

My Story

When I was very young I saw a photo of my Dad along with some of his mates riding their pushbikes down a lane near the Air Force base where he was stationed. My Dad's base was near Norwich from which he flew B-17's. Since that time I dreamt of riding a pushbike through the English country side. In 2005 I made my first trip to England, the home of my grandparents, to fulfill that dream.

Studying my laptop screen, with a map of England on it, I picked a location that would put me at the epicenter of my adventure. "This Salisbury looks like a good starting place" I said to myself. Gatwick was chosen as the airport that seemed closest to this town. I purchased my ticket and began collecting stuff to bring with me. Not much planning went into this trip causing my children a good deal of anxiety.

"What is your plan?" They asked me.

"I'm going to Salisbury in England."

"What are you going to do there?"

"Buy a bike, ride around and camp out"

They asked with heightened anxiety "Where?"

"Don't know till I get there."

"You can't do that! You'll get lost and we'll never see you again" was their combined cry! My children are in the early 30's and seemed to have little faith in their Dad.

I landed in England at 9:30 am on May 9th of 2005. I was mesmerized by the airport and the services available there. Here, I was able to purchase a ticket for train or bus, walk a few yards and board. This was a most amazing thing to me. Every minute introduced me to a new wonder of this country. However, the thing that struck me most was a feeling of inner peace that overcame me upon leaving the terminal. My spirit whispered "You are HOME."

A National bus zipped through towns and villages bringing me closer and closer to a town I knew nothing about. As the bus rolled through the green county side a Spire, rising high above the tree tops, caught my eye. Standing on what appeared to be a side street after exiting the bus at the Salisbury depot I asked myself, "Where are you going to do now?" When in doubt do something so I walked around the block coming back into the bus station I found a map attached to a wall. With the map's help I found the YHA, settled in, then walked around town and fell in love. The Cathedral, the Market place, the parks and rivers, all enchanted me.

A few days later I asked a fellow standing on line what was happening? He told me that it was the last night of the Festival and I should buy ticket. So I did and for the last 4 years made sure that I am in Salisbury for not only the close, but also the rest of the Festival. I'll be back for 2010 too!