

The Pickwick Magazine

The World's Oldest Cycling Club
and Oldest Dickensian Society Extant



Founded in 1870



Mr Pickwick sitting for his portrait in The Fleet



It doesn't seem possible that the Rio Olympics are just a few months away - it hardly seems like 4 years since the halcyon summer days of London 2012. Will our sportsmen & women be as successful, particularly our cyclists? I would hope so, and we have a lot to be confident about, with Women's World Road Race Champion Lizzie Armistead clearly a cut above the rest, and Sir Bradley raring to go on the track. We must also congratulate Chris Froome on getting his OBE, and wish him well for this year's Tour.

As for Club activities, there was an excellent turnout for the Hampton Court Ride in October, along with particularly fine weather, justifying the effort by Pruffle & Hunt to keep the event going. In early November, a group of members and other halves, had an excellent tour around the Royal Chelsea Hospital. The residents are regular guests at our events, and so it was enjoyable to visit them on home ground.

I don't know if any of you have seen the TV programme "Mickey Flanagan's Detour De France", but it is a light hearted and irreverent bike ride across France with his pal Noel Lynch. They drank, then cycled, then drank some more - sounds a bit like a well known club I've heard of. A bit frivolous, but clearly serious riding at times, especially when they rolled into Monte Carlo to be met by no less a person than David Coulthard (former F1 racing driver for those who don't know) and his local cycling cluband off they go for a ride. Some people have all the luck.

Another year and a new President - Bullman - who has indicated in his message on page 4 some thoughts on organising additional events throughout his Presidential year. We look forward to these, so keep abreast of any emails from Buzfuz about upcoming events. There is a list in this issue of the regular events, so please do your best to support them - particularly our new members - the Club is more than just two luncheons per year. And don't forget the Caption Competition, very few entries received for the past two pictures, and I don't want to keep all the prizes!
Enjoy your Summer.

Winkle Snr

Closing Date for the October issue - 30th August 2016

A Secretarial Report

from Sgt Buzfuz

email:sdownham@hughesellard.com

A somewhat belated seasonal greetings. As I stated at the AGM the club is in a healthy position and most members seem keen to participate. Out of a possible 180 active members over 140 attended the annual Garden party and all but 5 members replied with apologise if they could not attend. The varied room layout seemed to work well and the general response is that the food and service was a lot better.

We shall repeat the format, which means numbers are strictly limited to 550 on a first come first served basis. Tickets are likely to be restricted to 5 to each member. The dates for this year are back to our usual second Thursday in May (12th) and first Thursday in December (1st). As usual the AGM will precede the Garden Party in December at 11.00 a.m. Members are reminded of the luncheon attendance rules; in that you must without good excuse, attend at least one luncheon in three. Failure may be deemed to be a resignation, which we try to avoid. We can accommodate as many guests as members want in May. We are always delighted to see the Retired members who are welcome at luncheons at any time.

The membership list is still closed. The last of the last names of potential members on the old list will be introduced in May, when the first of the new names, suggested during the short period the list was open last January, will be interviewed. Just over 30 names were put forward and an electronic random selection has prepared a list. Sponsors of the first few names will be written to before the end of February.

I have circulated details of information the club currently holds about members. It is hoped that you have all returned the forms as when received, we will be producing a new handbook which will include preferred telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. If you have not returned this form it may delay the printing. Please return it even if there are no alterations required.

Finally we are close to booking both speakers for the year. May's speaker has not yet formally confirmed, but I am delighted that with the help of Samuel Pickwick the comedian Dominic Holland has been secured for The Garden party. Check him out on the web site a highly acclaimed performer.



I hope to see you at as many functions as possible this year. **Buzfuz**



Your President's Address.....

It is with tremendous pride I take up the role of President of this great Club. In my year I hope to meet as many of you as I can. At our Executive Committee Meeting in a few weeks' time I have a proposal that we try to arrange membership meetings to some or all of:-

Wasps - Sunday 3rd April Home Game at their Coventry Ground against Saints and similarly Harlequins, at their Twickenham Ground on Saturday 7th May against Chiefs.

A Saturday game at Surrey Cricket Club at the Kia Oval on the 13th August versus Warwickshire.

All the games will be for members, partners and/or friends and will provide entry, function room dining and I hope team player(s) joining us at some time during the match.

Additionally if numbers permit, a trip to Ghent, Belgium for the Ghent Six in November. I would also like to try and arrange some form of function at a hostelry used by Charles Dickens in Kent that is littered with all manner of reference to him.

Also you will find a piece of Club memorabilia later in the magazine which I hope you will find of interest.

Pickwickian greetings to you all

Brian Vandervilt /Samuel Pickwick (Bullman)



The 145th Annual Garden Party....

Once more the weather bordered on inclement for the members arrival at the Grand Connaught Rooms for the 11am start of the AGM. Unlike previous debacles, the venue management appeared to have got their arrangements well drilled and the pre-ordering of wine before the AGM went dare I say it - smoothly. The AGM was conducted as ever in an organised manner, conducted by our retiring President. Assistant Secretary -Mr Watty gave those present a brief overview of his Paris-Avignon ride. If you read the magazine in a normal manner, you will have already seen the Secretary's report, and I can advise that our ever reliable Treasurer Jack Martin has the club's financial status in good order.



The day continued well when we were summoned to table by our regular friends, the Household Cavalry trumpeters, and all but a few last minute guests were in place for the arrival of our President & principle guest. Our Captain had already put us through our paces practicing our choruses with surprising quality and little cajoling.



Hats raised for the loyal toast and on to the food. Well what can I say? Hats off (!) to the catering staff of the Grand Connaught Rooms, providing probably the best food we have had for quite some time. A varied menu of Smoked Salmon Salad followed by Pan Fried Sea Bass before the seasonal Turkey main course (once again twice cooked??). Rounded off with Plum Pudding & Mince Pies, plus coffee pots placed conveniently on the tables to help ourselves. Excellent idea. GCR take a bow.

Mr Watty once again presented himself at the top table with his Ordinary (OK I did listen!) to take wine with the President and to receive the Measured Time Trophy for his outstanding 860km Velocipede ride back in August. (see article in October 2015 issue).



The Late Lord Chancellor then welcomed a considerable raft of guests both old & new, special and club members! (full details of this interesting list can be seen on pages 12 & 13Editor).



The Captain had little to do at this luncheon, however he did stand to explain why we were given our glass of punch early on in the proceedings - apparently it meant that everybody had received their ration by the time of the formal arrival of the Joseph Atto punch bowl. That made sense - unless of course you preferred it warm.

At the appropriate time, Mr Dumkins escorted our "Scarlet Cloaked" Boys of the Old Brigade from the Royal Chelsea Hospital with the aforementioned punch bowl, and presented themselves at the President's table. As is becoming the norm', one of them was only 72 years of age, younger than many Club members and guests.

The other one was a 79 year-old sergeant, who put Mr Dumkins in his place when asked to give his age. Attendance at our luncheons is highly sought after at the hospital, and there's lots of competition to 'get on the list' and if inside info from our recent visit is correct, some skulduggery may even be called for.



Then it was time for Sergeant Buzfuz to announce four (4) new members of the Club. They were Gary Allen-The Mayor of Eatenswill; Keiran Messenger- Villam (third generation member); John Davies - Tommy the Waterman; Ian Why - Horatio Fizkin. As always we welcome them to the Club and trust they will help to maintain its traditions and continuity. Also, it would be great to see them attend other Club activities throughout the year when we really do need plenty of support.



Our chief guest was John Maloney, several times winner of the Best Live performer at the London Comedy Festival, Best Live stand-up at the British Comedy Awards. John took the term 'stand up' seriously and stood on his chair, so visible to all in the hall. He was very entertaining with his real life anecdotal stories, just a pity he wasn't on for longer. He concluded with the toast to the "Immortal Memory....."

Almost forgotten, the last job of the outgoing President was to hand over to Bullman the responsibility of Club President until December 2016.



Your New President



It's Photo Time



And with the re-appearance this year of the official photographer, thanks to Mr Dumkins, there were opportunities for photoshots with both the Chelsea Pensioners & the Household Cavalry after we had concluded proceedings with Auld Lang Syne.

Editor

Events for 2016

So far as is known at the time of going to press, herewith the list of events for members & friends to enjoy, whether participating or just supporting. As always I can't stress enough that the Club doesn't just exist for the two luncheons each year. A lot of effort goes into organising all the events, and they should be rewarded with support from as many Club members as possible.

12th May - The President's Spring Luncheon - apply Hon Sec/Sgt Buzfuz

16th June - Annual Golf & Cycle Ride at Harpenden -see page 27 and enclosed entry form for details & apply to Smithers

26th June - BaillieMac Something Charity Ride Details etc see page 26 and entry forms enclosed

3rd July - Benson Veteran Cycle Ride - details from Mr Brooks

14th-17th July - Mr Pickwick goes to France - BaillieMac Something has planned another of his magical trips to see the Tour de France, enjoying typical Pickwickian conviviality and cycling.

13th October - Hampton Court Bike Ride - a mix of pre-1929 bikes (and some riders) plus the carbon & lycra 'louts' endangering life and limb around Surrey. Starting at Imber Court and returning for lunch Apply Pruffle or Hunt for details.

1st December - 146th Annual Garden Party - apply HonSec/Sgt Buzfuz

NB - As you will have read in the President's message, there maybe additional events arranged, so watch for news emails from the Secretary Sgt Buzfuz or your President

Hampton Court Ride - October 8th 2015



Once again the annual Hampton Court ride of the 8th Oct went off without incident!!!! That is if you exclude the late arrival of " Mr Brooks" who successfully managed to find us as we were returning through the maze in the grounds of Hampton Court Palace, and one of our guests who managed to get a puncture 100 yards from the start.

The remaining 22 riders, (the biggest attendance since we started) enjoyed the 12 mile ride under cloudless skies. After negotiating the end of the rush hour traffic for the first mile, we turned onto the Thames towpath for the 3 miles to Kingston bridge, then into Bushy Park, avoiding a very large rutting stag who was trumpeting to keep his rivals away, for the 4 miles across to Hampton Hill where I had arranged for some light refreshments in the Rising Sun public house for members and their guests. On our arrival the proprietor greeted us with two tables full of food, then continued to bring out more, 4 differing plates of sandwiches, sausages wrapped in bacon, chicken squires, crisps, etc. etc - enough food to feed us at the Presidents Spring Luncheon.



After an hour or so of fine beer & food, I managed to assemble the riders for the return ride back through Bushy Park, passing the iconic fountain of Dianna that our forefathers had passed on May 26th 1877. After Mr Brooks joined us, we proceeded into the grounds of Henry V111's Royal Palace for a photo call.

Among the machines being admired by all were: 3 Ordinaries, 2 solid tyre Safetys, and 2 Boneshakers - 1 ridden by Mr Watty on what must have been a breeze for him after his achievement of his Paris-Avignon ride, along with a range of cycles post 1900 all riding with the comfort of air filled tyres. It was also lovely to see our first lady joining us. With the sun still shining, we made our way back to Imber Court. This being the 9th Hampton Court ride, and the 8th time I have arranged the veteran cycle side of the event, it was an achievement to be back just before 1 o'clock and the first time I have not had to endure the wrath of " Pruffle" for bringing the ride home late. As in the past, we assembled with the faster riders who had been out to the Surrey Hills, for a traditional Pickwick lunch.





After *Grace I* could not help noticing that a lot of members and guests had left their bread rolls and coincidentally they had all been on my side of the event! Wonder if it had anything to do with the earlier light refreshments in the *Rising Sun*?

"Hunt" aka Roger Hitchman.

Hampton Court Ride ...Part 2

The Lycra Louts were also present in numbers this year, and it was decided that they would split into two groups -one super fast and one more sociable. After much pointing and arm waving by Pruffle as he tried to organize the split - he gave up, and two groups of indeterminate ability headed off to the Surrey lanes albeit on different routes. Along with cycling mate of many years Mike Baker, the Editor was in the Martin Guest led group. Wife Vanessa once again accompanied us along with other lady riders.



Enjoying the excellent sunshine, and following much the same route as in previous years we headed along the lanes towards West Horsley and the *Garden Centre* on the A264 for coffee & cakes. I have yet to identify the person who decided to add an extra loop when we were within a half-mile of our target, but the next 10 mins of climbing (yes for some of us it was!) over the *Shere Downs*, took it's toll, and when we arrived at *Squires Garden Centre* it was full of OAP's queuing for food & drink.

Being experienced cyclists did not cause us too much of a wait, giving plenty of time to recover before our return to Imber Court.



As always the staff provided us with excellent food and an enjoyable lunch was had by all. Pruffle fulfilled his MC role as he organised the prize giving -whilst bemoaning the fact that ' those ***** at the Golf Day had snaffled up the best trophies". The recipients were duly presented with the various assortment of trophies by the President.

Thanks again to Pruffle for organising the event once more - hopefully the increased numbers justify the effort. Ably assisted by Hunt with historic bikes, yet another enjoyable day was concluded.

"Winkle Snr" aka Editor

Many thanks to Frank Simmery (aka Helmut Stibal) for the photographs

The Late Lord Chancellor's (Long) Guest List.....

"Gentlemen!! Good afternoon, we are delighted to be joined by a number of past top cyclists including....."

John McClelland -Irish track champion and member of the Pickwick, Vic Hopkins, Matt Stephens, & Alf Engers, also known as the King of Time Trialling. Maurice Burton a giant of track racing who rode 56 x 6-Day events and David le Grys who must have thighs like giant redwoods because in 1986 he set a world speed record of, I kid you not, 126mph. Also from the cycling world we have Stuart Hallam CEO of Cycling Ireland and regular guest Peter Ruffhea, President of the Pedal Club.

We are delighted to have with us Stuart (hippy) Birnie, the 2013 24hr National Time Trial Champion and 2014 World 24hr Time trial champion - completing a mere 518 miles. That's 21.5 mph for 24 hours. as you can tell from this stunning physique I doubt I could do 21.5 mph for 24 seconds. As a guest of member Brother Mordlin, Glynn Stockdale who on a Penny Farthing rode the English Coast to Coast, Lands End to John O'Groats, Ireland Coast to Coast and the traversed the USA, 3358 miles in 45 days.

We are also delighted to welcome Jeffrey Schwartz Chief Financial Officer and Co-owner of Dorel of Canada, owners of Cannondale, Schwinn, GT and many others. Having ridden with Mr Watty for 500 miles this summer from Paris to Avignon on velocipedes we welcome from France, Francis Robin a historian and researcher on the history of the bicycle. He established Paris Velocipedia and in 2011 organised events to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first bicycle. On other sporting fronts we welcome back Micky Stewart a past England Cricket manager and past speaker at our luncheons. (not sure he managed to attend-Editor) Along with a sporting party that includes Paul Volley ex England , Lions, Wasps and Harlequins rugby player.

Other guests include David Ward general secretary of the Post office union and some members will have spotted, out of uniform this time, Tim West who has been one of our regular trumpeters for a number of years.

Gentlemen you are all welcome as are all guests.

Now as we all know, Samuel Pickwick loved a jaunt. Talking of jaunts, did you see what I did there? My next introduction is actually to one of our own. We are, gentlemen, in the presence of a record breaker from our own ranks.

The Late Lord Chancellor's (Long) Guest List cont'd.....

My next introduction is actually for one of our own. We are, gentlemen, in the presence of a record breaker from our own ranks.

You may remember him from last year when he rather rashly climbed onto the penny farthing after lunch which was soon followed by a rather dashing dismount. I am referring of course to our very own Slum (Alan Ash), who has recently returned from a record breaking charity run of visiting every Caravaggio painting in the world within three weeks, while keeping the same alcohol to painting ratio as the great man himself achieved.

Whether it was the gruelling schedule or maybe lasting damage from the penny farthing incident, by the third week one of his legs had completely packed up and he was dragging them around Florence in a manner vaguely reminiscent of Boris Karloff's rather splendid Mummy.

BUT DID THIS SLOW HIM DOWN? Well, yes I think it did a bit. However he got the record, raised over £20k for charity and spent an equal amount in bars in 28 cities across the globe. Slum, we are honoured to have you in our ranks.

And finally, it gives me enormous pleasure to introduce our splendid principal speaker. John Maloney, Twice winner of best Live performer at the London Comedy festival and best live stand-up at the British Comedy awards, he has delighted audiences worldwide. Known also for performances on BBC The Stand up show and Grumpy old Men John has been described as such - in the car-lot of comedy, John Maloney is the Bentley.

John we greatly look forward to hearing from you in a few minutes.

Members of the Pickwick Bicycle Club, "Will you now please rise and drink a toast to our guests." Thank You



I am grateful to Alfred Jingle & Mr Smithie for their combined contribution of the following article about an almost forgotten cycling giant:



Best of British - Ian Steel

born December 1928 - died October 2015

Known as the Iron Man, Ian Steel was the first Scot to take part in the Tour de France - in 1955. However his greatest achievement was winning the 1952 Peace Race from Warsaw to Prague. He was the first Brit' to win a major international stage race. Ian loved riding a bike and at 10years old was a butcher's errand boy -on his bike of course! In 1946 he joined a club and took part in his first competitive ride - a 25mile time trial, but soon switched to another club because he wanted to take part in "massed start" road racing, and had a special interest in the glamour of iconic continental riders, dreaming of being the new Fausto Coppi.

He became Scottish time trial & road race champion but went off to race in France and earned himself a place in the Viking team for the Tour of Britain in 1951. And he won it!

His exploits in the '55 Tour were not as memorable - having been part of the Viking Pro' team he was riding with other Brits, Brian Robinson & Tony Hoar. Ian became a victim of the ever present team politics and pulled out of the Tour after he was ordered to drop back and wait for a team mate. He quit competitive cycling later that year and pursued a different lifestyle in tandem with wife Peggy, travelling far and wide living on boats and in motorhomes as they traversed France, Spain, Majorca, USA and Canada, before returning to Scotland. Ian still enjoyed watching cycle events and was a popular raconteur until his death.



I am given to understand that some current Pickwickians may have competed against Ian, although they look much to young to make such a claim. Thanks to our contributors for this info about a celebrated British cyclist.

Editor

Letters to The Editor



This is your chance to have your say.

Write to: The Editor, 'Taverners' Warninglid Lane, Plummers Plain, West Sussex, RH13 6NY

Email: pickwick2610@hotmail.com or Tel: 01403 891789

Several letters received for this issue for which I thank you, and some of them have resulted in articles elsewhere in the magazine. However we do have an abbreviated letter here from Mr Brooks relating to other news items.

My Dear Mr Winkle,

In addition to the Joseph Atto topic, I would advise that as stated at the AGM, the Club has acquired the Past President's medal of Gilbert Hitchcock CBE (aka Mr Grundy) who had been President in 1988/9. At the time Mr Grundy was living in Hemel Hempstead, but the medal was sold at auction in Stockport near Manchester. I am sure there are many older members who remember Mr Grundy, and I wonder if any of them knew him well enough to explain when he managed to move from Hemel Hempstead to Stockport, or possibly if it was just some of his effects that were moved on or after his death. Perhaps some members have such information and could enlighten us as to the travel of his medal?

I also enclose a photograph of The Downs (Hotel) when it was still trading as a pub. I can't quite recall when I took the photograph, although I assume it was when the original plaque commemorating the first meeting of Club was unveiled. Although there is no sign of the plaque on the wall. A mystery but perhaps you can use the photograph in a future issue of the magazine?

Kind regards

Mr Brooks

Thank you Mr Brooks, let's hope that some member(s) may recall Mr Grundy and can help explain the 180miles missing link. The Downs picture appears on page 30.

The Editor

Past President Quanko Samba recalls his year.....

Now my year in office has reached its conclusion I suppose this article should be a period of reflection of my year in office. I am afraid to say that work, that demon of the drinking classes, did interfere considerably with my intended plans.

I did manage to attend the Golf day albeit I didn't play but had a most enjoyable day walking the course with Dumkins. The weather was kind and it was followed by an excellent lunch.

I also managed to attend the lunch at Imber Court following the bike ride, which I must say was extremely well attended and enjoyed another glorious day albeit being spoiled a little by the 4-hour journey home.

The Royal Hospital Tour, which my predecessor Samkin valiantly tried but unsuccessfully to arrange, was arranged for the 18th November 2015. Some 14 in total attended and whilst my wife and I were slightly delayed due to transport issues it didn't seem to delay the event greatly. Nevertheless a most enjoyable day has experienced being taken round by our Chelsea Pensioner guide, Albert Willis, this was followed by a most convivial lunch at the Hollywood Arms PH, Chelsea.

A number of other planned events did not go ahead due primarily, to being fully booked into 2016. It will be my responsibility to arrange the annual Past President's luncheon, and as last year will probably be held in July, so to all PP's - "watch this space".

Finally may I thank you all for your support during my year thank you for allowing me to be your President a most enjoyable experience and one that I will never forget.



Quanko Samba

Joseph Atto.....the World's Oldest Clubman

At December's AGM, Mr Brooks passed around an article and other items of interest about the above mentioned Club member. Apparently he died aged 85 in 1918 and his grave is in Chingford Mount Cemetery. Mr Brooks informed us that Bill the Turnkey (aka Don Keen) has persuaded local management to tidy up the grass around the gravestone and allow the engraved wording to be painted thus making it easier to read.



It's difficult to reprint the whole article but it is summarised below:

“Atto’s soubriquet was Nathaniel Pipkin, and he was still cycling regularly until a few years prior to his death when he had one leg amputated. At the age of 60 in 1893, he won the gold medal of the Pickwick Club for his ride of 281miles in the Great North Road 24hr time trial. He also rode 198.25miles in 19.5hours, earning himself a Club silver medal.

He was elected President of the Pickwick Club in 1913, and some members recall him riding to Poynings (Brighton) & back to attend a club run in 1914. Joseph Atto had a ‘boyishly robust’ temperament and was at his happiest when recalling his life in the ‘70s (1870s!). He worked hard & played hard, and put his longevity down to his favourite past time of cycling, He was a disciple of the open road and believed himself to be a living, talking advert for its health giving advantages.

Due to his likeness to Lord Roberts(?), he enjoyed the many great receptions he received during one of the old “ Irish Wheelman Tours”, where somebody had amusingly announced that the Lord was participating. Joseph took the homage most gracefully as the Irish went wild in their enthusiastic welcomes at each town.

During his Presidency of the Pickwick Club, he was paid the exceptional compliment of being elected an honorary member of the Boston Bicycle Club -the oldest cycling club in America.”

Mr Brooks suggested to the committee that the Club should commemorate the centenary of the death of Joseph Atto on June 30th 2018, with a visit to the cemetery to pay their respects. Further discussion by the Club committee will follow, and members notified.

Winkle Snr



Who Were Your Early Namesakes? Researching Your Ancestors

The Pickwick Bicycle Club has been in continuous existence since its formation in 1870, and the soubriquets of its members have been faithfully passed down from generation to generation. If you would like to receive the available history of your soubriquet, please contact Joseph Smiggers at: steve@stephenbullen.com and you will have the information by return.

Captain Dowler – formerly in army; traveler by coach to Bath

"Of course, an interchange of friendly salutations followed this gracious speech; and the fierce gentleman immediately proceeded to inform the friends, in the same short, abrupt, jerking sentences, that his name was Dowler; that he was going to Bath on pleasure; that he was formerly in the army; that he had now set up in business as a gentleman; that he lived upon the profits; and that the individual for whom the second place was taken, was a personage no less illustrious than Mrs. Dowler, his lady wife. 'She's a fine woman,' said Mr. Dowler. 'I am proud of her. I have reason.' 'I hope I shall have the pleasure of judging,' said Mr. Pickwick, with a smile."

J Long	pre 1881	
Walter Percy	1900 to 1914	
John Roderick Hopper	1928 to 193	President (1935), Winkle Cup 1930
E Owen	1959 to 1986	
Guy A Turnell	1989 to 1994	
C E Lobley	1999 to 2001	
Seth Ennis	2003 to present	

Mr Cluppins – Mrs Cluppins husband

"The two caps, reflected on the window-blind, were the respective head-dresses of a couple of Mrs. Bardell's most particular acquaintance, who had just stepped in, to have a quiet cup of tea, and a little warm supper of a couple of sets of pettitoes and some toasted cheese. The cheese was simmering and browning away, most delightfully, in a little Dutch oven before the fire; the pettitoes were getting on deliciously in a little tin saucepan on the hob; and Mrs. Bardell and her two friends were getting on very well, also, in a little quiet conversation about and concerning all their particular friends and acquaintance; when Master Bardell came back from answering the door, and delivered the message intrusted to him by Mr. Samuel Weller.

'Mr. Pickwick's servant!' said Mrs. Bardell, turning pale. 'Bless my soul!' said Mrs. Cluppins. 'Well, I raly would not ha' believed it, unless I had ha' happened to ha' been here!' said Mrs. Sanders. Mrs. Cluppins was a little, brisk, busy-looking woman; Mrs. Sanders was a bit fat, heavy-faced personage; and the two were the company."

Sid C Woods	1971 to 1977
Martyn Gibbons	1994 to present

Mr Skimpin - Sjnt Buzfuz's junior counsel

"'Who's that red-faced man, who said it was a fine morning, and nodded to our counsel?' whispered Mr. Pickwick. 'Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz,' replied Perker. 'He's opposed to us; he leads on the other side. That gentleman behind him is Mr. Skimpin, his junior.' Mr. Pickwick was on the point of inquiring, with great abhorrence of the man's cold-blooded villainy, how Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz, who was counsel for the opposite party, dared to presume to tell Mr. Serjeant Snubbin, who was counsel for him, that it was a fine morning, when he was interrupted by a general rising of the barristers, and a loud cry of 'Silence!' from the officers of the court. Looking round, he found that this was caused by the entrance of the judge."

C W Nicolas	pre 1877 to 1879	Raced for PBC in 1877
J Evered	pre 1881 to 1902	
W H Stephenson	1905 to 1914	President (1912)
Robert Bell	1914 to 1920	
H F Johnson	1923 to 1931	Committee 1927; Life Member
Nigel Wildman	1992 to present	

Dismal Man - woke Mr Pickwick on banks of Medway

"The river, reflecting the clear blue of the sky, glistened and sparkled as it flowed noiselessly on; and the oars of the fishermen dipped into the water with a clear and liquid sound, as their heavy but picturesque boats glided slowly down the stream. Mr. Pickwick was roused from the agreeable reverie into which he had been led by the objects before him, by a deep sigh, and a touch on his shoulder. He turned round; and the dismal man was at his side. 'Contemplating the scene?' inquired the dismal man. 'I was,' said Mr. Pickwick. 'And congratulating yourself on being up so soon?' Mr. Pickwick nodded assent."

Ramon Hutton	1993 to 1999
Richard Annis	2002 to present

Bilson - this character did not exist

"I should like to hear that same story,' said the red-faced man with the cigar. 'Should you?' was the only reply of the bagman, who continued to smoke with great vehemence. 'So should I,' said Mr. Tupman, speaking for the first time.

He was always anxious to increase his stock of experience. 'Should YOU? Well then, I'll tell it. No, I won't. I know you won't believe it,' said the man with the roguish eye, making that organ look more roguish than ever. 'If you say it's true, of course I shall,' said Mr. Tupman. 'Well, upon that understanding I'll tell you,' replied the traveller. 'Did you ever hear of the great commercial house of Bilson & Slum? But it doesn't matter though, whether you did or not, because they retired from business long since. It's eighty years ago, since the circumstance happened to a traveller for that house, but he was a particular friend of my uncle's; and my uncle told the story to me. It's a queer name; but he used to call it THE BAGMAN'S STORY."

C Adams	pre 1881 to 1911
Col. H F Kemball TD DL	1920 to 1969
Richard C Bladon	1970 to 1994
David J Henstone	2000 to 2004
Arthur Wilkinson	2007 to present

Tommy the Waterman

"'Golden Cross,' said Mr. Pickwick. 'Only a bob's worth, Tommy,' cried the driver sulkily, for the information of his friend the waterman, as the cab drove off. 'How old is that horse, my friend?' inquired Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his nose with the shilling he had reserved for the fare. 'Forty-two,' replied the driver, eyeing him askant. 'What!' ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, laying his hand upon his note-book. The driver reiterated his former statement. Mr. Pickwick looked very hard at the man's face, but his features were immovable, so he noted down the fact forthwith. 'And how long do you keep him out at a time?' inquired Mr. Pickwick, searching for further information. 'Two or three weeks,' replied the man. 'Weeks!' said Mr. Pickwick in astonishment, and out came the note-book again. 'He lives at Pentonwil when he's at home,' observed the driver coolly, 'but we seldom takes him home, on account of his weakness.' 'On account of his weakness!' reiterated the perplexed Mr. Pickwick. 'He always falls down when he's took out o' the cab,' continued the driver, 'but when he's in it, we bears him up werry tight, and takes him in werry short, so as he can't werry well fall down; and we've got a pair o' precious large wheels on, so ven he does move, they run after him, and he must go on--he can't help it.'"

T J Agar	1942 to 1956
J C Beauchamp	1963 to 1980 President (1977), Acting Captain 1966 to 1970
J Aston	1980 to 1982
Ramon E Hutton	1982 to ?
John Davies	2015 to present

The Pickwickians visit the Royal Hospital Chelsea

As you are all I'm sure, well aware of our association with "Boys of the Old Brigade, it was a great opportunity to reciprocate the relationship with a visit to their 'home'. Our Past President explains:



On Wednesday 18th November 2015 a fourteen strong group of fellow Pickwickians together with their wives and or partners gathered together at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. On our arrival your President, being somewhat stressed in his late arrival due to the failure of overhead cables on his railway line, and the party were met by Chelsea Pensioner Albert Willis and were then treated to a remarkable tour of the hospital illuminated by

numerous tales surrounding its history. The Grand Hall and Church were particularly amazing with the major conflicts in which the British Army had been engaged in over the years being depicted on plaques hanging on the walls of the Great Hall. Also of note were the examples of the rooms in which the pensioners were billeted in those early days to the more modern on suite accommodation they enjoy to today. Following the tour the party adjourned to the Hollywood Arms PH Chelsea where we all had a most enjoyable lunch.



Quanko Samba - Past President

Since this was such an interesting visit your editor thought it might be of interest to look more closely at the history of the Royal Hospital.....

It was founded by King Charles 11 in 1682 as a safe haven for war veterans and was based on Louis XIV's Les Invalides in Paris on the principal of a hostel rather than a pension. It is built on the 66-acre site of the former Theological Chelsea College founded during the reign of James 1st.

Our guide, Albert Willis was an encyclopaedia of information about the life and history of the Hospital. There are currently 285 'in-pensioners' including 11 ladies (since 2009) and there is no hierarchy according to rank. However the Hospital continues a military style culture and the in-pensioners are formed into four companies each headed by a Captain of Invalids who is responsible for their day-to-day welfare and management.



Albert Willis

One key point Albert made clear was that their uniforms are "scarlet" not red! They also have a blue coat, and their choice of attire is dependent upon how far they go once outside of the hospital gates.

In 1680 Britain had had a standing army for over 35 years, and so there were a number of soldiers returning from the wars that had nowhere to go. It was built of brick and stone, and although founded in 1682, it wasn't completed until 1692. Sir Christopher Wren's initial design was for approx. 400 veterans & officers, but it was realised that this would not provide enough space, so he added two extra quadrangles, now known as the East Court & West Court. The clerk of works was Robert Adams, and he is always remembered for the design of the windows. Throughout time, these windows have never been changed, so no double-glazing for the men & women in scarlet.

The in-pensioners live in berths on wards, with accommodation in the East & West wings. Originally the berths were 6ft square, but later increased to 9ft square. The berths were centrally constructed back to back down the centre of the wards facing outwards onto the 'corridors' and windows. There were 36 in-pensioners on each floor of each wing, with 2 showers, 3 WC's and 5 washbasins to each floor. More recent modernisation (on-going) has improved these conditions with some self-contained suites; a great improvement for those chosen to have them.



The Great Hall was originally used as a dining hall, and then for a period in the early 1800's as a recreation hall, plus it was where the Duke of Wellington lay in state. It reverted to a dining hall in the mid 1950's. And a splendid hall it is - and their daily menu is as good a reason for being there you could imagine.



The big event for the residents (apart from being selected to attend the Pickwick lunches) is the Royal Hospital Founder's Day at the end of May each year, to commemorate King Charles birthday. It is also known as Oak Apple Day to commemorate the escape of the King when he hid in the Royal Oak following the Battle of Worcester.

On Founder's Day, a member of the Royal Family always reviews the in-pensioners. Anecdotal rumour has it that some in-pensioners endeavour to be in the infirmary on the day, ever since Sophie- Countess of Wessex visited the infirmary and kissed the patients. In 2015 it was the Duke of York -so not so lucky.



The Wren Chapel is over 40ft high and completed in 1687. The Resurrection painting in the dome of the apse over the altar was done by the Ricci family and completed in 1714. Services were held twice daily but now are limited to Sundays only. It's not obligatory to attend.

Unfortunately due to their age, the number of in-pensioners fluctuates quite regularly, although Albert informed us that the most common reason for leaving the Hospital is for those who depart to get married.



The Hospital visit was a great trip and Albert an excellent (and patient - Mr. Brooks take note!) guide. It's a pity that the group numbers was limited, but if any members have the opportunity to visit in the future, I urge you to do so.

Winkle Snr.



Front Cover Illustration.....

In Chapter XL, Mr Pickwick followed the tipstaff into the prison, through an open door and past the turnkey into the interior of the prison. Here they stopped while the tipstaff delivered his papers; and here Mr Pickwick was appraised that he would remain, until he had undergone the ceremony known to the initiated as "sitting for your portrait." "Sitting for my portrait!" said Mr Pickwick. "Having your likeness taken, sir," replied the turnkey. "we're capital hands at likenesses here. Take 'em in no time, and always exact. Walk in, sir, and make yourself at home."

Mr Pickwick complied with the invitation and sat himself down; when Mr Weller, who stationed himself at the back of the chair, whispered that the sitting was merely another term for undergoing an inspection by the different turnkeys, in order that they might know prisoners from visitors. "Well, Sam," said Mr Pickwick, "then I wish the artists would come. This is rather a public place."

Back Cover Picture - courtesy of Peter Magnus

The Giro of 1914 and after.....

As most of you are aware, the Giro d'Italia ranks second of the Grand Tours, but the 1914 was the 6th running of the event, and the last before the Great War. It also ranks as the hardest Grand Tour of them all - before and since. It was the first to be decided on time classification rather than points. At 3162km long it is reputedly the longest (although the 1909 course may have been 100km longer), it included five stages of over 400km, with the longest from Milan to Cuneo at 420km. There were 98 entries and it was a Tour of attrition with only 8 riders completing the course. And there was worse - with a number of tack attacks- tacks thrown in the road, but not from rivalry, but locals who objected to the race passing their door.

These tactics(!) were not a one off - the attacks on riders continued in various forms right up until the late 1980's. Vin Denson recalled having leftover food thrown at him from balconies as punishment for joining a group of foreign riders chasing down the Italian favourite. "Tomatoes, spaghetti, anything including a dustbin full as I entered the hotel." In 1987 Robert Millar suffered, when having secured the KOM title and second place overall he was subjected to a "rolling food fight when riding alongside Stephen Roche. Roche was leading the Tour having deposed Italian Visentini from the lead, who was later fined 3million lira for threatening to knock out Roche. They threw wine, steak and punches at us". Fortunately by the time Mark Cavendish started winning sprints this type of violence had ceased.

More on the 1914 event in the next issue.



CLUB OFFICIALS BOARD

A few years ago at a Committee Meeting some Club memorabilia was produced including a couple of Club Official Boards the request was whether any of the Committee could take custody of same and I was delighted to struggle home with one of the President's Boards. I have had this professionally renovated by a French polisher and it sits proudly in my office at sunny New Malden. **Samuel Pickwick-President (Bullman)**

2016 Extravaganza by Baillie Mac Something.....

Our organiser extraordinaire, Baillie Mac Something has once again conjured activity events for Club members. One involves cycling + something to eat, the other involves plenty of eating + watching some cycling! For both events though, he needs your support.

Sunday 26th June - Charity Cycle Ride

A similar format to last year, this will be a 30 mile ride through the Chilterns, starting from The Plough at Winchmore Hill -near Amersham. A lunch will be available at Taplow/Burnham Beeches for the riders, before returning to the Plough. This year's event (the 28th running) is to raise money for the Alexander Divine Children's Hospice. Such is the competition for the Wembley RC Shield currently held by our own Pickwick BC, that the Huntswood Golf Club, now include it in their events calendar, and are determined to wrest it from those Pickwickians this year. Following the ride there will be the infamous BBQ at Wildhatch, courtesy of Mrs Baillie Mac, aided by Justice Stareleigh as chief cook.

Sponsorship forms are enclosed in the magazine, or simply contact Baillie Mac.

Week end 14-17th July - Mr Pickwick Goes to France

A change in style this year, with leisurely travel via Eurostar to Lyon on the first day. Overnight with a *****class dinner to celebrate Bastille Day, before catching another train the following morning and then by 'voiture' to see the final stages of the individual Time Trial conclude at Vallon Pont d'Arc, in the Gorges of the Ardeche. Returning that evening to Lyon for dinner. On the 16th the group will head to Paris for sightseeing, and no doubt more high class culinary dishes.

The final morning -17th, after free leisure time -lunch! then it's off to the Gare du Nord for the Eurostar journey back to the UK. You can be sure of wonderful food, and Pickwickian 'craic' if past tours are anything to go by, and of course the purest form of bike racing.

If you want to join either event, you need to let Baillie Mac Something know as soon as possible, so he can organise food for the BBQ, and hotels etc for the trip to France. Get in touch with him NOW to avoid disappointment. Contact him on 01494 722611.

Don't Forget the 16th June.....It's the Annual Golf Day, Cycle Ride & Luncheon again.

Following the success of last year, Smithers has again organised his now unmissable sporting day for everyone to enjoy. In 2015 he also organised superb weather for all participants, and whether you want to play golf, ride your bike, or simply come to lunch, you can be sure of a typical convivial Pickwickian affair. You can bring your friend(s) along as well.



For the golfers, there is an array of historic Club cups & trophies (as coveted by Pruffle- see Hampton Court Ride) to compete for. The Harpenden course is very picturesque, and whilst allegedly not too demanding, some players will find most of the hidden treasures and quiet leafy copses as they search for their balls! Plus waders are not required for for the one water hazard!!



Justice Stareleigh will direct the cycling - whether it be the leisurely ride to coffee, or the hard man's hilly terrain (yes Hertfordshire is hilly - Winkle Snr), it will be an enjoyable day out, and back in time for the usual excellent lunch with the golfers.



The format will be the same as 2015, but with a 1045hrs T-off at Harpenden Common Golf Club, Herts, - an entry form can be found on the website with the magazine and this should be sent to Smithers **at his new address** or you can contact him at:

davinc2000@aol.com

Passing of time.....and more friends

Once again it is with sadness that I must report the passing of Club members.

Charles Griffin - Simpson (December 2015)

Charles joined the PBC in 1984 and became a retired member in 2004.

Joe Summerlin - Henry Beller (December 2015)

A Pickwickian since 1983. Harry Foxton -aka The Secretary comments that, Joe was a "true man of cycling. He was a local & a national official. He worked on major events like the Milk Race/Tour of Britain, and numerous local road & track events. He was also a major player in the push to clean up sport in general and cycling in particular from drugs. He was a real lover of everything cycling and is a real loss to sport in this country.

Brian Montgomery - Captain Boldwig (November 2015)

Had been a member of the PBC since 2001. Brian was the founder and chairman of the European Bicycle Manufacturers' Association passed away in November after a long illness. The EBMA was a protectionist trade organisation raising "anti-dumping" complaints against mostly Asian bicycle manufacturers. He was also an official with Comité de Liaison des Fabricants Européens de Bicyclettes, or COLIBI, and in the 1990s and early 2000s he was in open revolt against the UCI's anti-technological attempts to make cycle racing more about the ride than the machine. Brian was based in Paris.



October 2015 Caption Competition Winner!



Rather disappointingly there was once again little response to this competition, with only two entries - and they were from one member.

So nepotism rules again with my son **Nathaniel Winkle** declared the winner with:

"Peace, Perfect Peace"

(a small prize will be sent to your residence in due course)

March 2016 Caption Competition

Another chance to win a prize for the best caption entered by a Club member.

Entries (max two per member) in writing or email to the editor by September 11th closing date.



Photo courtesy of Frank Simmery



As mentioned on the Letters page, Mr Brooks kindly sent the above photograph from a now forgotten date of The Downs when it was just a pub. He is pursuing the possibility of obtaining the pub sign if it's still available. To hang outside his house?

Our Captain's Message.....

The Captain is looking forward to all members & guests having an enjoyable lunch in May and hopefully observing our ancient traditions.



Some cycling opposites.....

" I think the most ridiculous sight in the world is a man on his bicycle, working away with his feet as hard as he possibly can, and believing that his horse is carrying him; instead of, as anyone can see, he is carrying his horse."

Criticism from *George Bernard Shaw*.

" To see the golden hiking girl, with wind about her hair,
The tennis playing, biking girl, the wholly-to-my-liking girl,
To see and not to care.
At sundown on my tricycle, I tour the Borough's edge,
And icy as an icicle see bicycle by bicycle,
Stacked waiting in the hedge."

Praise from *Sir John Betjeman*

VELOCI-POMPE



PICKWICK BICYCLE CLUB
HAMPTON COURT RIDE 2015

