

# The "Digby Chicks"\* Tour

\* Term being used by Tour Director Bob to describe this ride

## Why?

Have you ever wondered what Digby Chicks are all about? "Digby Chicks" is the name for smoked herring that originated with early Digby settlers. Finding themselves without chicken for their Christmas dinners they celebrated with their next best thing, smoked herring.

## When and Where

Our Saturday June 30, 2012 to Tuesday July 3, 2012 out of town rides are scheduled to take place in the Digby area on the shores of the Annapolis Basin.

It is not surprising that in 1783 a hardy group of loyalists, led by Rear Admiral Sir Robert Digby, chose to settle on the shore of the same body of water as did DeMonts and Champlain many years earlier when they established the second oldest European settlement in North America at Port Royal at the other end of the Basin in 1605.

One can imagine the surprise of the early settlers when they passed through the strong currents of a narrow break in the forest covered, mountainous shoreline of the Bay of Fundy only to find that it led to a large basin of water (the Annapolis Basin) being fed by the waters of the long and meandering Annapolis River. We can also share the awe they must have felt when they discovered that when they anchored their ships along the shore of the Basin they could soon find their ships temporarily grounded by the lowering of the 27-32 foot tides in the Basin resulting from the forces of the Bay of Fundy rushing through that narrow shoreline opening (now known as "the Digby Gut"). The geological formation along the south east shoreline of the Bay of Fundy continues south west of Digby with the Bay of Fundy on the North and the waters of St. Mary's Bay on the south opening into the Atlantic Ocean. This long narrow geological formation is known as Digby Neck. With words like "Gut" and "Neck", the early settlers appear to have had a fixation with body parts.

## How to Get There

The drive to Digby from HRM takes approximately 2 3/4 hours and is well worth the drive. As many of us have discovered the drive through the Annapolis Valley from one end to the other is therapudically scenic in itself. Taking the #101 from HRM take Exit Number 26 to Digby. After taking the exit turn right at the stop sign and follow the #303 through Conway to the Digby town limits. One of first buildings on the right within the town limits is the Kingfisher Motel (now Coastal Inn) which is where many of us will be staying. For those riders who have partners who are not riding, they might want to consider the trip to Digby with you to take in the many tourist, golfing or other opportunities in the area.

The largest portion of the riding will be on paved roads but in order to take in some spectacular views and in order to avoid one section of the 101 some of Ride A will be on rail trail. There could be at least one bit of dirt/gravel road on the morning portion of Ride C,

though a longer route could be taken to remain on pavement. The bicycle of choice should be equipped with appropriate tires.

Motel contact information will follow. Each rider is responsible to make their own reservations. You can partake in the rides on all 4 days or you are free to pick and choose which day(s) you wish to ride.

### **What to Do When You Get There**

When coming into town for our Saturday ride, proceed past the Kingfisher Coastal Inn at the town limits, past Home Hardware and just past the traffic light and behind a Tim Hortons on the right (**not** the Tim Hortons in Conway on the left on the way in to town) there is a large parking lot on the right in front of Evangeline Shopping Mall just before you get to the Pharmasave and the hospital. The parking lot is just a 2 minute (or less if the traffic light is green) drive from the Kingfisher.

### **Ride A - Digby to Bear River**

Saturday Afternoon start time 1:00 pm at Digby

33 km

Map <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/904577>

The ride will start promptly at 1:00 pm. Please plan to arrive at the parking lot at least 15 minutes before the start time. This ride will take us to the village of Bear River, home of several internationally known artists and photographers and surrounded by vineyards and cherry orchards. Leaving Digby at 1:00 pm we will take the rail trail out of town along the spectacular shoreline of Conway to the Joggins Bridge (little wooden one on the trail). From there we will continue along the trail through Smiths Cove nearly to where the railway bridge used to cross the mouth of Bear River. Still in Smiths Cove we will get back on pavement and follow the River Road along the bank of Bear River until we reach the Village of Bear River. The river is a tidal river and depending on the tides and time of our arrival the river might be full or it might consist of mud flats. Come back later in the summer and you could observe dozens of people participating in grease pole walking over the river at high tide and other waters sports of the Bear River Cherry Carnival. We will be entering the Digby County side of the village. The village is divided in two by the river and as we cross a little bridge we will be in Annapolis County. Our way into the Village on the Digby side will follow the least hilly route possible but you will observe that although the village itself is at sea level it is surrounded by high hills all around except for our route into the Village and the tidal river leading out to the Annapolis Basin. Cell phone coverage in the heart of the little village enclave can be spotty to non-existent. It is not surprising that the village is sometimes called the Little Switzerland of Nova Scotia. We will take a break for snacks or a bite to eat at the café and then return to Digby the way we came except rather than taking the trail through Smiths Cove we will take the paved No. 1 and then we will take the trail at the Joggins Bridge. The ride is approximately 33 km.

### **Ride B - Lake Midway (or other) to Brier Island**

Sunday start time 10:00 am at Lake Midway or 11:00 am at East Ferry

Options: 80 km, 68 km, 54 km or 38 km

Map <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/911041>

This ride will take us from Lake Midway to Brier Island (western most part of Nova Scotia). We will carpool down Digby Neck as far as Lake Midway (with the option of carpooling farther down Digby Neck for a shorter ride). Hey, who would have guessed from the name "Lake Midway" that there is a lake (and provincial picnic park) midway down Digby Neck. We will start our ride from Lake Midway at 10:00 am sharp and ride 24 km to East Ferry at the mainland end of Digby Neck. We will take a short ferry ride (free for bicyclists) to Tiverton, which village is at the northeast end of Long Island. The ferry runs hourly on the half hour. Go figure, we can go to Long Island without travelling all the way to New York. We will be riding the length of Long Island (18 km), with a brief stop at the "Balancing Rock", arriving at Freeport at the west end of Long Island to take our second short ferry ride (leaves hourly at the top of the hour) over to Westport on Brier Island for lunch at Lighthouse Café or the Brier Island Lodge Restaurant or by grabbing a sandwich or sub at the general store. With the beauty of the shoreline of Brier Island, its flora, rock formations and abundance of birds, it is difficult to understand why Joshua Slocum, the first person to sail solo around the world and resident of Brier Island as a boy, had the desire to leave the Island to explore the world. After lunch we will return from whence we came in reverse.

Anyone wanting a shorter ride could join up with the ride farther down Digby Neck by driving farther than Lake Midway and parking at one of the other small communities. The ride is approximately 80 km (starting at Lake Midway), 68 km (starting at Sandy Cove), 54 km (starting at Little River) or 38 km (starting at East Ferry)

### **Ride C - Digby to Point Prim Lighthouse and Shore Road**

Monday start time 10:00 am at Digby

morning 22 km

afternoon 36 km

Map (morning) <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/911076>

Map(afternoon) <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/911085>

After a town ride, including a quick visit to the Digby wharf where the world famous scallop fleet ties up, we will proceed to the beginning of Lighthouse Road at "the Raquet". We will follow Lighthouse Road to .....guess what..... a lighthouse. The location of Point Prim Lighthouse provides a spectacular view of the Digby Gut and surrounding cliffs. If we are lucky we might observe the Digby-St. John ferry passing through the Gut. We will start back along Lighthouse Road and turn left onto Bayview Shore Road which will take us down to the end of Shore Road where the Digby -St. John ferry docks. Bayview Shore Road is partly dirt road. The Digby-Saint John ferry has been in continuous operation for over 200 years. To be more accurate, the ferry has been replaced a few times but there has been a ferry of one sort or another from Digby to St. John for the whole time. The relatively flat Shore Road will then take us back to Digby passing the fishing weirs on the left. We will have lunch in Digby

at one of the more than a dozen eating establishments. The morning ride is approximately 22km

After lunch we will ride from Digby to Gulliver's Cove. Leaving Digby we will proceed along the # 217 which runs along Digby Neck turning right onto the road to Gulliver's Cove. The views from this historic little fishing village are spectacular. A pair of binoculars might be handy in case whales, seals or porpoises are spotted. We should safely make it out of the village without encountering the infamous pirate "Cut-Throat Gulliver" who called this village home in an earlier century. The afternoon ride is approximately 36 km.

### **Ride D - Annapolis Royal to Bridgetown**

Tuesday start time 10:00 am at Annapolis Royal  
49 km

Map <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/911097>

We will drive from Digby to Annapolis Royal on the other side of the Basin and start our ride from there. We will follow the relatively flat No 1 more or less following the north bank of the Annapolis River to Bridgetown and after lunch we will take the No 201 back to Annapolis Royal along the south side of the Annapolis River. Many Ramblers rode this part of the tour a few years ago when we did some rides out of Bridgetown. Those Ramblers who partake in the annual Middleton Heart of the Valley Ride will also be familiar with this ride. The ride is approximately 49 km.

### **Interested?**

If you think you are interested in attending all or any of the Digby Chick rides let me know ( [les.pyne@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:les.pyne@ns.sympatico.ca) ) so that we can gauge the relative interest in these tours. Expression of interest at this point is not a firm commitment to attend, as plans of members can understandably change with time.

### **Maps**

Ride A

Digby - Bear River <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/904577>

Ride B

Lake Midway - Brier Island <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/911041>

Ride C

Digby - Point Prim Lighthouse <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/911076>

Digby - Gulliver's Cove <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/911085>

Ride D

Annapolis Royal - Bridgetown <http://ridewithgps.com/routes/911097>