

Ayr Roads/Harry Fairbairn Cycling Club's Own Family T(h)ree

Ayr Roads Cycling Club's latest and youngest recruit is 11 year old Alloway schoolboy, Christopher Andreucci. Young Christopher enjoys participating and competing in three other sports. He is a member of South Ayrshire Swim Team, Ayr Seaforth Athletic Club and Ayr Juniors Football Team. He was Alloway School's Primary 6 Sports Champion in 2008 and has participated in numerous swimming galas and tournaments with both South Ayrshire and Alloway School. Christopher has also competed in three Aquathon's earning a 1st and 2nd place finish and a respectable 5th place in the higher age group swimming 250m followed by a 2k run.

Christopher is the third generation of his family actively involved with the club. His grandfather is no other than Arnie Thomson, honorary life member; former Club Champion and Team Record Holder of three club and Ayrshire & Dumfriesshire Association Championships. Three of the club records still stand. Arnie joined the club as a schoolboy himself in 1955. The other member of the family is Arnie's son and Christopher's Uncle Alan. Now an over-seas member residing in Bangor, Northern Ireland! Alan was introduced to the club by his father – again as a school boy when he too was 11 years old in 1983. Alan won the club and Association Tourist Trophies in 1985 & 1986.

Membership stemming three generations is unique in the club's 80 year-old history and as the patriarch of the family, Arnie is delighted that his grandson has joined the club. However, he points out that his family's association with the Cycling fraternity goes back even further.

"My late father was a member of Ayr Argonauts Cycling club in the 1930's and was the 10 mile record holder in 1937. My uncle Jim (McGill) was a member of the Affleck Wheelers of Auchinleck in the late 1920's and early 1930's. He was the Best All Rounder Cycling Champion for Ayrshire & Dumfriesshire Cycling Association in 1931. At that time the B.A.R Championship covered distances of 10, 25, 30, 50 and 100 miles and a 12 hour endurance event.

His was a truly magnificent feat considering that he was a miner and subjected to the grim conditions underground at that time. He must have been truly committed and as my auld friend Bobby McLean would say "No pain – no gain".

I followed my father into the sport and was a member of Ayr Argonauts for two years before joining "The Roads".

I tried to emulate my Uncle Jim, but could only manage silver and two bronze medals in the Association's B.A.R."

By coincidence at last year's club dinner, I found out that fellow club member and co-sponsor John Gemmell was also related to Jim McGill."

"Chris is a great wee guy. He really enjoys his sports. He has never been pushed into any of them and is a true team player. He gets all the encouragement from his mum and dad. Yes, it's nice if you are a winner, but some winners are very bad losers and certainly not team players. He is hoping for a new Chris Boardman Mountain Bike for Xmas, so I expect my January bike miles to be on the increase, when I get the call "Grandad do you fancy going out on the bikes tomorrow! So long as he doesn't ask me to put on my running spikes I should be ok!"

"I have been privileged to have been a member of Ayr Roads all these years and although "an auld dun racer" now, I still enjoy getting out on my bike and helping the club with the other "auld dun racer" Bobby McLean in time keeping duties. We get a real laugh seeing the machines ridden today compared to ours of yesteryear. Bobby and I cajole the young 'uns by

calling them wimps since we used to ride to events and ride back with a drum-up on the return leg. Today they take their cars!

The club continues to go from strength to strength and a big thank you goes to Sir Arnold Clark who has continued the Harry Fairbairn Sponsorship with the club. The newly formed Barr & District Mountain Bike Club is also affiliated to Ayr Roads and with the assistance of our own Blair Wyllie in bringing the young ones on, cycling in South Ayrshire can only get better.”

Over the past two years I have even ventured into the Spanish Sierras with Alan and Chris. It's really nice to cycle in the sun and I am looking forward to another Andalucian Adventure this year with my boys and son-in-law Paul. To quote the great man himself – Davie Bell (The Highwayman) and founder member of Ayr Roads **“If I rest I rust”**.



Arnie & Alan Thomson flying the club colours in
The mountains of Andalucia



Young Christopher joins his grandad & uncle on the
Los Reales climb in Estepona