

Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club

Newsletter

May 1999

Founded 1888

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Large crowd greets rainy Daffodil Classic

Despite a steady downpour during the morning of April 18, the 24th Daffodil Classic Ride again proved why it is Washington's premier bicycle event, according to Bicycling Magazine. Event coordinator Janice Jensen said more than 1,200 riders registered for the 20 and 50-mile loops in the Orting area. The cities parking areas were mostly full, and the club also did well, earning \$8,000-\$9,000 after expenses.

A full report will be offered in the next issue of the club's newsletter. But in the meantime, photographs of the ride are placed throughout this issue.

New Zealand bicycle trip: The Road To Haast

Toni Matson

At last, a trip of a lifetime was actually taking place! Five weeks of cycling in New Zealand, plus escorting my mother back to her homeland to visit relatives and see the places she has talked about my whole life.

We had a rocky start to our adventure by missing our plane in L.A., but eventually touched down in a cow pasture bordered by extraordinarily blue ocean on one side, and a fringe of volcanoes on the other. This one building airport was Whatcatane on the Eastern side of the North Island in the Bay of Plenty.

What a paradise! I was struck by the tropical heat, having come from our wet Pacific Northwest winter to mid summer in New Zealand. We were met by my Uncle, and off we went down the narrow chip-seal road to the thriving metropolis of Whalcatne: home of the beautiful beaches, farms of produce, livestock and the volcanic White Island.

After two days of this paradise my uncle and mother drove me to catch up with my bike tour in the center of the island at Lake Tavpo.

Lake Tavpo is a huge lake bordered by what seemed to be permanently placed fly fishermen with a backdrop of volcanoes and tropical foliage. This day was a rest day for the tour, so I quietly peeked at the bikes I was to ride with.

Holy Cow, I was in trouble! Aero wheels, aero bars, soft rides: I thought this was a tour not a race! I placed "Big Green" with the other Treks, although my bike had 10 years on the OCVLs. I nervously waited the arrival of the tour group that was

kayaking. By evening and after introductions, all was well; just another group of maniacs out for a fun time.

My first riding day covered 90 miles; a real treat after not riding for months! I don't know which parts of my body hurt worse at the end of the day! I had adjusted quickly to riding on the 'wrong' side of the road, with a few minor adjustments like waiting to cross the road to turn left (which wasn't necessary).

Besides the torturous mileage and climbing 5,000 feet, the scenery was out of this world. We rode by an active volcano (steam vents appeared to be clouds), and over mountain passes of tropical "bush."

Our lodging that night was a lovely "farm stay" with a wonderful family. The hospitality was overwhelming; we all settled in large overstuffed chairs after tea and hot biscuits. We had a lovely evening sharing adventures.

This beautiful farm had a view of Mount Ruapehu that was home to a ski resort in the months of June and July. It had blown its top in 1996. Nothing like skiing while the volcano blows up around you!

Rain moved in that night, and we hesitated to hit the road the next morning especially after the fresh breakfast of homemade sausage, fresh fruit and the never ending bowl of muesli cereal. What did we eat every day after that? MUESLI!

That day we enjoyed the quintessential New Zealand; rolling hills, valleys full of poplar trees and rivers, and sheep everywhere! Of course we had to climb from one valley to the other! A mere 70 miles gave us a reserve for the next day's ride of 100 miles.

At least it's an easy entry, we said, until the headwind and rain hit us. A storm from Fiji rained down on us and caused a horrendous day.

Another day dawned to bright sunshine and the horrors of previous day disappeared. We were rewarded by a 50-mile ride and a town full of wineries! We did some serious wine tasting and rode to our hotel in jovial moods. At least we remembered the correct side of the road!

Another day, another mountain pass; onward to Wellington, the capital of New Zealand. This is a lovely city with a beautiful parliament building downtown and quite the hustle and bustle of city life.

The ferry took us to the South Island the next day. Three hours later we were in the tropical town of Picton on Marlborough Sound. The riding was like Vashon Island, except for the giant fern trees, and the broccoli-like Rata trees.

The harbors and inlets were home to a few boats. We had fine views below as we overlooked the water from the fringed hillsides.

As we ventured from the north coast, we followed the Buller River through a lovely gorge. I walked on a suspension bridge swinging high above the river, but Look Cleats don't do well on metal footing!

The next day I met the voracious "Sandfly of the West Coast"! I even had my picture taken with the 'Giant Sandfly' statue at a country store, as I swatted gnats. There were the sandflies and I was being eaten alive by little carnivores!

No more perfume or deodorant, just Industrial "Off"!

The west coast of the South Island has many points of interest. The Punakailci Rocks are an outcrop of limestone that has eroded into layered pillars. They are called the Pancake Rocks and the waves surge up at high tide through blow holes.

Another spectacular sight is the snow-capped Southern Alps. I found myself on the Franz Joseph Glacier with an ice pick and a heavy pair of boots, peering down into oblivion at a crevass. I marveled at how we tromped around at death's doorstep! The

ride down the coast was full of spectacular scenery. The Tasman Sea was an azure jewel. I was saddened when we headed inland at the end of the road (except for the loss of blood caused by the sandflies).

Infamous Haast Pass

Another pass to cross; the infamous Haast Pass. I didn't think it was bad until the 20 percent grade! These boots are made for walking and that's just what I did! The grade evened out shortly to a respectable 9 percent, so I could breath and ride at the same time.

The tropical bush and snow-peaked mountains opened up to reveal rolling hills of a golden brown and hot, dry weather. The last 20 miles of this 96-mile day was relentless in the climbs, as my tires sticked to the melting road tar.

At last we arrived at Lake Hawea, a refreshing oasis of cold water!

Yet another day we rode through the fruit growing region; the most wonderful peaches, apricots, strawberries, etc. We tried them all! Through the Kawarau gorge we rode toward Queenstown, stopping to watch crazy bungee jumpers, leaping 150 feet above the Kawarac River.

Queenstown is nestled around a bay on a lakeshore overlooking the striking remarkable mountains. On our last night together, we took our new friends to the top of the Gondola overlooking the lake and mountains. What a marvelous 20 days we had together, we thought as we chowed down on the buffet dinner.

The next day we bid sad goodbyes, but the twinkle in my eye was for my next adventure to soon begin. I had ridden 950 miles, and was off to join another tour; Wayne and Sue's Adventures.

The next day my tour guides dropped me off at another spectacular setting — Mount Cook. Alone in the campground, I put on my hiking boots and set off for a hike to the mountain.

The water coming from the glacier was milky white; the scenery spectacular with its ice and rocky outcroppings. I hiked for a few hours and decided to check out the main lodge. As I walked by the huge picture window I glanced in and was shocked to see a familiar face! Across the world, and there's Bob Myrick drinking a beer! I had arrived at Wayne and Sue's Excellent Adventure!

From the president's handlebars

Ernie Stephenson

I made a commitment early last Fall. There is this ride I very much enjoy. When other riders come along, its called the Nisqually Drop.

Otherwise, it is simply a great ride on the range roads of Fort Lewis. I promised myself I would do that ride whenever possible every Saturday morning throughout the winter.

Half the time I rode alone. There were also times when the conditions were too dangerous, the ranges were closed for training or Karin would have other plans. Then there were the times that friends would come along. One time while coming up out of the last climb out that I surprised an old porcupine.

Another time my friend, Steve chased a coyote 20 or so meters down the road before it jumped into the bushes. Late one fall morning I had pulled over to fix a shoe cleat when Dan Knowles, a well-known RAMROD participant came by. We talked a good half hour and didn't seem to mind the cold. When friends came by, there was always coffee and a boisterous critique of the ride afterward. On Saturdays when I could not do the ride, I would try to stay busy if for any other reason to keep from missing being out there on the range roads.

So what's the moral here? It is to go find your own Nisqually Drop. Or if you wish, come out with me on mine. Most importantly commit yourself to getting out there. Ride a different course every time you go out or do like I did and ride the same one at every chance.

Either way, keep yours eyes open, and if you are not careful, there will be new things to see every time you go out. We are all blessed with the love of cycling. If you haven't dusted off "ol' Betsy" by now, you may have no idea what you have already missed. See you out there!

Newsletter deadline moved up to second Tuesday

No doubt readers have noticed differences in the club newsletter recently. And they can expect more differences in coming editions as the new editor adjusts to the monthly task of gathering information and preparing it for print (including the club's website).

Starting next month there will be a major change in the deadline for copy, articles and announcements. The deadline will be moved up to the second Tuesday of the month, rather than the third Tuesday — which is the date for the club's regular meeting. Club members can continue to submit rides for the ride calendar up to the third Tuesday, or contact Connie Reitzug.

This will give the editor and mail coordinator at least two weeks to completely edit the publication, deliver it to the printer, attach labels and deliver it to the post office. Hopefully, the newsletter (with the crucial ride calendar) can be mailed to club members' homes before the beginning of the month.

(For club members with computers and Internet connections, the ride calendar will continue to be posted on the Internet at least a week before the month starts.)

This means copy for the June edition of the Tacoma Wheelmen's newsletter will be May 11.

Photos needed Readers also should immediately notice more photographs in the newsletter. For instance, this issue includes several photos from the Daffodil Classic.

Anyone with particularly good print photographs of rides or events related to the Tacoma Wheelmen can mail them to 3805 N. 36th, Tacoma, WA 98407.

Do the Ride Thing— be a Bike Buddy

Lisa Quinn

City of Tacoma The Bike Buddy program is a new service that is being offered by the City of Tacoma's SMART MOVES program in cooperation with the CarLess Commute campaign. The goal of the Bike Buddy program is to convert single occupancy vehicle drivers into bike commuters. The Bike Buddy program matches experienced cyclists with new cyclists to help them learn how to commute by bicycle and matches cyclists of all levels who seek a riding partner(s).

Experienced cyclists who volunteer as a Bike Buddy will share their knowledge about bicycle commuting and provide the new cyclist with advice in the following areas:

- Good routes
- Safe riding in traffic
- Proper gears for commuting
- Secure and locked bicycle parking
- Light repairs and pumping tires

Experienced cyclists may work with the new cyclists via telephone or meet in person.

Experienced riders are encouraged to actually ride with the new cyclist to work once or twice, if scheduling and commuting permits. Experienced cyclists are riders who define themselves as experienced and feel comfortable advising less confident cyclists or have never commuted to work by bicycle.

New cyclists will receive a matchlist of experienced cyclist(s) who live or work near them. New cyclists will learn about the Bike Buddy through CarLess Commute brochures, The News Tribune publication, their employers and word of mouth.

Bike Buddy services are available to anyone who lives in Pierce County.

If you are interested in receiving a matchlist application to become a Bike Buddy, please contact Lisa Quinn, City of Tacoma (253) 591-5380.

Log commute biking miles during CarLess Commute

Dave Tison
TWBC Safety & Education Coordinator

The Pierce County Parks CarLess Commute program which encourages commuters to try different modes of commuting besides using the omnipresent “Single Occupancy Vehicle” (SOV).

The program encourages participants to keep a log of commuter miles during the two week program. Options include taking the bus, riding your bike, walking, car pooling, etc. Some imaginative participants have even commuted to work by roller blade or horseback! Information on how you can participate in this program ,which the TWBC is a sponsor of, will be included in next months newsletter.

Ride Partners

VA biker seeks cross-country companion: I am looking to for someone to bike with (self-contained) from Seattle or Portland to Washington DC from 6/1/99 to 8/1/99. Don Evans, Northern Virginia, doevans@vt.edu.

Easy riding partner wanted:Over 50, not in peak condition. Not in training for STP, RAMROD or anything else. But I want to ride several times a week, steadily, casually, a reasonable distance and less than 20 miles. Joy Roelofs, 253-1843

For sale

ROAD BIKE: "Tommaso" 54 cm Frame. Shimano 105 components. Extras. Great Shape. Great Buy! \$250. Doug Ringenbach . 253-839-5353.

Biker Babe: one woman's training regimen

Carla Gramlich
Tacoma Woman's Bicycle Club

My road mileage is a lot lower than last year due to the extremely rainy weather. I rode up to Bicycle Expo for the opening day during one of the few breaks. I have done this for several years but the weather has been pretty lousy each time.

This year I didn't advertise the ride, and it was sunny but very cold. My route to Seattle is over Vashon Island. Leaving home to catch the early ferry and then riding across the island, allowed me to be at the Seattle Center by noon.

Bicycle Expo was pretty exciting. This is a great chance to see the latest bicycles and new-fangled equipment. My goal was to be the first one at the RAMROD booth. At 3:55 p.m., I was at the RAMROD booth to register for that little ride. My confirmation says number one but my rider number will probably be different. I donated some dollars to enter a drawing for the #1 bib for STP.

Bicycle Alliance was raising money for the Cooper Jones safety fund. That investment paid off with me winning the #1 bib. It is almost as thrilling as winning an autographed CD by Yani. The following Friday, I led a ride from north Tacoma to

Orting for lunch. I listed the ride as a code 2, knowing that I was going to be on the low side for mileage for the year. I arrive at the start on my mountain bike with two-inch knobby tires since I knew the pace was going to be leisurely. As I looked around at the group of riders, I could see I was in trouble since everyone else was on road bikes. Compounding the situation was Bob Myrick who had just returned from a month of riding in New Zealand and started the group towards Orting at 18 m.p.h..

I have spin class to thank for being able to stay in the pack and not suffer too greatly. It had been months since I had ridden 50 miles.

The first Friday in March was the start of the series called "Hills and Such." The mileage is low but the route includes several hills. Another sunny afternoon attracted 5 riders. We were missing Bob for this ride so the pace was at a reasonable pace.

After the ride, Toni Matson and I rushed over to the Downtown "Y" to catch up with the other Biking Babes for our monthly meeting. We are lucky that we can continue to meet at the Y since one of our members almost got us banished from the Y. Seems she was not aware of a rule that you can't sign people up for spin class who are not in the building. They asked her never to do this again. You would have thought the wife of the CEO would know the rules.

I bowed out of spin class to lift weights with Janice Jensen that evening. Due to friendly competition between Janice and I, I tried to lift the same amount of weights that she has spent month working up to. Janice encouraged this reckless behavior. Behind my back Janice has become the hulk.

The next morning I was feeling some pain as I headed out to cross country ski with Mary Neukom. Unbeknownst to me Mary has skiing every weekend. I have been out a couple of times but not for many miles. The trip was listed at 10 miles, but it ended up being 15 miles. Mary was a great leader and kept encouraging me the whole time. It was a gorgeous sunny day. Remind me to get her a metric to mile converter so she can give innocent people, like me, a better idea of the real mileage.

The next day, was my planned rest day. I really did need it and starting evaluating what I need to do to avoid this amount of pain in the future. After a day of popping ibuprofen, I went back to the "Y" on Monday and lifted weights that I could handle.

After a light spin class, I was feeling pretty good. By the end of the week, I was back with Janice lifting weights at my level.

I had hoped to announce the arrival of my new bike. The latest report is that it might be in this country, but it still must be painted. Since I have been busy with training, school and work, I really haven't had the time to work on it if it did come in.

I finally completed the wheels that I started after I wrote a 10-page report for school. Steve wished that I would work on the taxes that are due in April. He just doesn't understand my priorities.

We had a great group of Babes that met in March. The next meeting was April 9, instead of the first Friday due to it being Good Friday. We met at the YMCA at 5 p.m. for Spin and then dinner at a local restaurant. In May, we will consider riding outside. We are also looking for an organized ride that we could all ride together.

Members

New members: Lisa Martinez-Woeck; Russell Hale; Tony Picardo; Peg Wiaczewski; Martin Ellis

Renewals: John Thomas; John Peranzi; Derryl Finney; Herman Piers; Gary Delappe; Phil, Helen and Garry Burgess; Gordon, Sandy, Brendan, Kyle and Allana Unruh; Robert Mamburgey; Philip Blenkush

TWBC Board highlights.

Here are a few issues and topics that were discussed at the Tacoma Wheelmen's April 6 board meeting.

Club picnic: Vice President Steve Brown announced that he was still trying to arrange a July 18 club picnic this year. In previous years the picnic was held in September. There may be a conflict with the Summit to Sound Relay that some members may be participating in on that date but it's possible participants could attend both.

Insurance policies: Bob Myrick said he was looking into policies which would cover the club for errors and omissions and the club's equipment (Bob trailers, bike boxes, etc.).

Bicycle route signs: The club plans to discuss bicycle route signs at the Bicycle Alliance of Washington legislative committee meeting. The signs will help inform bicyclists of more favorable routes.

TWBC jerseys: Ride Captain Connie Reitzug announced that she placed an order in for 100 club jerseys. The jerseys will be available to club members for \$52 until the order is gone.

April calendar nearly full: Connie also announced that only three days of the club's calendar did not have scheduled rides. She praised the high number of members who came forward to lead rides.

Rides open to non-members: Although rides are led and organized by TWBC members, non-member bicyclists are invited to join these rides to see if the club meets their riding needs. The club has added members in this fashion.

Non-discrimination policy: The board passed a non-discrimination policy which reads: The Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, handicap, marital status, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Grants through Cooper-Jones Act: The Washington Traffic Safety Commission has sent information to TWBC on the Cooper Jones safety grants that are available from them. TWBC is eligible to apply for these grants. The information will be available through the Safety and Education Coordinator, Dave Tison.

TWBC bike racks: TWBC still owns two bench type bicycle racks which were purchased with the intent of the club donating them to municipalities that have done something beneficial to bicyclists and TWBC gaining recognition in the process. University Place and Gig Harbor have received racks from the club with plaques attached. Other cities are under consideration.

TWBC Website: There were 4,300 “hits” on pages during March which is 26 percent more than February. February’s record was 25 percent higher than January. The Daffodil Classic web page was the most popular. Also record numbers of club members are using the web to check out the ride calendar.

Board elections will be held at June 15 club meeting

All of the club’s board positions will be up for election at the June 15 general membership meeting. The positions include: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Touring Captain, Newsletter Editor, Director of Community and Government Relations and Director of Special Events.

The club meetings are held at 7 p.m. at the South Park Community Center, 4851 S. Tacoma Way.

Government report
bob myrick

Last month, the TWBC Government Affairs Committee meeting included Ralph Wessels, myself and Scott Pierson. Scott represented the City of Tacoma as its non-motorized coordinator. Others must have been planning the Daffodil Classic.

Bike Lanes: The State of Washington Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) deleted the \$211,925 bike lane project for Tacoma. The Puget Sound Regional Council had approved this project for funding and sent it off to the State. Apparently, the State TIB considered this work to be "maintenance" and diverted monies from it and several other projects to projects deemed to be more worthy.

Bicycle Trails: The committee reviewed the SR16, I-5 and SR512 trail proposals. The City has submitted a trail proposal to the Department of Transportation.

Local Project Funding: The committee reviewed the final list of the local projects that appear to be funded under the new Statewide Transportation Enhancements Act program as follows:

- Foothills Trail Construction: South Prairie to Orting — \$729,000
- Cushman Trail: Segment at Kimball Drive Park and Ride lot — \$21,000
- Puyallup River Trail: Phase 2 Right of Way acquisition — \$300,000
- Portland Avenue: Mid Block Pedestrian Signal — \$60,000
- University Place Grandview Drive: West Phase 3 Improvements — \$200,000
- Pierce Transit Tacoma Dome: Pedestrian Connections, etc. — \$500,000

Water Ditch and Cushman Powerline Trails: Tacoma Public Utilities has apparently forgotten the "public" in their name. The utility appears to be still dragging their feet with regard to both of these trails. If TWBC members know anyone on the Utility

Board or any utility officials, please let them know this lack of positive action is appalling and should not be tolerated. It also makes them look bad and in need of more regulation.

CarLess Commute in June: CarLess Commute will be celebrated June 14 to June 26. Look for registration materials in the June newsletter. Join the TWBC team or the team where you work.

Growing Smart Conference: There will be a conference 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 8 at Tacoma Community College. The Pierce County comprehensive plan amendment process will be the main topic. Call Kirk Kirkland at 761-1963 or e-mail him at TahomaAudubon@compuserve.com for more information.

1974 Bicycle Routes Bill: According to the Audubon newsletter, the Legislature passed a bill which provided that cities and counties would be eligible for urban arterial trust funds to establish a system of bicycle routes. "Wherever reasonable practicable", revision of roads should provide provisions for bicycle paths. I guess the locals must have ignored this law.

Sprocketman Vacancy: The job is still open. Call Cara at 798-4739 if you would like to help kids.

Transportation Choices: The coalition (formerly Altrans) asked us to support their "Smart Spending" transportation budget which offers more travel choices.

Statewide Route System: The State Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) and the Bicycle Alliance will be requested to ask the State Transportation Commission to develop a state route system and change state law to encourage routes to be marked by local and state transportation officials.

Cross State Pipeline: The Olympic pipeline is still alive and moving across the state. The Ginko State Park officials will not let the pipeline in the petrified forest near Vantage.

Cooper Jones Law: In the Senate transportation budget, \$150,000 is provided for education and safety programs for cyclists. The House transportation budget provides nothing at this time.

The next meeting of the TWBC Government committee will be held at 7 p.m. May 16 at the Planet Burrito on Sixth Avenue. There is good food and good fellowship as we try to help our government roll in the right direction.

Volunteer opportunities

Feed your STP friends ...and all the other riders too.

If you have decided NOT to ride the STP we need you at the Tacoma Wheelman-sponsored lunch stop! It takes quite a crew to feed the 10,000 that will be coming through Tacoma on July 10 and we want to treat them well! The food will be prepared Friday night and laid out early Saturday.

To volunteer Call 759-2393 and leave name, phone number and T-shirt size.

RAMROD volunteers needed Redmond Cycling Club needs volunteers for RAMROD (Ride Around Mount Rainier in One Day) on July 29. Positions are worth "points" to secure preferred status for RAMROD registration this year or next; to "buy" a free RAMROD entry or to participate in WIMPROD All volunteers receive a T-shirt. For information call Peggy Fjetland at 253-841-4458 or Allen McBride at 206-937-6920.

Bike Alliance meets in Tacoma

The next meeting of the Bicycle Alliance of Washington legislative committee will be held 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 22 in the Cascade Room of the main Tacoma Public Library, 1102 Tacoma Ave. South.

The meeting will be attended by bicycle advocates from around the state who will develop an agenda and action plan for bicycle issues of statewide interest.

The meeting is a forum for making contacts with bicycle advocates and has an open attendance. Contact Ralph Wessels at 857-5658 for more information.

Past pedaling

anne heller

Historical highlights of TWBC's 110 years

Some things never change — death, taxes and complaints about other people's conduct on the road. An article in an 1897 issue of the Tacoma Daily Ledger has nothing positive to say about cyclists, pedestrians, buggy drivers or women. The rules of the road in 1897 were much like the rules in 1999:

"Know how to drive.

Keep to the right.

In passing another vehicle going in the same direction keep to the left.

In approaching a crossing, slow up.

A city street is not a speeding track.

If you cannot drive, do not handle the reins.

Keep a cool head."

The remainder of the article has a curmudgeonish tone. No one escapes the wrath of the writer. After all, "Senile men, untrained boys, nine-tenths of the women and one-half the men should never be allowed to drive."

Bicyclists were given these admonishments:

"Do not ride on a crowded street until you are its master. Do not pass close in front of a vehicle or street car. Take your time unless you happen to be going for a doctor. Do not turn the corner of a downtown street while riding faster than four miles an hour. Do not coast on downtown streets. It is dangerous to your own life and the lives of others. When you see a wheelman riding on the wrong side of the street, warn him. If you are so warned do not get angry. If you ride at night without a lamp and are accidentally run into, it is your own fault.

"Wheelmen should never ride more than two abreast when riding in parties. If you are a beginner get off and walk down a hill. You are sure to be nervous and might run into someone. No man should take a woman on a tandem on a crowded street. Tandems are not fit vehicles for downtown streets during business hours."

In explaining why women should not be allowed to hold the reins of a horse, the writer describes this scenario:

"From 9 o'clock a.m. until noon is the best time to prove this assertion. Then is when the woman harnesses the patient family nag to the buggy and sets out for town to shop. Generally she takes the children. Imagine a buggy full of children. A baby in arms, a small boy who wants to fall over the back of the buggy or get tangled up in the wheels and who requires his mother's hands all the time to keep him from death. The possibilities of such a combination in a crowded street are interesting."

Older drivers also suffer the disdain of the writer:

"An old man, with hardly strength to hold the reins in his palsied hands, and who, in an accident or collision, would be as helpless as a babe, is yet entrusted with a powerful animal and a four wheeled vehicle in a crowded street. If he ever knew how to drive, he has long since forgotten. His mind is practically a blank, his eyesight is nearly gone and he is deaf. You may see this senile wreck running into the jaws of

death from which an All Wise Providence protects him, any day you desire to watch for him."

Lastly, the writer heaps scorn upon the pedestrian: "As a blocker of traffic, a terror to drivers and wheelmen and an unmitigated nuisance, the pedestrian who thinks all things were made for him is the worst. He trips across the crowded thoroughfare, and where the stream of vehicles from all sides flows the deepest and wildest, he meets Miss Perdita. They stop to barter the small change of gossip. Horses are drawn snorting to their haunches to save such lives. Wheelmen take hasty fliers from their bicycles to escape death. Clanging cable cars half a block away are brought to a stop. And they gossip on oblivious of the hoarse shouts of the impeded commerce."

Clearly, some of these examples are just as true today as then, but there was no such thing as political correctness in 1897.

Wheelmen photo makes perfect parting gift

Former Tacoma Public Library Director Susan Hardie will take a visual memory of the Tacoma Wheelmen to her new home.

Club member and regular rider, Susan recently accepted the post of director of the Alameda (CA) Free Library.

At her last meeting with the library board April 14, she was presented with a framed 1880s-era photo of several Tacoma Wheelmen in an early chandelier-lit clubhouse surrounded by their big wheel bikes.

"We all know her as a librarian and as an administrator, I know her as a strong and determined bicyclist," noted , Anne Heller (TWBC secretary) who presented the photo on behalf of the library board.

Helmets on Wheels volunteers given fitting lessons

Carla Gramlich

Last year Helmet on Wheels program provided low-cost helmets for nearly 3,000 kids. Mary Bridge Children's Hospital supplied more than 10,000 in their Safety Central program.

At the beginning of the year several fire departments sold 350 helmets at stations. There doesn't seem to be an end to the number of helmets folks need in Pierce County.

The first Helmet on Wheels event was held April 17 in Orting.

A Safety Fair will be held on June 12 where volunteers are also needed. This year's Safety Fair will be the end of the school year and the start of summer vacation for most young people. The

Helmets on Wheels program plans to fit more than 1,000 helmets.

Since the helmet provider is only a few blocks away, there will be no problems running out of helmets. The limit to how many helmets provided will be limited only by the number of volunteers who are on hand to fit helmets.

A volunteer appreciation dinner and training session will be held at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 10 at the Westgate Roundtable Pizza at N. 26th and Pearl. After dinner, volunteers will be given a lesson on sizing helmets.

An instructional video will be shown for volunteers who have never fitted a helmet. Lack of training is not an excuse for not helping with this event. All necessary assistance will be offered for volunteers who wish to participate.

For any questions on helmet-fitting or volunteering, call Carla Gramlich at (253) 752-4038.

Great biking awaits beyond the PMC boundaries

Carol Davis

A vast territory for fabulous biking awaits just beyond the Peninsula Metric Century boundaries in sunny Kitsap and Mason counties.

Just a 20-minute drive from the Narrows Bridge in downtown Port Orchard, riders can hop aboard the historic Horluck foot ferry. A 10-minute ferry ride whisks riders to beautiful Bremerton shores where there are cruises along scenic waterways and quaint villages to exotic destinations such as Poulsbo, Kingston, Port Gamble, and Winslow.

An excursion to Hansville and Point No Point is worlds away. Bucolic Big Valley Road is a cyclist's dream ride. The truly adventuresome can meet at the Hood Canal Bridge (only 45 minutes from Tacoma) to explore the Port Townsend Peninsula.

Mason County beckons exploration of the wilderness surrounding Hood Canal. In mid-May is the annual Wild Rhody Ride through wilderness on paved (some chip seal) roads from Belfair to Seabeck.

The plateau between Belfair and Shelton promises empty roads to explore as well as a tour of Mason Lake. For those who haven't cruised the Grapeview Loop Road, tantalizing treats are in store. Dreamy rides await for the price of a short drive and a great work-out!