quite mild and still and believe it or not, out came the sun to make it a truly lovely day. I would say it was Autumn in the Lakes at its best.

We took the main road out of Bowness to Ambleside which was blocked with traffic. After weaving around cars for the first half

hour it was good to turn off to take the much quieter road to Hawkehead – much more enjoyable. After a brief break we headed for the climb out of the village to Grizedale Forest and our dinner stop at the Eagles Head at Satterthwaite. We enjoyed a few beers and sandwiches helped out by a large plate of chips – kindly given to us by a family on the next table, who had obviously ordered too many, and must have felt sorry for us poor pensioners!!! With much reluctance we dragged ourselves away from the pub and headed for the ferry back to Bowness, via lanes that I must admit were new to me, and I guess most of the others too. There were some very steep hills and very fast descents. On one of these Mick Stevenson decided to show off his Kamakaze skills, braking at the last minute at the bottom of the hill and sliding sideways before laying the bike and himself down on the road with apparently no damage apart from a few adjustments to his near brake to allow a slightly buckled wheel to pass through. We then headed for the ferry once more... By the way we had the same group as before with the addition of Terry Kay and Cyril Singleton (both forces to be reckoned with in their own right!)

The evening was more or less the same format as the previous night – i.e. plenty to eat, to talk about and to wash down with a decent beer or two – most enjoyable.

Sunday was another very nice day. After getting lost coming out of Bowness – whilst looking for the Lythe valley road – some toing and froing took place before we picked up the scent and were on our merry way once more. We had only gone a few miles when suddenly Mick's chainset fell apart; he had shed every bolt and not one could be found. This is where Bev Wood had a brainwave, three of us should give up one of our bolts – and believe it or not it worked. Mick got home no bother at all (I was very impressed with Bev's brainwave!!) The rest of the journey was uneventful, and I think I speak for everyone when I say – we had a very good three days.

Roy F

111,111,111,111, x 111,111,111,111 = 1,2, 3, 4,5,6,7,8,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1 - now whether this is true or not I don't know I have tried it – but my calculator gave up on it! However I am assured it is so.

Ed