

## Bears on a Bike

*Big Ted*

Hello again dear readers!

After a quiet Summer, I had such an exciting time at the beginning of September. A whole troupe of cyclists were coming past St Mary's in Plumtree and I wanted to welcome them properly. Apparently this was part of some special race around the country [*Nottinghamshire was the venue for the penultimate stage in the Tour of Britain cycle race, Big Ted*].

Little Ted said he wanted to get involved as well (he doesn't like me having all the fun!), so I sent Auntie Fiona and Uncle Les on a mission to find me a bicycle with a basket for Little Ted; and they found one! It is a lovely yellow bicycle [*originally it was a faded pink colour - I don't think you would have liked that - so we painted it, Big Ted*]. It doesn't have any pedals but that's probably just as well, 'cos I don't think my legs would have reached them.

We practised riding the bike a few times to make sure we wouldn't fall off (which would be embarrassing in front of all the crowds coming to see ME); some elastic bands and string helped a little here. I have to say that there's not much padding on a bicycle saddle! [*Little Ted: You've got plenty padding of your own, Big Ted – tee hee!*]. Grrr! [*Behave, Teds!*]

And then the big day arrived. Someone had put yellow bunting along the church wall and there were two yellow cut-out plum trees as well. My bike was carefully placed on the wall and I climbed on. I dragged Little Ted into position and we waited, and waited, and waited.

Little Ted was getting a bit fidgety and trying to get out of the basket (actually, he didn't really fit in the basket – he's not such a "Little" Ted as he thinks he is [snigger]). Quite a few people took photographs of me riding my bike and lots of people came to stand behind me; I had a very good view down the hill.



Eventually things started to happen. Odd cars with bicycles on the top went past, and then lots of motorcyclists. Many of them were police motorcyclists who waved and flashed their blue lights; we all clapped. Suddenly we heard a helicopter and a buzz went through the crowd. More motorcycles and cars arrived, this time with cameras, and then the cyclists came, a crowd of them, and whoosh... they were gone around the bend. And that was it! All that hard work and hours of sitting on a cold bike for a few minutes excitement.

I went back inside church shortly after that because Little Ted was beginning to whinge and it was getting windy and drizzly (and you know my feelings about the damp and splendid fur – not a good combination). It was a good day though, and I learned a new skill – but I don't think I would suit a lycra bodysuit like the ones the real cyclists were wearing!

It's Harvest next and they we're into the real Autumn and Winter things in church. Maybe I'll see you if you come to look at the Harvest flowers; please come to say "Hello".

*Love, Big Ted*

*From Little Ted:* I feel I may have been misrepresented in Big Ted's article. In my defence, I did not fidget; I was adjusting my position to improve my photogenic potential (with a big head like Big Ted around it's very hard to get in the photo at all). Nor did I whinge; I was snuggled up in my lovely woolly cardigan and shorts. The day was a thoroughly interesting experience.

