

1995

The editor had at last ironed out the bugs in the system and computer-generated magazines were now appearing in time for this years Dinner at the Moat House. For their Ragley Hall promotion efforts Mike & Sarah Adams were invited as guests, along with Jim Jinks & his wife in recognition of Jim's support at the clubroom. Alan Boden received a special award for his outstanding successes in last years Vets events and John Hartga got the Yabbergabber trophy for the account of his epic Redditch - Lands End - John O'Groats - Redditch "trunking expedition".

The March reliability trials went well thanks to Harry Gardners efforts. He was deputising for "H" who this year was in South Africa visiting Keith who came in 6th in the 4-day Tour of the Cape.

In May a group of Tuesday tourists took a week off to ride a sun-baked coast to coast traverse. This year also saw a new development in club activities, a party travelling to France and participating in their unique cycling week, the "Semaine Fédérale", held this year at Lons le Saunier in the Jura district. Not to be upstaged, Simon Martin, who had already completed Phase 1 of the Raid Alpine, took advantage of working time in Oz to ride the Audax Australia 200km event in the mountains of Victoria. Vice President Bob Maitland continued to amaze us - in September he completed Paris/Brest/Paris.

On the home front, Thursday social runs were becoming a regular feature thanks to pioneering efforts over the past 2 years by Trevor & Ann Bayliss. Rumours were also rife that something called the "Z" run might afflict the club. New member Phil Rosenbloom was settling in and his articles began appearing in "Awheel". Another fine days MTB racing went off in June at Ragley Hall with 450 riders involved and with 30 or so club members helping organisers Mike & Sarah.

In club time trials Mark Paveley, Dave Driver, Nigel Roberts & Colin Langham were the usual names up at the top of the results sheets. Later in the season Paul Carbutt got revved up, scoring 1st vets place in both the Stone Wheelers '25' (57-18) and the Battle of Britain Memorial '25' at Bognor (57-32).

Another autumn excursion to France was arranged by Fred Towers, this time to the Roubaix district. And as the autumn days got darker "Young Paul" Chiles donned the mantle of Chief Hobo.

1996

With extrovert commentator Roger Shayes as chief guest, Paul Nix again laid on an excellent Dinner at the Moat House. Mark Paveley cleared the board with the BAR trophy plus all the senior TT awards; Ann Bayliss scooped the Yabbergabber for her outstanding series of articles on Thailand; John Moore captured the newly-constructed Michelin Puncture Trophy.

To see how healthy the club was at this phase, a scan of "Awheel" would show Monday as the only day of the week when the club hadn't got anything on - club rides Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday & Sunday, evening time trials Wednesday, leaving Friday for the cyclist-walkers to get out. Could it be for these reasons that among names joining (or rejoining) this year were Dave Stanton, Dave Stephenson & John Cornish ?

As happens every year, May sees the big lunch event for the "Old Sols" as arranged by Frank Wells at the White Lion in Hampton in Arden. 55 people filled all the available places : The most senior member, John Hall, *arrived on his bike!* Much hilarity resulted when the originator of "Airney Pairkins" was accosted taking a spare lunch home in his saddlebag. At about this same time the Senior Langleys were Up North, pushing head winds across a snow-dusted Sustrans "C2C" route ; having done it one way they turned round and pushed the wind all the way back again!

In June the Tuesday "crinklies" were once again on a roll, this time up the east-coast mountain route (?) to Edinburgh. After that the club was off on another excursion to witness "Le Tour" in Holland. Back in UK it was time for the mid-July "Solihull Weekend" - Alan Boden's Vets races on the Saturday, Len de Vos's "Green Heart randonné" on the Sunday. Then with hardly a break it was Semaine Fédérale time - this year at Cholet in the Vendée district south of the Loire.

Sadly amongst all this activity the club lost one of its great characters - Tom Kempshall collapsed while on one of the summer Tuesday runs and despite time in hospital he never recovered. Many were the words of appreciation that recalled Tom's unique contribution to club memories.

But, as always, Life continues. In the racing sphere it was Dave Young who powered his way through to the '96 BAR. Pete King once again exerted his gravitational skills for a repeat triumph in the autumn Downhill event.

1997

Once again it was time for change. As clubnights were sadly only attracting the die-hard few, our 10-year link with the Highgate Football Club was terminated. Our clubroom from the 9th of January was with the Earlswood Motor Yacht Club, beside the canal and bridge on Lady Lane. From the word go this move proved very popular; our room there was warm, comfortable and well-lit. Joan & Bob Thornton's hospitality made everyone feel welcome and the club quickly found their catering was of a very acceptable standard - you only have to be there on Randonnée/Barbeque Sundays to see how fast the steaks disappear!

At the Paul Nix dinner promo, Jim Jinks & his wife were invited as Presidents guests as thanks for Jim's personal efforts at the Highgate clubroom. Jim also accepted election to the post of club Vice-President. Club guests this year were Chris & Marian Moseley in recognition of their 20-year provision of mince pies for pre-Christmas clubruns to Stratford.

The season soon kicked into life: In February "H" organised a Drive & Ride trip to witness the Severn Bore, a remarkable sight when comparing the tide level before & after the big wave moved upriver. Following that, the usual Spring reliability trial, then the programme of evening time trials as organised for 5 years now by Maureen Paveley. A new item on the Sunday menu was the "D" run, thanks to Paul Chiles. A novel excursion for this year saw budding track aces trying their skills on the Wall of Death at the Manchester Velodrome; then came High Summer (in more ways than one) with an enthusiastic club gathering at the now-unmissable Semaine Fédérale. The weather at Albertville was immaculate, the alpine passes were unforgettable.

Our one-time record breaking lady, Carol Langley, went on a gruelling 3-month cycle expedition through East Africa - which later provided us with a unique slide-lecture night at the clubroom. From Dave Stephenson & Anne-Marie Bathmaker we didn't see slides but we got good magazine reading after they rode (in atrocious conditions) the Pre-Alpine Randonnée from Geneva to Nice.

Most of the general club activities continued as usual but with two new end-of-year developments; the Mince Pie Run now moved to Merrywood Farm, Morton Bagot and the Tuesday clan were firmly into the Christmas Pub Lunch run.

1998

Paul Nix was allowed to take a rest - Guy Elliott moved into the organisers seat for the club dinner. Same venue, but Guy staggered us all with his mounting of an impressive display of club photographs & memorabilia. A few new faces in the award-winners list - Hayley & Emma Chiles as Most Promising Members; Kevin Wilson (who'd taken a year off just to be able to thrash all the opposition) bagged the Hill-Climb; Dave Stanton took over from Robert Hampton as holder of the Hobo Shield; Lucy Ryan was top lady time-trialist. Roy Cromack, who had recently been robbed of his 24-hour record, was back among old friends as Chief Guest. Two faithful clubmen relinquished their long-lasting official posts at the AGM, John Cordwell as President, Mal Lawton as recent joint Chairman & Treasurer. Tom Godwin became our new President, Fred Towers took on the role of Chairman, Phil Rosenbloom as Treasurer. The Thursday Run finally became "official" with Jim Smyth in charge, and Guy Elliott made sure everyone knew what happened on Saturday mornings. Even the mountain-bikers showed what can happen if you have Faith - their Maytime excursion to the Berwyns and the Wayfarer Crossing left everyone sunburnt.

Among new members enrolling were Terry Passey, Pete & Mary James, Ivor Thomas, John (the Gardener) Thomas, while on the clubruns a now-retired previous Chairperson brought a breath of fresh air with his Claud Butler, his Brooks saddle, his 'bonk-bag' . . . May, and it was time for the Old Sols to get together. This year the venue moved to the Motor Yacht clubroom; as with the mountain bikers the day was sunny and 42 people were very happy. The Tuesday Crinklies tootled off to France for a second year of Giteing & hill-grinding.

'98 was special in another way - Le Tour was starting in Ireland. Lucy wouldn't let us get away with NOT going there in July, so she personally dedicated 12 months of planning to ensure the club had a great time. Unfortunately even Lucy couldn't guarantee the weather. Luckily there's always (now) the "Semaine" - this year in the Ardennes district at Charleville Mézières - so we ended up with another crop of sunshine photos. On the racing front Harry Reynolds was now i/c time trials; he had new '5' & '10' courses and the events were well-supported, especially the "Lottery 2-up".

1999

So here we are, right up to date. And still we're making our own little bit of history.

In January it was Guy again and the Dinner again and this time Hugh Porter & Anita Lonsborough as Chief Guests. Hugh made the night fly by, we couldn't believe how late it was and we were still all talking and laughing. And not just because Andy Leacock was Chief Hobo or because Helen Lewis was Chief LADY TRAMP or because Steve Mountford had grabbed both uphill & downhill trophies. It was just a good night all round.

And then, before the year had really got rolling, what happens? Swarms of people are queueing at Birmingham airport and swanning off to Mallorca - 31 people were on the Solihull "start sheet" - thanks to the organisational genius of Harry Reynolds, aided and abetted by BCF-man Bob Grinsell. Still, we aided and abetted Bob later when the BCF road race championships were held round the Solihull roads in July.

Even more members and friends went on the August emigration to the Brittany-based Semaine Fédérale; an autumn tour group sweltered in September sunshine in North Wales; Chairman Fred escorted a randonnée team to the French champagne country; born-again Racer Roger Storey rode the Paris-based "Steven Roche" - and there's still the Ghent Six yet to come . . . .

*Who can doubt that the Solihull Cycling Club is blooming,  
when you've got a commitment-record like that?*

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# REGULAR CLUB ACTIVITIES

## Introduction

This section is intended to give you a very brief overview of the club's activities so that aspiring cyclists can decide whether they might be interested in joining the club (or it might even tempt Sunday club riders to tackle the rigours of mid-week riding!)

With the Solihull Cycling Club having started in 1929, it was in the post war years of the fifties, sixties and seventies that the club really came into its own. In that period it was one of the country's top cycling clubs with activities across almost every cycling activity. Riders from the club represented Great Britain at every Olympics from the end of the war until the late 1970's. At that time clubs in England started to fragment as sponsorship found its way into the amateur side of the sport and top riders tended to move to sponsored clubs for their racing activities. The Solihull Cycling Club has always continued as a club which has more interest in offering the full range of cycling activities to its members, from touring through to all aspects of racing as well as a varied social programme.

During the 1990s the club has continued to remain very healthy with membership growing each year. We have had sponsors from time to time but where this has been the case the money has been spread evenly across club members and has usually been used to subsidise the purchase of club jerseys and clothing for all members regardless of whether they race at a top level.

In 1999 we are pleased to say that our membership is nearly 150 strong but most importantly that all members are very active in the club's life. Despite what has been written above, we do have racing members but the main emphasis is on group rides that cater for all abilities. As you read on you will see that there is almost certainly a "run" that should

be within your reach, with perhaps just a little preparation if you are coming into the sport or are returning after a long lay off. There is, after all, a particular skill in safe riding in a group, but this should not deter anyone. One of the benefits of riding in a group is that there are many more pairs of eyes or ears to warn you of potential hazards.

At the present time we have group rides (that are generally known as clubruns) on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. In addition there are also clubroom meetings every Thursday, evening rides fortnightly on Fridays and 5- or 10-mile time trials during the summer months, also on Thursday evenings.

If that doesn't leave you confused, some of our cyclists organise their own regular programme of country walks on Fridays.

How do they all manage it? Read on or come along, and find out.

## **The Tuesday Run**

Many of our members are retired or semi-retired and they seem to be the fittest of the lot!

A group of 12 or more riders meets every Tuesday at 9.15 am in the carpark of the Cheswick Green Inn in Shirley and from there go out on an all day run. This ride might typically be about 70 miles depending on the season, with the riding speed averaging some 15 miles per hour. This is not a ride for newcomers as the total mileage rather than the pace can make it hard. Having said that, the group ride together and wait for each other as the hills sort out who are the fittest riders. There is a coffee stop mid morning then a pub lunch around 1 o'clock. In the summer months - when the mileage might creep up a bit - there will often be an afternoon tea stop as well.

If you are interested in this (perhaps you are already a sufficiently experienced rider) then please feel free to contact Trevor Bayliss on 0121 705 2668.

## **The Thursday Run**

Do not be put off having read the mileage involved with the Tuesday Run – there is still hope for newcomers !

Perhaps one of the best runs for newcomers is the Thursday Run. It starts from "The Punchbowl" pub at Lapworth every Thursday at 10.30 am. The run will go out to a comparatively local café stop usually arriving at about 12 noon then return to the Punchbowl where it may be appropriate to sit in the garden for some well-earned refreshment. The distance is not too far, some 40 miles or so, at a moderate pace. If you feel comfortable riding on flat roads at around 12 – 13 miles per hour on your own you will probably find this run is ideal for you. Whilst all of our runs are friendly, the Thursday Run is known for being a particularly sociable crowd with again the majority of participants being retired or semi-retired ; the ladies are usually well represented and you don't need a flashy bike to feel part of the scene. If you are interested in this run please call Jim Smyth on 0121 743 6679 and he will be pleased to give you more details and make you welcome when you turn up.

By the way, one of the best things about the Thursday Run is because you stay local you might be encouraged to start out with them, ride as far as you feel comfortable and then head for home knowing you're still in familiar territory. The next week ride out further, then the following week . . . .

## **Thursday Club Night**

Every Thursday we meet at the Earlswood Motor Yacht Club, Lady Lane, Earlswood, Solihull for a couple of hours from around 8.30pm. We're lucky to have our own comfortable bar area.



The room is not over-large which ensures the atmosphere is nice and chummy; there are so many conversations going that you have difficulty getting a word in edgeways! The Clubroom has a skittles facility which we occasionally use and other special clubnight events have included slide shows, curry suppers or "Bring & Buy" nights - which usually entail hectic trading of cycle parts or clothing. Our hosts there are Joan and Bob Thornton but if you want information on the cycling club just call Trevor or Jim (as above) and they will make sure you feel at home with us.

During the summer the club holds its regular programme of evening time trials. These take place on the Thursday evening and the majority of events are ridden on a course close to the Earlswood clubroom, starting either at 6.30 or (more generally) 7.00pm. Upwards of twenty riders participate in these time trials and non-racing members provide the back-up for time-keeping, recording and marshalling.

Harry Reynolds is the man handling the organisation of these events.

## Friday Night Rides

These outings are a fairly recent introduction and with the advent of the modern and much more efficient cycle lighting systems the runs have become quite popular. The runs meet at the "Barley Mow" hotel in the centre of Solihull at 7.30 pm, the riding distance is about 25 miles and there is a break at one of our local country pubs.

Our Treasurer, Phil Rosenbloom, is the "guiding light" in this venture and you can get precise details of the fortnightly dates by ringing him on 0121 682 4123.

## The Saturday Run

This is a unique run in the club in that it meets at the same place, week in week out and follows exactly the same route. Boring? Definitely not! The Saturday Run riders pride themselves on being regulars and the banter is the key aspect of the ride.

It is a relatively fast run with riders averaging 20 miles per hour. Leaving Dorridge Station at exactly 9.00 am you will cover 50 miles with a quick teastop at 10.30 and be back in Dorridge at exactly 12 noon. If you are interested in racing this is an ideal preparation ride but it is not a "training bash" - 20 miles per hour is the average speed - it will fluctuate between 20 and 25 miles per hour with hills obviously slowing the average down. There is a bit of a hectic sprint before the café stop with three sharp hills killing off many riders! However, we all ride home together. Interested? Call Harry Reynolds on 0121 744 1315 or Guy Elliott on 01676 532174 and we will make you welcome.

## THE SUNDAY RUNS

There must be something for you here and in case you are a newcomer reading this we will start in the reverse order! All Sunday runs meet at the "Barley Mow" in Solihull town centre at 9.00 am every week, week in, week out.

(The only variations are special club open promotions like springtime Reliability Rides or summertime "Randonnées", where the larger gatherings mean a start from the Clubroom in Earlswood and timings will undoubtedly differ from the Sunday norm of 9 o'clock.)

Details of these special events - and all other club activities - are contained in our bi-monthly club magazine "Awheel".

Details? Contact the Editor, Barrie Goodyer, on 01926 842005.

But, as far as the regular Sunday runs, read on :-

## The Sunday D Run

On the first Sunday of every month we have introduced a D Run which will always be led by an experienced cyclist and will be tailored to fit whoever turns up.

Here is our guarantee for the Sunday D Run: We will not leave you. We will advise you. We will tell you what to do. We will advise you on riding a bike. We will tell you whether you have the potential to ride other runs. If you are nervous about your ability to get out with a club but are just dying for someone to help you or give you that boost of confidence, this is for you. It might be that you are the only newcomer that day – do not worry as our nominated members will take you for a gentle ride with the specific aim of getting you out on your bike regularly and helping you to become a club cyclist. This is the ride where we welcome literally everyone. However as you will have seen from previous paragraphs – do not just turn up unannounced. Call Graham Randle on 0121 744 6687 so he can give you a proper welcome when you turn up. Now – you have absolutely no excuse for not turning your dreams into reality. If you are young and want to give that gleaming new machine a proper road test; if you're older and need to reduce that waistline – come on, get out with the Solihull Cycling Club!

## The Sunday C Run

This is a fabulous run and one of the most popular rides of the club. The ride will average about 16 miles per hour on the flat – but remember it is easier riding in a group. If you feel comfortable at about 14 to 15 miles per hour on the flat you should feel fine with this friendly group.

The group always waits for each other especially as the hills string riders out. The emphasis is on good company and you may find about 16 to 20 riders out on the C Run ; again ladies are well represented. The ride may cover about 50 miles with a tea stop and this mileage may be where you find it difficult if you are a newcomer.

Again ring Trevor Bayliss on 0121 705 2668 and you might plan to ride for an hour then turn for home before you get tired and gradually build up confidence this way ; Trevor is extremely experienced and will help and advise you - he has an excellent track record in bringing new riders into the sport.

Many of our very good and fast riders started on the C Run and gradually worked their way up to other runs or into racing activity. By the way, many riders on this ride are very experienced and pretty fast themselves but they just choose the C Run as it has this fantastic reputation for its social side.

The run always finishes at a predetermined pub ("the Social Stop") and a pretty good strategy is to get your husband or wife to meet you there at the end and you even get a free lift home with a bit of luck.

The Sunday C Run is The Business !

## The Sunday B Run

OK \_ you're getting fit now. You have a stack of C Runs under your belt ; you have occasionally seen the B Run out and you think "Is that for me ?" About 70 miles with plenty of hard work and averaging about 18 miles per hour but usually over quite hard countryside.

(B Run - continued . . . )

If you are considering racing but are not too sure about your abilities or what is involved, this is the run for you. It is not a straight "bash" but you will certainly come home tired having enjoyed a good workout. On the run you will find experienced British Cycling Federation coaches and members who are racing themselves, albeit not at a top level now. The run will typically include older members who have ridden as professionals or top amateurs and can pass on a wealth of information and advice if you just ask them. You need a decent bike to enjoy this run - that does not mean thousands of pounds but it does mean a lightweight road bike with reasonable equipment.

Call Harry Reynolds on 0121 744 1315 for details. Harry was a top rider for many years and his son Keith was also a top professional; both father & son were Olympic riders and if they can't give you advice, no one can!

## The Sunday A Run

Funnily enough not massively harder than the B Run just a little less predictable. The run will average about 18 to 19 miles per hour, will use a different café stop, may stay out longer than the B Run and might even only just be back in time for tea. This is not a ride for newcomers; if you "go off the back" you will have to work out your own route home. You need to give it some careful thought before you commit to the A Run.

Call Roy Gordon on 0121 778 1884 if you are interested.

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## The Friday Walk

With cycling being essentially an outdoor sport, it probably won't surprise anyone that members of the Solihull club dabble in other forms of outdoor activity as well. Pastimes that spring to mind are long-distance walking, fell running, Alpine mountaineering, skiing, sea sailing and so forth. So, from time to time, "regulars" will disappear for the odd week or two while they exercise their talents in these other pursuits.

However on a regular basis the one activity that gets regularly catered for is country walking. Over recent years our walkers have progressively worked their way along the entire lengths of several of the named Midlands long-distance footpaths such as the Heart of England Way. This rambling is pitched at a very sociable level and our lady members are well represented; cars are shared out to the relevant venue and there is invariably a pub lunch-stop involved. Even non-walkers or resting cyclists have been known to turn up to help with the eating!

If you'd like to know more about this fringe activity talk to either Trevor Bayliss ( 0121 705 2668 ) or Barbara Richards ( 01926 493116 )

# THE CLUBROOM

Since 1997 the Club has been fortunate to have found a warm and welcoming home for it's weekly clubroom in the premises of the Earlswood Motor Yacht Club. Our hosts in this canalside venue, Bob and Joan Thornton, have provided a convivial meeting place which has brought a big boost to clubnight attendances. Major annual events such as the summer Randonnée and the springtime Reliability trials are now started from this location.

Social events such as the equipment "Bring & Buy" sales, Autumn curry nights, the occasional slide show and travel talk, and summertime barbeques all help to generate that essential clubby atmosphere. Of course, one important element in helping ensure this clubby aspect continues unabated is the satisfying range of liquid refreshments held on tap.

**About Bob and Joan themselves,** they are very much Solihull locals. The boat club owes it's origins to Joan's father who in 1960 bought three prefabs from near the "Maypole" and set them up beside the canal at Earlswood. Leisure boating was already happening there, with 3 pleasure-trip boats operating, their names being "Planet", "Franklyn" and "Cepheus".

Bob and Joan have been involved since 1982, working on the trip boats - typical day runs being to Lapworth and back. In more ways than one, boats were a dominant feature in their lives, so in 1987 they applied for building permission. To their great surprise permission was granted!

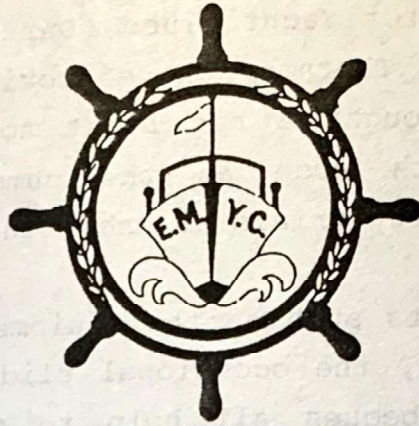
*The rest - & our good fortune, being able to share - is history.*

And how else are boats important for our hosts ? Because, as we've come to learn, CRUISING is their big passion - no less than 15 big-ship cruises over recent years including, famously, the swan-song cruise of the "Canberra".

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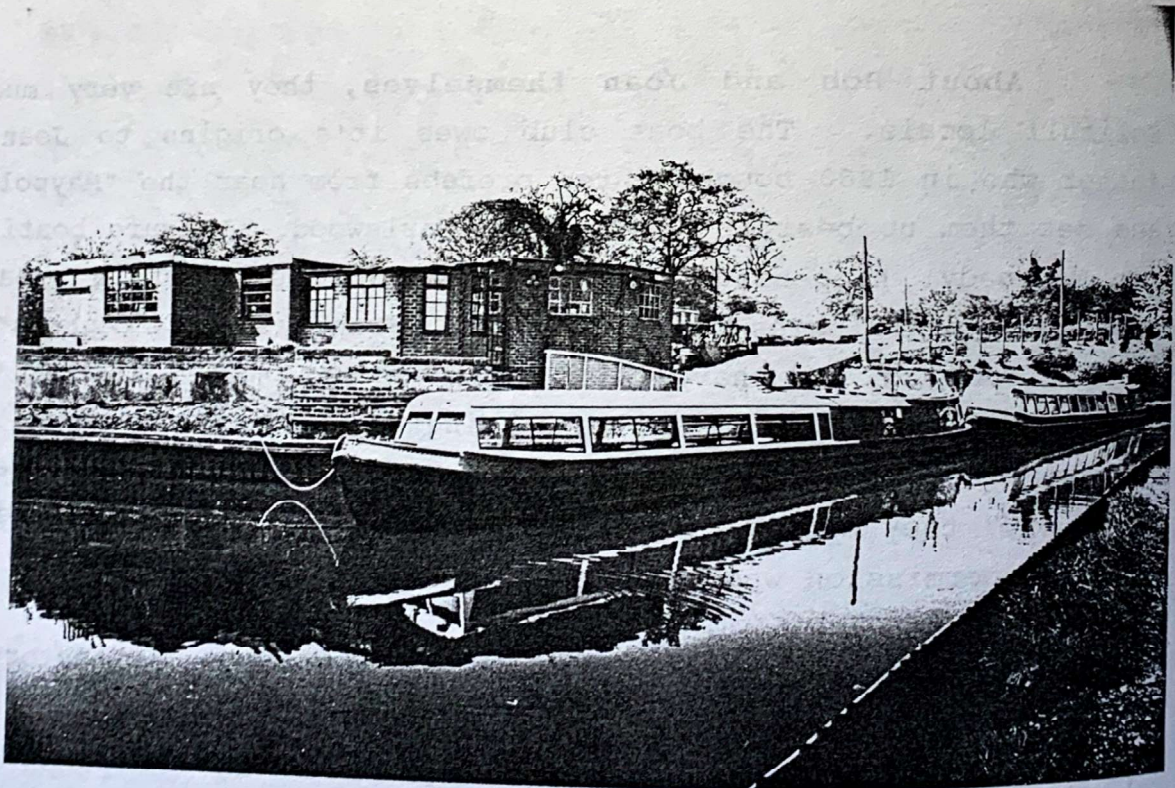
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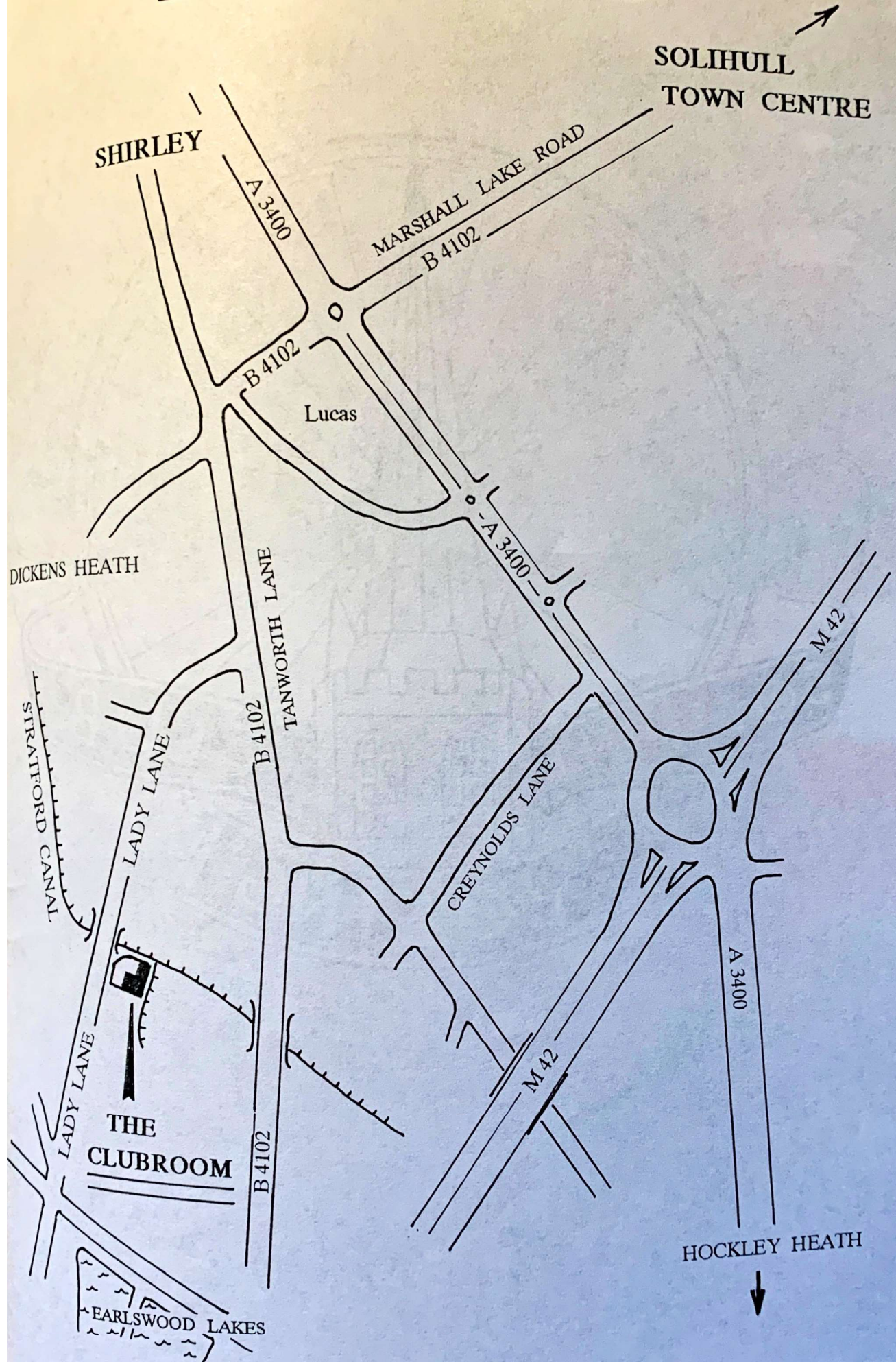
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Early days at the Motor Yacht Club,  
with two of the pleasure-trip boats moored alongside.



# WHERE TO FIND US



SHIRLEY

SOLIHULL  
TOWN CENTRE

Lucas

DICKENS HEATH

STRAITFORD CANAL

THE  
CLUBROOM

EARLSWOOD LAKES

HOCKLEY HEATH





SOLIHULL COLOURS (minus one!) OUT FOR THE 1999 PRUTOUR.

ON A SUNDAY "C" RUN (Before RED SHORTS were banned!)



