



Freewheelin'

June 2007

Teddy Tour 2007- A short play in four acts.

NARRATOR: Uncle Ron

CHARACTERS:

The Perry Family (mother Marion and son Murray) a wonderful combination of a young man and his loving and protective mother, Velda Back – a veteran Teddy Tour participant with a stoic nature and extremely good humour Frank Celin - a “never say die” trooper with a constant smile and positive attitude

The Kerney Family (Shelley, Perry and the delightful Maryn and Adam) – a Freewheelin’ troop with youthful enthusiasm and great family togetherness

The Stedwill Family (Kathy and Robert) – a wonderful couple of veteran riders who live life to the fullest

Ron Keall – the avuncular bike mechanic and cook

Tamela Friesen and Karen Hardy– referred to as “the girls” by Ron and others, this dynamic duo are adventurous and energetic and always a pleasure to be around

SETTING: the badlands of North Dakota, the fire-ravaged scoria and tinder dry brush of one of the most spectacular parts of the state. A club destination for over 20 years!

ACT ONE – THE APPROACH

Border Guard - (with hand on pistol) “Do you have any weapons? How about an axe?”

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Liquor? Beef? Tobacco? Weapons? Beef? Citrus fruit? Beef? Weapons? They do like to repeat themselves!

Ron - (in Albertson’s) “Do you know how much this pipe tobacco would have cost in Regina? I paid \$20 but it would have cost \$190 at home!” “Hey Marion, do you know which aisle has the Limburger Cream Cheese and the kippered herring?”

Marion - “Well, I’m really glad you saved some money but, you know, even pipe smoking is bad for your health. (Marion takes care of Ron) And no, I will not assist you in finding that smelly stuff!”

ACT TWO – FRIDAY

Scene One – the North Unit campground where Marion and Ron camped Thursday evening

0700 – Ron busy trying to get the Coleman camp stove lit by heating the generator over his lighter. Ron trying to break up the ice inside the water jug to get coffee water. Ron dressed in four layers, toque, hood, heavy leather mitts and winter boots. Marion, snug in her tent with no signs of getting up until she smells freshly perked “Bed and Breakfast” blend coffee. (Ron

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takes care of Marion)

Ranger Rick - (approaches two intrepid campers in the North Unit uneasy about the mental state of anyone who would camp in this weather) "How are you folks? Do you know it reached 0 degrees Fahrenheit (-17 C) last night? Were you warm enough?"

Scene Two – the North Unit parking lot

The Kerneys unpack the van. There is not one cubic inch of unused space! Four bodies, snack food for 10, camping equipment, a TANDEM!, Easter bunny riding costumes and a thick rock-climbing crash mat for umm..... sleeping. The riders continue to arrive and discuss what might be appropriate clothing for the windy and cold day. All have a great time climbing the little hill at the start of the ride but are soon shivering in the cold so decide to cut the trip short and head for the South Unit. Construction on the "little hill" makes most slow down for the descent but Adam is thrilled to reach 52 kph!

Scene Three – the South Unit campground

After supper and clean-up, our Freewheelin' fraternity gathers around the fire – made of Ron's old patio door frame and broken fence posts. Buttershots and coconut rum are passed and stories and jokes are told. It's going to be another cold one tonight we all think.

ACT THREE – SATURDAY

Scene One – Breakfast

The water jugs are frozen, the Coleman stoves refuse to light and hands are frostbitten as they fumble for provisions. Stedwills finally get their stove alight and begin the never-ending process of providing coffee for the group using their Coleman special automatic coffee brewing machine. Ron prepares a hearty breakfast of Buttershots flambé French toast, ham and hot cross buns. The overnight temperature registered a mere – 15 C, quite an improvement from last night, but cold enough to convince the Kerneys and Stedwills to opt for hotel accommodations tonight.

Scene Two – The Ride

Cold? No way! Hilly? Not really! Exhausting? Pshaw! Of course, I **am** driving Marion's car! The hardy souls who completed the loop should indeed be proud of themselves as the weather certainly wasn't ideal. Despite the less than perfect conditions there were smiles aplenty and expressions of awe all around. What a beautiful place to be! I am so glad I came.

Scene Three – The Meal

Ever been in one of those fancy restaurants where you can pick out your own lobster? Well, at the Buffalo Gap Restaurant you may not be able to pick out your cow, but you can certainly see them milling about outside wanting to be next. Delicious prime beef and a great salad bar were enough to convince even the skeptical Robert that this place deserves a return visit.

ACT FOUR – SUNDAY

A few opted for some riding while others hiked and still more just enjoyed the day with some serious relaxing. Maryn came to camp with an offering of a decadent chocolate treat. Frank packed up and left in the middle of the night in order to get back for a special dinner. Campers collected the treats left by the Easter Bunny and prepared for their trip back. Kathy and Robert, ever thoughtful, provided the dirty campers with a key to their hotel room so that we could freshen up for the drive home.

We had 13 participants on this trip and I can say with confidence that despite the cold nights and challenging riding conditions, ***a good time was had by all!***



Ron—North Unit, Teddy Tour 2007



Riders set out in the South Unit



Wild horse at dusk—South Unit



L to R: Shelley, Marion and Tamela at Buffalo Gap

Cycle Safely in Groups

1. Be Predictable

Group riding requires even more attention to predictability than riding alone. Other riders expect you to continue straight ahead at a constant speed unless you indicate differently.

2. Use Signals

Use hand and verbal signals to communicate with members of the group and with other traffic. Hand signals for turning and stopping are as follows:

- Left arm straight out to signal a left turn
- Left arm out and down with your palm to the rear to signal slowing or stopping
- Right arm straight out to signal a right turn or put your left arm out and up.

3. Give Warnings

Warn cyclists behind you well in advance of changes in your direction or speed.

4. Change Positions Correctly

Generally, slower traffic stays right, so you should try to pass others on their left. Say "on your left" to warn the cyclists ahead that you are passing. If you need to pass someone on the right, say "on your right" clearly since this is an unusual maneuver.

5. Announce Hazards

When riding in a group, most of the cyclists do not have a good view of the road surface ahead so it is important to announce holes, glass, gravel, grates, and other hazards

The leader should indicate road hazards by pointing down to the left or right, and by shouting "hole", "bump" etc. where required for safety.

6. Watch for Traffic Coming From the Rear

Since those in front cannot see traffic approaching from the rear, it is the responsibility of the riders in back to inform the others by saying "car back"

Around curves, on narrow roads, or when riding double, it is also helpful to warn of traffic approaching from the front with "car up".

7. Watch Out at Intersections

When approaching intersections, that require vehicles to yield or stop, the lead rider will say "slowing" or "stopping" to alert those behind to the change in speed

Each cyclist is responsible for verifying that the way is indeed clear before proceeding. Bicycles are vehicles. Riders have the same responsibilities and rights as drivers

8. Leave a Gap for Cars

When on narrow streets or anywhere you are impeding faster traffic, leave a gap for cars between every three or four bicycles. That way motorists can take advantage of shorter passing intervals and eventually move piecemeal around the group.

9. Move OFF the Road When You Stop

Whether you are stopping because of mechanical problems or to regroup with your companions, move well off the road so you don't interfere with traffic. When you start up again, each cyclist should look for, and yield to, traffic.

10. Ride One or Two Across

Ride single file or double file as appropriate to the roadway and traffic conditions and where allowed by law. Courtesy dictates that you single up when cars are trying to pass you.

Wednesday Night Ride Guidelines

For Leaders

- Arrive 10-15 minutes early.
- Introduce yourself and ask the riders to introduce themselves
- Announce upcoming weekend rides
- Make sure everyone is a WFW or SCA member or completes a membership form before the ride
- Communicate the duration of the ride, the route and the coffee/ice cream stop.
- Appoint someone to ride at the rear.
- If the group is 10 or larger, or of differing abilities consider asking someone to lead the second half of the group.
- In years past, leaders distributed route maps. This is a good option if groups are large.

For Riders

- Be visible—wear light or reflective clothing. A safety vest over dark clothing works well in the daylight and after dark.
- Bring your lights, especially when the days are getting shorter.
- Be aware that you are cycling with a group. Be familiar with the "How to Cycle Safely in a Group" Guidelines.
- If you must leave a ride early, inform the leader or someone who will inform the leader.
- Have fun.

Cycling in the City Clinics

Under Velda's guidance riders practiced such skills as riding straight while shoulder checking, proper braking, and dodging objects. Poor weather meant that Barb P. received personal attention during the traffic skills clinic and she reports that she learned lots and it was a great experience.



Winter Cycling

by Tamela Friesen

I step out the door and take a deep breath. My nose-hairs freeze together momentarily as the crisp air washes down to my lungs. The dense and heavy winter air envelops my body, notifying every square inch of me that it intends to steal every morsel of heat that it can. I've got to get moving quickly, as I'm dressed far too lightly to stand around at -30°C.

The bike waits in the garage, frosted aluminum and frozen rubber at the ready. Remember the ABC's—air, brakes, chain. The tires are firm, but not to capacity. The brakes, while certainly stiff, work well. The chain is clean and oiled, smoothly shifting gears. I attach my bike bag as quickly as possible, still-warm fingers sticking slightly to the icy metal rack.

Hopping on the saddle, I pedal up the lane, quickly and lightly, trying to get warmed up. Immediately I embark on the first large downhill on the icy grid road.

"Concentrate," I admonish, "level the pedals." I glance at my speedometer... 15kph.

"Stand up."...20kph.

"Relax your arms."...30kph.

"Breathe easy"...40kph.

"Just let the bike run, keep your centre of gravity"...45kph.

The wind bites at my cheeks, tears leak out my eyes and freeze on my skin half way down my face. The front tire skids left an inch or so as I hit a tiny rut...48.5kph. It crosses my mind that now would not be a good time to crash. Even so, I cannot resist the crazy adrenalin rush and loath the equally large hill I must start to climb in about three seconds.

50kph.

Far more quickly than I sped up, I slow down as the climb begins. Crawling along at 8 kph, any chill from the early downhill evaporates as my heart rate rises and I actually begin to sweat. As I crest the hill, the grid road stretches over gently rolling hills. From here on in, it's incredible scenery (which looks different from a bike than a car),

intriguing animal tracks, the sounds of crows' wings flapping, snow crunching, and my own breathing.

In thirty-five minutes, I arrive in town, self-made hoar frost clinging to my face-mask, neck, shoulders, and arms. I actually arrive before I know it, caught up in the enjoyment of the moment. I'm warm. I exceeded the recommended daily exercise amount and got somewhere at the same time. I've saved a bit of money and perhaps a bit of the environment. I've refreshed my lungs and muscles. I've cleared my mind. I enjoy the extensive variety of responses from folks, which are far nicer than I used to get in the big city.

Not to savor the moment too long, it's already time to prepare for the journey home, and then to do the errands. I change my wet socks, shirt, mitts, and face mask—wet clothes, even on a mild spring day, can mean hypothermia in minutes. Check the mail, pick up the groceries, greet a few folks and away I go. When using all my bike bags, I can carry up to 80 lbs of items, but I prefer less!

To make it home safely, I must always attend to well-proven procedures. I try to ride where I can safely maneuver around obstacles without darting into traffic. I try to ride predictably so my fellow road users know exactly where I'm headed. And I try to remember to wear my highway safety vest, so folks in other vehicles can always see me. I also carry a first aid kit and plenty of extra warm clothes and hot shots. Six winters and counting, I'm home safe and sound and have a blast on every trip!

Can anybody do this? If you're fit or willing to get fit, if you have a bike (pretty much any bike), and if you can learn how to minimize winter risks, OF COURSE YOU CAN DO IT!

Karen and I are both certified National CanBike Instructors. That means we're trained to teach folks of all ages and abilities, including adults who've never ridden a bike, to ride safely and enjoyably on the road, whether rural or urban, around the block or across the country, summer or winter!

Former Freewheelers, Tamela Friesen and Karen Hardy, are now operating Wild Berry Lane B&B outside of Roblin, MB and are starting up The Famous Bicycling Chicks Vegetable Farm this spring. Contact them at 204-937-8016

Gone With the Wind, 2007

by Don Wilson

Five degrees," announced the weather reader on the radio at 0700. "Partial cloud for southern Saskatchewan, with a high today of 22." Excellent! Could not be finer weather of the annual Freewheelers Gone with the Wind ride. Speaking of wind ... nuthin.' Nary a leaf stirring on the elms across the lane. Tsk. Not propitious for a wind ride.

Come 8 a.m., the group is gathering around Ron and Velda and the rented van in front of the Legislative Building. The bike trailer is attached; water stowed, treats, tools, compressor and first aid kit are at the ready in the van. A glance at the triumvirate of flags atop the Lege gives hope: they seem to be stirring, but are not yet indicating any firm decision by Æolus as to which of his charges he will let out of the cave today.

Barbara arrives, and Gord. Lorraine off-loads her bike from her rack, Isy checks her tire pressures and uses the compressor. Marion snaps some pix and Ron thoughtfully hands out slips of paper with his cell 'phone number. Grant and Janet roll up, and Don; Brian and Donna pop the hatch on their truck and pull out the tandem. Murray appears. We gab, distribute walkie-talkies and watch the flags.

At 0810 the flags are declaring a south wind. A final consultation and 22 skinny tires head north up Albert Street, followed closely by Ron in the van. First challenge: navigating the obstructions and lanes squeezes around the reconstruction of the CPR subway. At the last McDo's in Regina, a "DR" - designated rest stop - is called. After the necessities and a last coffee, Marion reminds us that this is not a pack ride, but rather we should expect to find our selves strung out for several miles, and not to worry, Ron will keep us all in play. Awa-ay we Go!

It *is* one fine morning. Highway 6 is welcoming with Wide shoulders. Cattle-covered pastures roll by left and right, and fields drying in the warm breeze. Geese in pairs poke at the stubble looking for dropped wheat berries; old gophers stand sentinel at burrow entrances whilst pups squeak to each other far below. A red-tailed hawk hangs in the air, searching for brunch for its chicks.

By the time we reach the green of the magnificent Qu'Appelle valley, the breeze is definitely windy. Bracing. Down we roll, buffeted by cross currents redolent with the nectar of wolf willow. "Heaven smells like this," declares Marion. I'm nor sure how she knows, but I'm tempted to reform my sinning

ways. By the time that the back marker begins his climb up the north face of the Valley, the wind is strong, and lofted by wolf willow airs, he hardly notices the incline.

The Homestead Restaurant in Southey thoughtfully opens up a private room for our use, conveniently close to the buffet. Bacon is wolfed, and spuds, eggy preparations, cakes. The rice pudding receives Gord's seal of approval and is attacked without mercy again and again. Paid up, we step out into a brisk wind. Heh, heh. We grin at each other and saddle up. Grant has literally blown the tire off his rear wheel a few miles before Southey, and Lorraine, who faces a several days of long shifts, generously offers him her bike and will ride with Ron in the van. Pushing much more rubber than is necessary on pavement, Murray is going to relax for awhile and join them.

And that is the last I saw of them, dear readers. I wandered around Southey for a few minutes, photographing the water tower and a few other structures, and by the time I regained the highway, not a bike could I see.

I guess they had fun, dodging the potholes in the narrow shoulder that Highway 6 offers cyclists north from Southey. And not just potholes and loose gravel. Southey has a popular "off-sales" store and drinking beer and driving is still a cherished pastime of many Saskatchewanians. The only proviso: Don't Get Caught. And one good way to minimize that danger is to toss your empties towards the ditch. Many a bottle doesn't make it, adding another dimension to the skill-testing challenge of this nasty little twitch of roadway.

Never mind, no Wheeler suffered a flat on this gorgeous Sunday, and the roadside sloughs were festooned with yellow-headed and red-winged blackbirds arguing over prime bull-rush perches. Water fowl of all manner were spotted: canvasbacks (or maybe they were scaups), red-headed ducks with blue bills, teals, grebes of various sorts, coots, mallards, of course, and probably a pair or two of shy pintails hiding in the reeds. A fox, I'm told, was seen skulking in the stubble, a pair of white-tailed deer, a quiet crow here and there going about its business of scavenging food for its nestlings.

Near the dwindling community of Serath a thirteen striped ground squirrel failed to cross the highway safely, and my olfactory nerves informed that somewhere or sometime far away something had encountered a surly skunk. To the joy of the aforementioned ducks, lots of standing water in the fields have yet kept many farmers off their tractors,

although dust was being raised here and there around farmsteads obviously prosperous, and some obviously not so.

Everyone made it to Raymore, although Yours Truly only achieved that distinction after being picked up by the Van because Marion insisted on going back for her camera (which she subconsciously intends to lose so she can buy a better one). Before all that happened, however, Ron had to run up to Dafoe to pick up Velda who, she admits, is an indifferent cyclist before noon, but after lunch? Look out road-running gophers. The rest of the group enjoyed ice cream concoctions at Raymore while waiting, All loaded up and happily exhausted by our exertions under the sun, we rolled steadily back to Regina to off-load at the Lege and bid each other farewell until the next time.



Condie Picnic Riders, May 5, 2007



Tire Changing & Display at SIAST, Apr. 23, 2007



Gone With the Wind Riders, May 27, 2007



First Bicycling in the City Clinic, Apr. 21, 2007

Freewheeler Materials In Saskatchewan Archives

by Sharon Baldwin

Pursuant to motions passed at recent Freewheelers' AGMs, I deposited an assortment of records with the Saskatchewan Archives Board on March 6, 2007. The records were from the period 1983 to the early '90s and included financial statements, agendas and minutes, membership lists, tour schedules, newsletters, advertising, Heritage Tour information, and a brief description of the beginning of the club that Robert Stedwill kindly wrote up for me. The Archives Board has assigned an accession number of R2007-138 to this collection.

Those who were present at the 2007 AGM will recall a discussion as to whether we should destroy or retain membership lists. There was no disagreement as to the desirability of retaining the lists but some Freewheelers were concerned that to do so would violate privacy laws. Staff at the Archives routinely deal with material that is subject to privacy restrictions, and they encouraged me to include the membership lists in our material on the understanding that they will apply whatever restrictions are appropriate. This may mean that a researcher would not be given access to the membership lists without formally requesting permission to view them and stating the reason for doing so. There should be no problem for anyone with a legitimate reason – genealogy, historical research, a club member organizing a reunion, etc. – being allowed to view the lists.

Unfortunately the Freewheelers material is quite incomplete. The membership lists, for example, only cover a few years in the early '90s. If any of you Freewheelers find something tucked away in your attic that you think would be a useful addition to the archives collection – especially anything from the categories listed in the first paragraph – please save it for me and I will be happy to collect whatever turns up and deliver it to the Archives.

Anyone wishing to view the Freewheelers collection (or anything else) at the Archives may do so at 3303 Hillsdale Street during business hours, Monday to Friday. Phone 787-4068 to check when a reference archivist will be on duty as you will need his/her help to get started. There is no charge for using the archives but you will have to pay for any reproductions you order.

Shakedown Tour Photos

by Barbara Shourounis



Barbara's new Trek 520 on its first loaded tour.



Velda imbibes chocolate milk after riding to the campground



Marion sets out on Day 2