

# OXFORDSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST



*From the Ride and Stride Press Officer:*  
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## Ride and Stride 2013

For the first time for some years the weather was not kind to StRiders, and many got rather wet! As always people of all ages took part, from 1 to over 80, and there was an encouraging number of groups of youngsters out and about. The sum raised is higher than last year – over £120,000 – which seems to demonstrate that this event has not lost its attraction for those who like a challenge.

There are many names which come up year after year as high-achievers: Chris Brennan takes the prize for the highest mileage, having cycled to churches in each of the six counties surrounding Oxfordshire covering 199.4 km. John Griffin from Wallingford Quaker Meeting House, Roger Livett from St Lawrence, South Hinksey and Anne Marie Mashongamhende all visited over 50 churches on their bicycles and Helen Abbott of Goring Free Church walked from Streatley to Oxford visiting 42 churches. Pauline Franklin was sponsored by 94 people, many of them customers, but Dennis Blease of Longcot St Mary's had 140 sponsors; both of them raised over £1,000. Reggie Heyworth of St Mary's Holwell once again raised the most with his £3,615, and eight others raised over £1,000. Many people took advantage of JustGiving and sponsors came from as far afield as America, Australia, Kenya and New Zealand. The Revd Mark Abrey of The Chase Benefice raised £1,820; £1,455 was donated through JustGiving. James Webster of St Mary Cogges is to be admired and congratulated for running (and walking) from Trinity Church, Cheltenham to Cogges (58 kilometres) visiting Churches in the Windrush Valley on the way – can anyone beat that feat of endurance?

The youngest participant, as far as I know, was Luke Saxel who toddled round the Churchyard at St Giles, Standlake; Sam and Charlie Greenslade, 3 and 5 respectively, cycled to churches in the Broadshires. The Mustard Seeds Baby and Toddler Group from Watlington pushed buggies and cycled to raise money for St Leonard's Church. Joe Appleford, who is now 9 years old, visited 40 churches in Woodstock, Kidlington and Oxford with his mother. James and Kit Lamb, 13 and 15, once again supported Sibford Gower Quaker Meeting House, cycling to 42 and 40 Churches in the Banbury Area. Group Scout Leader of 1<sup>st</sup> Barton Scouts, Jill Elliot, allocated churches in the Benefice to the scouts who were working towards their cyclist badge. Three under tens from St Mary Magdalene, Woodstock, were sponsored and walked with their parents and an aunt (pictured) to Bladon, a distance of two miles, and back.



The octogenarians amongst the participants are obviously very fit; Wing Commander White cycled to 27 churches in the Wantage area, John Tobias walked to 26 churches in Oxford and Wallingford, Tony Moore from Longcot Chapel cycled to 20 churches and Eve Vause cycled to 17 churches in Oxford.

Basil Eastwood, Chairman of OHCT, persuaded Bishop Colin to cycle with him from Goring to Henley; on arrival in Henley, Bishop Colin said “We have had a really good day, despite a bit of drizzle and some fairly steep hills. We only managed to visit eleven churches, but it has been wonderful to see all the work that has been done with OHCT’s support, to meet the teams working together in each of the parishes along the way and to talk to other enthusiastic participants”.



It is always interesting to read of participants combining the StRide with other activities: Tony Crabtree of St Andrew’s Shrivenham organised a bell ringing outing to Burford, visiting churches in the area as well; one of their group cycled a Sinclair C5 up and down the Cotswold hills. The most unusual fundraiser was a Strictly Come Dancing Sweepstake organised by St Mary, Black Bourton. A StRider from Wheatley went to London and walked to 20 Churches, starting in Battersea and ending at St Mary le Strand, taking in three Cathedrals and Westminster Abbey on the way.

Almost half of OHCT’s annual income is derived from the Stride, and this enables them to give much needed grants to Churches and Chapels of all denominations for repairs and refurbishment. Your participation is much appreciated. In the coming year, when OHCT celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, it is hoped to raise the profile of the Ride and Stride, and any ideas for doing this would be welcomed.

The Ride and Stride this year is on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September.

Handwritten signature of Alison Shaw

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