



(Clockwise from top left) Mike's grandfather was Les Warner, CTC's National Secretary during the '60s and '70s, here pictured with wife Sheila and, on his own bike, Mike's father Tim. CTC's three Dr Bike stations were busy all day during the FreeCycle event. Finisher's medal for the Surrey 100 sportive. A big field for the sportive meant a big demand for marshals too.



# THE RIDELONDON VOLUNTEER

**AT THE PRUDENTIAL RIDELONDON WEEKEND, HUNDREDS OF CTC MEMBERS MARSHALLED THE ROUTES AND SERVICED BIKES. CTC PRESS OFFICER LAURA RAYMOND CAUGHT UP WITH ONE OF THE BUSIEST, MIKE WARNER**

**M**ore than 50,000 cyclists took over the streets of central London on Saturday 3 August for the start of the inaugural London FreeCycle event, part of the Prudential RideLondon festival weekend.

Many of them were casual cyclists who would never normally cycle around the capital but had chosen to take advantage of the closed roads. CTC volunteers turned out in their hundreds to help these riders enjoy the day and resolve any problems with their bikes. Among them was 20-year-old university student Mike Warner (pictured overleaf).

Mike has quite a family history with CTC. He has been a member for as long as he can remember and his grandfather was the late Les Warner, CTC's National Secretary during the '60s and '70s.

Mike remembers his grandfather's

enthusiasm for keeping the wheels turning during the 'difficult days for cycling.' After a decline in membership of CTC to 18,000 in 1972, Les nearly doubled the membership by the time he retired in 1980.

Les would have been proud of Mike, who had put in hours of volunteering

**“CTC volunteers turned out in their hundreds to help at RideLondon”**

at head office before even getting to the London event. He had been instrumental in contacting over 300 people who volunteered through CTC to work as a marshal or on a Dr Bike stand for Prudential RideLondon, the biggest Olympic legacy event so far.

If you volunteered for the weekend, it was Mike who sent you clear instructions on where to go and what to do. As well as organising others, Mike donned his CTC Dr Bike T-shirt and joined dozens of others at one of the three locations across the city.

'It was a huge pleasure to be part of such an event,' said Mike. 'On the Saturday, I worked at Tower Hill on the CTC's Dr Bike stand, along with about 15 other CTC volunteers. By the time I arrived at the Tower Hill location, having earlier taken part in the Guinness World Record attempt cycle ride (which sadly didn't succeed!), everything was in full swing.'

'CTC volunteers were on a number of different stations, some responsible for pumping tyres, others for checking brakes, providing a safety check, examining gearing problems, and adjusting saddles.'

There was a great atmosphere, Mike





said, as the CTC volunteers helped members of the public with their bikes. 'All those who came to Dr Bike left with a better understanding of how their bike worked – and had a better functioning one,' Mike said.

'Many people I spoke to on the day said that it was the first time they had ridden their bike in ages. This, to me at least, was evidence that the event achieved its aims. People were getting on their bikes and enjoying it.'

## “Overall, around 1,500 bikes were serviced by CTC’s Dr Bike teams”

It was a busy day. The Dr Bike at Tower Hill serviced about 350 bikes, while the others at Green Park and St Paul’s were also a hive of activity. Overall, around 1,500 bikes were serviced by CTC on the Saturday.

'The volume of bikes we got through is evidence of how successful the Dr Bike scheme was,' Mike said. 'I hope that in the future the scheme can expand and provide even more bike services. All the members of the public that I spoke to on the day were genuinely appreciative of the professional

work of our volunteers.'

Mike was busy on the second day of the festival too, marshalling both for the London-Surrey 100 sportive in the morning and for the professional road race in the afternoon.

'After a team briefing we headed off to our specific locations and manned crossing points, traffic islands and zebra crossings,' said Mike. 'The first wave of riders came through just after 6am, followed by more and more riders until around 8:30am when roughly 17,000 had passed. Seeing so many cyclists on a 100-mile ride shows that cycling is growing into a mainstream activity.'

Mike is now back at university, where he’s studying history, but plans to volunteer again. 'I enjoyed the whole weekend,' he said, 'and loved seeing so many people getting on their bikes and being able to cycle safely on the closed roads through London.'

Although clearly proud of the work he did with CTC to help the Prudential RideLondon weekend go ahead without a hitch, he shrugged modestly when praised for it.

'We did okay, didn't we?' he said. ☺

**If you are interested in being a CTC volunteer, contact Mark Slater, CTC’s Volunteer Coordinator, on 01483 238 323, [mark.slater@ctc.org.uk](mailto:mark.slater@ctc.org.uk)**

## CTC & me too

**DAVID BROWN** is a long-standing volunteer at CTC National Office, and says he wants to work in the cycle industry. He worked with Mike behind the scenes, contacting other volunteers for Prudential RideLondon. As a keen cyclist, David said he couldn't resist taking part in the actual ride: 'It was an opportunity not to be missed,' he said. 'Cycling 100 miles, taking in all the sights of London and Surrey on closed roads!'

David also had praise for CTC colleagues and volunteers over what was a fantastic weekend of cycling. 'I saw the CTC team at Green Park. They were out flag marshalling and doing crowd control. It was a job well done.'

