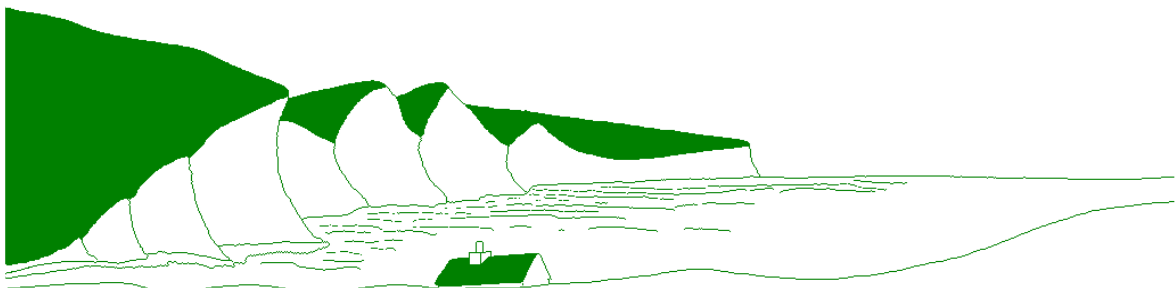


The



Coaster



the magazine of the

EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT ASSOCIATION
CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB

No. 39 - Summer 2002

£1



working for cycling

*East Sussex District Association
Cyclists' Touring Club*

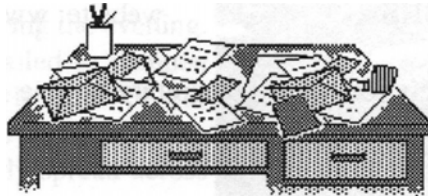
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" THE COASTER "

Issue No. 39, Summer 2002



From the Editor's Desk.

Welcome to another issue of "The Coaster". As I write this we are hoping for better weather during the rest of the Summer than we have had so far - I thought global warming was supposed to cause it to get warmer, not wetter!

This is not a large issue, but I hope you find it a quality one. As well as a write up by Anne Doyle on one of the rides, I've also included my report on the Ringmer Rally, which should also appear in the CTC magazine, but with some pictures which weren't available at the time - more should be on the D.A. website when I get a chance to put them on.

I owe an apology to Roy James. I noticed after I had printed the last issue that I had inadvertently managed to leave out his drawing that I had scanned in. This issue therefore has an extra helping of Roy's excellent drawings.

Happy cycling.

David.

THE CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

The Cyclists' Touring Club (originally known as the Bicycle Touring Club, the present title being adopted in 1883) was founded at Harrogate in Yorkshire on August 5th, 1878 by Stanley Cotterell. It is Britain's national cyclists' association, devoted to the encouragement of cycling for recreation and as a means of transport, and to the protection of cyclists' interests.

The C.T.C. was the first Touring Club to be formed in the world. Membership details may be obtained from:-

C.T.C. National Headquarters,
Cotterell House, 69 Meadrow,
Godalming, Surrey, GU7 3HS

Tel: 0870 873 0060
e-mail: cycling@ctc.org.uk
website: www.ctc.org.uk

or from the local District Association (D.A.) Secretary or one of the Section Secretaries whose addresses are listed below.

EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

(website: <http://eastsussexctc.5er.com>)

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Cyclists Flock to Ringmer Rally

a special report by David Rix

Following 2 disappointing years when the South of England Rally has been cancelled, East Sussex D.A. have shown that it is still popular with over 230 cyclists attending a very successful Rally at Ringmer, near Lewes.

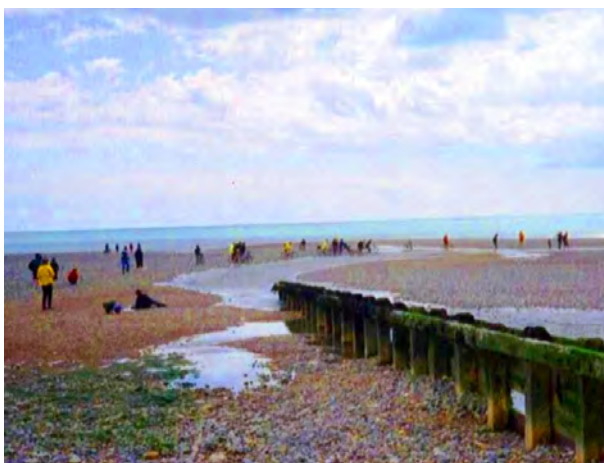
Bookings had trickled in from January onwards, reaching about 100 by the beginning of April, then during the final month they had come in almost daily. The venue was Ringmer Community College, just North of the South Downs near the County town of Lewes. Over 2/3 of the rally goers camped on the school fields, whilst others stayed in B & B or simply came along for the odd day.

The camping area and reception were just about ready by 5 p.m., at which time campers were already queuing to check in and continued to arrive steadily during the evening. Showers during the evening failed to dampen people's spirits and we crawled out of our tents the next morning to the sight of tents, campervans and caravans neatly spread across the playing fields.



As promised the weather was fine and dry, though slightly cold, with some sun and groups started gathering about 9 a.m. for the first of the rides. The longest one, the A ride to Hastings & Winchelsea drew a reasonable number, who set off eastwards at a good pace. The largest crowds though were on the B and C rides, to the Cuckoo Trail and Seven Sisters Country Park. Both attracted about 50 or 60 riders, who were split into smaller groups. The mountain bike ride also attracted about 25 riders

The C ride had all types, with singles, ordinary & child back tandems, youngsters on their own bikes and mountain bikes, amongst others. After a pleasant ride through the lanes and villages coffee was had at Alfriston Youth Hostel, before crossing the Cuckmere to ride down the delightful Cuckmere Valley to Exceat and the Country Park. Then it was down through the Park to the beach at Cuckmere Haven, where riders were treated to the sight of



the mountain bike group who, wanting a change of route after lunch, had decided to ford the river – luckily it was nearly low tide, but it was still about a foot deep in places! The return route passed the chalk figure of the Long Man of Wilmington, before continuing through the lanes back to Ringmer. After an excellent evening meal many still managed to come along and dance away the evening at the Barn Dance with local band Folk Convention, whilst some with less energy sat next door in the dining hall and chatted with friends old and new.

The weather was still on our side Sunday morning as rides set off to Tunbridge Wells, Pooh Bear Country and the Bluebell Railway. Riders on the B ride were treated to an interesting and educational ride with local member Peter Crowsley, an expert on Winnie the Pooh, who took them to Pooh's Secret Place on Ashdown Forest and Pooh Stick's Bridge near Hartfield, where he narrated extracts from the books. This ride and the C ride to the Bluebell Railway and Sheffield Park again attracted 60 to 70 riders, the C ride managing to take in 2 preserved railways with a tea stop at the Lavender Line at Isfield, where many enjoyed a ride in the brake wagon.



An audio-visual treat awaited those who attended the slide show in the evening, with local amateur photographers Joe Mott & Graham Moore taking people on a sequence of journeys around different parts and aspects of Sussex, all set to music and some with commentary. Subjects ranged from castles and windmills to a trip around Shoreham and a child's memory of the days of steam trains.

Monday put a slight dampener on proceedings, when everyone woke to light rain and although we were promised this would clear before mid-morning some did decide to pack up and go early. There was no great rush on the part of those who did go out, though, with the exception of the mountain bike ride, all rides did take place. About a dozen heading towards Eastbourne & Beachy Head, a handful towards Ditchling Beacon and the largest number, about 30-40, going down the Ouse Valley to Newhaven and Seaford, before returning up the Cuckmere Valley. Rides organiser, Geoff Boxall, led a special extra children's ride over the hill to see the Alpaca's at Glynde, where they were enthralled by the sight of over 400 alpaca's crowding the hillside.



All that day's riders and others gathered in the dining hall at the end of the rides for a slap up farewell tea, before packing up their last bits and pieces and wending their weary ways home after a really great weekend.

Many thanks to all those who helped out the D.A. by giving their time and effort to make the Rally such a great success.

The D.A. are also grateful to John & Beryl Bedford of Park Cycles, who not only took part in the Rally but were also selling goods morning and evening from their stall in College entrance (and still managed to join many of the rides); and also Francis Thurmer of Cycles Plus, who was on site over the weekend to provide mechanical assistance and spares to those who needed them.



HIGHLIGHTS OF A SCOTTISH TOUR

by Bruce Allcorn

An account of three days of a fortnight spent cycling in Scotland in 1970, the rest were also great days.

Cape Wrath

Each night we hostelled, variety being the nature of accommodation, from Rosshire's Carbisdale Castle with its magnificent staircase and marble statues to Craig Hostel on the shores of Loch Torridon in Wester Ross, more of Craig later.

I was riding solo and Brian Guy was on trike. Durness was our staging post for our trip to Cape Wrath and July broke fine and clear. An early start and down to the shores of the Kyle of Durness and a clamber across the rocks to the waters edge, no fancy pier. We could see Mr. Donaldson coming across on a return trip and were surprised how small the boat was. A good job there were no other passengers as one bike and a trike plus us didn't leave much spare space. A concrete ramp on the other side made unloading easier. A cheery "Hello!" to the people waiting for the mini bus and we were on our way. Our first obstacle was the ford at Dail, Brian ploughed his way across on the trike, I used the footbridge, and so we wandered along the road to the lighthouse.

We had elevenses in lovely sunshine looking down the west coast. It was marvellous cycling, only the mini-bus to occasionally disturb the peace. We also came across a road re-tarring gang with the most basic equipment consisting of one Ferguson tractor and trailer complete with barrel of tar overhanging the rear of the trailer and quantity of granite -chippings. Tar gurgled all over the road from the barrel tap and chippings spread on top. More of this later.



So we arrived at the lighthouse where a sign said "closed to visitors"... oh well! We wandered up to the very rusty fog-horn on the cliff edge where we sat and had our lunch soaking up the sunshine and the view.

Time to retrace, with a detour down a small track leading to the north coast. We were nosy and

wanted to know where it went, which turned out to be a small bay with a jetty. We decided it was used to land supplies for the lighthouse. So back to the 'main road' to encounter the re-tarred section. Wet tar and loose chippings made Brian's rear wheels look like Catherine wheels, I went up front!

Back at the slip way, Mr. Donaldson jollied us along as the tide was low and sandbars had appeared in the Kyle. He ferried us safely across and when, after unloading, we indicated grease on the seats from our chains he merely took off his flat cap and wiped them clean. We had a few chuckles over that.

Cape Wrath had always been an ambition of mine and now I had achieved it with a great companion and on a lovely day. The next day we headed south to Stoer Hostel and it rained solidly all morning.

Craig Hostel

Craig Hostel was another challenge, the reason for attempting it was the hostel handbook warning, and I quote, “not to be attempted by cyclists”. We had stayed at Cam Dearg Hostel the previous night and with just 21 miles between hostels we had plenty of time. Reaching the road junction at Kerrydale we needed to make up our minds, to go right to Red Point and Craig or abandon the idea and go left down to the shores of Loch Maree. The weather was very black out towards the sea but we decided to chance our luck and Craig won the day.

It was an excellent road through to Red Point so good time was made and then there was about 5 miles of footpath along the shores of Loch Torridon. There wasn't much chance of any riding and at one rocky point the trike had to be almost hurled through as the gap was not wide enough for man and machine.

Out to sea the rain clouds were darkening and becoming increasingly threatening so speed was essential and it was just as the beach was gained, a quarter of a mile below the hostel, that the rains came and no time was lost in reaching shelter. The hostel was warden-less, had no coal, no fuel for cooking and if I remember correctly no lighting. Water was collected from the river at the back of the hostel. A very basic abode. We had the hostel to ourselves and our primus was worth its weight in gold, providing hot drinks and food. It must have been early to bed with no lighting and apart from a small leak in the roof of the mens' dorm', we were snug enough.



Next morning we had a warden, he had walked back in late that night after escorting a lone girl walking on from Craig the previous day. It was from the warden we found out that coal was delivered by boat to the beach and then carried up to the hostel. We said farewell to the warden and started on the last 3 miles of path to Lower Diabeg. It was good to be back on hard road again and excellent to have made Craig without mishap, also it was a fine day.

The Corrievairack

The Corrievairack, one of General Wade's roads from Fort Augustus to Newtonmoor, was our next challenge. This road was constructed in 1731 and was the highest road pass in Britain at 2543 feet but was abandoned around 1805.

We stayed at Loch Lochy Hostel, wardened by a very pleasant lady who was most interested in our travels. She wished us well as we left the next morning to head north along The Great Glen to the start of the Corrievairack. The beginning is a track leading off the

main road to the right indicated by a bent metal sign stating “Wades road to Laggan”.

The track was stony but rideable and at elevenses we sat looking away to the hills wondering what lay ahead. Good progress was made and though there are four miles of 1 in 10 gradient, the summit was reached about mid-day. We were just below the cloud layer so had extensive views away to the west with a hint of sunshine on the Lochs and to the east down to the Spey Valley.

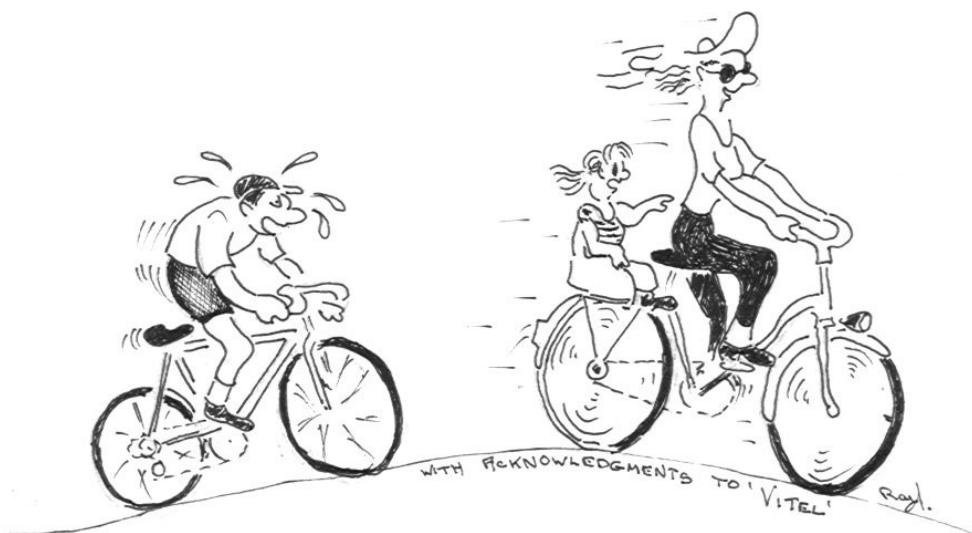


For dinner we had a billy of soup bubbling away on the primus, delicious! Over the top, and with the hill at 1 in 3½ the twelve zig-zags reduce the gradient to 1 in 7. This part of the road is more of a water-course so I had to walk, Brian managed to ride on until I caught up with him laughing his head off in a heap with his trike. So we wandered on down toward the Spey passing Crathie Reservoir and enjoying the solitude and meeting no other travellers on the Corrieyairack. At times the weather had looked threatening but it stayed fine.

Joining the main road at Laggan church it was good to ride once again on hard roads. Seven miles to go to Newtonmoor and a further three to Kingussie and the hostel. Rolling through Newtonmoor we spied a fish and chip restaurant and, with no hesitation, two hungry cyclists decided that was the meal for them. No slaving over a hot hostel stove. Brian and I had done a good mileage, around 25 miles over the Corrieyairack and with the approaches a total of around 43 miles, a hard day.

Kingussie Hostel brought back happy memories for me of a pony trekking holiday back in the 60's but that is another story

Footnote. It is about 30 odd years since we did this tour. If I had written a diary then instead of relying on memories, I'm sure this would have been a better tale.

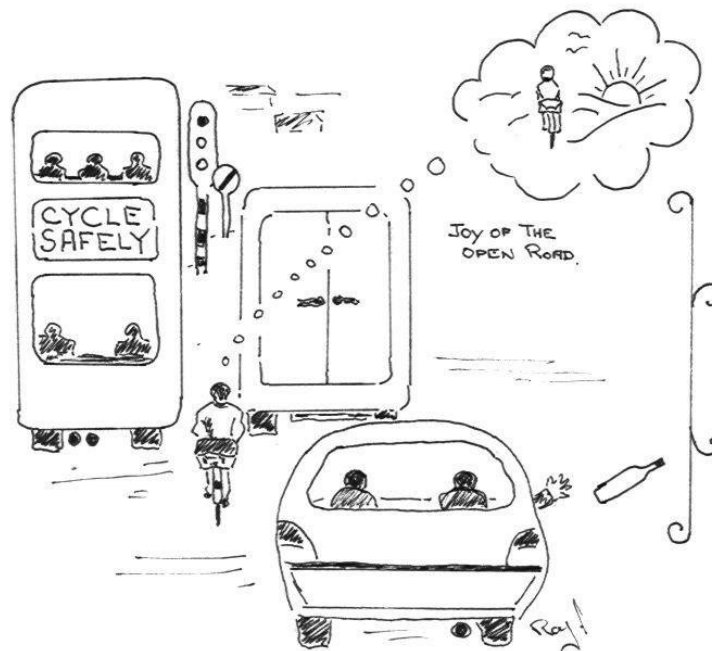


RISKS

by Pat Graham

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool.
To weep is to risk being called sentimental.
To reach out to another is to risk involvement.
To expose feelings is to risk showing your true self.
To place your ideas and your dreams
before the crowd is to risk being called naive.
To love is to risk not being loved in return.
To live is to risk dying.

To hope is to risk despair, to try is to risk failure ---
But risks must be taken,
because the greatest risk in life is to risk nothing.
The person who risks nothing,
has nothing, is nothing, who becomes nothing.
He may avoid suffering and sorrow, but he simply
cannot learn, feel, change, grow up --- or love.
Chained by his certitude, he is a slave.
He has forfeited his freedom.
Only the person who risks is truly free.



An Enchanted Ride

by Anne Doyle



I set my alarm for 7.00 am on Saturday evening, Sunday's ride was going to have an early start. We were to meet up with the South of England Rally, a cycling jamboree organised by the East Sussex CTC (Cyclists' Touring Club). After catching an early train to Lewes we had the road to ourselves for the short ride to Ringmer Community College. Some two hundred cyclists were gathering there for a weekend of cycling. On arriving at the college we headed straight for the café which was

serving early morning teas. There was a chilly north-east wind outside and a warm cup of tea was just what we needed as we sat down and met up with our cycling buddies.

Around 60 of us chose the Winnie the Pooh ride, one of four organised rides, making a colourful procession as we set off. The Duddleswell Tearooms were to be the first stop en route. Situated well back from the road in the Ashdown Forest it's in a lovely country spot. The staff coped admirably with everyone descending on them at once.

The next stage of the route came as a complete surprise. The leader of the ride turned out to be a Winnie the Pooh enthusiast. He led us up to 'The Enchanted Place' and told us all about the background of the location and how it figured in the Pooh stories. He got so carried away he read us an extract from the book, the part where Christopher Robin and Pooh are saying goodbye. It was beautifully read and it was special to be in the spot that the scene was set. We all gave him a round of applause when he had finished. Back on the bikes and it was downhill to Chuck Hatch.



Only a short walk through the woods and we were at Poohsticks Bridge. We all threw our sticks in the river and watched them float out the other side.



This is all very hungry work of course and we were beginning to think of lunch. Hartfield was just another mile or so down the road and The Anchor was still serving lunch. We were just in time to get our orders in, but had to chill it out in the garden as the pub was completely full. The food was fairly average but we were glad enough of it.

After a morning of climbing and head winds it was good to have some downhills and a tail wind. First though, the two and a half mile climb up out of Hartfield. There were some fantastic views

from the top over to both the North and South Downs and the colour was starting to come through in the gorse.

Some 20 miles through the lanes and we were back in Ringmer, a bit weary but nothing that a tea break couldn't sort out. After six cups of tea and a slice of coffee and walnut cake I was brand new. I got home around 7.00 pm, after catching the train back from Lewes. It had been a long day but a thoroughly enjoyable one meeting old friends and making some new ones too.



New cars have nowhere to go
(2 letters from the national press)

Sir, The Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders proudly trumpets its best year ever (Business, January 8):

2,458,769 new cars sold in 2001; subtracting those scrapped, since the beginning of 1997 the nation's car population has increased by about 2.7 million.

Starting with the observation that parking meters are 20ft apart, we can calculate the size of car park that would be needed to accommodate all these extra cars. Parked end-to-end they would form a queue 10,000 miles long, or a new motorway from London to Edinburgh 30 lanes wide. The average car spends 95 per cent of its life parked, so if these new cars are to be driven anywhere they will need another space at the far end of any journey - another 30-lane motorway would be a modest start for any government seeking to court popularity with frustrated motorists.

Lord Birt is reported to be looking to Europe for inspiration (report, January 7th. In 2000 alone Western Europe's car population increased by more than 3 million - a new London to Rome motorway 12.5 lanes wide. In Europe, as in Britain, such growth can only be accommodated by sprawl; the older towns and cities have been full for some time. The Government laments sprawl, but has yet to tell us where all these extra cars are to park.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN ADAMS, Geography Department, University College London,
26 Bedford Way. WC1H OAP. January 8.

Sir, Rather than build more roads we should be placing an absolute limit on the number of cars registered to use them. For every new car registered one should be taken off the road, either by a potential user or the industry. License plates would then move to a premium.

This would at least attempt to curb ever-increasing congestion and would bring a number of worthwhile benefits. Not least speeding up the removal of those older, less safe cars which cause most pollution, and removing the nuisance of abandoned cars,

Yours faithfully,

ERIC WILSON, Copmanthorpe, York YO23 3GE. January 8.

Swiss Bicycle Regiment – Update

Following the item in the last issue about the imminent demise of the Swiss Bicycle Regiment, we thought that readers might be interested in some more background information. The following has been culled from various press and military web sources. Ed.

On a wooded hillside outside Berne, Balz Buetikofr puts new recruits through their paces. At his command, a dozen or so helmeted, camouflaged cyclists appear on similarly camouflaged bikes. They hurl themselves at bone crunching speed into the foliage and dive onto the ground. The bikes are laid on their side and an extraordinary array of weaponry is removed from their khaki panniers. Balz is used to people coming to laugh at his troops and leaving with the smiles wiped off their faces. Because in this terrain - hill tracks and thick forests - bikes



actually do seem to make sense. The specially made machines are very strong and very heavy - it took all my effort to lift one - but they are extraordinarily manoeuvrable and the anti-tank weapons they carry can pack a punch. "We can be sitting in a room and if the call comes for action we can get to anything within 50 km before the tank boys have even got their vehicles ready," the proud commander tells me. But year after year, as they wait for this action, the same thing happens, and it is beginning to sap the strength of even the hardest of them - nobody invades Switzerland.

The famous green camouflaged Swiss army bikes - like the knives - are the stuff of legend. Introduced in 1891 despite opposition from the cavalry, they became an integral part of the Swiss defence force, originally carrying messages between units. Today's Swiss Cycle Regiment



recruits ride specially-designed mountain bikes with seven gears and hydraulic brakes, which they fondly refer to as their "metal mules". They ride up to 120 miles a day through mountains and forests on their hard-frame bikes that can carry up to 352lb of equipment, including bazookas, mortars, machine guns or other weaponry, and can reach downhill speeds of almost 40mph. A Swiss firm, Condor, makes the bicycles to the army's specifications at a cost of about £1,500 each.

In 110 years, the bicycle brigade have earned a reputation almost as legendary as the red Swiss army pocket-knife or St. Bernard mountain-rescue dogs. Their popularity is unsurprising in a nation where many children grow up cycling long distances over mountains and where nearly every town has a club of serious enthusiasts. Joining a cycle regiment is also seen as a way for robust young conscripts to avoid the otherwise dull routines of mandatory military service. Aspiring candidates must prove themselves in a national fitness test, which includes running two six-minute miles, jumping and climbing. Competition is stiff. More than 2,000 soldiers vie for the 200 places available in the twice-yearly training program, based in nearby Romont. The 1996 Olympic road race champion, Pascal Richard, and current Tour de France rider Laurent Dufaux served their time in cycling regiments.

The army's bicycle brigades are not entirely about cycling, and recruits are schooled in munitions

by a non-cycling artillery instructor. Luke Bischofberger, who was on the Swiss junior cycling team and is following in his brother's tracks at the army cycling school, would prefer to cycle all



day. His most memorable exercise was a recent 120-mile, 14-hour overnight ride that all 100 recruits attempted from Lac de Morat to the Thuner See near Interlaken. They began at 5 p.m. and halfway along the route ran into rain and snow. Two soldiers had to be picked up off the road after falling asleep at their handlebars; only half the troop reached the finish line. The soldiers ride for hours on hard leather seats, pedalling 50-pound bicycles with up to 130 pounds of gear. Forget Lycra shorts; these cyclists wear full camouflage fatigues and combat boots and sling assault rifles across their backs. All that weight makes for less-than-stable steering. Even with hydraulic brakes, careening down a mountainside at speeds up to 35 m.p.h. can feel more like riding an out-of-control rickshaw than a fighting machine. In between military stunts, the soldiers take their bicycles home and are encouraged to ride them regularly.

The regiment's role in conflict is to fortify a flank & guard the valleys from Lake Geneva to Lake Constance. The chief advantage is that they can be deployed very rapidly. Soldiers in other countries might regard them as something of a joke, but the Swiss are fiercely proud of their combat cycling tradition. Even so, both officers & recruits admit that their bikes have no place in a modern high-tech army. Capt Matthias Zavratnik, 28, who is "deeply saddened" that the regiment will soon be gone, said: "I've served 700 days on my bike, but you have to be realistic. An army costs money & we can't hang on to the bikes just for the sake of tradition."

There was a public outcry when Switzerland phased out the mounted cavalry in the 1970s & its carrier pigeon service in the 1990s. But as Switzerland reduces its military spending, its defence ministry has branded the 3,000 cycling soldiers an anachronism in a modern world of high-tech weaponry and decided to phase them out by the end of 2003. Not everyone is happy about the loss of the bicycling regiment, which they see as the cruellest aspect of a sweeping modernisation of the armed forces. It is believed to be the world's last combat cycle regiment.

The school's commandant, Col. Jean-Pierre Leuenberger, and his 100 latest recruits have grudgingly accepted their approaching elimination but not the defence ministry's logic. Leuenberger, one of the country's few permanent military officers, spent two decades with the bike brigade and now heads a training school that provides 15 weeks of basic drilling for about 250 recruits each year. "They come in as civilians and they leave as real cyclists," Leuenberger declares with satisfaction. The Swiss army cyclists say they can cover distances of up to 30 miles over rugged terrain more quickly and quietly than vehicles. The bikers take their military roles very seriously. "The cyclists are discreet and easy to camouflage," said Leuenberger, "They can go on the street and in the forests with the same ease. If there is combat between a Sherman tank and a cyclist, well, the cyclist has a bazooka, and the first shot wins."



Many Swiss resent military conscription, but the cyclists show a special spirit. The regiment is oversubscribed because it is perfect training for potential world class athletes: 1996 Olympic road race champion Pascal Richard passed through the ranks. Few within the army hope for a

reprieve. "We ask ourselves why the cyclists should go," said Julian Wolffray, a chemistry laboratory assistant. "We are quick and silent. And we don't need gas."



The man at the very top, Major General Urban Siegenthaler, chief of staff for military planning, waxes lyrical about the commitment of the bicycle regiment - commitment that was second to none and must be harnessed. "But how? Well, we'll give them armoured vehicles. They will still be called the bicycle regiment, but they will no longer have bicycles." Already the military bureaucrats are doing their dirty work - laying out the metaphorical tin-tacks in the path of the plucky peddlers. Soon perhaps the Swiss will be in the UN and the EU and their bicycle troops will be reduced to ceremonial duties. It will be a victory for modernity and for those young Swiss who want to be like the rest of us.



SW SS ARMY BIKE

Outsiders knew it existed and, sometimes, when vacationing through the Alps, would see it used by Switzerland's crack Alpine troops. Sportsmen, campers, cyclists would gaze, with envy, at a distance wondering how they could own this precision Swiss Army Mountain Bike. But production was limited. Condor, Switzerland's oldest bicycle manufacturer, was limited in what they could produce. But now, for the very first time, a limited number of Swiss Army Mountain Bikes are available. Here's what makes this bike...different: A mountain bike that runs with the precision of a Swiss watch, but without a baffling array of gear change mechanisms.



THE FRAME:

Specially hardened chrome molybdenum, assuring tough virtually indestructible construction.

THE TIRES:

Rugged, dual-purpose, (mixed profile) skid-proof 26" tires; for both City-driving as well as superior performance over rugged cross-country terrain.

THE RIMS:

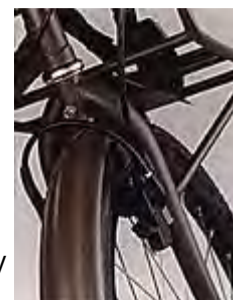
Ceramic-covered totally eliminating any rusting of this vital part.

THE BRAKES:

100% Fail-safe hydraulic brake efficiency for both dry and humid road conditions.

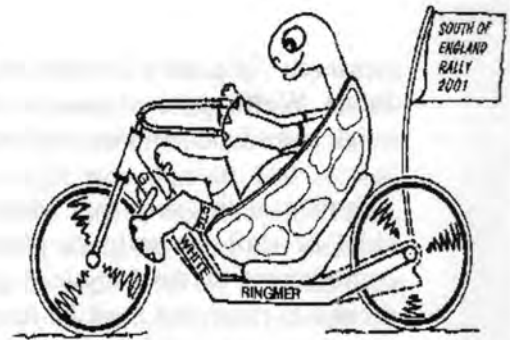
THE RADIUS:

A full 90 degrees, even when the bike is nearly stopped!



Word Search Challenge

Find the hidden words - these can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal



A	e	n	a	g	o	f	f	r	o	a	d	k	r	j	b	a	e	h	j	l	u	v	q	s
B	j	x	k	y	d	x	n	s	b	q	p	t	p	m	q	t	f	n	p	w	q	m	s	l
C	f	a	u	h	z	k	s	e	a	c	g	u	a	w	i	e	f	y	g	k	v	z	o	i
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J	c	w	x	f	v	l	l	t	e	y	z	h	o	e	s	u	j	b	i	c	y	c	l	e
K	m	o	l	h	z	e	t	e	s	d	c	v	r	g	a	t	m	o	y	k	t	q	j	o
L	n	x	l	s	k	u	b	r	s	b	a	l	y	a	n	c	o	b	q	q	r	k	w	d
M	c	t	i	l	y	r	n	s	r	d	a	a	u	c	l	y	h	u	e	e	j	u	v	f
N	d	i	e	r	e	i	n	n	e	r	t	u	b	e	i	l	h	y	r	n	s	p	j	g
O	t	t	m	o	d	g	x	x	i	u	k	a	t	t	g	p	y	e	h	i	t	n	y	e
P	s	l	e	w	e	s	e	c	s	o	u	t	h	d	o	w	n	s	x	e	n	n	c	v
Q	w	y	g	y	q	h	n	a	l	f	r	i	s	t	o	n	a	s	b	i	a	g	w	o
R	t	c	a	m	p	i	n	g	g	m	o	u	n	t	a	i	n	b	i	k	e	d	k	q
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24

bicycle	derailleur	ringmer	mountainbike
south	tent	lewes	touring
england	caravan	alfriston	slideshow
rally	sevensisters	offroad	puncture
tandem	beachyhead	college	innertube
barndance	southdowns	recumbent	camping

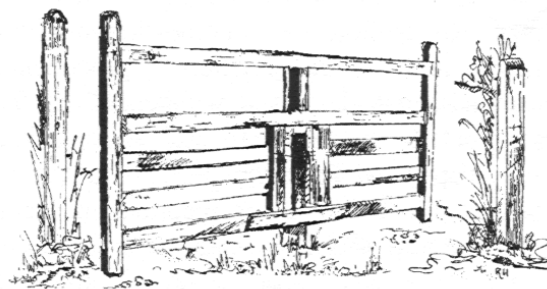
TAPSELL GATES

(The following has been reproduced from a leaflet available in Jevington Church, written by Rosalind Hodge in March 2002.)

At the Eastern entrance of Jevington Churchyard you will find an example of an unusual design of gate, known as a Tapsell gate.

It is said that the Tapsell gate is peculiar to the Churchyards of Sussex but there have been one or two of a similar design recorded in other counties.

The gates are constructed from oak or some other hard wood and the central spindle, on which the gate balances, is often reinforced with iron. It will turn at the slightest touch and if swung full circle will come to rest closed, on the fixed stops of the gateposts. The Tapsell is less cumbersome than a five-bar gate, and requires half the radius of a conventional gate for opening and closing. It is a simple but most ingenious design.



Tapsell gate in Jevington churchyard

Tapsell gates were obviously an excellent method of keeping livestock from the churchyard in earlier times, yet, when swung half open, bearers of a coffin could comfortably pass on either side of the gate without breaking step. It was also said to make a convenient surface on which to rest the coffin, if the bearers' needed to pause before entering the churchyard.

By 1950 only six examples of these gates remained in Sussex: two in the West of the county and four in the East. Possibly there were others in general use when the design was first introduced over two hundred and fifty years ago. The earliest reference seems to be in the Churchwardens' Accounts for the parish of Kingston by Lewes:

'P'd for setting up ye tapsel gar Is. 6d.'

It is thought that perhaps the clever carpenter who invented the design also gave it his name. Tapsell is a name found in various parish registers in Sussex. As with many names there are variations in the spelling due to illiteracy and the interpretation of pronunciation by the vicar and parish clerk. The members of one family in a Sussex parish appear as Tapsel, Tapsell, Tapsaille, Tapsayle, Topsil and Tospel.

The Sussex Tapsell family is recorded in accounts at West Tarring near Worthing in 1577 for casting bells. A father and son named Tapsel were well known Sussex bell-founders, with examples of their work in many local churches.

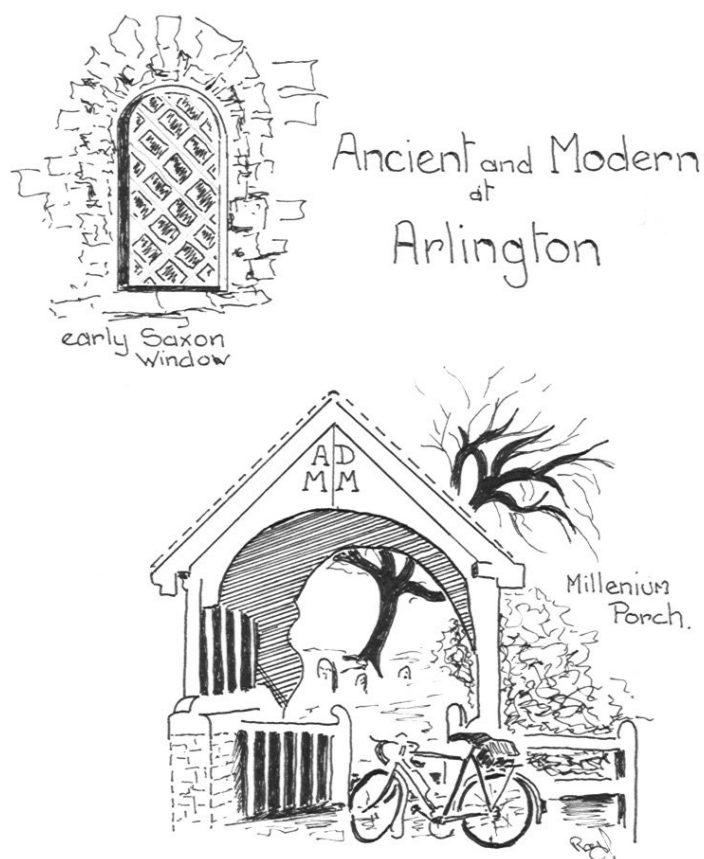
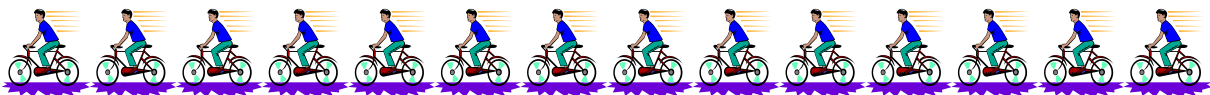
One of their descendants was a carpenter, John Tapsell a widower, living at Mountfield near Battle in East Sussex. An entry in the Marriage Register for 1753 records his marriage to Sarah Hammond but there is no indication of his age. Could this John be the designer of the gate?

Today there are still six examples of Tapsell gates remaining in the county. No two are exactly the same but each varies slightly in design. Those in West Sussex can be found at Coombes, situated midway between Bramber and Lancing and at Pyecombe, a village famous for fine Sussex Shepherds' Crooks, where members of a family named Tapsel lie buried. In East Sussex, Kingston near Lewes still retains a Tapsell gate and fine examples can be seen in the cluster of downland parish churches of East Dean, Friston and Jevington, near Eastbourne.

Until recently the Jevington gate was the only one to incorporate a stile but as this caused extra wear in the central pivot it was removed when undergoing repairs.

Sir Peter Tapsell MP, whose family originates from Sussex heard of the gates and had an exact replica made of the Jevington gate, complete with the stile.

In the year 2000, the Willingdon & Jevington Parish Council adopted the gate as their official logo.



An Ode to Men

(Found in an old copy of "Bonk"- The ESCA magazine
Summer 1991)

When you men all use the loo
Try to do what women do,
After you have pulled the chain
Put the loo seat down again.

You might try another tack
Undo your zip and stand well back,
And when you have that wanted piddle
Aim Percy carefully through the middle.

You see the problem seems to be
That when we women want a wee,
To find the loo seat in a muddle
Can end with an unwanted puddle.

It seems that all this extra bind
Slows up our knicker-dropping time,
If time we had to take much more
A piddle could well hit the floor.

And then what gives us all a fright
Is when we need a pee at night,
It makes us lose all heart and soul
To get our bums stuck down the bowl.

So there you have an explanation
At why all women in the nation,
Get into a real frown
When men don't put the loo seat down.

"Cross-legged" of Chichester.



Clock Tower: Bexhill.

A memorial to King Edward VII