

## The 2019 Tour of Worcestershire – 11<sup>th</sup> May

Well, the days just prior to the run were cold and wet and the forecast was for warmer weather but with heavy showers. Yuk. Trusting the forecast like a sucker, I put my waterproofs on ready for the soak. Also, our Secretary - Dave Spencer, had misread his own event categorisation and listed this event in the journal as "A Cleaner Roads" run, which really concerned me. I had already purposely avoided any fords in my plan but some of the roads could be very mucky indeed. However, as it had been so dry earlier the rain had been absorbed, no showers appeared, and yes, we did have a very clean run, so thank you Dave. The start was once again at The Old Wagon & Horses, selected because of its car park where trailers/vans could be left and facilities would be available. A few weeks prior, the management was changed and the pub would now not be opening until 12.00, so unfortunately there were no facilities available for us.



Undaunted, 19 bikes ranging from 1930 (Martyn's Sunbeam M5) to 1994 (the Guzzi engine Tri-King of Paul & Chris Harris ) assembled in the warming sunshine to chat and consume 2 tins worth of freshly baked biscuits and shortbreads courtesy of Marion, whose partner Alan was delayed by a rescheduled hospital appointment and would rejoin us at the halfway stop. All our machines were in lovely condition (*Especially John Shaw's Velocette. John is seen right apparently polishing an oil pipe. Fastidious or what?! Ed.*) and the focus of many knowledgeable conversations, which meant we didn't



get underway until about 10.40 with Martyn's Sunbeam needing just a little gentle persuasion to reawaken.

Several poor souls still suffering calorie deprivation at this time of the day were seen taking on further supplies after only 9 miles, at the café just off the A442 at Cutnall Green. It is a good café though and just for the record, I rode past it. (*Not calories Peter, it was coffee time! Ed.*) Crossing the River Severn at Holt Fleet, we all somehow managed to miss seeing Julian Edwards, who was waylaid by a puncture and was awaiting recovery. He'd had to detour home from the start but had rejoined at the river crossing and assumed he was well behind us all. He made it home safely.

Road closures are seemingly a mandatory inclusion in our recent runs. This arose at Wichenford, where a poorly signed diversion caused some confusion, but we got around it to pass through Willow Green and Berrow Green to emerge at Knightwick. Here the Talbot Inn was providing further refreshments to other poor undernourished souls.

Crossing the A44 we headed for Lulsley and Cradley where we came across a rally of several steam traction engines and lorries, which made a glorious sight and gave a cheery toot on the whistle as we passed by.



On one of my favourite roads we kept west of the Malverns for a 5 mile run via Old Colwall to cross the A449, pass through Eastnor and across the picturesque Castlemorton Common to lunch at The Plume of Feathers pub (left) on the B4208. Caz, the chef here, is a keen biker herself and was in the car park to greet us. She had put on a good and varied menu for us, so it was at least an hour and a half later when we emerged to commence our return.



Avoiding the Malvern Flower Show we meandered into Upton upon Severn to re-cross the river and head close by Croome Court to Wadborough, White Ladies Aston and Churchill. Two more of my favourite roads were to follow, the 5 miles from Crowle through Himbleton to Droitwich and the 6 mile run from Droitwich on Dodderhill Road to the A448, returning to the starting point

around the back of Chaddesley Corbett to avoid the Point To Point horse racing traffic. Approaching the finish, many people peeled off homeward so, few people met at the finish but most, subsequently, appeared to have had a good time. Poor Julian was seemingly the only casualty with his puncture, so thank you all for a great day.

Peter Gray