

# Poole Wheelers

Poole Wheelers are very lucky to have a record of club history written to cover the period from its formation on 10th November 1926 through to 1986.

The Reminiscences of Harold Cribb were published by the Ashley Press in Poole, but we are only aware of one surviving copy which is in the safe hands of Ros Spencer. Harold Cribb was an active and very keen club member throughout those 60 years until his death in 1988.

I intend to re publish the reminiscences and with the help of club members expand the story using pictures and first hand accounts to bridge the gap to the current day. If you have pictures or any useful memories that you wish to add to the History of Poole Wheelers please contact the [webmaster](#).

## **Presidents**

1926-1943 L.E. James	1965-1969 A. Smith
1944-1947 W.A. Dightam	1970-1971 R. Mills
1948-1949 H. Cribb	1972-1975 P. Beckley
1950-1953 E.G. Speck	1976-1986 H. Cribb
1954-1955 A. Rothwell	1987-2000 J. Jefferies
1956-1959 R.F. Russell	2001-2009 C. Price
1960-1964 J. Jefferies	

## **Club Champions**

1930 V.Doe	1963 A. Spencer
1931 M.F. Cobb	1964 A. Spencer
1932 N.H. Barnes	1965 A. Spencer
1933 N.H. Barnes	1966 No Award
1934 N.H. Barnes	1967 M. Green
1935 R.C. Lydford	1968 No Award
1936 R.C. Lydford	1969 P. Downer
1937 A.W. Wren	1970 No Award
1938 K. Harrison	1971 No Award
1939-47 No Award	1972 P. Rawlinson
1948 W.G. Knight	1973 P. Rawlinson
1949 W.G. Knight	1974 R. Wisbey
1950 K. Furniss	1975 R. Wisbey
1951 K. Furniss	1976 A. Spencer
1952 K. Furniss	1977 C. Ballam
1953 R. Wadham	1978 C. Ballam

1954 S. Dunford	1979 D. Brown
1955 R. Wadham	1980 D. Brown
1956 R. Wadham	1981 No Award
1957 R. Manners	1982 G. Harding
1958 R. Manners	1983 S. Oliver
1959 R. Moon	1984 T. Icke
1960 A. Spencer	1985 T. Icke
1961 A. Spencer	1986 T. Icke
1962 A. Spencer	

### Looking Back.

"It is always interesting to learn how things begin, particularly in the case of the "POOLE WHEELERS C. & A.C.", where the rise to national recognition — indeed fame, has been so rapid..

Rapid is an appropriate term, for it was only five years ago on November 10th, 1926, that the Club began its activities. But long before then, probably two years before, there had been cycling club - of sorts - operating in Poole and district. This Club had many names, its membership was few and very select, objects it had none, unless it was to ride mudguardless, bell-less, brakeless bicycles, with very high gears for long Sunday rides, the mileage of which seldom fell below 120. It was a club of a few fiery enthusiasts, without subscription, rules, or elected officials. Sometimes it was known as "Mentone Wheelers", an earlier name was the "Parkstone Suicide Club". Charlie Kellaway was the acknowledged leader, no-one elected him, no one contested or questioned his authority.. He was a remarkable, lovable, autocrat. Of the rank and file, Stan Carter. an early Poole lightweight enthusiast, in fact the only one of the Old Gang, still faithful to our pastime; Bill Jeans and the late Charlie Cull, are names easily remembered. Later such common fry as Alex. A. Josey, Laurie Hazell and Jimmy Skerman joined the ranks.

But it was strange circumstances that later caused the formation of an orthodox club under the original title of Poole Wheelers' C.C. It was really the combination of a feeling of justifiable pride and a good humoured resentment of the withering banter of Jimmy James of the Century Road Club, who had come to live amongst us. He had scornfully but helpfully picked so many holes in our method of cycling that we felt like one big moth-eaten vest, that sowed the seeds clubdom in our breasts.

For on October 3rd, 1926. Kellaway and Josey had won first and second prizes in a novices "25" promoted by the Wessex Road Club. It is worthy to digress in order to record here that it was E.B.Brown, now the famous national record holder who was third in that event. Well, on the return from Ringwood after the race, at the crossroads at Kinson, the matter was decided. Josey was to convene a meeting to see if a club was desirable and practical. Jimmy James agreed to take the chair. The meeting was duly held in Poole Liberal Hall, November 10th 1926, and although only eight, L.E.James, C.C.F.Josey. G.Frampton. B.Jeans, L.Poole, J.Skerman, C.W.Kellaway and A.A Josey attended, the club which in five short years has risen so high in the world of wheels, began its life.

It is interesting to recall how things began". So said Alex Josey in the introduction to the 1932 Members Handbook.

### **Pre - War Days**

Those eight members who attended that inaugural meeting must have been surprised and elated at the rapid influx of new members, fourteen in 1927., seventeen in 1928 and a like number in 1929, including the writer.

By the time Alex wrote those words the membership was 124.

By 1931 the club had won 20 Open and 15 team events, this in an era when there were only 6 clubs running Open events. They were, Wessex, Southampton, Portsmouth, Yeovil, Bournemouth Arrow and ourselves. Those members who joined before the 1930s included, of course, Bill Harvell (who performed so well in the Los Angeles Olympics in 1932), Norman Barnes, Ray Cleal and Ernie Holmwood who with Bill won the 1933 National Pursuit title at Herne Hill in a very fast time. Norman, with his 'stoker' Frank Feakes, won both the country's major tandem 50s in 1931 handing out a beating to the legendary Frank Southall and Stan Butler. It is with sadness I record the death of our old friend Frankie Feakes, at his home in Clandown, Avon, just a month after reaching his 80th birthday.

There were others at this time who could give the established 'stars' a run, one I remember was Norman Watkins, a fine stylish rider, but inclined to be a loner. Vic Doe, Jack Merchant and Ron Silk were very successful, particularly on the road, these last three were later to join the Wessex R.C.

In this period we lost three members in fatal accidents. Firstly, Charlie Cull, whilst descending Evening Hill on a tandem, then a young lad named Morris on the humped backed bridge just past Tricketts Cross. The third tragedy happened to Gladys Emery who, while descending from Fleets railway bridge was in collision with a motor cyclist at the then junction. It was this fatality that led to the first roundabout being built there.

### **A Bicycle made for two**

The club captain in those early years was Bert Bennett, an ex Dorset Regiment sergeant who married one of the lady members, Gwen Hawkins. They decided to take a tandem honeymoon. The ceremony was at St. John's Church, Ashley Road, the crowd almost closed the road. I remember the Wheelers passing the tandem over the crowd to allow the couple to cycle off, preceded by the Pathe' News van with the camera man standing on top winding the camera and followed by many of the Wheelers on their bikes. Later we were invited by the manager of the Gaumont Cinema in Bournemouth to view the Pathe News item and remain for the film, which was, by the way, mine and others' first 'talkie'.

In the early thirties there was a further influx of members, among them Aubrey Jenkins, Ivor Evans, Ted Cake, Harry Hemmings. Walt Paget, Arthur Beesley, Joe Small, Ernie Bridle, Bill Kiddle, Walt Peach, Vic Allner, Reg Mullins and two young ladies Elsie Russell and Kitty Turner, who became Mrs N.Barnes and Mrs H,.Cribb respectively.

The first Open '12' in 1933 was organised by Ernie Bridle. Bill Kiddle took over in 1934 and yours truly in 1935, and really became a star event. Included in the field were all three leading contenders for B.A.R. honours.

After Alex joined the staff of 'Cycling' in London, Len Ryall took over, and, although later to relinquish the helm, was many years a prodigious worker -for the club. Len is now member of Bournemouth A.C. and a highly respected National timekeeper.

In 1929 an approach was made by the Poole Harriers, who were the local Athletic Club, to amalgamate with the Poole Wheelers. The outcome saw the formation of the Poole Wheelers C and A C. Many fine athletes were to represent the Club, among them Stan Pauley and Freddy Smith, both fine 'milers'. Tom Shepherd, a fine sprinter, held Dorset County records at 100 and 220 yard distances. Tom opened his first cycle shop at 15a Wimborne Poole in 1930, while Stan opened his General Store in 1931. Both these businesses are now run by their sons. Tom was many years President of our Poole Track League and always sponsored a meeting until 1984. Sadly Tom passed away October 1986. Alex Josey also died within a day of Tom, he was in Singapore where he had resided for many years. Alex wrote a number of books, the first of which was called "Accident". I am fortunate in having a copy of this intriguing story of a secret agent—"a cyclist of course"— working against foreign forces in the area covered by the Round the Harbour event.

With the loss of Tom Shepherd the club has lost three life members, the others being Bill Harvell and Ray Cleal. Strangely Alex was not a life member, a lapse by the Committee long ago I feel sure.

Jimmy James was the President from the beginning until the war years, although a member of the Century R.C. He was also fine long distance walker, a regular competitor in the fashionable London to Brighton walk. He encouraged some of members to take up the sport and indeed many of the cyclists at the end of the racing season would get into training and have a 'bash' at the seven mile distance. Apart from walking events at the track meetings a regular annual event was the Poole to Wareham and back road walk won in 1932 by Tommy Green of Belgrave Harriers in 2.41.04 for the 18.75 mile course, our own Stan Pauley second. Incidentally, Tommy Green won the 50 kilometre Olympic title in the same year.

In the mid 30s success did not come quite so readily.. I suppose many members married and did not -find the time to devote to training, and working hours were much longer in those days. In addition Bill Harell and Norman Barnes moved to Southampton and London respectively.

In 1937 a young man, A.W.Wren was the star. Starting in a novice event, which he won, he was victorious in every senior club event. He also won some Open 50s at Southampton in spite of having to ride from Poole to the start. Later in the season two young Welshmen came from the Rhondda to work in the building trade. They were Ken Harrison who had just set the Welsh Competition 25 record at 1.2.46 in the Bridgend Wheelers event and Tommy John who favoured the longer events, so the prospects were good for the 1938 season. The first 25 in that year was a win for Wren, but the second event, with Ken on a new bike, gave Ken the advantage . From then on there was a constant battle with the honours mostly in Kens -Favour. By mid season Wren suddenly quit the sport leaving us to find a replacement for the Pursuit team who were doing well and heading for another go at the title. Since that day I have realised that instant stardom is not a good thing, you become geared to

winning and the attitude to losing becomes suspect. In spite of the problems created by the departure of Wren the 1938 the Pursuit team progressed to the quarter final in Paddington but lost to Norwood Paragon. The team was Ray Cleal, who returned to cycling after the great personal loss his young wife, Ken Harrison., Wally Whitfield and Jimmy Leggett.

By now there were many more young members around, among them Les Drewett. Alby Dean, Jack Spray and Sid Rose. One member I should not forget is Charlie Sawyer who helped me settle in to club life nearly sixty years ago. Les was good on the road and won several Open 25s, while Sid performed well on the track and became known as "Sprinter Rose". There is no doubt in my mind that he could have obtained National recognition with his lovely fluid action and finishing sprint, but his suspect temperament meant that he was easily discouraged if events went other than he expected. Wally Whitfield was just the opposite, he could ride any old "tank" and get it over the line. Nearing now the end of the thirties, with war clouds gathering, almost all the members were whisked away, and that effectively closed us down. With myself acting as secretary, working in a reserved occupation in the local shipyard, the only task left was to hold a yearly meeting, that was sometimes only attended by two or three people.

### **Post - War Days**

Off the mark in 1946 and club runs started again. Attendances gradually improved with four of my family bikes loaned out most weeks. Names that come to mind are Sybil Mayer, Audrey King, Beryl Ford, Hazel Bacon, Sylvia Rae, Jack Jeffries, Keith Furniss and Ron Cribb, a nephew of mine. Jack Glazbrook, an exceptional organiser for his age, also turned out to be a fine rider, but unfortunately left to join the R.A.F. and emigrated to New Zealand. In 1986 Jack returned to England on holiday, and renewed old acquaintances at our club night.

Sybil Mayer became the first Ladies Association champion and had some great battles with Hazel, they were way ahead of the opposition. Sylvia performed well in support of these two. Later Jack introduced a young lady named Jean Young, a determined lass who won two of the annual walks that were introduced by dear old George Batt, in Poole Park. Jean became Mrs Jefferies while Sybil married Keith Furniss. Keith, of course, became Club Champion and held the 12 record the 1980s, which must be a record in itself. Jack took part in most aspects of the sport, except distance riding, with many battles on the track.. One occasion I particularly remember was a great battle with Eric Gore in the Club 20. Jack was also good at organising outings to places like the Herne Hill events, from which he always strived to make a profit club, early signs of his good business sense. At the club dinners rock and roll was in vogue and things were going with a swing. Jack and Jean would kick off their shoes, the sign for others to leave the floor, leaving them to entertain the assembly with a display of dancing which was much appreciated.

### **The 1940's**

On the athletic side things were moving apace under the lead of one John Hopkins and as they were now so strong suggestions were made about separation. After a while the proposal was dropped, but the seed had been sown, with the cyclists now making the same noises. The separation became fact in late 1948 and in 1949 the cycling section reverted to the Poole Wheelers Cycling Club once more. This left the

athletes to form the Poole and County Athletic Club. A close tie was still held between the two sections during the early years and, in fact, we undertook to survey and measure the course for the Dorchester to Poole Relay, a distance of 32 miles.

The secretary, who bore the brunt of the trauma of the separation, was Alan Rothwell, who donated the Rothwell Trophy. My friendship with Alan and Vera was something special, he was a quiet scholarly man, with a University education, but I know that his stay in our area held especially happy memories. There are those in the Club now who remember the camping weekend in their cottage orchard at Keyworth. That was the weekend we also celebrated Joan Whatley's 18th birthday. She is now of course, Mrs. Ray Price, yes, she was a Poole Wheeler! We kept in touch with Alan and Vera over many years, but after leaving us he travelled the world in his work for the Admiralty and it was a great shock to receive news from Vera that Alan had passed away suddenly in his office some five years ago. I travelled to London for the funeral and it was very evident that they had had happy memories of Dorset as Vera proudly introduced me as a Poole Wheeler, a clubmate of Alan.

Wally Knight took the job as Secretary about this time. Other members included Derek Hale, Dave Short, Dennis Bartlett, and Tom Barker, all fast 25 milers, and Dave also excelled on the track. Mike Gash was another young member at this time.

### **The 1950's**

Sybil Mayer was Secretary between 1951 and 1955.. After the Open 25 we would come back to my house and sort out the result. Sybil would type it and we rolled it out on the hand duplicator. We then folded and stamped each one to catch the 5 p.m. post in Bournemouth. We were once congratulated by a competitor from London who cycled back after the event and stayed the night near Town, arriving home mid—morning, where his mother handed him the result sheet.

Along this time Ron Speck and his parents took a great interest in the Club and it was them who persuaded my two girls, Margaret and Janet, to join. Other members at this time were John and Margaret Holcombe, Dave Ballam and his sister Mary, Roy and Ron Allner,, Brian Crane, Freddy Bagshaw. Colin Matthews, Carroll Rawlings, John Bridle, Graham Walker, Eric Lewis, and Brian Dudfield. In 1954 Steve Dunford was Club champion, followed by Roy Wadham, Bob Manners and Ron Moon, the latter won the Track and Hill Climb and won the Rothwell Trophy. Two others I almost missed were Chris and Micky Russell, the latter won the Hill Climb at his first attempt, he was also President from 1956/59.

In 1959 Janet Spencer was Ladies Champion, with second place going to Carol Sarchet. Janet Cribb was secretary for seven years until 1962 when she handed over to her brother, Ian, who took over for the next four years. It was during this period that Allan Spencer scored his six Club Championships commencing 1960.

### **The 1960's**

It was in 1960 that I was relieved of the responsibility of running the ' 12', handing over to John Holcombe, who was rewarded by a record ride from Jon Bayliss of 263 miles. Was this a vintage year? It was certainly the year when the name of Peter Rawlinson appeared in the minutes and Allan took the '25' "inside" with 59.40.

In 1964 Pete Rawlinson won the Hill Climb, this was of course before he started his liaison with those hangers-on, but non members, Woodhouse. Eldridge & Pope! Jack Jeffries was now in his fifth year as President but was about to hand over to Arthur Smith, whose son Barry was an accomplished rider..

In the early sixties Tony Phillips, Steve Turner McComish joined. Ann was to take the Ladies 25 time down to 1.3.20. Later of course she married the very talented and likeable Joe Mummery. Ian Graham also joined and looked after our money for several years as our Treasurer. In 1967 Phil Stacey became Secretary and remained in office for four years,

1968 was a disaster year for the Open 12 as the promoter failed to produce start sheets and the R.T.T.C. decreed that a committee of four should be responsible for the event. These were Don Chalmers. Bournemouth Arrow, Phil Downer John Holcombe and myself. This idea was adopted for three years but in 1972 Phil Downer took full control, although by now a member of the Bournemouth Jubilee. Under Phil Stacey, and aided by Colin Price, Chris Best and Don Standhaft, the club efforts were in massed start events and these four lads won many awards in this field. Phil Stacey was very good in getting young riders out on runs, but he was soon to emigrate to New Zealand, followed later by Colin Price and Chris Best. Before Colin sailed he took the club secretary's job for a year and Phil both won the League Track 20 miles event for which Colin still holds the record. Ann Bevan was at this time the Social Secretary, eventually to become Mrs. Colin Price.

### **The 1970's**

The finances of the Club improved considerably during this period due to a weekly Draw run by me and in 1972, as nobody was available, I took over the Secretary's job. I was very pleased when Ros Spencer took over from me in 1973 and I contented myself with the Social side.

Percy Beckley was now President.. He was not a cyclist but he had been such a help to the Club over many years in providing catering, particularly for the '12'. He had assisted in this event for many years. It was during my lone year as Secretary that Sid Rooker appeared and, ever since, has been a prolific worker for the sport. Sid favours the massed start and Cyclo-Cross, and has organised many of the Wheelers' events and indeed the Track League. Sid always turned out for Time Trials when available. By now Pete Rawlinson had taken on the job of running the Open 12 and is possibly the longest continual promoter of the event.

Along this time Nick Best was performing well, taking his brother's place in Club events, and another young rider Andy Sawyer was rapidly becoming a force in schoolboy event's. He was especially adept at Cyclo-Cross. On the advice of a sage in Southampton it was decided to enter him in the Championship at Leicester in 1974. I was invited to attend and Andy's mother, Janet, and Eddie Durden drove us to Coalville in good time for the start. We all walked the Course, which was under water. In the first lap Andy was 21st, second lap 11th, third lap 5th and took 3rd place by half a wheel. The following year the event was held in Southampton and after a disastrous start Andy romped through the field and won by almost a lap to become the National Schoolboy Champion.

In the other extreme Andy rode the Poole 12 in which he covered 214 miles,

although here my memory may be suspect. He had a yen for motor cycles and tried scrambling with some success, later he acted as leader in the Massed Start event held at Bovington Camp.

In 1973 a young couple joined the club, they were Roger and Diana Wisbey. Roger immediately offered to do the Treasurer's job. His connection with the sport started with a Hertfordshire club. Diana was not a cyclist but possibly fed up with seeing her man depart on runs or events, later decided to join in and became quite proficient and a welcome competitor both by the club and the Ladies Association.

Mike Woolfries appeared on the scene around this time and quickly made his mark, he performed well in class events, mostly in massed starts..

The remarkable success of the veterans returning to competition encouraged Allan Spencer, although not yet of that ilk, to get back into action, with Ros, anxious to disprove the theory put about by some, including me, that she was holding him back, (mostly leg-pulling, of course). In fact she encouraged Allan all she could, whilst at the same time, as Secretary, she was doing great work to promote the Club's image.

Both Allan and Roger got down to a 61 minute 25 and I had firm hopes of 'under the hour' rides the following year. Although Roger only competes occasionally, Allan is a regular and we are still hoping.

In 1977 the Ratcliffe brothers, Martin and Peter, joined and with Steve Baker were a most successful trio. Phil Harvey and John Frost joined later and both enjoyed some success, Phil mostly on the Track and veteran John on the road. During this time Chris Ballam was responsible for many club events whilst old faithfuls Allan and Peter were still promoting 25s and 12 hour events.

Sponsorship of events from the Beacon Hill Brick Company at this time was mainly due to the connection of their Production Manager, Eddie Durden, with young Andy Sawyer and his mother Janet, who also worked for the Company. Eddie was voted Chairman in 1977.

I notice from the minutes of 1973 that I had reawakened interest in a weekly draw which was quite successful due to obtaining members from my place of work, thus making the collecting of money easier.

Competition for the Senior Championship in this period was not at its most competitive, and in 1979 allrounder Dick Brown took the senior title; he was also a prolific marathon runner. Brian Hunt and a young lady, Rita Maddison, joined in this year and served on the committee. Rita was mostly successful in beauty contests and I watched her on the television when she reached the last seven in the Miss World contest. Brian preferred touring to racing but performed really well in the 1980's, getting down to a 55 minute 25 and just outside a 2 hour 50.

In March 1978 tragedy struck again. While riding in an early 25 Diana Wisbey was in collision with a car at the Bere Regis turn and lost her life. As a result of this "U" turns were discouraged in most events. A fund was started which resulted in the Club supplying the Ladies Association with the Diana Wisbey Memorial Trophy.

### **The 1980's**

Mike Gash had now returned to the Club and with son Chris riding well he also tried a few evening 10's, only to fall foul of a bad pot-hole which resulted in a stay in hospital..

Later young Jamie Harding was a schoolboy star riding in short distance and track events, being chosen for representative events, but he lost interest when approaching adulthood.

Another tragedy struck when Peter Bennett was killed on the way to work on the Upton by-pass.

In 1981 we suffered great family distress with the loss of our son, Ian, a former Secretary, following a short illness..

Ann Manners served on the Social committee in 79 and was a help to me acting as a programme and collection steward in my Track League.

It must have been around 1979/80 when Terry Icke appeared. I remember marshalling at Baker's Arms when he rode his first event, a low-gear early season race, and his easy style was evident. He was soon to become a rider to be feared in the area but the biggest surprise of all was to come, when he entered the 1982 24 hour championship.. When questioned about his training preparation for the event I must admit I had reservations about his ability to complete a 24. Had he embarked on any all-day rides? The answer was a definite no. With only two 100 mile races to his credit it seemed unlikely. Looking back now, it seems our worries were unnecessary as he seemed to sail through the event with ease, if finishing a 24 can be so described.

I know it was the first 24 in which I failed to return home for a couple of hours kip, and up in the Forest around 2 am he reported trouble with his lamp but kept going to the Headquarters where Tom Lodge, of Wessex R.C. took some ten minutes to replace it. I had to persuade Terry to go inside for a cuppa. At the Finish the promoter had entered him on the Result Board in 3rd place, but in fact I knew that Ian Dow was to occupy that place and relegate Terry to fourth with a marvellous ride of 461.8 miles.

In 1983 he took ten firsts, three seconds and four thirds in Open Events, starting with his win in the Round the Harbour. and found time to win seven club events. With times of 54.07 and 1.53.52 he had definitely arrived! Moving home in 1984 restricted his riding, but in 1985 he made a determined effort at the Best All Rounder Competition and surprised everyone, including himself, by finishing in sixth position with times of 1.50.11, 3.54.08 and winning the Open 12 with 274.8. Although Terry was the star of the last five years we must not forget the influx of new members who have joined us. Jeanette Jackson, Paulina Benham. Ed Rispin. Mike Yates and Pete Hopkins, the last two have now moved on but are still in touch. Later John and Robert Griffiths joined. John in particular has performed really well with fine rides of 55 and getting inside for the 50. The return to the club of Martin Allner brought renewed interest from his family, and the introduction of his friend Paul Hanwell who, in the short space of two seasons has been inside for 25's and won the last two Hill Climbs. Another one who has returned with renewed interest is Paul Jeffrey, a former schoolboy track racing enthusiast, as is Paul Jeffries. son of Jack, who has performed well, particularly on the track, but who has now decided to try his luck with the Arrow.

Around 1982 we had quite a few members attending the C.T.C. 'Potterers' runs, Paul Coope, Aubrey Jenkins, Walt Pagett, Ken Love, Norman Barnes. Bob Soane and yours truly. Ken Love has been Club Secretary for the last two years but I know he will agree that Ros still does a lot of work for the Club. Indeed I am sure that all members look to Allan and Ros as the mainstays of our club and have been for the last 12 years. Their home has been the headquarters all that time. Ros also spends many hours timekeeping for our club as well as many others.

Jack Jeffries is a real stalwart and his interest and dedication for the good of the Wheelers has resulted in a revival of spirit from members.

Colin Price has returned to us from New Zealand and, as an added bonus, his experience can be a real help to the younger members, especially in the Track events. One of our most consistent performers over the last few years has been Pete Corbin. Another who shone for a while was Gerald Veal along with Andrew Rose and Ian Mills, who were competing with some success. Steve Oliver moved over from the Arrow and joined in both competitive and committee work.

Mike Malins and Paul Wilkin have recorded some good times, the latter is building up a good interest in the B.C.F. and Massed Start events. Paul Szucs rode the Track this year quite successfully and a crop of young riders who we hope will carry on the Club's activities include Scott Wheeler, Mike Etchingham. Simon Hume and Darren Martell. While the complete family of Danny. Sue and Paul Roff are doing great work in committee and catering services. David George and Simon Slater deserve a mention, they both availed themselves of all the Clubs' activities, David took the secretary's job for a spell and Simon did particularly well in schoolboy events. The T.V. "Survival of the Fittest" winner, Bernie Shrosbree, joined last year, and turned in some very good times in an effort to improve his overall triathlon performance.

I am sure I have forgotten many past or even present members of our club, for which I apologise, but sixty years is a long time to remember and like so many of my age the present is harder than the past. My membership has caused me heartache on occasions but many happy memories prevail, especially at the recent evening celebration of our Golden Wedding.

Reading through the many Minute Books it would appear that I have spent a lot of time in the 'chair' and my most regular jobs were Press and Social secretary, in fact I can recall that every job in the Club has been mine at some time, starting with Club Captain in the thirties, with the exception of Treasurer I have never been able to get my hands on the money

The club can be justly proud of the fact that since its formation the Poole Track League has been promoted exclusively by Pete Rawlinson and myself. Pete can also take credit in that he is now a "Cabinet Minister", having been elected to serve on the National Council of the R.T.T.C.

In the future we may find problems in continuing the sport in its present form, but whatever happens I am sure present and future members of the Wheelers will continue to play a part of the great sport and pastime of cycling.

## **Determination**

This is the story of a young Poole Wheeler over half a century ago, a keen young competitor, much like a few good juniors who have followed over the years. This lad was competing in a fifty mile time trial on a Southampton course and was on a 'ride' but, with just two miles to go, was in collision with a sports car and suffered severe injuries, the most serious being a shattered leg between the knee and hip

He was taken to Southampton Hospital where he remained for more than three months.

I remember when, with a clubmate, we cycled to visit him, it rained all the way. We gazed in amazement at the rigging of wires and pulleys attached to his limb, unaware until we came to depart of the two puddles on the floor from our sodden clothes.

After the months in hospital he was brought back to Bournemouth to continue the treatment at Boscombe. He now was a little heavier, his broken bones being held together with two metal plates and screws, a bit like the effort of the doctors' on Barry Sheene.

But the worst news was about to break, the doctors told him that his knee, after months of being held in position, was permanently stiff and, having tried to bend it under anaesthetic, there was no way it was going to respond, bad news indeed for a keen young cyclist

This lad had other ideas, he got his bike out and tried to ride it but when the peddle came on the up stroke it took him off the saddle, being a fixed gear which we all rode in those days

His next move was to remove the two cranks and take them to an engineer who cut and spliced them together at only 4.5 inches, a shortening of two inches. This cut the regular rise of his rear end from the saddle somewhat and soon he appeared on the club runs, and I often followed him for miles. While riding in file, with Reg (that was his name) bobbing up and down like a yo-yo. Although it was not obvious to us there must have been a slight giving of the knee joint, because the next move was back to 6.5 inch cranks and after many months and a multitude of miles a gradual lowering of the saddle. Some thousands of miles later Reg was a regular but feared hardrider. I've known strong young riders say they have prayed for a spill, anything to stop the relentless pace of Reg who late in the day would always grind away at the front. Later his idea of a day's run would be up as far as the Hogs Back in Surrey and back!

Much later of course, in the dark days of 1940, Reg found himself in the Army where he served for some five or six years and he smiles when recalling his problems with the parades.. He could do anything but 'about turn', this exercise caused him to lose balance, much to the annoyance of the drill instructors who would accuse him of malingering until Reg would quietly refer them to his medical records which stated 'excused marching'. Funny really when his favourite pastime on a day off would be a twenty mile hike around the Welsh Border country..

Some years ago he had to have further surgery, the plates were causing some problems, but now approaching three score years and ten is quite fit and still working and attended the Dinner recently.. The name is Reg Mullins, nicknamed Rosy because of his complexion, he still is Rosy and example to us all..

## **Memories**

I remember a very cold winter club run in the early 1930 to Horton Inn and left over the hills to the junction with the Blandford - Salisbury road above Farnham. Situated here was well known Dew Pond, probably 60 feet across and shaped like deep saucer with a concrete surface to collect water.. At this time there was probably 3 to 4 feet depth off water in the pond, but sufficient dry concrete around the edge to make miniature banked track.

Soon we were all furiously tearing around this track but within a short time we were getting giddy and staggered off all except Ted and Harry.. While we watched Harry continued circling with Ted tightly following his wheel. Suddenly Harry paused and turned into the water with Ted following, but the -latter just managed to check and scramble clear with only WET legs but his bike was submerged.. Poor old Harry rode on and went under, he staggered up but fell- after the second submersion his giddiness left him and he came out dragging his bike.. He stood on the exposed bank with the winter winds howling across the downs, within minutes Harry was freezing. My suggestion that he should ride home as fast as possible was not approved and we did not know what to do.. Then Norman Barnes had an idea, he went to the only house on the junction and came out with an armful of papers, which were twice as big as they are now.. I sent the only girl present for a walk, took Harry behind a hayrick, stripped him, and with my spare pullover as a vest we wrapped his torso and limbs in newspaper then replaced hi wrung out clothing, when he walked out to get his bike he looked like the Incredible Hulk. We decided the best thing to do was to start a tear up to get warm and five miles later Harry told me that he was probably the warmest of us all.

## **My First Club Bike**

My first cycle would be frowned upon by all the club members today. It was an ordinary dreadnought with 24" frame and 28x1-1/2" wheels, straight handlebars, to be replaced later by an old pair of French bars with wooden hand grips given to me by a friend, and the original freewheel changed to an 84' + fixed.

That bike opened up a whole new world to me, it took me on every club run either hardriders or social and I discovered the delights of the Dorset coast and lakes, the leafy New Forest, and the rolling County of Wiltshire..

It was fully 12 months before I managed to replace it with a real lightweight, which was itself replaced by my lovely nickel plated Merlin, complete with the "King of the Road' oil lamp, seen in the photograph.

## "Post Harold Cribb"

This is where the existing knowledge in Poole Wheelers members will need to come into play.

We need to build information relating to the following decades.

### 1990's



The 1990's saw increasing traffic volumes which gradually limited the numbers of courses available towards the close of the decade.

Club riders included Terry Icke, Melissa Kitcher, Paul Doughty, Andrew Hartwell, Tony Saunders, Colin Price, Mike Malins, Paul Hanwell, Nigel Rendell, Adrian Snell, Mike Snell, Gary Steadman, Terry Belbin, Mark Valentine, John Hook, Eddie Beck, Paul Hughes, John Burrows, Graham Hurst, Paul Harris, Brian Harris

Successful riders of the era included Clive Brooks VC Camelot, Glenn Longland and Lee Paxton Antelope RT, Eamonn Deane BJW.

Races promoted in the area included the usual 10's 25's and 50's. In 1995 there were 64 Open events which included 2 x 100 mile TT and a 12 hour promoted by Poole Wheelers

In 1996 Poole Wheelers hosted the National 12 hour Time trial which was run on a course centred on the Roundhouse Roundabout at Sturminster Marshall with legs off to Blandford, Poole, Bere Regis and Bakers Arms. Ros Spencer recruited a huge number of helpers to assist in the logistical nightmare that is a National 12 hour event. Marshals were required for each leg of the course. She arranged for feeding stations as required by the RTTC. The HQ was at the David Lloyd centre in Ringwood.

After a day of massive effort by the riders, helpers and organisers, we were rewarded with the record breaking ride by Andy Wilkinson of Port Sunlight Wheelers. He set a new national record of 300.271 miles in the 12 hours averaging over the 25 mph.... Andy managed to set a new record at 50 and 100 miles and the 12 hour. He went on to set a number of end to end records. He rode the RTTC events during 1996 and disappeared into other endurance pursuits.

1998 saw the final Poole Wheeler promoted 12 hour event won by Malcolm Cox covering 279 miles. The roads had become too heavy with traffic and the danger to riders considered too great to continue. The South DC ran a 12 hour event in 1999 which was never repeated.

By the close of the 90's there remained one 100 mile time trial run by BJW.

During the late 90's there were a number of tales that I can recall. Paul Doughty rode into the rear of a tanker on the Wimborne bypass during a race and spent a good deal of time recovering, he also received a ban for his troubles.

Terry Icke suffered injuries including a broken pelvis as he rounded Stag gate early in the 12 hour event. He got out the saddle to bring himself back up to speed and woke up in hospital.

Mark Valentine suffered life threatening injuries when knocked off his bike on his way to work on the Bournemouth spur road one dark winters morning. He has since returned to cycling and has ridden a number of recent events

## **The 21st Century**

The beginning of 2000 saw Poole Wheelers entering a team of riders in the Tour de North Contentin centered on Cherbourg in Northern France. This stage race saw a racing team under the banner of Poole Wheelers. The true Poole Wheelers were joined by other club riders. The team was Terry Icke, Tony Saunders, Mark Valentine, Paul Harris, Mike Tarrant (owner of Prendas Ciclismo) Eamonn Deane (BJW) Roland Tilley, Paul Doughty.

The end result of this was Eamonn came 3rd in the 255km race and Roland 7th A truly creditable performance by all the riders and a great way to start the 2000's....

Paul Doughty and Melissa Kitcher moved into the equestrian scene after many years of supporting cycling. John Hook moved to Spain a sad loss to the club at a time when he just looked to be getting even quicker.

Riders entering into the race scene were Max Baldock, Mike Graven, Pete Cotty, Mark Dobbs, Pete Grounds, Lou Dutch, Richard Davidson, Gareth Cobb. and re-entering Paul Jeffrey

The sport of Triathlon has contributed to our success with many riders joining to improve their cycling section of the 3 disciplines, Richard Martin and Denzil Hunt reflect this trend

2006 was a particularly good year with the club winning the EDCA and South DC titles through having a consistent team of riders.

Whilst the old stalwarts are still competing for the club. We have been lucky to see the natural talent of younger riders shine through. Max Baldock had a very successful 2006 mixing it with the established riders and making a name for himself locally, particularly over the shorter distances.

Club activities seemed to have broadened considerably with riders in Etape events and other long distance events The 1600km Paris Brest Paris was attempted by Paul Dytham in 2007( he'll be doing it again next time) Cyclocross, Road racing and TLI events have all been well supported.

Amazingly the driving force behind the club has remained constant with Ros Spencer (mentioned in 1973) and Joan Price (Joan is mentioned in the 1940's account on the occasion of her 18th Birthday) giving up considerable amounts of their time to keep the events running.

Graham Hurst has been active as the Chairman and promoting cycling through his coaching with British cycling.

Colin Price (mentioned in the 60's please note) works tirelessly for the club whilst at the same time supporting his wife Ann.

Our club captain of the last two years Max Baldock has injected huge doses of enthusiasm into the 82 year old club resulting in a rejuvenation many thought they might never see. New members provide the promise of a great season in 2008 with Gary Tuskin, Leighton Girling, Adam Darcy-Wykes together with all the usual suspects.