

# Quo Vadis?

The Journal of The Land's End John O'Groats Association



**Issue 113    Spring 2025**





Established 1983

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## Editorial.

Firstly, our own personal thank you to Brian for his exemplary service to the association. It is difficult to know what else to say. We all know of Brian's commitment to the cause. His support given to all the members of the group, his control of the AGM, the slick and faultless way the presentation evening is delivered. Also, his mastery of blowing up banks, and delivery of Stanley Holloway monologues. If you want to know more about the monologues, find yourself a comfortable chair and ask Brian.

Sometimes a change at the top of an organisation can signal problems. We all know of new brooms etc. However, our new Chair, Russell will, I am sure, wield his broom gently and with consideration, to continue with the association's progress into the future. We are lucky to have such an excellent new Chair.

We would also like to thank everyone who was at the AGM and so kind to Denise after her fall. ( I didn't fall, I tripped.)

If someone happened to lose their way and find themselves in the Toorak Hotel they could be forgiven for thinking they had slipped into a meeting of the Rotary club, or possibly, The Chipping Campden Geranium Appreciation Society. However, amongst the throng there lurks a group of extraordinary people. Every person present has a story to tell of their own journey, both from end to end, but also, their lives. Denise and I rode our tandem on Lejog in 2019 and Jogle in 2023. Neither were easy. I don't think any end to end could be. I can't imagine the commitment to walking the end to end. Even travelling by public transport or private car must be tiring. Despite this, every year hundreds of people set off to join our little community. If you give this some thought the unmistakable conclusion is that they are all as mad as us.

In this issue you will find a letter from our top contributor, Eleanor Goodge. She writes with the help of her assistant, Paul Goodge. In the last issue I maligned Paul by saying that we couldn't get rid of him. This is not true, just another misjudged attempt at humour. So, an apology to Paul, and please tell Eleanor to keep it coming. Also, Paul has donned the regalia of social secretary so we want to keep on the right side of him. We are looking forward to his plans for the next social weekend.

In this issue don't miss photographs of members receiving their trophies and certificates. If you were a recipient and do not appear here, please contact us and we will publish your photos in the next edition. On the back cover you will find photos of the presentation evening. These were taken early on while everyone was still moderately sober.

The Back Page Gallery has, over the last couple of copies been a roaring failure. I don't understand how so many people can travel so many miles without having an interesting photograph to contribute to the gallery. (I hope that sounds like a challenge!).

An interesting sign atop  
Drumochter Pass.



Another page not to be missed, is our new feature: Book Reviews! We have both been busy during the dark dismal winter, reading books about journeys made by members. If you have written a book or possibly a booklet about your journey, let us know and we'll review it. Alternatively, an article for Quo Vadis? could start you off on a literary career. Send us an article and experience the thrill of seeing your words in print. If you do not feel able to write your story, please contact us we can talk to you, and write an article for you. We will begin compiling the next issue as you are reading this, the sooner we hear from you the better.

We hope you enjoy all the articles from our fellow members. Please note the article by Alan Dracey was delivered to us in a large lorry and was much too big to fit into the magazine. The first half, Dieppe to Paris appears herein. Part Two, The Return will appear in the e version of this issue.

For readers of the e-QV? And maybe dyslexic, please be aware that we have a green e-QV? Which you can request from us.

To all you good eggs, Happy Easter, from your editors Ted and Denise.

## Not the AGM Minutes 2025

Arriving in “Brian” time guaranteed me a prime seat between Toorak regulars Tony Bagley and Ken Osbourne rather than relegation to the second row. Brian was counting down to the meeting but we managed to adjust his time zone to GMT, allowing five more minutes for members to arrive. However on the dot of ten no-one could have missed Brian opening the meeting. Rumour has it that this is the only time Brian has been known to raise his voice (perhaps we should have confirmed this with his son). Russell’s eardrums are probably still vibrating.

We heard well-deserved tributes to four members who have died in the past year: Krister Andren, Les Holmes, John Blanchard and our President Roy Walker, standing for a minute in silence to remember them all. Roy was a legend in his time, raising over £2.5 million for charity in 1988 when, along with four colleagues, he organised a relay walk from John o’ Groats to Land’s End. He regularly attended the AGM weekend until prevented by ill health and I remember many conversations with this inspirational yet modest man. However, all four have contributed greatly to the Association.

Brian was keen to maintain his reputation for ensuring the AGM would last no longer than an hour and firmly announced that there would be no “Any Other Business” as none had been notified. I can’t remember approving the minutes for the 2024 meeting – I must have blinked and missed it. It wasn’t until after the Treasurer’s and the Membership Secretary’s Reports that Brian realised we hadn’t all introduced ourselves – a longstanding AGM tradition which he reinstated promptly. Thanks to Ken Osbourne, we remembered to propose and agree all the reports.

Brian, the longest serving chairman in the history of the Association, explained why he needed to retire for health reasons and to look after his wife. He commended to us the “Hands Around the World Charity”, some words of John Wesley and an old Chinese proverb all of which emphasise that great things can happen when people care for others. This was all lightened by a humorous poem including a grain of truth - “I’m on a committee” – worth searching for on-line!

Likewise Eldon has worked tirelessly for the Association, most recently as Social Secretary backed by his wife and family members, masterminding both the AGM weekends and the successful autumn social weekends. He also explained that he would not stand again due to health issues.

The work of Louise George who is standing down as Social Media representative was also celebrated.

Russell George narrowly avoided being asked to propose himself as the new chair. Brian's proposal of Russell was approved unanimously. Russell's acceptance speech commended Brian's skills in maintaining contact and pastoral support with Association members in times of need, the time and effort Brian has put in behind the scenes, all his initiatives to ensure the healthy state of the Association and, of course, his ruthless efficiency as chair of the annual meeting.

Brian was nominated and approved as a worthy new President, and we agreed that Geoff De'Ath continue as Vice President. The new committee was voted in and includes Henry Cole who has already been immensely helpful behind the scenes (the rumour that he has transformed from "Little Pest" to "Big Pest" is unfounded). The AGM ended at 10.46 – a record! However it was swiftly reopened in order to nominate, second and approve the appointment of Dr Paul Goodge ("not a medical doctor so don't ask medical questions") as Social Secretary.

The formal meeting was over and we were free to enjoy coffee then a plethora of possible activities.

Kathryn Hough

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**Minutes of Land's End John o' Groats Association  
A.G.M  
held on February 8<sup>th</sup> 2025 at 10.a.m.**

**Agenda** See Quo Vadis? Issue 112 Winter 2024

**Minutes of Previous Meeting :** These have been in Quo Vadis? Issue 111. Minutes accepted unanimously.

**Matters Arising:** None

**A.O.B.** None

**In Memoriam** Roy Walker (President), Krister Andren (Sweden), Les Holmes, John Blanchard. The meeting stood in silence.

**Reports** These were distributed covering Membership, Route Advisor, Editor, Social Secretary, Social Media and Chair. All were accepted .

**Treasurer’s Report** This was published in Quo Vadis? Issue 112.

Russell gave a brief resume’.

One question was asked: Does the income include everything? Answer: Yes

**Membership: : Money raised for Charity** Records from 2016 until now show that a total of £984,000 has been raised for many different charities.

**Introduction of Members present:** Everyone introduced themselves. There were no questions for any of the reports.

Brian told the meeting that in response to a question raised at last year’s A.G.M. a questionnaire had been emailed to all members. 38 members responded to this and the majority wanted to continue holding the Presentation Weekend at Torquay

## **Website**

The Chair thanked the team who had spent many months putting a new web site together. A lot of help has been given with this by Fred Walters who has made it very attractive. It was recommended that he should be made an Honorary Member. This was agreed unanimously.

## **Quo Vadis?**

Some extended articles will only be published in E Quo Vadis? as it is necessary to limit the size of the printed version for postage costs.

A copy of Q V has been produced in print suitable for people with Dyslexia. This is available on request



## **Chairman's Report**

Brian thanked the officers who are stepping down from office: Louise George (Social Media), Katharine Arzul (Website) Eldon Mackridge (Social Secretary), Brian Dawson (Chair). He explained his reasons for stepping down due to health problems.

He said that the Committee had voted that the Dennis Greenslade Trophy conditions could not be complied with by meeting our duty of care. There was also the fact that our Health & Safety conditions precluded such a drive. It was to be removed from our list of trophies.

Nominations and Elections for the officers for 2025 covering Route Advisor, Editors, Membership and Social Secretary was as follows;

Steve Athawes,  
Ted & Denise Pearson  
Adrian Cole  
Paul Goodge

Brian proposed Russell George (the present Deputy Chair) to become Chair and this was accepted unanimously.

The following were elected to the Committee - Henry Cole and Nick Peksa, who will join Tony Bagley, Des Bass, Suzanne Longworth, Richard Farrant, Kathryn Hough, and Colin Jones.

Russell then took the Chair to nominate Brian Dawson for President, and for Geoff De'Ath to continue as Vice President. These were seconded and accepted.

Russell thanked Brian for all his work as Chair, particularly for his pastoral care of all members.

There are back copies of QV available - they will be in reception area on Sunday morning. The Association will only keep 1 copy of each QV.

Derek Bootyman thanked Brian on behalf of all members for his work as Chair, especially his pastoral care.

The meeting closed at 10.46 a.m.

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### **Brian Dawson steps down.**



At the Association's recent Annual General Meeting in Torquay, our Chair Brian Dawson announced that he was stepping down due to health reasons and to spend more time looking after his wife Pat.

Brian has served as Chair for a remarkable 16 years, making him the longest serving Chair in the Association's history. There is no doubt that during his tenure he has enhanced the spirit of the Association and its health and prestige, not just in the UK, but overseas as well. He has worked tirelessly, patiently and courteously, always with great enthusiasm and has acted in the best interests of the Association throughout. Much of his work takes place behind the scenes and probably goes unnoticed by most members, but over the last couple of years I have been able to bear witness to just how much time he has devoted to the Association.

Brian joined the Association in 1996 after early retirement and his maiden end-to-end journey was completed on foot, an impressive 1,240 miles in 49 days. However, in recent years he became more acquainted with the route by car, regularly being awarded the Alroyd Lees Cup for being the oldest motorist to have driven from Land's End to John O' Groats or vice versa. True to his character, Brian used the journey as an opportunity to raise funds for charity.

Many have commented on one of Brian's key qualities, the genuine pastoral care he provides to members. Whether welcoming new members and their families at our annual gathering in Torquay, telephoning members who faced personal difficulties, or attending the funerals of members who have passed away, Brian's hands-on caring approach has been appreciated across the Association. He is particularly skilled at dealing with high spirited young children, who must have taxed his patience to the limit with their antics, but Brian remains calm and polite at all times.

He is also renowned for the ruthless efficiency with which he ran the AGM, his portable clock placed directly in front of him to signal the start of the meeting at precisely 10 o'clock, no mercy for those who have not brought their copy of the agenda to the meeting, and no time for idle chat.

I'm delighted that Brian has agreed to become President of the Association, filling the vacancy arising from the recent passing of the previous incumbent, Roy Walker.

On behalf of the committee I'd like to thank Brian for his outstanding contribution as Chair over the past 16 years and to send Brian and Pat our very best wishes for the future.

Russell George (with valued input from Geoff De'Ath and Tony Bagley)

## **Our new Chair – Russell George.**

Following the announcement at the AGM that Brian Dawson was stepping down, I have been elected to take over as Chair of the Association. Brian will be a hard act to follow, but I will try my best to continue the hands-on and caring approach that Brian adopted and to guide the Association through the challenges we face in the future. Brian has handed over an organisation which is in a healthy state – our membership number is growing, our finances are strong, we have a high-quality website, and our committee is enthusiastic. I'm very keen to seek the views of all members and would welcome any ideas and suggestions about how we move the Association forward.



I joined the Association in 2013. After taking early retirement and seeking a new challenge, I walked from John O' Groats to Land's End to raise money for Cancer Research UK. I became Treasurer in 2015, managing the move to online banking and saving many trips to the local HSBC branch (which subsequently closed!), and took on the additional role of Vice Chair in 2024. I was also part of the team which oversaw the creation of our new website, with enhanced content and the facility to join and purchase merchandise online. I've worked very closely with Brian over the last year so I'm very aware of the diverse range of activities in which he was involved.

I'm a regular walker (I completed a hike of over a thousand miles around the perimeter of Wales in 2023 and walk in Europe every year), a volunteer fundraising ambassador for Cancer Research UK, a trustee for my local Scout Group, I love researching genealogy, and support Liverpool Football Club. I'm married to Carole, a church vicar, and we have two children, both in their mid-twenties, and live near Windsor.

I look forward to working with you and hope that I can count on your continued support.

Russell George

## The Journey of Two Shores

From the cliffs where wild waters clasp their foam,  
I stand at Land's End, windswept and alone,  
A solitary pilgrim seeking a road—  
To John O'Groats, where horizons are known.

Each step I take speaks of stories untold,  
A tapestry woven in memories bold;  
The bracing air whispers of distant shores,  
Of compassion and struggle through history's doors.

By the lapping waves, my heart starts to race,  
With every mile conquered, I find my own place—  
Fields etched in green and towns bursting bright,  
Along ancient paths kissed by soft morning light.

Through valleys and peaks that rise like great dreams,  
In the echoes of laughter and even the screams—  
From fisherman's nets to the farmers' rich soil,  
Each face holds a dream cultivated through toil.

In towns that lean close like lovers at dusk,  
Amidst triumphs and trials we'll softly discuss;  
That each mile might bind us with tales yet unsung,  
From Land's End to Groats—the journey's not done.

So listen! The earth sings a rhapsody grand,  
And I am but one voice in this myriad band;  
Let my footsteps remind you as long as you roam—  
The path we walk holds our hearts far from home.

This is what happen when you mess with AI.

## Presentation of Awards

In the next few pages are photographs of members receiving their award trophies, followed by those receiving certificates for completing their journey. On the back page are photographs of everyone at their tables for the presentations.



**Shanks Pony Trophy. Anthony Bishop.**

This trophy is awarded to the person who, at the discretion of the committee, achieved the best performance on foot. Taking 62 days.



**Chase Korte Memorial Cup for 2024. Elizabeth Schnieder.**

Given for someone who has shown fortitude and determination in the face of adversity.

Walking Jogle, taking 113 walking days to cover 1556.38 miles.

**The Griifin Trophy. Max Foster.**

Given to the person ho raised the most money for a charitable cause. Max walked 1257 miles



**The Chamber/Hume-Spry Cup. Gary Shirley.**

Presented for an unsupported cycle ride.

Gary took 19 days riding over 1000 miles.



**The Aams/Elloway Trophy. Harry Peska**

Presented to the young person to complete

An end to end trip. However, Harry completed an incredible LEJOGLE in 54 day. Cycling 2406 miles. From another cyclist, Harry, Chapeau. I am In awe, and not a little jealous.





Cara Flanagan walked 1413 miles to complete Jogle. Due unforeseen and extenuated circumstances took five and a half years.



Nick and Harry Peksa cycled 2406 miles in 54 days to complete Lejogle.

Charlie Hide (centre) joined them for Lejogle.



Graham Shaddick made the rest of us seem almost sane, but slightly pathetic, by running Jogle in 26 days.



Hamish Critchley walking Jogle in 69 days over 1080 miles.



Ken Osbourn completed Jogle  
by public transport in 11days  
6hrs 20min



Leslie Beecher walked Lejog in  
3 months.



### Chase Korte Memorial Cup . Finn Latcham

For 2025 for walking Lejog, taking 3 months, 2  
days, 28 minutes to cover 1399.56 miles. (I  
would have walked the extra 0.44 miles my-  
self.) Presenting the trophy, looking like a  
rather dowdy gnome is non other than our  
beloved membership secretary, Adrian Cole.





Mike and Shona Hamilton walked Lejog in 70 days covering 1131 miles



Doris Zimmer cycled Lejog in 12 days over 910 miles.



Brian Purvis cycled Lejog in 22 days over 1029 mile



Gary Campbell (left) walked Lejog in 10 weeks over 1100 miles.

David Stockwell (right), walked Jogle in 127 days covering 1331 miles



**In 2020 our story of Lejog on a tandem appeared in Quo Vadis? We felt very proud to be awarded the Mabel McCracken Trophy. However, this raised a question who is Mabel McCracken? the answer was well documented in a previous QV?**

**As editors of this publication we are custodians of a huge pile of back copies. I found myself, recently, idly flicking through them when I found this letter from Ms. MM.**

Dear Editor,

When Donald brought me your latest QV? I enjoyed reading about all those people who had won cups and trophies at Torquay. I love that little man holding the cups with his bow tie. He's sweet which is more than you can say about that woman standing by her computer and grinning inanely, which you always put at the top of my letters. At last, someone has won my mug— well your mug really, with my name on it. Bill Atkinson— who is he and what did he do? I expect it must have been something very good or he wouldn't have won it. Such a shame that Donald couldn't take me to Torquay three years ago. I did so want to meet Nigel Tetley. He looked very amused in that photograph with you.



Now, I saw in that long winded editorial that you would ask me for a profile. You haven't, but while I wait for Kevin to take me shopping in Minehead, for that crochet hook I've been looking for (Kevin borrowed the last one for his feet and never gave it back., and I do wish he would do something with that ponytail), I thought I'd give it a go. Of course if you don't like it feel free to do so.

Goodness gracious! I've been around for so long it's hard to remember that far back. No that's not true. I can recall lots of things that happened a long time ago but I forget what I was doing yesterday five minutes ago.

My parents and my birth certificate tell me I was born in a nursing home in Shepherd's Bush in 1905, but I don't remember much about it. I do remember catching Diphtheria when I was 4 and being very ill and 2 years later going with my parents and my sister Phyllis to John O'Groats in Papa's Austin 7. Can I apply for membership do you think? We had started at Land's End and stopped only for comfort breaks and snowdrifts in Scotland. I will contact Tony Elloway for a form.

After I won the "Miss Wet T-shirt" competition in Le Touquet in 1925 my cousin, Gladys Mockpudding and I trained and then I went to America to make my fortune. Papa paid for me to cross on the Mauritania and I got a job cleaning ashtrays with Warner Bros. in Hollywood— they did some and I did the others.

Mr Warner was not slow to spot my assets and I was soon in the front line of the chorus in three Busby Berkeley's musicals. I forget their names but one was Gold Diggers of 1933. It was fun but I was lovely so I came home and returned to Maida Vale where I met Mercedes (her father tinkered with cars in a coffee bar) and we soon set up home together and then in 1937 went on our charabanc holiday to the Lake District.

During the war we became land girls and she was sent to Chipping Norton and I spent five years in Wisbech where I stayed with a little old man called Neville and his wife Tracy who always had a cigarette dangling from her lips with ash about to all and yellow fingertips. She used to boss Neville about and one day she spotted him in his cycle clips talking to a comely young lady in the village she became so jealous that she biffed him over the head with a shovel. They took him to hospital and the nurses saw his wound and thought it was shrapnel. I don't think they liked each other.

When the war was over I went back to my flat in Maida Vale, which Mercedes had been looking after because she had an allergy to all green vegetables and was afraid of cows and sneezed every time she saw a sheep and pigs brought her out in a rash. So they decided to discharge her. I edited a gardening magazine in the 1950s and became famous for my juicy cantaloupe melons which won me the Cocklecarrot cup before going on a catering course and Mercedes and I started making sandwiches and Bakewell Tarts and canapes and sold them to Jo Lyons Shops. Business flourished and we did Princess Margaret's wedding breakfast (I've never been able to face peanut butter since). One day in 1975 Mercedes was returning home after delivering 500 gingerbread men to a children's party in Pimlico when she was struck by a pigeon in Trafalgar square, straight in the eye. She died a week later from Sittercosis or something like that. I was devastated and carried on alone for six months but my appetite for Victoria sponge and fruit cakes was gone. So I moved away to a cottage in Chew Magna which my Auntie Norman left me in her will. I continued to contribute to the gardening magazine and my succulents attracted much attention and I also knitted,- my own cottage industry you might say, sweaters, hats, cardigans, gloves, willywarmers- that sort of thing, which I sold to John Lewis but gradually my eyesight failed and global warming started and my facilities went wrong so Donald made me come here in 1985 where Keith has looked after me ever since and brings me my Horlicks, I must go now as he's waving to me to get ready to go out and I've looked everywhere and I still can't find them.

Yours truly,

Mabel McCracken (Miss),- Minehead.

# LEJOG

From Land's End in Cornwall to John  
O'Groats in Scotland

July 2024

**An epic journey**

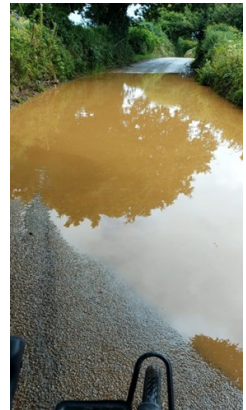


**Doris Zimmer**

This July I spent 12 days on a fabulous adventure, the LEJOG 2024. The 1,465 km from Cornwall to John o' Groats followed the Audax route for the most part. I went solo, unsupported, a free-lance biologist sleeping wild or at farm sites in my little tent. The tour was my birthday present to myself to celebrate turning 60 this year.

I started at Land's End in fantastic weather, after heavy rainfall on the days before, and was surrounded by deep red heathlands, lichen-covered rocks and wild flower roadsides. A great start!

Passing Mediterranean palms in Penzance, and St. Michael's Mount, the route turned inland and was still flooded here and there. I had some problems with the brakes at first, but got them solved.



Bike paths were rare and sometimes quite overgrown; characteristic of the area were the high hedges along the roads as well as the beautifully situated hill farms.

A stop at the fish and chip takeaway was a must, of course, and then I had arrived at the Severn Bridge. The bike path to the right was closed and so I followed a motorcyclist to the lower side.

Wales!! Temperate rain forest, mosses, ferns, so many shades of green. I was stunned by the beauty and will surely return.



What a surprise then to find that almost one-third of the route was already over after passing a wee shop and a local post office.

Of course I always give way to dinosaurs. And started talking to sheep, chickens and cattle, as well as to the countless rabbits on the way up north. I met a couple who specialized in butterflies, and we had a most interesting discussions on the loss of species and nature conservation issues.





I fell in love with Cumbria and its mountains but it was quite rainy there (two photos above).

The Scottish border was a highlight, as well as crossing the Forth Road Bridge. At that point I started to watch out for aliens...



The route continued on through the Cairngorms National Park, with several 20 % gradients. I didn't know beforehand that I would be passing two skiing areas, but of course the scenery was gorgeous. I spent one night on a soccer field, and was in luck. The Tomintoul Highland Games were on!



Cycling became easier further north, following the coastal route through lovely landscapes. One area was surprisingly similar to our North German Schlei - Region.

Cycling the length of Great Britain.

**Finished !!!**

**John o'Groats**



**23.7.24**



My thanks go to my bike, my family, and to all the lovely people I met on the trip and with whom I shared a piece of chocolate, a coffee, cherries, water with ice cubes, chats, laughter and interesting stories. And to the Lejog forum for great inspiration!

## The road ends here.

It didn't.

I took the Highland route back to Inverness. Best greetings to Ted, should you read this. Thereafter I followed the coastal roads to Newcastle, Netherlands, Germany and finally Böklund .



**Adventures  
out of this  
world!**



# Much Ado About Nothing

## Roger Petherbridge

The question I'm most frequently asked, since completing JOGLE with my friend Barry in 2019, is "Didn't you run out of things to talk about?" It is a pertinent question: we had known each other for over 50 years, having met on the first day of university. We knew more about each other than our wives did...we knew more about our wives than they did! So...the answer was always a simple "No." So what did we talk about for 64 days, over 1,156 miles?

There were obviously some stock conversations: last night's beer and looking forward to the coming night's ale making numbers 1 and 2 in the hit parade, closely followed by the weather and Barry's snoring. Donations to our chosen charity, Prostate UK, online or in person, also kept us amused, as did the state of each other's beards. We both grew them when we ditched shaving gear to save weight at version 7.3 of our packing list...we contrasted how long...how luxuriant...whether Barry looked a wally wearing one...the colour (is white a colour?)...whether it aged us...whether Roger looked a wally wearing one...

But what else? We couldn't actually talk about the route...meticulously planned by Barry (version 43.12), it was pre-loaded onto the GPS. Apart from a few hours gratuitous haranguing, if one or the other of us briefly took our eye off the screen to look at the view, it didn't actually matter if we went 'wrong' as there is no prescribed route. For us, all paths led to Land's End, even those heading north, those traversing working quarries, railway tracks without convenient crossing points, private land, barbed wire fences requiring the wedding tackle to be kept clear, or those testing our state of vertigo whilst climbing over whatever was barring the way.

One way to stimulate the conversation was to invite friends and relatives to share a day's walking. That helped on the few occasions that invitees were not "unfortunately out of the country" or "really sick with that lurgy thing that's going around" when we passed through their neck of the country. When guest walkers actually joined us, they frequently appeared to lag behind after a period. Indeed, we became a little paranoid that this was not entirely due to the brisk pace we were setting. Conversely, one guest didn't seem to want to leave the walk...he might still retain a vague sense of his own paranoia about the pace we set that day when we disappeared over the hill somewhere near Nether Skyborry. One couple brought a dog...so Ruby at least provided me with some intelligent conversation for a while.

One conversational technique we had previously developed and could bring to the fore was 'looping.' We first perfected this in 2002 during the Kent Marshside 50-Mile Challenge. This challenge walk featured eight laps of a 6.25 mile circuit through endless mud. As the conversation started to dry up around the end of lap 1, we found ourselves repeating an ever expanding conversational repertoire. In addition to beer, curries, football / rugby, recent events etc., Barry discovered that I had a new car and he informed me that the chimney stacks in the distance were those of Richborough power station. After a few laps, in a tide of rising hysteria and laughter, we found that we could repeat, increasingly verbatim, the conversation from the previous lap, with each topic being introduced at exactly the same point. Well, it kept us amused.

My favourite repeated conversation during JOGLE was the furore around eating salad with a pasty. Barry, being a proud Cornishman, is fond of the odd pasty and naturally nothing would be more heinous a crime to a proud Cornishman than eating salad with a pasty....how very Home Counties. So, it was a sad day that passed when Barry was spotted doing just this, in public, in Bodmin High Street no less. I have photos. Now, whilst I was only able to engage Barry in the rights and wrongs (or is that wrongs and wrongs?) of eating salad with your pasty...in public, for the last 4 days of our JOGLE to Land's End, interestingly, I have since been forced, yes forced, to weave this travesty into every conversation for the 5 years (and counting) since! Cool!

More fertile ground for everlasting conversational repartee is a counting game. For example, being of a certain age, each with a heavy backpack, traversing well over 1,000 miles of often wet terrain, we didn't necessarily remain on our feet all the time. After initial concern for our fellow traveller, followed by much hearty mocking laughter (having ascertained that the break wasn't too serious), healthy debate would ensue as to whether what had just occurred constituted a 'fall.' You might be little interested to know that after all those miles, it was an honourable 4-all draw.



My favourite counting game started on Day 1 as we were leaving the town of John O’Groats (you may have heard of it). Barry exclaimed, as we climbed a hill and a car passed by towing a trailer, “Have you noticed that all trailers are made by Ifor Williams?” Not to be a pedant or take things too literally, I couldn’t help picking up on the word ALL. And that was the start of the Ifor Williams game. Much heated debate took place daily during JOGLE as to what constituted a ‘trailer’. I was very cross when Barry wouldn’t allow me the child’s plastic trailer left in a front garden...it definitely wasn’t Ifor Williams! I did insist on counting the mangled wreck of a trailer in a farmer’s field...nobody said anything about road worthiness. I of course won on Day 1 when I spotted the first non Ifor Williams trailer! For the record the final scores on the doors were, Ifor Williams - 136, others – 181 (yay!).

Some endless conversations appeared magically. On the long climb out of Frodsham, through Frodsham Hill Wood, getting bored of my endless recitation of the qualities of the summer fruits Eccles cake I had just consumed at the excellent Devonshire Bakery, Barry ventured that if Frodsham had a football team, what would it be called?...Frodsham United or Frodsham Town? For the rest of the day, and intermittently thereafter for the rest of the journey, the conversation would be interspersed with a new name (easy enough when you have long since stopped listening to the other person and can think undisturbed)...Rovers...FCC...City...Academicals...Athletic...County...Albion...Park...Hotspurs...and on and on. Only recently did Barry add another name to the list! This led me to subsequently research whether Frodsham actually had a football team and what the appended name was, only to find that the search results threw up...Frodsham JFC and Frodsham Park Vets...we had guessed neither!

So, by the end of week 3 of JOGLE we had entered a nice, relaxing, comfortable loop for the rest of the journey; conversational extracts throughout the day and every day might include....”That Ball Crusher IPA last night was superb” ....”Oops, enjoy your trip?...two falls to one I believe” ....”Rangers!” ....”Might be time to put the waterproofs on” ....”Aha, another Ifor Williams trailer....42 to 37!” ....”No it isn’t!” ....”Wanderers!” ....”I’m soaked, should have put the waterproofs on earlier” ....”Hey, look! 42 to 38!” ....”Is this right, aren’t we in a firing range?” ....”I didn’t know you had a new car” ....”But I told you 20 years ago!” ....”I hear they have a Broken Leg Golden Ale on at the pub tonight” ....”Where is this place?” ....”Ecclefechan!” ....”Really? I don’t Ecclefechan believe you”



## Dieppe to Paris Avenue Verte Cycling Tour. Sept, 2024

Alan Dracey.

The seeds for this ride originated after our last tour in 2023, along the Hebridean Way. Although we normally leave more than a single year between rides, Colin felt that he needed to do something this year, in order to mark his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. From a shortlist of possible rides, the Avenue Verte got the most votes, and so it was that Colin started planning. For David and myself, it was easy; all we have to do is turn up with our bikes, and off we go...

Our ride started on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September, and finished a week later on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September.

It is worth noting two things before we proceed. Firstly, although the Avenue Verte is for the most part well signed, by means of marker posts bearing the logo "Avenue Verte: London to Paris", there are enough places where the signage peters out to make additional means of navigation essential. And secondly, the Avenue Verte in its entirety actually starts at the London Eye. We, though, have elected to do only the French part of the ride.

**Stage One: Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2024 Dieppe to Neufchatel-en-Bray** 24.4 miles. My average speed 10.3mph, 2hrs 21minutes cycling time

David had arrived the preceding evening so that we are ready for an early train from Lewes to Newhaven at 07:30. We arrive at the ferry terminal at 07:45, and await Colin, who is coming by car from Cranbrook, driven by Brenda. At this time of the day, there is not too much rush hour traffic, and Colin arrives at 08:00. At Newhaven, bicycles are required to queue with car traffic to clear ticket and passport control, but this takes very little time, and we are soon ready to be ushered onto the boat

It is a nice sunny morning, despite a chill in the air, and we shelter from the wind until it is time to board. We wheel our bikes onto the ferry, and make our way upstairs to the lounge where we are able to relax for the four hours it takes us to reach Dieppe.

On arrival, when we go down to retrieve our bikes, we chat briefly with some of the other cyclists who have made the crossing with us. A couple of women in matching leopard skin print cycling jerseys are most conspicuous, and I wonder what their plans may be. We load up our panniers and at 15:00 we are on French terra firma.



Exiting the port we are immediately met with a helpful signpost towards the Avenue Verte, and make our way across the temporary footbridge into Dieppe. Our guide book tells us that our route begins at Dieppe railway station, and with the help of a local who points us in the right direction, we are soon there. Heading to the left of the station, we pick up the cycle way. To begin with, this involves cycling along a minor road through an industrial estate, but very soon we are on a proper cycle path, with shared pedestrian use, which will give us an uninterrupted run for the next 24 miles to Neufchatel. The weather is glorious sunshine, and we enjoy relaxed and traffic free cycling for the next two hours. Following a disused railway line, it is also virtually pan flat; if the rest of the ride is as easy of this, I think to myself, there will be no problems.

At Mesnieres-en-Bray, we stop for a minute to admire the magnificent chateau, set in 12 acres of parkland. It is open to the public, but only for the two months of July and August, so we are unable to pay a visit. Instead we take photographs, and I am minded for a moment to send a picture to my wife Diane, telling her that this is our hotel for the night...

From Mesnieres, it is only a short hop into Neufchatel, where we exit the cycle path and make our way up into the town centre. David is particularly taken by the statue of a cow in the middle of the roundabout at the bottom of the high street; we are at the centre of production of the celebrated local cheese, the "Coeur de Neufchatel". We ride up to the Hotel les Airelles, our accommodation for the night, arriving just after 17:30. Tour leader Colin checks us in, and we stow our bikes in the shed provided, before making our way up to our rooms.

Now begins the daily ritual of washing out our cycling kits in preparation for the next day, showering, and changing into civvies for the evening. This is a bit of a chore, but for me, with no second set of cycle wear, there is no alternative. Cleaned and refreshed after such a short ride, it is now time to hit the town. At the time of booking, Colin had selected the dinner, bed and breakfast package, but the receptionist informs us that these are reserved for business clients only. As a result, we now have to decide whether or not to look for a suitable restaurant. Before we do so, however, we are agreed that it would be quite nice to settle down with a relaxing beer or two before we eat. There is a pleasant looking bar just up the road, opposite the Marche du Fromage, and we pile in for a celebratory beverage.

I enjoy a gentle Goudale, brewed nearby in Arques-la-Bataille, and having finished our beers, agree that we really should stop for a second. The staff are very welcoming, and when our next round of beers are brought to the table, the landlady then offers us complimentary bags of crisps! I almost feel guilty that we do not stay for a third...

At this point we decide that rather than tramp the streets of Neufchatel in search of a restaurant, we may as well just go back to the hotel, and dine in anyway. It is a good choice; we enjoy a splendid meal, in which I opt for oeufs mimosa, langue de boeuf, and meringue avec ananas et verveine. But the poor waitress who takes our order seems to have a problem with the wine. I order a Sancerre rouge, but she brings us a Bordeaux. We return it before she opens it, and she returns a few minutes later, but this time with a Sancerre blanc. It is only at the third time of asking that she gets it right, and we are able to settle down to our dinner. After which, it seems only sensible to finish off with a Calvados, the local apple brandy. Well, actually, make that two...

Happy and sated, we repair to bed, ready to take on the world; tomorrow is another day.

**Stage Two: Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024 Neufchatel-en-Bray to Bazincourt.** 53.1 miles, My average speed 9.6mph, 5 hrs 32 minutes, cycling time, Total mileage 77.5 miles

If one is of a superstitious nature, one may remark that today's stage is on a Friday the thirteenth, which is considered by some to be a sign of bad luck. I, on the other hand, have no such qualms, and am confident that our day will pass off entirely without mishap. As usual, I will be proved wrong.

We are up and ready for breakfast at 08:00, and plan to leave Neufchatel at 09:00. At 09:00, we are indeed ready, but to my dismay, there is a little rain in the air. The forecast is for dry weather, and I am not prepared for getting wet. Thankfully, though, after only a couple of minutes, the sun comes out, and we are ready to do battle.

We re-join the Avenue Verte, and once more start to enjoy some relaxed cycling. The path is a gently upwards incline, but nothing bothersome, and we are soon into our rhythm. It is only a short distance to Forges-les-Eaux, where the dedicated cycle way comes to an end. We are now directed onto minor roads, taking us into and through the village, and then along another cycle track alongside some suburban back gardens, before exiting to cross a main road onto a new track which follows another railway line. So far, so good, but then Colin and I somehow manage to lose David. We stop to wait, but after a couple of minutes, come to the conclusion that he could not have been that far behind us, and so decide to retrace our steps. And there, at the start of the track, we find David, bike upturned and panniers removed, removing his rear wheel. It is, of course, a puncture; our first of the tour (and it will not be our last!). Thankfully, David is an accomplished mechanic, and after a delay of no more than 15 minutes, he has inserted a new inner tube and refitted the rear wheel. We are ready to continue.

Our guide book informs us that the next section, from Forges-les-Eaux to Gournay, has a number of challenging ups and downs, and may be a little demanding for children and senior citizens without e-bikes. We climb up to La Belliere, drop down, and then up again to Haussez and Menerval. These are, though, quite charming villages, and we are able to enjoy the varied scenery as we pass through more small villages and open countryside. Next, we arrive in Dampierre-en-Bray, where we come across a delightful looking café with our name on it; "Le Velo Jaune". We decide that this is a good place to stop for a late morning drink, and wheel our bikes up to the waiting bicycle racks. There are tables outside, and going inside we find some stools with bicycle chains and pedals, offering the opportunity for a warm down to the more athletic rider. Our host appears from the kitchen, and as I prepare to place our order in my best French, he greets us with the more familiar "What can I get you, gents?". Deep in the heart of the Norman countryside, we have come across the one bar owned and run by a Scotsman... Even more auspiciously, subsequent research proves him to be another David!

We order our coffees, and I take an almond croissant, after which we repair to the tables outside, to sit in the sunshine. It is an extremely enjoyable quarter of an hour or so, but eventually we decide that we really ought to press on. We exit Dampierre on the D16 for a brief stretch, before the signpost for the Avenue Verte directs us onto the ominously named Chemin du Mort. Oh dear; first a puncture, and now the road of death; perhaps Friday the thirteenth is an omen of ill fortune after all? In fact, though, our run into Gournay is all very straightforward, and we work our way through the town quite easily with the help of our guide book. At St-Germer-de-Fly, the Avenue Verte splits into two, giving you an option to ride either clockwise or anti clockwise in a big circle to Paris and back. We have opted for the anticlockwise option, which will take us through St-Germer-de-Fly and Gisors, in the direction of Giverny, site of Monet's Garden.

We cross the main road and ride into St Germer, where we decide it is high time to stop for lunch. The sun is high in the sky, and we espy a pleasant looking boulangerie, "Au Fournil Brayon" where we order baguette sandwiches and cold soft drinks, This enables us to make lunch a reasonably quick affair, and so it is that barely twenty minutes later, we are ready to resume our journey. The road out of St Germer dips and then rises, until we reach a busy looking road, which we believe we need to cross in order to find our signs for the Avenue Verte. But having done so and found the signs, we are dismayed to discover they are the same signs for St-Germer-de-Fly at which we had exited the V32 just an hour ago. Sickeningly, the penny drops; we have just ridden a circle for the last mile or two, and must have missed our turning for Boisville. Now we have to retrace our steps into St Germer, and approaching the town by the road from which we had exited it, sure enough find an Avenue Verte sign on to the Boisville road. We have probably lost about 30 minutes, so the brevity of our lunch stop has become something of a blessing.

Back en route, we cycle along a quiet country road to Neuf Marche, from where we have a long climb up to Bouchevilliers. Across the valley, we can see dark clouds heavy with rain, and I hope that the weather will not reach us on our bikes. Fortunately, though, despite a brief flurry, the rain holds off, and we enjoy a nice ride through dappled woodland, passing Amecourt and Serifontaine, all the way to Bazincourt-sur-Epte, where we are booked in for our accommodation tonight. We are just a little north of Gisors, and we make a sharp right hand turn at the village of Bazincourt, to make a vertiginous climb up into the Bois de Gisors.

We are staying at the elegant and luxurious Hotel de la Rapee, a country manor house with equestrian centre and hunting. It is clearly signposted, which makes it easy to find, and we cycle up to the hotel at 16:30.

**Stage Three: Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2024      Bazincourt to Maisons-Laffitte**

50.1 miles    My average speed 8.5mph                      5 hrs 39 minutes cycling time

Total mileage 127.6 miles

Breakfast this morning is largely self-service, but with one curious exception. Our waitress enquires whether or not we would like fried egg. I assume this means that a full English breakfast is available, with bacon, sausage, baked beans, mushrooms and hash browns coming as standard, and the only element of choice being if we prefer our eggs fried, poached, or scrambled. We happily agree to fried eggs, and await our breakfast. But when our waitress returns a few minutes later, our plates bear exactly what she had offered; a single fried egg on each! Back to the self-service, we now enjoy a leisurely continental breakfast with our eggs, and feel no pressure to make a particularly early departure. After all, our projected mileage is a little less than yesterday's, and given our early arrival yesterday afternoon, we are confident that we can take our time. It is already 09:30 by the time we collect our bikes and load up our panniers, but as there is still a bit of a chill in the air, we are happy not to have been any earlier.

Leaving the Hotel de la Rapee, we retrace our steps to Bazincourt village. From here, we are soon into Gisors, through which we navigate without any difficulty, and onto the Epte Valley cycle path. This is a beautiful stretch of our ride, taking us alongside a large lake through to Dangu and St Clair-sur-Epte. The surface is good, and we are able to make fast progress all the way to Bray-et-Lu, where we are looking out for signs onto the D142 to continue the Avenue Verte; the V16 cycle path continues straight on towards Giverny, which would take us a long way off route. Sure enough, our way is clearly marked, and we join the road which sets us a nagging climb up to the village of Chaussy. By the time we reach Villarceaux, we are ready for a break, and as the Avenue Verte signs point us in the direction of a Golf and Country Club, we agree that this might be worth investigating.

At the entrance to the Golf Club, a notice states that the kitchen and restaurant have just opened, so we ride down a stately looking driveway, and park our bikes by the wall of the main house. There is a terrace to the side, with tables and chairs overlooking the golf course, and we are happy to sit here in the sun and while away a pleasant fifteen minutes. We order coffees and sandwiches, and watch the club members doing battle on the 18<sup>th</sup> green. It would be nice to stay even longer, but having eaten and drank, we are mindful that there is still some way to go. There is also some concern that having enjoyed good cycling surfaces so far today, our guide book cautions that we are in for some rather more challenging terrain over the next few miles.

We leave Villarceaux, and resume our ride along the road as far as the first crossroads, where we are directed left onto an unmade road. Which is where things start to get interesting. The surface gradually deteriorates from gravel to loose sand, and our progress slows considerably as we try to manoeuvre stray rocks and potholes, as well as avoid coming to a standstill and falling off in a drift of deep sand. On a mountain bike, this might be less of an issue, but for us, on our road bikes, it is not so much fun. By the time we reach Maudetour-en-Vexin, I am relieved that we have all made it without mishap. We cycle into Themicourt, a very attractive historical village, where I stop to take some photos, and we re-compose ourselves for the ride ahead. Our relief, though, is only short lived, as only a few minutes later we are faced with another section of unmade track. This one takes us from Vigny to Longuesse, where we re-join the road for less than 100 yards, before hitting a third section of track to Sagy. I am beginning to feel empathy with the Tour de France riders who are often faced with multiple sections of pave in the northern parts of France; this is not by any means an enjoyable experience, and I would much rather be on tarmac, with or without traffic.

At least, though, by the time we reach Sagy we are still all puncture free, and now we resume our ride along quiet country roads, by which we reach the small town of Courdimanche. This is the point at which we leave the Vexin National Park; for the remainder of our day, we will now have to do battle with the outlying suburbs of Paris. From Courdimanche, it is a straight run up to Cergy le Haut, where we know that we must make our way to the railway station. We arrive in Cergy without any difficulty, and agree that we should now stop for another break, as we will need to be fresh and with all our powers of concentration for the final section of the day

. We find a boulangerie from which we can buy coffees and pastries, and we sit outside, facing the railway station, with a degree of optimism.

Fifteen minutes later, and we are ready to go. At last, things are becoming a little less complicated, and we follow the road until we reach Neuville-sur-Oise, where we know that we must cross the bridge over the river.

We have now reached the point at which the Avenue Verte joins the alternative loop from Beauvais, and which we will take for our return trip to Dieppe. It is comforting to think that however complicated the remainder of our ride into Paris may be, the return will be a much simpler matter of just retracing our steps; as long as we can remember where we have been, we surely cannot go far wrong? From Neuville, the Avenue Verte directs us onto a good surfaced cycle path, away from any traffic, and running alongside the river Oise as it snakes round into the Seine. At Conflans Fin d'Oise, we are directed onto the old bridge across the Seine, after which we continue through a housing estate until we reach a sign directing us left onto a narrow track, which the guide book assures us is the correct route.

We make our way alongside a line of disused factories, taking care on the path to avoid the overhanging briars and brambles. At one point, a low hanging branch gets stuck in the rear wheel of Colin's Thorn bicycle, and David cautions him to stop in order to remove it; we don't want to risk a puncture this close to our destination. The phrase "a thorn within a Thorn" enters my mind, but I say nothing as I don't wish to tempt fate. The pathway eventually comes to an end, and we turn right into the Forêt de St Germain-en-Laye, in which there appears to be a cornucopia of cycle tracks. We stop to work out which one we should take, and I use the opportunity for a brief comfort break. It's a good job I am quick though, as no sooner than I have finished than a group of off road cyclists come racing past....

The Avenue Verte is, happily, signposted for us, and we proceed through the forest until we reach an imposing park, the road through which takes us into Maisons-Laffitte. At the end of the road, we come face to face with the imposing Chateau, and just beyond that, around the corner, is the Ibis Hotel, our accommodation for the next two nights. It is a little later than usual, at 17:40, that we ride round to the hotel to check in and park our bikes. Tomorrow, Paris beckons.

## **Stage Four: Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2024 Maisons-Laffitte to Paris Notre Dame**

56.9 miles My average speed 8.3mph 6 hrs 48 minutes cycling time

Total mileage 184.5 miles

We are quite excited by the prospect of cycling today up to the cathedral of Notre Dame in the centre of Paris. I was last here only four months ago, with my wife Diane, when we stayed overnight with our friend Gilles' youngest daughter Shaeron, and her partner Guillem, but that was on foot, and we were travelling by train. As a resident of Paris, living close by the Jardin du Luxembourg, Shaeron has offered to meet us for our arrival at Notre Dame, and I am looking forward to seeing her and Guillem again. She has asked what sort of time we expect to arrive, and after consulting with Colin and David, I reply that we hope to arrive by 12:30. It is only 25 miles from our hotel, and if we leave by 09:30, we surely won't be any later.

We take our self-service breakfast in the Ibis, and prepare to load our bikes. The great thing about having two nights here is that we can leave most of our luggage in our rooms; all we need for Paris is a single pannier each for locks, toolkits, and sundries like maps, guide book, wallets, and phones. We set off at 09:10 in good heart for the day ahead.

To start with, we cross the Seine, and turn sharp right through a park onto the cycle route alongside the river. It is well signposted, and with a good surface, makes for easy cycling as we follow the Seine as far as Croissy. Being a Sunday, it seems as though the entire population of Paris are out for a weekend stroll or a jog in the park; David wonders if this might be the French equivalent of a "Park Run". At Chatou, the cycle path comes to an end, and we are directed up on to the road parallel, where we are looking out for a sign onto the old bridge across the river. We do indeed find our way, and once across the Seine, end up dropping down into the Parc des Impressionnistes, in the hope of picking up the cycle route along the south bank. This is, though, a mistake, and we have to retrace our steps to the main road, whereupon we are completely at a loss as to where to find any signage for the Avenue Verte. We ask a man out for a Sunday morning walk, who points us in one direction, confident that this will at least take us back to the river, even if is temporarily a little off route. We take his advice, get back onto the cycle route, and get as far as Bezons, just a mile further, where we join a busy road and once more find ourselves running out of signage.



We are utterly lost, and realise that our estimated time of arrival may need a rethink; if this keeps happening, we may never reach Notre Dame! This time, a group of three men come to our rescue, and again offer us a route down a side road that will take us back to the river. At last, we find our signs for the Avenue Verte cycle way alongside a busy road towards Gennevilliers, and our rate of progress picks up again. We are heading in the general direction of L'Ile-St-Denis and the Stade de France, both of which are well signposted for vehicular traffic. Approaching the end of this road, there is a large roundabout which we must cross, on the other side of which David's attention is taken by a large building. Concentrating on the geography instead of the road, he then proceeds to cycle straight into a bollard; the first Colin and I hear of this is when he lets forth a string of expletives from his position on the tarmac underneath his bicycle. It is a moment of some concern though, as the first thought is whether or not he may have done himself some injury, or caused some damage to his bike. Thankfully, he appears to be OK, but it is a salutary reminder that we really do need to be careful as we hit the busier parts of Paris.

At Gennevilliers, we pass a MacDonaldis, which tempting though it may be, we decide to ignore. Shortly afterwards, we have a left hand turn past Gennevilliers railway station, and make our way due east towards L'Ile-St-Denis.

Crossing the river once more at Ile-St-Denis, our route now is clearly signposted past the Stade de France, and alongside Canal St Denis and the Bassin de Villette, until we reach the Parc de Villette. We are, though, clearly going to be considerably later than we had originally thought, and I message Shaeron to let her know that our estimated time of arrival might now be as late as 14:00.

Even this, though, will turn out to be unduly optimistic. At the Place Stalingrad, on the edge of the Parc de la Villette, the Avenue Verte signs once again disappear. At a busy road junction, we have no idea where to go next, and even after taking advice from a helpful lady gendarme, are still really none the wiser. There is, though, a sign for the Gare de l'Est, which although intended for vehicles, we agree will have to do as well for us; our guide book clearly shows our route taking us past the station, and from there it looks as though we will nearly be there.

We pass the Gare de l'Est, and reach another road junction. Again, no signposts for the Avenue Verte, but our guide book counsels a right turn, followed by a left onto the Boulevard de Sebastopol. At last, our road crosses the river and takes us onto the Ile de la Cite, and suddenly, there on our left, the clock just striking 14:30, is the magnificent cathedral of Notre Dame! We have made it!! And even better, just as realisation begins to sink in, I hear a cry of "Alan" from across the road, and turn around just in time to see Shaeron, armed with her camera, recording for posterity our arrival.

It is an emotional moment, as the three of us dismount and are greeted by Shaeron and Guillem. I am grateful that they have managed to wait for such a long time, and that they appear unfazed by our delay. So now, having arrived, we are ready for a break for a drink and a sandwich, and to chat with Shaeron and Guillem before making our way back to Maisons-Laffitte.

I make a quick phone call home to Diane, just to let her know we have arrived, and then we walk with our bikes towards a café just to the side of the cathedral. But as we do so, David notices another couple of cyclists, walking in the same direction, each sporting leopard skin cycling jerseys sticking out from their back pockets. Surely not? I race to catch them up, and call out to get their attention. And yes, it is indeed our two friends from the Dieppe ferry! They had also arrived today, a little earlier than us, and are planning to return from Paris to London by train. What, I wonder, with all the thousands of people milling around Notre Dame, were the chances of our having met again like this. It is a lovely footnote to our ride, and we wish them well before going our separate ways.

Here ends the story of Dieppe to Paris. The story continues with the return to Dieppe. This will appear only in the e-QV? This can be accessed via the associations website or you can request it from us.

## "Dear Elsie"

Well, my ODD (Obsessively Devoted Dad) is at it again. I'm at his wits' end (and it wasn't far to go, a short toddle, frankly). He tells me he's a walker (I think I heard that right), and yet, I'm only just 2 years old and I have to hold his hand everywhere we go. I'm setting Personal Bests every day, and can beat him to the pub now. I'm already on my sixth pair of shoes, and if that isn't commitment to the perambulation cause then call me a Gruffalo.



He's dozing at the moment, apparently 'someone' kept him awake during the night. He does give me funny looks sometimes, especially after he's had some of his Special Water. He says he's very much looking forward to going to Turkey in a few night nights, and apparently has to see someone called Toorak. He says they are a fine body of men. He then talks about the fine bodies of women, drifts off, and then I have to mop up his dribble (again).

My alphabet is doing well, and I can now arrange E, J, G, O, and L in both right orders. My ODD is showing his age (he calls it 'maturity' ... but he does cry a lot, and I've tried to tell him that bloodyref is two words). Before his slippers get thrown in the bin by Mummy I will get him to bring me to meet you. Although he will walk (ha!) I'll bring Mummy in my car. I must go now, as he is waking up, and I think he needs to know for how long the wheels on the bus go around.



Wet wipes to you

Eleanor (aged 2 years and 54 days)

## Why start at the End? End at the End!

### Emma Wood.

This was the advice that my youngest daughter gave me when I was planning my ride. In her mind it made no logical sense for me to start at Land's End, "why would people do that?" she asked me. I had already decided long before, that my adventure would be JOGLE as I live in Dorset, so it felt like it made logical sense to head towards home on the ride. It was nice to know that my daughter was equally on side with the planning, as I thought it would have been a tougher sell to ask the family to travel to remote John o' Groats for a big family reunion at the end.

Over a decade ago the idea of cycling JOGLE first emerged from a book I read. Back then I simply thought I *wow that's a cool thing to do*, not that I would one day embark on the adventure of solo cycling my humble Decathlon road bike and with my Dad supporting.

I suffered with Aplastic Anaemia when I was eight years old and I've grown up with that chapter of my life shaping me into the person that I am today. Having a life event shake you to your core also shakes life into you, and as time rolled by JOGLE became a life goal to accomplish and I was focused to make it happen. After many armchair planning sessions over a glass of wine, and after overcoming a whole bunch of challenges and the deep-rooted guilt about being away from my family I was ready. I mean as ready as you can be. I was still nervous, feeling physically nauseous but I was as ready as ever to give this crazy 15 day adventure the best go I could.

In May 2023 as I apprehensively set off from the large puddle beneath the John o' Groats famous signpost in the rain, deep winter cycling kit on, I was unaware that whilst I was pedalling solo it would be an adventure supported by a team of friends, family, strangers and more. Even the cuckoos in Scotland would support me as I imagined their bird call saying "keep going, keep going".

I started the ride trying to relax into it and with a bit of mind trickery. I only did 20 miles as that was what I was used to riding on my weekly ride. It was short and sweet to tick off day 1 and then hit the bigger mileage days in a few days' time.



Would I do that again? No, I wouldn't. It was nice at the time to tell myself I was just heading off on a short 20 mile ride like lots of other people one Sunday morning, but I could have given more that first day and brought the other daily numbers down slightly.

I would meet Dad for a morning coffee and again at lunch and most of the time that was with Nellie. Nellie was the support van that Dad converted as a lockdown project, but Mum had also played a very important role in the conversion and JOGLE prep process. She was a proud and accomplished CEO of Fairy Lights and President of Snacks. On a dreary day the fairy lights in the van were warming and pretty, on a sunny day the van provided much needed shade. No matter what the weather the boxes of snacks and food probably gave me too much choice, and I was able to fuel up and re-pack my jersey full of small tasty sweet and savoury treats for the next stint of cycling.



“Have you ever bonked?” I was asked at the end of the next day at The Crask Inn, a famous stop for end-to-enders. “Not on a bike” I replied. My Dad’s face confused and amused equally... Derek was a LEJOG end-to-ender who would be finishing his adventure the next day, just as mine was beginning. I still didn’t feel like a true end-to-ender like Derek, I felt a little bit of a fraud having so far only cycled a short distance. Nonetheless it was amazing to chat to him over a refreshing end of day beer about

what each of us would encounter on our rides the following day, the routes planned, and swapping stories and tips. One golden nugget he gave me was to eat every half an hour. I was already acutely aware of taking fuelling and nutrition incredibly seriously, but he made me re-think this and focus on eating based on time, not miles. Eating every 10 miles can look very different to every hour as it can take a lot longer to progress in challenging weather or over tricky terrain. Wise words that I would all too soon know to be true.

The charity I was raising funds and awareness for, The Aplastic Anaemia Trust (AAT), had popped out a little social media post at the start of my ride commenting on how I’d never met anyone else who had had Aplastic Anaemia, and that I’d love any support and to meet people along the way (and if they could bring me cake). From this post there was such warmth and outpouring of support from the AAT community. There were offers from people generously saying we could stay at their pub, have meals if passing, would come and meet us and bring cake! I was so incredibly touched and humbled to have strangers so willing to help in any way they could. Since the offers of meeting up and cake had started to come through, the planned route hadn’t gone close enough for me to be able to take anyone up on their kind offers, until day 7.

The charity got in touch to say they'd given my number to a lovely lady who lived in Edinburgh. The timing was incredibly fortuitous as this was quite close by, almost unbelievable, how amazing! I felt, once again, that the adventure was bigger than me, bigger than Dad and I. It was now also including the inspiring and supportive people involved with the AAT. It was going to be a family affair with Fiona, Bruce and son Sandy all bundling in the car to come and chase us down and I could not wait. The energy that came from knowing people were travelling to support Dad and me was palpable; it made me cycle on with a huge grin on my face. I still had a lot of cycling to do before I could rest and enjoy a social meet-up though.

I was blown away by their support and the effort they had made to travel to find little me on my bike. Their energetic spirits and warm nature were infectious, and we all chatted easily about our experiences of being diagnosed with Aplastic Anaemia, and how parents cope with living through that chapter. Whilst the subject matter was deep, the atmosphere was light and I was thrilled to have met such a wonderful family. They also brought a collection of Tunnock's treats! Teacakes and caramel wafer bars were the perfect snack for a cyclist on a newly invigorated mission!

I was told that in Scotland people were given a teacake after giving blood and how it was such a nice treat and reward. I loved that story. I'm not able to give blood since suffering with Aplastic Anaemia but I am so appreciative of everyone who does give blood. I relied on a lot of blood transfusions throughout my treatment and if a teacake would encourage anyone to donate blood it would be so worth it.



Arriving at Gretna was very surreal. Everyone has heard of Gretna, just as people have heard of John o' Groats. They may not be able to pinpoint either location quickly on a map but they've heard of the place and what it signifies. I was buzzing with excitement and grateful to arrive safe and sound with Dad welcoming me in and waving me in the direction of the carpark so I could jump off my

bike. Dad had filmed most, if not all, of my starts and finishes of segments and I was always full of nerves as I said goodbye, and had smiles of relief when I'd say hello again! The sun was shining and now had some real warmth to it. I was hungry and ready to temporarily lose the sweaty bike shoes and socks, step into flip flops and welcome being a tourist here for a while. I hadn't even left the edge of the carpark and already I was having so much fun being normal.

At the checkout of one of the tourist shops there was an ice cream stand and I said to Dad, "Ooo shall we have an ice cream?!" "But we've not had lunch?" was his surprised reply. *No, we hadn't, but who cares?!* I was already in a jubilant and celebratory mood having (almost) cycled the entire length of Scotland. I was also on holiday and very hungry, so I carried on and ordered a delicious vanilla ice cream laced with chunky tablet pieces, "*the perfect starter for any athlete's lunch,*" I thought. Still with my ice cream in hand and enjoying the sugary sweetness as I strolled around the shop, I spied the whisky corner with samples to try. I thought that if I didn't try one now, I would miss my chance whilst in Scotland as I was so close to the border with England now. Down the hatch went a wee dram of whisky, its warm heat went surprisingly well with the cooling ice cream.

"Road ahead closed." "Here we go again," I thought to myself as I cycled beyond with nerves building as to what I might encounter today. I was now used to seeing the road signs, but boldly carrying on to find out more and if I could still get past. Today it was even worse than I had imagined though. I turned the corner, continuing to follow my original route as far as I possibly could, through a housing estate and towards the River Clyde which I needed to cross. I approached the bank of the river where I very quickly lost my happy smile and started to worry about what this would mean for the route and my tired legs. I backtracked and chatted to a couple of locals who tried to make light of the situation and suggested they could slingshot me over the Clyde. *Hmmm tempting* but I politely declined to take them up on this!

On to a dog walker, who must walk regularly with his canine friend so I stopped him to find out if he knew more about the closure and any possible diversion. It turned out there was absolutely no way across as not only was the road closed but the actual bridge was in the process of being dismantled ahead of a rebuild. I was gutted, and all of a sudden deflated and exhausted. He looked quite blank when I asked if he could suggest a detour over another bridge and his

blank face and delayed reply told me that this local chap couldn't think of a straightforward one! Time to make use of the support crew...this was a REALLY hard call to make as I wanted to do everything independently and mile by mile on the route that I had planned. However, I also wanted to enjoy it. Now that I had Dad as support, I told myself it would be silly *not* to call him.



I felt riddled with guilt, feeling like a fraud and failure for a long time afterwards, and even as I sit and type this now all the feelings are as raw as they were right in that moment. I knew that there would be twists and turns and challenges and this was just part of the journey I took.

Another opportunity to meet a family through the AAT happily came up on day 9. After dinner I received a message to say that the family had arrived and I was so excited to meet them. We spent a lovely time chatting about our experiences and it was so beneficial, I couldn't have been happier to chat with them, especially young Thomas as we were both 8 when we were diagnosed and so instantly had a lot in common. We swapped similarities and differences in the medical journeys we'd been on and it was special and beneficial, for each of us. It was a lovely evening all round. I also had a new stash of treats to enjoy the next day as they kindly arrived armed with supplies to keep me fuelled up.

Tonight was an emotional and poignant reminder of how ill I was and how to not take life for granted. I was reminded that I don't want to put my life on hold and wait for retirement to have adventures, no matter how big or small. I was confident in my decision to be here, right here, doing what I was doing.

After heading off the following morning I received several calls from the hotel, we had overlooked settling up our bar bill, oops!

By the time I arrived almost to the Midlands I had almost lost a little sense of where I was. This might sound somewhat ridiculous given I'm aware of what the signposts are saying but I had started to become just a bit detached from the reality of where I was. I would simply cycle. Stop. Cycle. Stop. Cycle. Stop. I would see signposts all day long but not visualise where they actually were on a map, I just kept the legs turning and moving forwards!



I thought back to the early days in Scotland when I wondered when I would feel wild and free like those people I saw cycling in the opposite direction, and today, I felt as if the process was beginning and I was being re-wilded. I noticed how cycling south, the sun would hit the left-hand side of my face in the morning as it rose from the east and I would still have shade to protect me, then as the morning progressed, the sun would rise, becoming more powerful as it did, and then the shade would evaporate before moving to my right-hand side in the afternoon.



The hedgerow on the opposite side would benefit from shade and I would need to seek out trees or farmers' gates to shelter me as I'd stop for the loo, drink or snack. Being re-wilded felt good.

One of the highlights from the long canal tow paths of the Midlands was cycling briefly with Dad. He had brought along his bike which hadn't been used for ages. Today was the day though. It was a time when I was cycling with someone else, but someone who knew what we were doing. It was fun and I wished it could have lasted longer but Dad needed to turn around to return to Nellie before his round trip got too long.

"Can you get some Welsh cakes when you go to Wales? I like Welsh cakes!" I spoke to my eldest daughter after school on day 12 and as I mentioned that I had seen the Severn Bridge in the distance she made her request. I explained that whilst I could see Wales, I wasn't going to Wales. She wasn't happy with that response so I further explained that even if I wanted to go (which I didn't) it was a little too far to go, and that Mummy was feeling quite tired after cycling all day long. This still wasn't enough of a reason for her, though, as she confidently argued (rightly!) that I always cycle extra miles going round and round in circles each day and so I *could* do extra miles, and pick up some Welsh cakes at the same time. I admired her persistence and logic before carrying on minus any Welsh cakes.

I was so used to cycling alone that occasionally I would jump out of my tired and achy skin if I saw someone. "AAAAAAAAAAAAAGGGGHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!" I screamed, loudly and instinctively one late afternoon/early evening as the flow of the day had once again fallen into leisure cyclists making a bid for freedom away from jobs and enjoying exercise in the sun. I made this assumption based on their chipperness and freshness, bikes sparkling clean without a scrap of dirt, no bags strapped to the frames, a single water bottle and clean kit. All these signs pointed to a quick blast on the bike with a mate, not a wild adventure from Scotland! I was so used to being alone, on quiet roads and paths that when these two guys happily came alongside and said, "Hi!" I was so surprised that I literally screamed "AAAAAAAAAAAAAGGGGHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!" in response. I was so mortified! I apologised profusely as they sped past but couldn't believe how shocked I had been to see other people that I had yelled at them rather than trying to chat and stick with them, even for a short time.

I caught up with the cycling duo again not long afterwards, not because I was quick but because one had stopped at a T junction whilst the other carried on down the hill and was making a U-turn. This time I said, "Hi," and apologised again and carried on along the track. Then I heard them again, this time approaching in a deliberately noisier fashion and then announced loudly, "Just about to pass you, don't want to alarm you!" I laughed and chatted back, before putting my head down and trying really hard to keep their pace and keep with them but it wasn't meant to be as my tired legs couldn't maintain it for long. However, I enjoyed the company for the short distance I could manage around the twisting and turning country lanes as the sun lowered in the sky.

I had really enjoyed cycling along the canal together with Dad, I wasn't alone pedalling and it shifted the dynamic of the ride. Dad suggested that he would meet me near the end of the route on what would be the longest day of the journey and cycle with me to the accommodation. I knew I was getting closer to where I was due to meet him, but once again to round the day off I got confused, lost and spiralled around and round.

Seeing Dad smiling at the end of the day was always such a pleasure, both to see him and for the fact that it symbolised the end of another day and the start of an evening of chatting and catching up. We met up and made our way along the road and on to a cycle path then BANG!!! I could not believe it. Dad could not believe it. His trusty and ancient bike, that he'd never recalled having a puncture with, had just blown the tyre and was as flat as a pancake. It was unreal. I still kept my smile as we laughed about it but I couldn't believe that the longest day was now ending by us walking our bikes for the last third of a mile - me in cleats which was far from comfortable. I had to laugh otherwise I could very easily have cried.

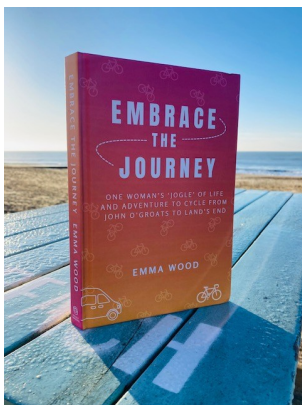
The familiar sights of Okehampton and the Granite Way were welcome as a rare flat section for today. I stopped at a way marker for the National Cycle Network and snapped a quick photo and a lady nearby who was cycling with her husband took one of me too. We got talking and asked one another where we were cycling from. When I said, "John o' Groats," she gave me the biggest, warmest, maternal hug! She said how incredible that was and I shared her sentiment, it was incredible and I couldn't believe how far I had come. Every day was bit by bit and broken down into thirds for stops and then further into manageable miles. Sometimes I would literally focus on getting to the next mile, or the top of the next hill as that was all I could do to keep going.

Mum was with us too on the last night, and it was really lovely to have both Mum and Dad to myself as this so rarely happens as an adult and when I have a young family too. I wanted to soak it up and make the most of it but I was too tired and sleepy to talk much! We shared a meal and looked out of the apartment window at the fields and sheep below as the sun was going down before the last day of riding. I was now in the position that Derek was in all those days previously at The Crask Inn before the final day. *Wow, how had I got here?* I thought to myself.

I was cycling around the gloriously flat section at St Michael's Mount and was already incredibly emotional. I heard "C'mon Mummy! KEEP GOING!!!" I do not have the words to convey just how much that helped. To catch a glimpse of my happy, smiling daughters shouting words of encouragement lifted me beyond words. I had tears of joy, tears of pain, tears that I was so close to achieving a huge personal goal but I had to keep focussed, concentrate and not make a mistake now.

Memories flooded back from two weeks before being stood in a wet and wild John o' Groats, far quieter and less touristy, than here. I had come so far since then, by bike! I was beaming from ear to ear as I hugged my family eagerly waiting my arrival. We had photos by the signpost and ate an ice cream and I was so happy, all the aches and pains melted away quicker than the ice cream. I had made it to the End, Land's End! I was so grateful to have made this dream a reality, to have embraced everything the journey had to offer and to have made memories to last a lifetime.

As I sit and type this article up ready for the spring edition of Quo Vadis I am nursing grazes and bruises from falling off my bike earlier this week. A silly accident catching a drop kerb at the wrong angle and I'm reflecting how grateful and fortunate I was to have managed to cycle over 1000 miles across two countries without a slip or a slide. I didn't know how the 15 day journey would unfold, what would be involved but the connection to nature and team support will be two core themes that I'll cherish!



If you'd like to read more about my ride then I'm excited to share that my book, **Embrace the Journey**, is now available on Amazon! Part adventure memoir, part cycling guide it will take you through planning the ride and then you'll join me at John o' Groats on a wet and wild morning and travel the 1,000 miles down to Land's End.

## LE61 JOG—JOGLE—LE05JOG

### Adrian and Henry Cole

We planned our holiday again this year to spend a few nights in Staithes then a week in Cromarty. Cromarty, that is not far from John O’Groats ? Could Henry join us for a JOGLE ? These ideas were, “pie in the sky” but they could work, couldn’t they? Henry had passed his test in April, he could manage a drive to Cromarty, couldn’t he? He has not driven that far, alone, he would be OK, wouldn’t he?

“Yes, Dad, I can do it, I can finish work and come straight up!”

“Oh No! You need to break the journey.”

We had a great few days at Staithes, dog friendly pub, beaches, people, and the scenery was amazing. We travelled north via the Angel of the North and looked forward to our few days in Cromarty before Henry would come to join us. Would he break the journey as I had recommended? Yes, he spent the night on a small farm campsite testing his new roof tent. Then off he went to the Go Outdoors opening in York, now the largest outdoor store in Europe! It was opened by Helen Skelton.



He set off after filling a goody bag with freebies and made his way north, the weather was poor and getting worse, when he was near Aviemore he could not even see the road in front of him! Very tired he arrived around 8pm we ate together, and he went to spend another night in his new roof tent!

We had a day’s break before we would start our JOGLE, a trip to Inverness and lunch with our great friend George Stone, who sowed the LEJOG seed with me 40 years ago! We had lunch with him and relayed our plan to both drive JOGLE in our own cars. We believe that this was the first JOGLE, where both cars with personalised number plates would be at the start and finish at the same time!

We set out from Cromarty making use of the small ferry that saves fifty miles and followed the east coast up to one of our Meccas John O’Groats! We then hand-railed the north coast to Thurso and then onto Tongue.



Dropped down to Ullapool one of my favourite places in the UK where we had “chish and fips” for dinner and back to Cromarty where Henry spent his third night in his roof tent, second night at the top of the Cromarty Firth.



Saying goodbye to Cromarty in fair weather was shadowed with the expectation of our day today, heading south via Fort William we spent too long here struggling to find somewhere for lunch! Through Glencoe and onto Loch Lomond, we stopped at Luss for a pitstop, but the loos were closed! Onwards south and a long journey to Clifton,

We stayed at the White House Guest House a regular B&B stop on the A6 just south of Penrith, after getting evening meal supplies at a motorway services.

Prue looked after us for breakfast and treats for TJ and Tilly. We left after breakfast with a plan to visit Buxton on the way back. Buxton welcomed us well, a great pub lunch and lots of rain! Home tonight! The route after Buxton took us passed Biggin, Henry had walked through there on his LEJOG walk north!

The weather was getting worse, and the rain was getting heavier and heavier, luckily, we were not on a motorway. We aimed to get to the National Memorial Arboretum for a cup of tea, but it was closed, so onwards getting home, at last! At 7pm.

Henry and I set off on Thursday morning at 8am to complete our JOGLE straight through to St Columb services then to Lands End. wWe had called ahead to book our cars to the signpost, mission accomplished and our first joint JOGLE in our own cars.

Since this trip, we have both changed our cars but kept our number plates, so another trip is planned this year!



## Competitive le jogging?

*We are honoured to have a Guinness Record holder in our midst, Peter Langford cycled Lejog in 2023 at the age of 90. I wondered if anyone else fancied breaking a record. I have a little wait until I can beat that, but there are other records to have a go at.*

*On Feb. 24, 1988, RAF Phantom 'Black Mike' set a world record for the fastest time between John O'Groats and Land's End of 46 minutes and 44 seconds at an average speed of 772.19mph. XV582 is a K model variant ([designated FG.1](#) in UK service) of [the F-4 Phantom](#) that was delivered*



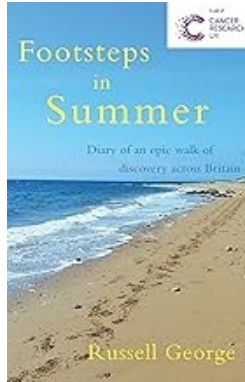
*to the RAF in May 1969 and served with 43(F), 111(F) Squadrons and finally 228 OCU. The aircraft is known [as 'Black Mike'](#) due to its unique paint scheme. As well as setting the speed record for John O'Groats – Land's End, the aircraft was also the first Phantom to reach 5000 flying hours and was used for display by 228 OCU until retirement.*

*Not for you? How about an unassisted cycle ride, present record a mere, 43 hours, 25 minutes and 3 seconds. No? how about running it? Can you beat 9 days 21 hours, 14 minutes and 2seconds. Unless you are of the female persuasion in which case the record is 12 days, 15 hours and 46 minutes.*

*Have you got a horse? Have a go at this. Horse riders generally, ride Jogle, Some thing to do with midges. There is no official record for this method of travel. Probably, to avoid some clown galloping down the hard shoulder of the M5. However, Preston Councillor David Ainsworth rode his horse Queenie from John o'Groats to Lands End in 1934, taking just 26 days.*

*The most completed journeys from Land's End to John O''Groats (or viceversa) is 20 and was achieved by John Taylor (Australia) by cycling, driving or on foot from 14 January 1980 to 18 May 2009. The last journey was the record attempt for the lowest average fuel consumption around Britain. ( can anyone beat this? )*

# BOOK REVIEW



I bought this book at the AGM weekend 2024. Nearly 12 months later it appeared at the top of my to read pile. I always feel sorry for people who, apparently cannot afford a good bike and do it properly and have to walk instead. However, I read this book with increasing enjoyment as interesting stories and histories of the places visited were revealed. Nothing lightens the read more than the story of a major cholera epidemic in Dumfries in 1832. Or the history of the highland clearances. These and lots of other stories, well researched and detailed, made the book an entertaining read. The reports of weather along the way do question the veracity of this tale. What? prolonged sunshine in Scotland. Give me a break.

Russell manages to convey all the problems involved in planning and executing a successful end to end. Routing, equipment, accommodation, blisters, getting lost. He even manages to demonstrate how to solve some of them.

All in all, an interesting and entertaining read.

Ted Pearson

# ★ ★ BOOK ★ ★ REVIEW



As we were preparing to leave The Toorak Hotel in 2024, I got talking to Steve Athawes. Steve had some copies of his book for sale on the Lejog stall and gently persuaded me to buy one.

I am so glad I did. As a dedicated non walker with an aversion to camping, I wasn't sure I would find his story interesting. However, I had not accounted for Steve's wonderfully descriptive and entertaining writing style, and I fairly rattled through it. From a few short walks around his home, to tackling the famous "Coast to Coast" walk in preparation for Lejog, his account is inspirational to anyone who thinks they may not be fit enough to attempt "The Big One". Whether you need information on preparations, routes, or the best brews of beer to be found en route, he is your man.

This book is an inspiration to anyone contemplating Lejog as well as a reminder to all End to Enders of the joys and adventures to be enjoyed along the way, not to mention the determination needed to overcome the difficulties. A great read.

Denise Pearson



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# Association Merchandise

To place your order please email our Treasurer, Russell George at [russellgeorge1@sky.com](mailto:russellgeorge1@sky.com). He will let you know the total cost, including postage and how to make payments. As a guide, postage for a small parcel sent by 2nd class within the UK currently cost £3.75



**Sweatshirts**

**£25.00**

Colour: Maroon, Sky Blue or Navy, Red, Military Green.  
Sizes: S,M,L,XL

Merchandise is also available for sale at our annual presentation weekend in February, when Russell opens the pop-up shop on Sunday morning.



**Ties** £11.00  
Maroon, Navy or Green



**Ladies Silk Scarves** £6.00  
Navy, Red, Maroon or Green



**Baseball Cap** £10.00  
Free  
Navy.



**Mugs** £4.00 each  
Or 4 for £12



**Car Stickers**  
Postage only



**Sew on Patches** £4.50  
Flag or Plain



**Fridge magnets** £2.50



# Back page gallery

