

June 2001

CAIRNGORM CYCLING CLUB

-- Tom Mackie

When I moved from Edinburgh to Aviemore in June 1968, I was still a member of the Musselburgh RCC. until December 31st.

The north clubs were 30 to 40 miles away, so I decided to start a cycling club in Aviemore. The first members were my wife Isabel, son Paul and myself !

We chose the colours Kingfisher blue and nasturtium. The 'body' was blue with the yoke, sleeves and waist hoop in the nasturtium -this colour for safety reasons, as it is easily seen from a distance.

We advertised the club with posters on the side of our Bedford van.

The first race was a short one for some children, with boxes of iced-caramels and fudge for prizes !

I registered the club in 1969 but for some reason I didn't receive confirmation so it was officially registered in 1970.

We were given the small rooms in the village hall to use as club rooms.

When our friend Dudley Evans mentioned the club to his wife Sylvia, she told her class at school and about 20 children turned up for the first club night !

Former Scottish and British Road champion George Edwards also brought his family to the club.

We set up a tuck shop and provided Rollers and a rowing machine to have competitions and had Hallo'een with all the sticky buns and dooking for apples etc. and fancy-dress competition. Dudley and I took most of the 20 children out on the road for a cycle run, which was nerve racking ! We had to stop the runs as we didnt have insurance. Brian Dickson was the best schoolboy but went on to be an Ice Hockey star !

My first race for the Cairngorm was a Forres "10", when I cycled from Aviemore to Forres, rode the "10" and cycled back. Fortunately it was a sunny day !

Our first organised race under NOSCA and SCU rules, was a "25" in May 1970.

All the NOSCA clubs supported the race and Jimmy Lane came up specially from Musselburgh to be time-keeper. The start was Loch Alvie, south to Newtonmore, retrace and finish at the start. There was about 30 riders turned up and the 'strip' was behind the cottage at Loch Alvie . I made a porcelain tankard with a cyclist motif on it, for the winner. It was a lovely sunny day (with a few snow flurries!!) and Pete Robertson drank the tea urn dry !!

Our first "10" was Rothiemurchus to Glenmore and back. Dudley and I tied boards over the cattle grid which is no longer there. Isabel made scotch broth for the riders (which made a change from biscuits !) and the local pottery allowed us to use their kitchen facilities which had a serving hatch to the car park.

Our mountain time trial was the same course used now.

Our best club and race member was Ewan Mackenzie whose dedication to training was inspirational but a hard act to follow ! He had many first places and personal bests and broke the north 100 TT record. (4h 15). He became an Olympian at his other chosen sports.

Colin Horn joined the club after moving to Grantown from Inverness and took over the administration of the club. He started the "Tour of Speyside " which was every June for several years. It was a very prestigious race with top national riders. Since I founded the club, I've met Hugh Porter and Anita Lonsbrough, Doug Daley, Billy Billsland , Ian Steel and Arthur Campbell who were guests at the Tour. There were many riders from other areas such as mid-Scotland - who wanted to join the club to help boost the numbers.

I am very grateful to all the north clubs for all the help and encouragement they gave me during the first years.