

BAS FRANCIS

Another of the great racing legends from the early days of the Club, Bas joined the Club the same year as Dick Bowes, in 1940. By '43 he was recording "firsts" in several local "25"s and in 1946 he won the National Championship "25" - nearly a minute ahead of the famous Cyril Cartwright - following this only a week later with a win in the classic Solihull Invitation Scratch "25" in the new competition record time of 58-49.

It wasn't long before Bas pulled the competition record down to 58-35, as well as establishing a new "50" record in the Twickenham C.C. event.

In recognition of this class of performance Bas was elected to Honorary Life Membership in 1947, sharing this honour with "Oscar" Moreton who had been the Club's representative in the Great Britain team at the World's Road Race championships in Zurich.

A real fixed-wheel expert, Bas was a very stylish rider and a true perfectionist in all that he did, so that together with Maitland, Bowes and others, Solihull C.C. was firmly planted on the racing map.

In '48 the Club's Solihull to Warwick & back record was taken from Bas by a new junior, Pete Bowler, but before long Bas was back in ascendancy again with a new record at 1 hour and 40 seconds. Now 1949 and Bas was one of the club quartet who got through to the quarter finals in the National Team Pursuit Championships having put out the previous year's champion team on the way up.

1950 saw Bas leading the Solihull trio to first Team award in the National "25" championships and also participating in a new "30" team competition record.

It's good to record that Bas still lives in the locality. Only recently Club groups have had the pleasure of meeting Bas when - in desperate need of refreshment - they dropped into a Lapworth alehouse.

LIBRARY

JOHN MOORE

Cyclist, skier, mountain rambler, chemical engineer, jazz fan, bookworm, francophile, krautophile, dance expert, thermal efficiency consultant, grandad, hydrological pump specialist, randonneur, photographer, cinema buff, tourist, wine drinker, sage, bike-wrecker, Paris-Brest-Paris survivor, youth-hosteller, raconteur, bivouac camper, pneumatic repair ace

And that's only what we've **heard** about - what else is there to say ? How does he fit it all in ?

A constant participant in the Club's history since he first joined in 1946, inside two years John was already active in the organisation of clubruns. Some measure of the popularity of his early efforts can be gauged from the club magazine issues for 1949 :- Easter tour to Wales, Whitsun to the Peak District, hostel weekends to Ludlow, Astwell Castle, Hay on Wye, Crickhowell and (*a J.M. special*) Heol Senni. This beside the usual run of 100 in 8's and a 200 in 18.

But John's efforts weren't only seen out on the road. On the social side the Club also benefitted from special promotions like the slide show "Cycling is Such Fun" by writer Rex Coley or the Club's 21st birthday celebrations, which included a unique Olde Tyme Music Hall party at Catherine de Barnes.

No stone was left unturned in this man's quest for novelty. In 1953 he scooped the accolade as Chief Hobo - and from then until '57 he took on the more sombre mantle as club General Secretary. It was during this period that he also Stage Managed the Silver Jubilee pantomime at the Club's 1954 annual dinner.

1967 saw John as one of a team of three organising Solihull's prestigious Invitation Scratch 25 - won that year by Brian Hayes of the Oldbury club.

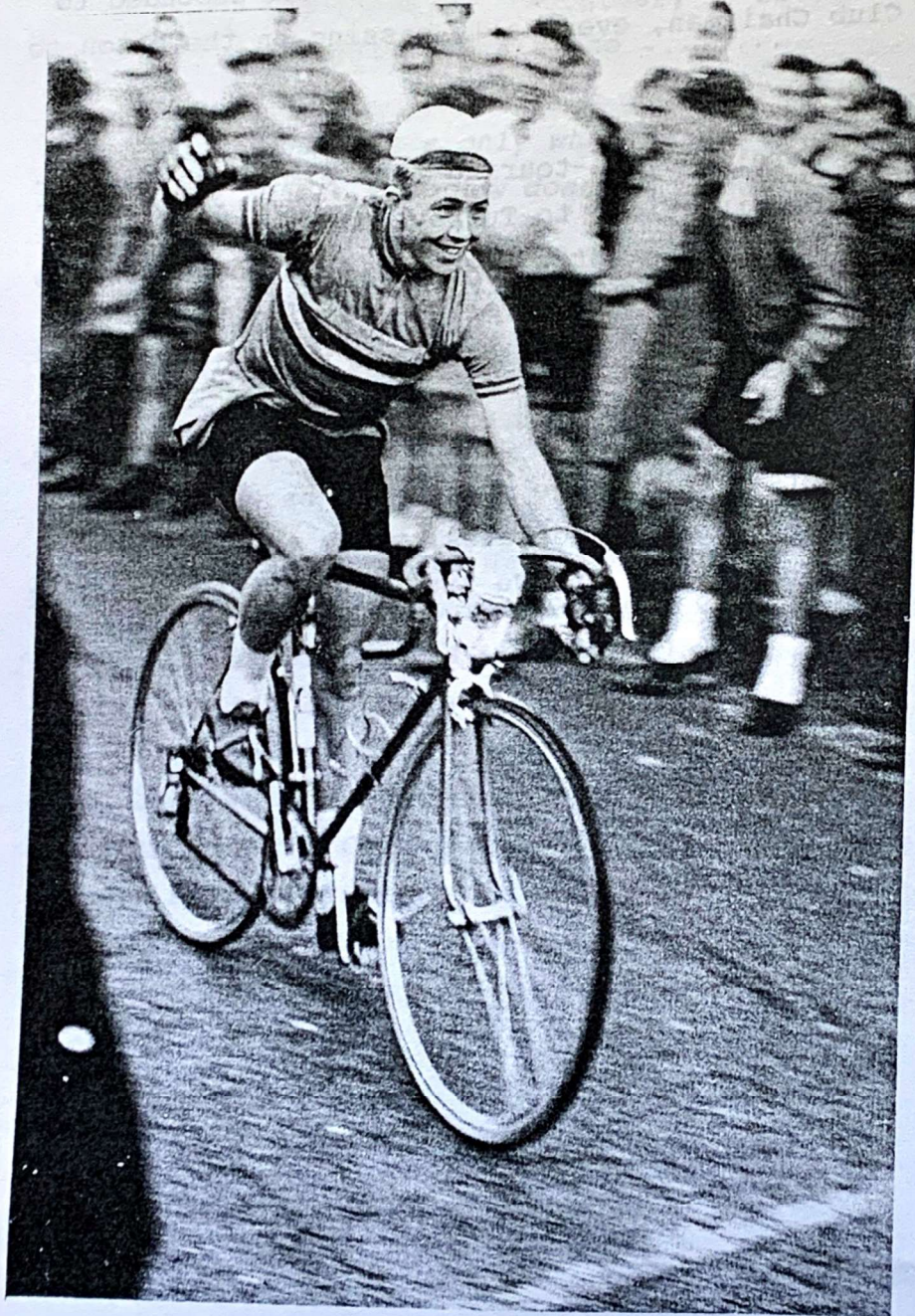
By 1972 - and through the next two years - John had ascended to the position of Club Chairman, eventually passing on the baton to Tom Kempshall.

And so it goes on - foreign cycle-touring took him to the wilder parts of Canada in one direction, to Turkey in the other. To celebrate his 65th, this young sprog turned his attention to the fabled/notorious/heroic Paris-Brest-Paris, coasting home nonchalantly - as you'd expect - neatly within the allotted timespan.

A couple of year's later and he just couldn't resist the lure of Lands End/John O'Groats. Then there's weeks in back-of-beyond French gites, weeks in Semaines Fédérales, weeks on the Costa Russell, weeks in Majorca We just can't shake him off!

HARRY REYNOLDS

Solihull Cycling Club was lucky to attract several worthy new entrants in 1951. One of these, Sid Payne, took the Club's junior Best All-Rounder title the following year. But hard on his heels was another of the squad of '51, one H.T.Reynolds. It didn't take long for Harry to get into his stride and do some overtaking. By 1953 he had won the National Junior Mass-Start Championships, then in '54 he took the Club's Silver Jubilee M/S Championship - just pipping Dick Bowes - as well as the Dawes Memorial "25" and sundry road race firsts in events like the Concorde, Eppynt and Birchfield circuit races.



Harry wins the
1956
Solihull Open
Road Race

By 1955 Harry was into the big time, taking 7th place in the Isle of Man International road race and - with the able support of Pete Janes and Dick Bowes - ensuring Solihull came away with first club team award.

In '56 he was picked for both the World Championships and for the Melbourne Olympic Games, winning a silver medal for the team's success in the latter. That same year had him winning the Solihull Open road race as well as taking 4th place in the I.O.M. International.

1957 and it was 3rd for "H" in the National R.R. Championships, while in the World Championships - staged this year at Waragem in Belgium - he had the misfortune to puncture on the last lap when he was nicely set up to finish among the top ten. Even with this setback he still came in with 30th place.

1958 and our man was 5th in the Tour of Britain, 8th in the Tour of Belgium (wearing yellow jersey part of the time) and, what must have been very satisfying for his C.O., winning the Army 5-day road race with an incredible first on every stage. On the basis of these results Harry was selected for the World Professional Road Race but his Independent licence at that time debarred him from competing. Still, a little upset like that didn't stop him enjoying a mountain bash in that year's Dauphine Libéré.

The pinnacle was 1960, the year that saw Harry competing in the Tour de France. That year the race took the anticlockwise route. All went well until the 12th stage going through the Pyrennees when there was a crash coming down off the Port d'Aspet pass. Harry went out with a broken collarbone.

After that and for a few years there was a slight lull. But, surprise surprise, by 1978 and at the tender age of 42 he was back in action taking 2nd place in the Vets National Championship road race, putting up fastest time in the Vets National "10" and filling top spots in both the Club Road Race Championship and by returning a 57-55 in the club "25" Championship.

1979 saw him again achieving honours in the Isle of Man, this time winning the Vets National Road Race championship. By now his accumulated record provided the Club with ample justification for electing him to Honorary Life membership - nicely coinciding with the Solihull's Golden Jubilee.

However, that is not all.

If you read "Cycling Weekly"

(see the issue of 28 November '98)

you will recognise that these observers

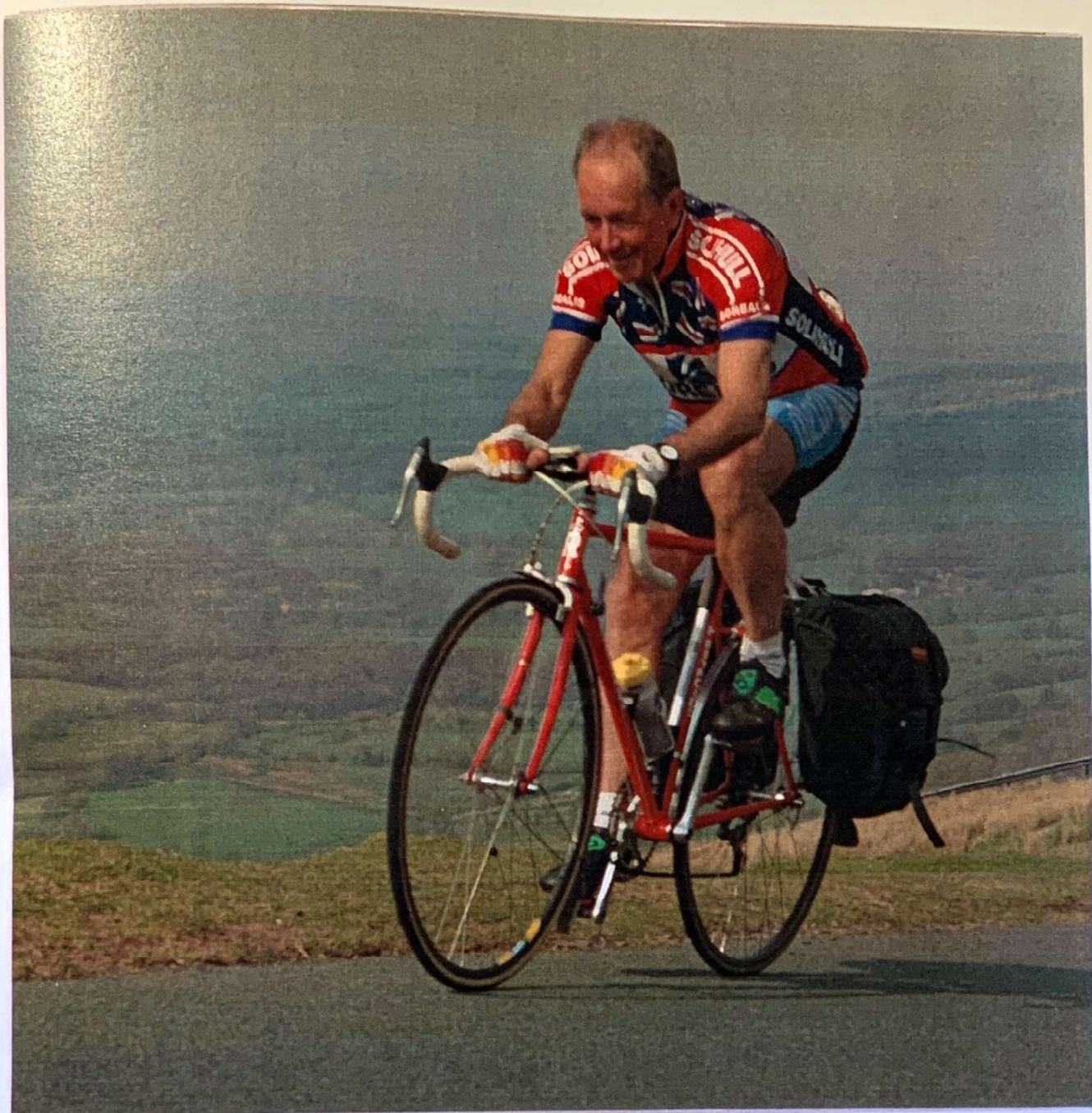
of our sport consider Harry's **real**

claim to fame is that he is

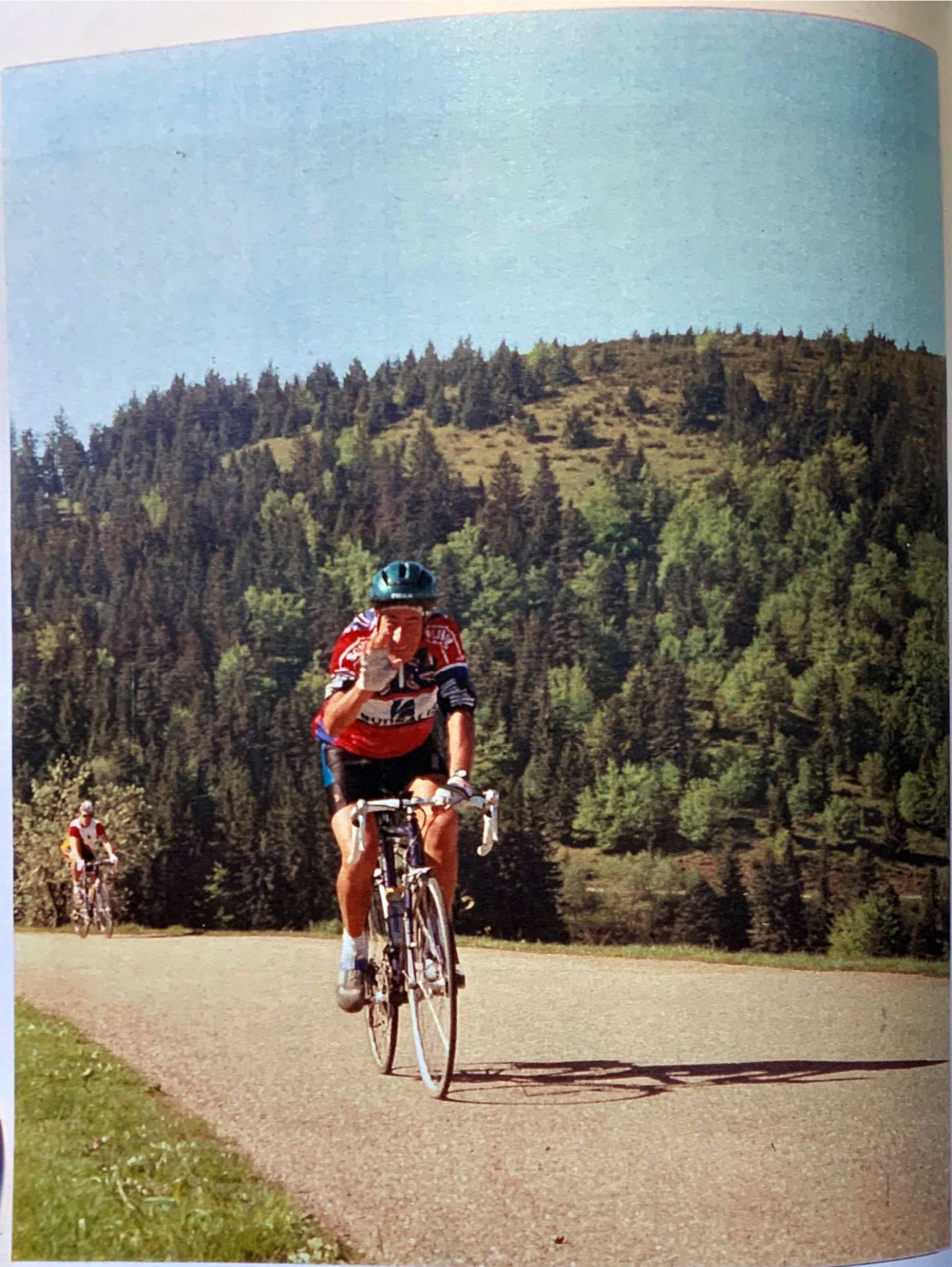
father of Keith Reynolds.

Be that as it may, we know Harry runs a mean line in Reliability Trials, has raised a lot of money both for club funds and for local charities through the Sponsored Rides which he initiated in 1974, and has been involved in encouraging or promoting many more activities through the passing years.

To itemise everything will be well nigh impossible - out of sheer desperation to get all the facts we may need to organise a "Watergate Job" on the Loxley Avenue Archives.



Life Member **HARRY REYNOLDS**
Now – on his own admission – a "certified tourist",
lugging his heavy load across the Brecon Beacons
on the Coast to Coast ride, 1995.



Life Member **JOHN MOORE**
riding the "Hirondelle Randonnée" and topping out
on the Petit Ballon, Vosges mountains, 1997.

WHO'S WHO continued: -

ALBERT & FRANK TAYLOR

The Taylor brothers are two of the more unique characters in the Club. Out & out tourists, the accounts of their travels have graced so many editions of the club magazine that most other contributors seem virtual "non-starters". Almost anywhere you can think of in Europe seems to have been covered by their wheeltracks; from Norway, down through the Alps and south to the sunny islands of the Mediterranean. And not just on tarmac; for years they've been leading lights in the Rough Stuff Fellowship - dedicated to battling their way, never downhearted, over the most inaccessible trackways in Britain's wilderness regions. Only recently, an article by Chairman Fred Towers about the "100 Cols Club" prompted a response from Albert that reference to his notes indicated he and Frank had comfortably exceeded this total in trips abroad - even disregarding all their mountain crossings in Scotland, Wales or northern England.



A recent study of Albert & Frank
at the 1997 Old Sols luncheon.

Our happy and intrepid duo joined the Club back in 1949. By 1952 they were both sharing the post of Chief Hobo - there's no record of whether the Hobo Trophy was big enough in those days to fit around two necks

Touring interests meant that photography was high on their list of ancillary skills, which means that various local cyclist's gatherings have benefitted over the years from slide shows courtesy of Taylor Bros. In '55 their artistic abilities won them the competition for the new magazine title-block and this was followed in '61 with another new cover-block featuring the Knowle community centre Clubroom.

The Club Magazine owes a lot to the Taylor brothers. Reference to the "Yabbergabber" award lists over the years indicates there's no-one else who can hold a candle to the achievements of one or both of the Taylors.

Another big contribution to the financial well-being of the Club from this dedicated pair has been their organisation of Christmas Raffles through the years from 1973 when Frank Wells "passed on the baton".

In 1980 Albert and Frank were elected as Honorary Life Members in recognition jointly of their fundraising, their film & slide shows and their consistently interesting magazine contributions.

MARGARET TOWERS

Born in Cambridgeshire with the maiden name of Pitt, Margaret joined the Cambridgeshire Road Club. Soon she was editing the club "mag" as well as getting into time-trialling. Her favourite distance was the "10", and in at least one memorable event she rode off scratch position in an East London event with 100 lady entrants.

At some stage a distraction arrived on the scene in the shape of an up-and-coming youth called Fred - then in the Cambridge University C.C. Margaret did her best not to rush into things and went to work for the U.N. in Geneva, even achieving International cycling status by competing in a round-the-town race in France.

Then - blame Fred - marriage and a move to Lancashire, where for a while Margaret was secretary to someone called Reg Harris..... Margaret did not allow herself to be overawed with this situation and continued actively time-trialling, in the process winning the North Lancs T.T.A. Ladies' BAR with a "25" qualifying ride in East Anglia, a "50" in Lancashire and a "100" in Scotland.

Work then took our dynamic duo to Scotland where they enjoyed 6 happy and very active years with Glasgow Road Club. Racing was still an important commitment, so much so that during one of those years Margaret took 3rd place in the ladies BAR.

Three daughters arrived ; cycling became "more leisurely."
If so - how come daughter Anita became a Manchester Wheeler ?

Then to the Midlands - and in no time Solihull C.C. had a new General Secretary - a role Margaret master-minded with great competence for thirteen years, through to 1998.

FRED TOWERS

Fred's interest in cycling began in 1950 when, as a sixth-former, he joined the Blackburn Eagles CC. National Service followed, with the Navy CC and long rides home to Blackburn awaiting him. Then came three years at Cambridge, he became a member of the University CC and in the long summer holidays fitted in a couple of alpine tours, inbetween rolling barrels at his local brewery. I first spotted Fred at the famous 32nd milestone - between London and Cambridge - which in cycling terms was the E1. In spite of the braces and baggy shorts, the pursuit was on!

Fred joined Courtaulds soon after university, was based in Manchester for around three years and became a member of the North Lancs RC, the Blackburn Eagles having disbanded. By this time we were married and cycling filled our lives, but one summer we had a different kind of holiday and caught the overnight bus to Glasgow with rucksacks on our backs: Fred's was giant size, mine just large enough for the daily picnic as we trekked over the bens and across the moors to the hostels.

Almost unbelievable, but within a year, Fred was transferred to Glasgow office. We joined the Glasgow RC, were made very welcome, were soon very much at home - and on the committee! To reach the clubroom we had to take the Erskine Ferry across the Clyde - a very old-fashioned affair, since replaced by a modern high-fly bridge. We visited many parts of Scotland, enjoying the scenery as well as the racing. Fred rode mainly time trials, but occasionally he teamed up with clubmates for a spot of road racing. I recall him being patched up at a local hospital after a two-up.

With the arrival of Anita a weekend rota was called for and we took turns to go round the three lochs - Fred usually getting the morning shift as I liked an early start on the bike. Fred should have been awarded a medal for the middle-of-the-night bottles - and I don't mean cycling ones!

During a 12-hour in Stirling in 1967, I drove round the course with Anita and a Scottish friend who was helping feed Fred and keep Anita happy. We'd been up at 4 a.m. so around lunchtime decided we were more shattered than Fred and went to a playground, completely forgetting the purpose of our outing! It took an hour to catch him, by which time he was having anxious moments: Sandra was a month away from joining us and when no

more bottles appeared, it crossed his mind that in running along to feed him, I may have gone into premature labour! Presumably, he could suddenly see bottles of a different kind once more looming ahead... Needless to say, he kept on pedalling.

The highlight of Fred's racing career was being a member of the Scottish CU BAR team in 1966 and, of course, the subsequent Champions' Night. We remain members of the Glasgow Road Club: subs have doubled in the 30 years since we left Scotland - we now pay £2 per annum!!

In 1968 Fred was transferred back to Manchester and with our two little Glaswegian-born daughters we settled in Wilmslow, Lorna joining us two years later. Time to change clubs yet again and Fred became a Manchester Wheeler - he is now a Life Member - and hard clubruns served as training. At a later date, Saturday morning social rides with his Mancunian clubmates, Peter Walthall and - wait for it - Reg Harris, kept him in trim! By now Anita had joined the junior clubruns of the Wheelers, so Fred had yet another bike to maintain.

In most of the clubs of which Fred was a member, he happily took on a variety of official positions. Throughout our competitive days, Fred gave me endless support and encouragement with my racing and frequently I was the one being given a time check and cheered on. Always ready and willing to marshal he has, over the years, stood on many a street corner!

It is exactly 15 years since we arrived in Solihull and within a matter of weeks we had tracked down the Solihull Cycling Club. Fred looks upon it as coming home to roost and rates the day he won a sprint up Tom Hill, on an early Solihull clubrun, as one of his finest hours! I gather he now only sprints when the pub comes into view.

With just days to RETIREMENT, Fred is dreaming of putting into action the words of the great Fausto Coppi, when - at the Royal Albert Hall, all those years ago - he almost brought the roof down when he told everyone to "ride-a-biseecul - ride-a-biseecul - ride-a-biseecul".

Margaret

MARGARET GORDON

After the 13-year stint as Honorary Secretary by Margaret Towers, we were more than a little concerned about who was going to fill the gap. We needn't have panicked; Margaret Gordon floated quietly into the job and has been performing admirably ever since.

A long-time member of the Club, at some stage she married one of the club stalwarts (can't recall his name; Margaret will tell, if you ask her) and then the "middle years" were devoted to bringing up sons Dan and Tim, followed by work again as medical secretary. Now the lads are making their own way in the world, so despite a continuing work commitment Margaret has been able to get down to some serious mile-eating. One spin-off is that we've even been treated to the sight of her time-trialling in the odd "2-up".

But her great claim to cycling fame is that she is one of the few (perhaps the only) representative of the fair sex who dares to mix with the mighty on the notorious Solihull Saturday Run.

Sunday clubruns, evening rides - all those and she even gets out cracking the whip on the Tuesday runs. The after-lunch gate-stops in particular come in for very pointed, very ladylike criticism. The gentlemen are tempted to bite back until Trevor jumps in and reminds us that, without Margaret, we probably wouldn't have a Club Banner with which to grace our presence at the annual Semaine Fédérale.

On top of all that, she rises to the challenge and ensures Harry gets the Club booked into the classiest of accommodation for its massed 1999 holiday excursion to Mallorca.

What an angel! Long may she remain at the helm!

The section in this booklet entitled **REGULAR CLUB ACTIVITIES** identifies contact names & telephone numbers for those club members who are specifically involved in particular activities. If anyone wishes to make more general enquiries they are invited to write to the Club Secretary,

Mrs. M. Gordon,
47 Paradise Lane,
Hall Green, BIRMINGHAM
B28 0DY

CLUB EVENTS, PROMOTIONS & GENERAL WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Annual Club Dinner

Bi-Monthly Magazine

- * Several categories of Sunday club-rides
- * Various Mid-Week club rides
- * Thursday Clubroom night
- * Evening Club Time Trials - Spring through to Autumn
- * Friday country walks
- * Friday night pub rides
- * Saturday Morning clubrun

Special Clubnight Social Events

Springtime Reliability Trials

March "Racers Reunion" - Derbyshire

Maytime "Old Sols" Reunion Lunch

Early Summer Tours

Mid-Summer Veterans Road Races

Mid-Summer Randonnée(s) & Clubroom Barbeque

August "Semaine Fédérale" - unique cycling & camping festival in France

Autumn tours

Visits to Continental road-race & track events

Autumn hill-climb and/or freewheeling contests

Mountain Bike excursions or special events

Cyclo Cross Race Meeting

November "Hobo Run" - an outdoor catering spectacular!

Pre-Christmas midweek Cyclists' Lunches

Christmas Mince-Pie Run

- * You will find descriptions of the normal weekly events within this publication in the section entitled "Regular Club Activities" - pages 66 - 74.

Details of the other promotions will appear in the Club Handbook (due out after the club Annual General Meeting) and in the club's "Awheel" magazine, which is distributed every two months.

WORLD EXCLUSIVE

Thanks to the Solihull Cycling Club membership being representative of a wide cross-section of the local community, we enjoy contacts with a surprising range of specialists. These contacts have enabled us to draw on the full range of MI6 surveillance facilities, backed up by NATO global positioning satellites, to check on the fascinating characters and movements of the

>> SOLIHULL SATURDAY RUN. <<

Much has been written recently about this unique institution ; the communal bonhomie, the simmering competitiveness, the dedication of its participants, the utter discipline inherent in its timetable. But for that you rely on the spoken word, the written text. Here you will find not only the pictorial proof, but you may also discover some unexpected revelations

But first of all, **The Timetable** - checked & meticulously rechecked with state-of-the-art technology as above. Even beyond the 10 mile point, variation will never exceed +/- 45 seconds from standard: -

Dorridge (start)	9.00.00	- Honiley Hall	9.24.30
Haseley Church	9.32.40	- Rose Cottage X-roads	9.49.20
Newnham Aqueduct	9.58.50	- Kookaburra Café (arr.)	10.29.58
Kookaburra (depart)	11.00.00	- Wootton Wawen Mill	11.27.20
Dorridge (arrive)	11.58.58		



9.28 am – April – Beausale Lane

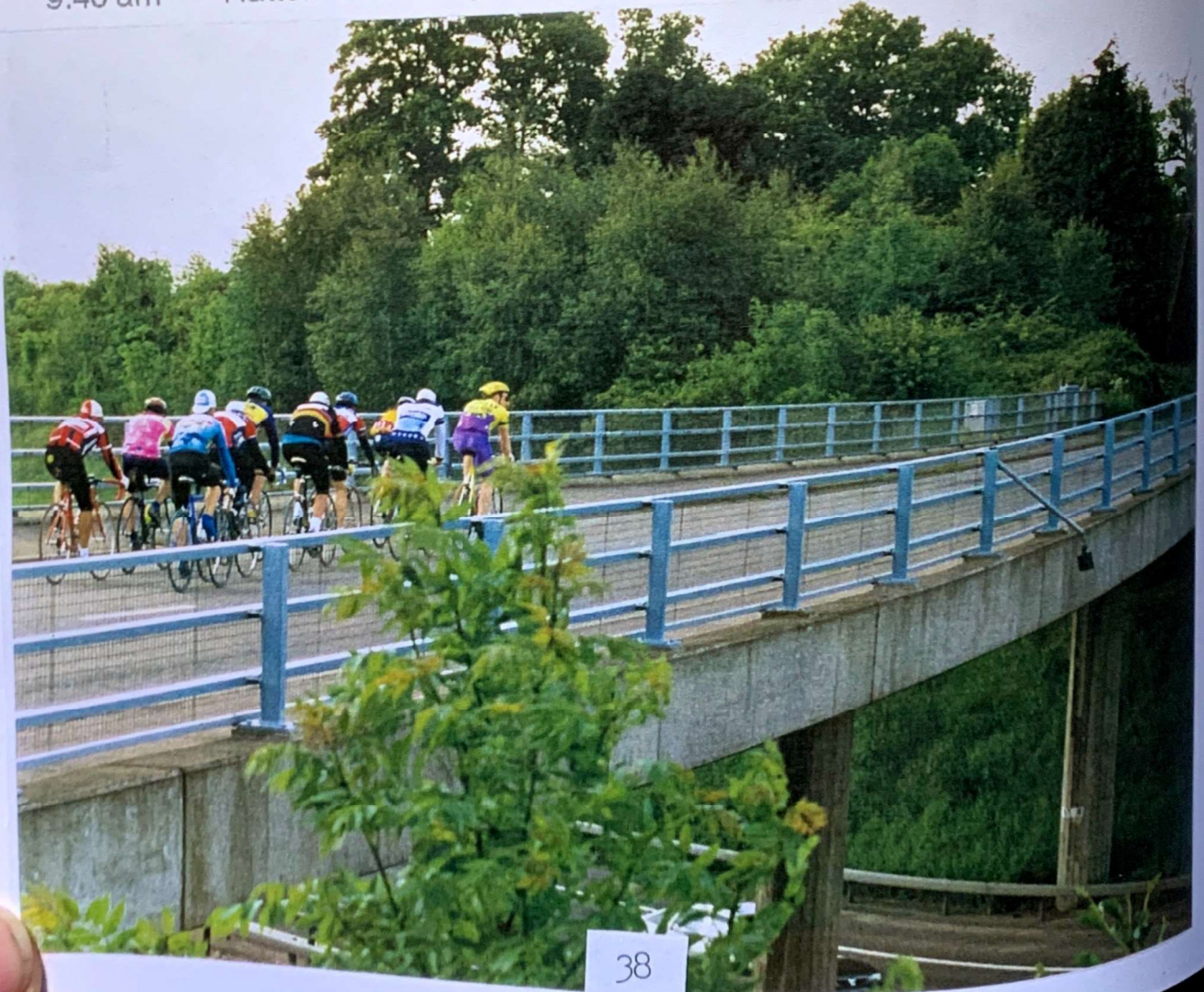


9.32 am – July
– Haseley Hill.



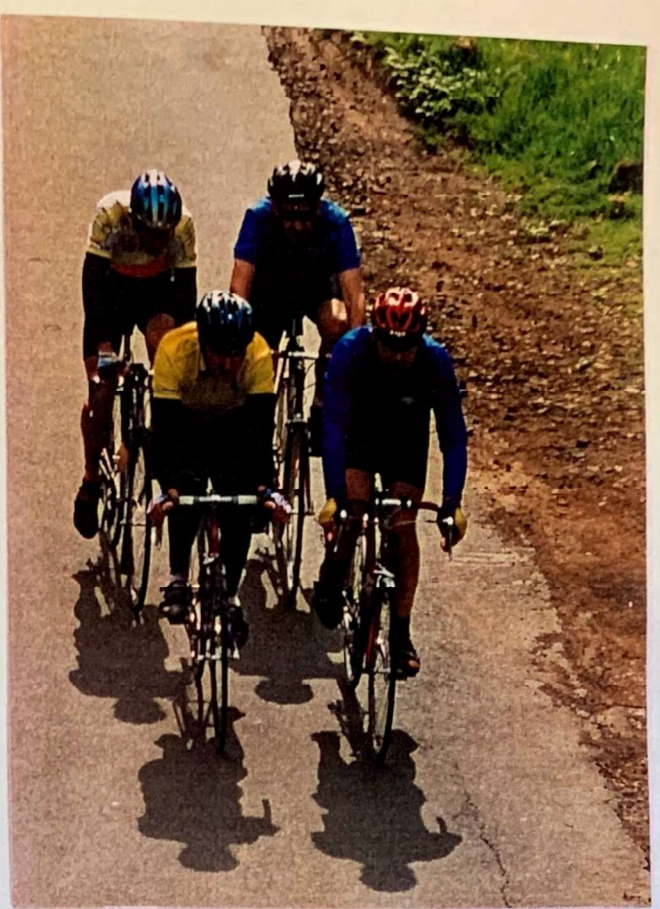
9.32 am - Haseley holly hedge

9.40 am - Hatton motorway bridge





9.57 am – Vanguard duet.



9.57.30 am – Executive quartet.

NEWNHAM CANAL AQUEDUCT

9.58 am – Main peloton / Service vehicle ? / Broom wagon ??





9.58.05 am – Newnham Aqueduct
– **Identity Check Shot** –
Main Peloton / Service vehicle?

10.02 am – Salters Lane,
Aston Cantlow.
Peloton / Service vehicle? /
Broom wagon??

