

OXFORDSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST



From the Ride and Stride Press Officer:

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Ride and Stride 2014

It is wonderful to report that last year's Ride and Stride raised the record sum of £129,562, which includes a healthy sum of Gift Aid. 92 people set up JustGiving pages, which is a very encouraging increase since it makes the collection and recording of sponsorship money much easier.



The ages of those who participated this year ranged from 9 months – Joshua Bones walked with his father, Richard, and raised £50 for St Leonard's, Watlington – to 90 year old Joyce Watson who raised £63 welcoming visitors to Chadlington Methodist Church for eight hours. Sam and Charlie Greenslade (4 and 7) again cycled for SS Peter and Paul, Broadwell, visiting 3 and 7 churches respectively.

Sam at Langford Church

Every year the same names crop up on sponsor forms, and Simon Blainey of Wesley memorial Church in Oxford topped the list of number of churches visited on his bicycle with 60, closely followed by Malcolm Brecht who wrote on his sponsor form "58 churches, 52.3 miles, 11 biscuits, 6 glasses of squash, 1 water, lots of fun!". Pauline Franklin was sponsored by 92 people, many of them customers at her hairdressing salon, visiting 50 churches and raised £1,390 – well done Pauline. The longest distance achieved on foot was by Helen Abbott from Goring Free Church who walked from Goring to Oxford, visiting 45 churches, including 26 in Oxford, which is an amazing feat. The most raised by any Church was, once again, St Mary Holwell's total of £3,365; Reggie Heyworth sends out a letter with a GiftAid form to potential sponsors, which obviously pays off! James Lamb (14), who has taken part for some years, cycled to 38 churches in the Banbury area. Ian and Pat Fraser of Rotherfield Peppard have frequently chosen to walk round churches in different areas, and this year they visited 27 in Ipswich, raising £908.



Wytham Cricket Club again supported Wytham Church. This year four members travelled to Lords Cricket Ground and cycled 70 miles back to Wytham. They raised £1,191. The support vehicle which travelled with them was required when one member had a nasty fall and had to go to hospital.

There were also canine participants: Charlie walked with Mary and Peter Hughes, in aid of St James, Stonefield, and raised £30 in sponsorship, and Bella from Appleton walked with Margaret Reading. Carolyn McCrum walked with her two dogs in Derbyshire, where she was on holiday.



Bishop Colin and OHCT Chairman Basil Eastwood joined a party of cyclists in the Vale of the White Horse to follow a route devised by Diane and Dennis Blease. Basil wrote: Bishop Colin and I were in good company as we cycled round the Vale of the White Horse. The presence of Tony Moore aged 87 and Chloe Bramwell aged 12 in our cavalcade meant that we had no excuse for slacking, but we had chosen The Vale because it is a new part of Bishop Colin's patch and because it is flat, so it was really a very pleasant day's ride.

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We started from Uffington, then on to the lovely church at Baulking, followed by Goosey, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Hatford, Shellingford and Fernham, which is one of the churches featured in Becky Payne's book *Churches for Communities*. Then on to Longcot, where we enjoyed a pub lunch, Watchfield, Shrivenham, Woolstone and back to Uffington where we ended the day with a very welcome cup of tea and a piece of cake before stopping at Radio Oxford on the way home for an extended interview with Bill Heine.

A walker from Wheatley caught the bus into Oxford with the intention of combining the StRide with Oxford Open Doors. A number of the Colleges were either not open until the afternoon or not taking part, but he did manage to visit a few College chapels. He walked along what he termed "a sort of Christian supermarket" – St Giles: first the Dominicans at Blackfriars, then the high Anglican Pusey House, the Quaker Meeting House, the Christian Scientists and then the Roman Catholic church of St Aloysius.



Robin Fieth from Pyrton Church usually races around on his own clocking up as many churches as possible, but this year he decided to get a group together for a more social but still challenging day. They were seen off by John Howe, MP, who said he was "delighted to come and give my support to Robin and his friends... OHCT does a great job in giving grants to local churches to help them maintain our heritage". Robin and his group visited 38 churches. Over the years Robin has raised over £13,000 for the Trust and was invited to make a presentation to the Earl of Wessex at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations at Dorchester Abbey.

Apart from those who walked or cycled, there were other fundraising activities: Tina Palmer from Fifield did sponsored gardening; Anthony Lee of Sparsholt was sponsored for playing in a tennis match; Richard Dudding ran to 11 churches in the Radley and Kennington Area; Victoria Prentis and her daughters Tilly and Cressida of Somerton rode their horses to four churches and Jean Bagnell from Hampton Poyle held a coffee morning, bring and buy and cake stall which raised £228.



There was some discussion as to whether power-assisted bicycles were allowed, as at least two participants of mature years went out on theirs. Philip Rogers of Yelford wrote "I managed 29 churches, but the battery ran out in spite of a recharge at Northmoor, so I had to pedal home! (Bit heavy, but not bad for 79!)"

I enjoy reading people's comments on what they did on the day, and there are always some good stories. Keep them coming in 2015! Please let me know in advance of 12th September if you are planning anything special so that we can have a photocall arranged and perhaps press coverage.

Thank you for your support and all you do for Ride and Stride and for the Trust as a whole.

Alison Shaw
Ride and Stride Press Officer