



# Freewheelin'

Double Edition: June & August 2006

## Ride Reports and Late Summer Ride Schedule

### Editor's Corner

This is a special double edition. The Cape Breton Tour in June took precedence over the newsletter. In this edition you'll find the schedule for upcoming rides, and reports of rides past, including Don's full journal from GASP. Enjoy!

It's the beginning of August. Already, we need lights to return home from Wednesday Night Rides. Despite shorter days, there is still good riding ahead. There's an opportunity to improve your cycling skills at the *Cycling in The City Clinics*, and a chance to try loaded touring on the *Searching for Robin Hood Ride* to Sherwood Forest. The Club has panniers, a tent, and some other gear available free to members. Contact Velda and get set for fun.

And, don't forget about the food! The *Progressive Dinner* and *Fowl Suppers* are yet to come. The ride schedule for the last part of summer is attached, but stay tuned to the e-group for last minute updates. If you're not a member of the e-group, you can join by going to the "Newsletter and E-Group" page of our website where the pdf version of the newsletter is also found. Pictures are much better on the web!

Hope to see you on the road!

Marion Perry

WFW Communications Coordinator

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### The Great Annual Saskatchewan Pedal '06 Shamrock Tour Journal

by Don Wilson



Don Wilson, "Sheik of Shellbrook", & Therese Stecyk at 300 km on the Shamrock Tour

#### Saturday, July 22

Come 1220 hours on Saturday afternoon, the big, white van was cruising past the weigh-scale on Hwy 11 just out of Regina. Wheelin' was Ron who was instrumental in organizing

(Continued on page 8)

#### In this issue...

<i>Editor's Corner &amp; Shamrock Tour Journal</i>	1
<i>Do You Remember.....</i>	2
<i>Condie Tune Up Ride.....</i>	3
<i>Trying Teddy on for Size.....</i>	3
<i>Gone With the Wind.....</i>	4
<i>Cape Breton Thoughts.....</i>	6
<i>Road Food &amp; Congratulations .....</i>	7
<i>Bicycle Touring Haiku.....</i>	14
<i>Toy Talk, Miscellanea .....</i>	15
<i>Tour Schedule August-October .....</i>	16

## Do you remember?



*Information & Chili Night, April 2, 2006*



*"Talk of the Town", March 25, 2006  
Marion Perry & Gord Kerfoot*



*The Round Regina Ride, April 30, 2006  
Lorraine Reynolds & Velda Back enjoy Stedwill's deck*



*Sunrise Library Presentation, March  
Ron Keall*



*Freedom Friday Ride, April 28, 2006  
Gord Kerfoot & Alison Purdy*



*Wednesday Night Ride, May 17, 2006  
Murray Perry*

### The Condie Tune-Up Picnic Ride

April 2, 2006

by Marion Perry

At 11 am about a dozen riders gathered in front of Ron's house. Some biked circles around the Bay's island; others put together and adjusted equipment. Finally, all tires inflated and water bottles filled, we were off in



Murray Perry, Judy Young, Don Wilson, Gord Kerfoot

the sunshine and crisp air. Condie was still brown and leafless; snow and ice covered the water. Riders moved picnic tables into the sun and enjoyed lunch



Left: Don Wilson and Mick Rissling

Below: Gord Kerfoot and Marion Perry model new wool jerseys

together. There was much talk about equipment, the new wool jerseys worn for the first time, and the summer ahead.

A slightly breezier ride took us back to our vehicles. The official WFW 2006 Rides had begun.



### Trying Teddy on for Size

April 14-16, 2006

by Murray Perry

I don't know how I get myself into these things. Not just this article, but actually getting convinced to tackle the 21st Annual Teddy Tour when my butt hasn't been on much of anything except the couch or computer chair in two years. That and the fact I sort-of-kinda forgot which weekend Teddy was on and started the tour with a 2 hour mad gear scramble for spare tubes, patches, an extra water bottle and some US cash so I could actually, you know, camp and eat while abroad. Oh, and some insurance in case I wound up on the wrong end of a buffalo. (Do buffalo have a right ends?) I managed to meet up with Velda at Marion's for our international trek and, once the bikes were loaded and the absurd amount of gear was stowed, we rocketed off down #6 towards adventure.

Now, I wish I could tell you my first experience of the park was a gorgeous sunset panorama. Really, I do. But I'd be lying. V & I missed the full-feathered display the wild turkeys put on for Ron and Marion. We pulled into the North Unit campground in the dead of night, I with the rising sense of dread that can only come from riding 5 miles of rolling, roller-coaster-like road in total frosty darkness. "We" let everyone know we were there by setting off Velda's car alarm (I swear it was an accident, really!) then I got into my sleeping bags and fell asleep wondering what I'd gotten myself into and what the coming days would bring.

The biggest surprise for everyone (particularly the veterans) was what it didn't bring: rotten weather. Coincidentally, I didn't bring much in the way of clothing appropriate to 30'C heat so I spent the whole weekend in the same shirt and shorts--on and off the bike. Ah, tribulations. Instead, the main adversaries for our Freewheeling crew consisted of the nefarious "b"s: Buck Hill and buffalo. And our fuzzy friends had a special knack for foiling me especially. But more on that later.

Day one started off with legging weather, but by the time everyone had made the 5 mile warm-up roll to the front gates we were looking

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

for secluded spots to strip off layers. We met up with unexpected Freewheelin' friends

Tamela and Karen who'd come all the way from Winnipeg to join us. The return route was nice as well, although we had a casualty: Brenda bruised her ankle when she took spill on her bike. Day one was also the first day we were foiled by the buffalo: the last 100 m of the road to the lookout had a couple of ornery looking fellows who'd just been transferred in by truck. Paroled from the South Unit, I think.

The big highlights of day two all involved wildlife, and left me with a deeper appreciation of touring on a bike. We were treated to no less than 3 separate herds of wild horses, one so close we didn't even need Marion's binoculars to see them in fine detail. There were also quite a few deer sightings, which I missed because I was either a) off on my own ahead of the group (youth and all ;o), or b) blasting down a hill at the speed of stupid with roaring knobby tires and all. But hey, it was FUN.

The other thing I learned to appreciate is what it really takes to climb a hill. I buckled at Buck Hill. I still grit my teeth when I think of how I walked my bike up that 1 mile climb. I can tell myself whatever excuses I like (it was faster anyway, at least I didn't take the sag wagon, or the knobby tires were killing my momentum--trust me, I have a few) but in the end it just comes down to the fact that I let Buck Hill beat me. I got to the foot of it, looked up and buckled. I could have done it. I just didn't want to.

I can hear some people saying "Sag wagon? It was 30°C and they had a \*sag wagon\*?" Well, that was what Brenda did rather than sit around at the campsite and nurse her ankle (and boy howdy, we were glad of the water she brought with her). And the second time buffalo foiled us was the reason her accident turned out to be a fortunate one for the rest of us. You see, we had to stop about 200 m from the entrance to the campground because there were buffalo on either side of the road, and one of the ones on the left was with a couple yearlings that we could see. And she was \*not\* happy to see us: snuffing, grunting, and generally giving us the hairy eyeball while not moving an inch. Right then, some people drove

by (after snapping some pictures) and told us that there was a little teeny tiny baby buffalo over there, and that it was super cute.

Great.

So we waited, and hoped. Not moving, except to get really nervous when a motorcycle went by us. Some suggested forming a pack after the rest of the group caught up to us and riding by as a group. I thought about it for a minute, then commented: "Mom, think of how protective you are of me--and I'm 25." While we waited the 20 minutes or so for Brenda to drive up in the truck, the baby, who couldn't have been more than a few days old, got shoulder-nudged across the highway by another buffalo right in front of us. It was a special moment. Once Brenda joined us, she shuttled the drivers into the campsite where they got in their vehicles and returned for their bikes and the rest of us. That moment, not so special.

We split off on the last day and did our own rides, and mine was what convinced me the buffalo had a personal vendetta with me. You see Buck Hill wasn't the only hill I chickened out on. I knew I could have done that first hill to Wind Canyon, and by gum I was going ride it before I went home. Alas... no. There they were. Blocking the road and in no mood to go anywhere. In the end, I had to ride almost all the way back into Medora before I satisfied myself. Next time, Buck Hill, and next time buffalo. Next time.



Murray Perry, Velda Back, Teddy Tour, 2006

## Gone With the Wind

May 28, 2006

by Marion Perry

Tuesday, the week before Wind Ride, Ron, who was in Vancouver, checked his phone messages.

"Sorry, the van you reserved has mechanical problems and will not be available Sunday."

When I received his e-mail, I began phoning rental agencies. My request for a 15 passenger van with a hitch to pull a trailer was usually met with a "Are you crazy, lady?" pause, followed by "Sorry". Budget did have a van, but you must rent their trailer for mega bucks.

I phoned Velda for support and she suggested the bus the Ski Club uses for its Asessippi trip. Our last hope, *Explore the West Tours*, was available, could pull the trailer, and provided a driver for a very reasonable fee. The Wind Ride was on!

May 28 was drizzly, grey and not overly windy. Following a tutorial on how to secure bikes to the trailer, riders headed west on number 1. The veterans stopped at Belle Plaine for soup, but many first timers rolled right by without seeing the parked bikes. No lunch for them until Moose Jaw!

Word came to the café that Isy was about 1 km back walking—a flat, no quick release and no wrench—oops. At the café, the tube was changed, the tire inspected for debris—none was found. Unfortunately, the new tube was soon flat—invisible debris forced Isy to finish the ride by bus.

Everyone except Velda and I decided to stop at Moose Jaw. With Cape Breton in mind, we pushed on. Velda's road bike suffered some broken spokes, forcing her to release the brake for the final stretch to Briarcrest where we stopped for treats. As we refueled Moose Jaw Jim from last year's GASP rode up. We renewed acquaintance and compared summer plans (He was Goin' to the Sun.) until our bus rolled up. We loaded our bikes and joined the others for a comfortable bus ride back to Regina.



*A serious group: Don Wilson, Barbara Shourounis, Ron Keall, Mick Rissling, Isy Azzopardi and Deena McNichol await other riders before the start of the "How to Secure Your Bike" Tutorial*



*Explore the West Tour bus towing WFW trailer.*



*Tire Trouble: Isy Azzopardi & Ron Keall*

## Cape Breton- Some Thoughts

by Gord Kerfoot

A lucky guy is me! Over the last number of years, my principle holidays have involved cycling trips; Saskatchewan, Alberta, B.C., Minnesota, North Dakota, and most recently Cape Breton Island. The cycling has been challenging and enjoyable, but it's the folks I've shared these trips with that really draw me back summer after summer.

This summer's excursion to Nova Scotia is no exception. Marion did a fabulous job as our tour organizer. Route planning, campground scouting, museums and significant spots to visit; all taken care of so efficiently. For me, it was easy; just show up and follow! As a great souvenir of the trip, Marion has put together a journal and picture presentation detailing our entire voyage. It's found at the following URL [www.crazyguyonabike.com/journals/CapeBreton](http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/journals/CapeBreton). Thanks so much Marion.

The trip for me marked a first - traveling with my bike on a plane. Many of you will know of my incredible mechanical talent. Stripping down my bike and shoving it in a box, putting it back together, and expecting it to function properly, had my anxiety meter ticking just a bit. Good ole Dr. Ron came to my aid as he has done on a number of occasions. Personal service to my garage no less, where he took me through the process. Thanks so much Ron.

Brenda refers to me as a minimalist. "You could do most tours on a Safeway bag", she tells me. That's a bit of a stretch, but essentially true. I don't over pack. It's B, however, who's taught me most about organizing for a trip, and the day-to-day business of camping. Given this was my first big trip without her, I think I did pretty well. Thanks, B. We missed you, and I love ya lots!

Arriving at Sydney without a bike or luggage did add new meaning to the term minimalist. I remember Ron saying, "Gord you seem pretty calm given the circumstances." Well, thank goodness for friends. Misery does like company. I knew things would eventually come together. What really was the point in getting too excited?

I felt pretty good about my physical

preparation for the trip having spent quite a bit of time at the U of R gym over the year. All the reading and conversation indicated the climbs would be a challenge, to say the least. Yep, they were, but the good fortune we enjoyed with the weather, and the lack of traffic due to the time of year, made for maximum enjoyment. Cape Breton is truly a beautiful part of our country!

The down hills. I can climb all day, actually like the challenge, strange as that may seem. But the problem is, you have to eventually go down! I know, that's totally the opposite of the way all other cyclists think. Everybody loves those long down hills; relax, feel the wind in your face, glide, smile! For me, total panic!! It's release the feet from the clips, tense the body, clench the handlebars, grit the teeth, mutter monosyllabic curses, and "feather" the brakes, (a misnomer to me) all the time sniffing for the aroma of fried brake pads.

Well, Gord (The Gazelle, as I was labeled on this trip, for my up-hill prowess) elected to walk down the descents. Never ridiculed, never mocked, my fears accepted! Thanks V, Marion, Karen and Tamela, who did enjoy the freedom of "letting her roll", to attain speeds of up to 70-80 Km/h.

The sag. Me thinks I'm starting to like it. The past few trips have included the advantages of having a support vehicle. There's a certain



Whale Watching Near Cheticamp: Karen Hardy, Marion Perry, Tamela Friesen, Karen Cochran, Bob Cochran, Gord Kerfoot, Velda Back (front)

comfort, a security in just knowing it's there! Yes, I'm getting a bit soft; probably do need to load the bike again soon, to regain the satisfaction and confidence of being unsupported and independent. But Bob & Karen's shepherding allowed us to see places and do things just not possible had we only cycled the Island. The climbs and descents would have taken on a whole different dimension without 'Carrie the Caravan'. Thanks to both of you!

Finally, just some encouragement. For those who have yet to be a part of an extended cycling trip, I hope you'll consider signing up for one soon. It's a great way to get to know your fellow club members on another level, to challenge yourself physically, and to just enjoy being outside doing something healthy for your mind and body.

## Road Food—Fried Cheese

This is a favourite breakfast for many Freewheelers when they're on the road, but it's good anytime. Ron is the originator of this simple and satisfying repast.

- enough slices regular swiss or cheddar cheese for one bagel
- one bagel sliced in half and toasted or warmed over a burner or a pot or not according to circumstances

Place cheese in non-stick frying pan and heat until it melts nicely. Hold the frying pan handle in one hand. In the other, take one bagel half and press into cheese. Swirl the bagel and pick up all the cheese. Top with the other half of the bagel or enjoy open-faced and melt more cheese for the other bagel half.

## Best Wishes Brian & Donna!



Freewheelers Brian Fergusson and Donna Kovatch were wed on August 5th.

Brian and Donna host the Brunch at Brian and Donna's Ride each spring. Brian is a longtime (charter?) member of the Club.

Congratulations to both of you. May you live happily ever after.



*On the tandem at Teddy, 2006*

*(Shamrock Tour Journal, continued from page 1)*

the tour, and for the next 8 days would be the cycling group's support driver. Flying as navigator was Don, with Delee and Ted relaxing in the passenger section.

Before the hour was out Ron had turned off 11 and was driving us due north past Watrous, and Wakaw, over the strange St. Louis bridge and up into the belly of Prince Albert. After dropping Ted and Delee at the Travelodge on the "south hill", Ron and Don headed for the Mary Nisbet Campground on the north end of town to scope out the situation.

As they were setting up camp around the ill-maintained  
 cookhouse, Brenda and Gord arrived in their truck. Isy and Therese reported by phone that they were experiencing some equipment problems and would likely be late for the participants' meeting scheduled for 2000 hrs. With camp established, Brenda, Gord,



*Therese Stecyk—thumbs up—  
 bike rack issues solved.*

Ron and Don repaired downtown for a Chinese meal and a quick stop by the old roundhouse and its tiny collection of salvaged Carlton Trail R/W "Geeps".

Back at camp, Jim had arrived, and it was learned that Isy and Therese were successfully underway from Regina. Ron convened the meeting at the appointed time, handing out his Participants' Meeting Information Sheet along with a 'Help' card with his cell phone number on it. Attending were Delee, Ted and Ted's sister-in-law, Carol, who had just arrived from her home in Calgary, Amund, a Wascana Freewheeler-at-large from Shellbrook, Jim, Brenda, Gord, and Don. The meeting was cordially brief, and after making loose arrangements to meet the others on the road in the morning, the Freewheelers crammed

into the downtown "DQ" with everyone else in PA.

Returned to the campground as night was falling, we were happy to find Therese and Isy arrived and to see them off to a hotel, it being too late to struggle with an alien tent in the dark.

**Sunday, July 23rd**

Crack of dawn sunbeams lancing thru the skinny lodgepoles found the campers' tents around 0545. Up and breakfasted and camp broken, the vanguard, led by Amund, cycled a few hundred metres south on dirty Highway 2, peeled off to the right on the 3/55 interchange and away'd westward thru the boreal forest which reaches down for the North Saskatchewan River. The crowd from the hotel, Carol, Isy, Therese, Delee, and Ted, had beat the campers to the highway, and we were now comfortably spread out

Ron had stowed all the baggage from the hotels and the campground in the big Ford, had filled the big water jug, had loaded up on juice boxes and treats, and met us for a pit-stop just outside Holbein where the Sheik of Shellbrook [aka Don] momentarily incarnated.

Around Holbein the forest gives way to farm land and the north wind that had been screened by the trees began wafting the scent of canola flowers and ditch clover, purging the air over the highway of diesel fumes and road dust. Was delightful. We rolled into Frodo's Resto in Shellbrook.

Lunched and way, guided by the map on Ron's carefully prepared trip-sheet, we pushed the veering breeze westward some 3 K. on Hwy. 3 to its intersection with Hwy. 40 where we turned left and followed the Carleton Trail Railway south-west past the giant lilies at Parkside.

As the wind picked up strength out of the 3 o'clock position, and the afternoon heated up hellaciously to around 4 million degrees centigrade, some of us who had this season only ridden as far as Moose Jaw with the wind at our backs were beginning to feel the strain. Painted gooey white with SPD 900 sunscreen, cowering in the shade of infrequently spaced groves of cottonwoods, guzzling water by the



*Therese Stecyk and Don Wilson at Petrovka Bridge*

tonne, we gratefully wilted into the cooler comfort of the Leask Cafeteria. Finally, as the afternoon was approaching the dinner hour, the last of us straggled into the Blaine Lake campground, fell like desert island castaways upon the cans of pilsner so thoughtfully corralled by Ron, and congratulated ourselves on surviving 108 klix on a record-hot day.

Anticipating even a cold shower in the rec-centre to sluice off the sweat-salt, we were momentarily chagrined when Ron discovered that the facility was closed. No matter: he hied himself directly to The Country Girls Inn where he procured the essential and shuttled us over. That the motel's hot water heater's capacity was only about an imperial pint was disappointing and a little shivery for those not first in. (Sworry, guys. If I'da even suspected that the hot water was so severely limited, I wouldn'a let 'er run free like I did. Sigh.)

Supper gathered us in Ciona's for a big feed, bread pudding included. The hotelers repaired to their rooms and the campers off'd to their hot beds; those without earplugs attentive to the traffic either prowling around the camp, or roaring off down Hwy 40 towards The Battlefords.

The toilet facilities at the campground ensured that most of the tenters were back at Ciona's for breakfast. Fortified with the knowledge that this was to be but 62 kms, many lingered over coffee, re-establishing old acquaintanceships and eyeing the overcast thru Ciona's big windows. Heading south on nasty-narrow Hwy.

12 into a 2 o'clock breeze, some of us donned yellow jackets. Isy attacked the shoulder gravel with her right calf in fit of pique over her toe-clip's intransigence. A little blood was spilled, but no other injury to either Isy or the gravel occurred.

Traffic on the hwy was heavy; we even had to pull over to let a house drive by, heading to Fort MacMurry, it's said. Going the other way we met Glen and Cale from Saskatoon. Out visiting relatives in Rosthern, they thought that they'd race over to meet us and stretch their legs a bit before they joined us for the weekend portion of our ride.

By the time Ted, Delee and Carol flew across the Petrovka Bridge over the North Saskatchewan, the day was begging to brighten. Cranking up the escarpment on the other side, on a highway greatly improved with smooth, wide shoulders, we came to the 50's Blacktop Diner and curio emporium: closed. After lounging on the veranda for awhile, tummy grumblings inspired us to move on south a couple of K. on Hwy. 1,2 and hard left East onto the Waldheim Access Road.

The breeze was now coming in on our right shoulders. The ditches were exploding with flora and herbage, and the grain fields on either side of the roadway looked lush and thick and clean. Hope they get their harvest off, those families, and that the prices they get make it worth their while to try again next



*Ron Keall, Don Wilson, & Amund Otterson relax at Rosthern*

*(Continued on page 10)*

(Continued from page 9)  
year.

Into lovely Waldheim we pedalled past a faerie's cabin festooned with whirligigs and cartoon characters and rolled up to the Tea Garden Restaurant on main street. A very fine luncheon was served us, to the sorrow of several locals who came in, saw with alarm how many tables the bikies took up, pursed their lips in regret and headed out the door to the second-best place in town.

The afternoon sun found us drifting wind-at-our-backs down the rust-pocked Hwy. 312. About half way to Rosthern, the entire Ride gathered about the van for an extended, relaxed rest-stop on the carefully manicured grounds of the Eigenheim Mennonite Church

Rosthern, under ominous skies, was perhaps half-observing a tradition of Monday closing, as the downtown was mighty sleepy. Faced with closed signs in the restaurant windows, some riders went shopping and the campers then congregated at the excellent Rosthern Regional Park campgrounds to set up under the trees.

Refreshed in the neat, scrupulously-maintained shower-house and with the laundry hanging to dry, the matter of supper was addressed. Whilst Gord, Brenda, Isy and Therese opted to cook in camp, the rest of the campers piled into the van and headed downtown to Mackie's Oriental Grill for the noted triple-salted wonton soup buffet. A search for a post-prandial ice-cream led some to the clubhouse at the regional park where popsicles had to satisfy desire for cold sweet.

### **Tuesday, July 25th**

Again, those with earplugs slept reasonably soundly; traffic on Hwy. 11, maybe 40 metres away thru the trees, roared steadily until the wee hours, and began its workday soon after. The night was cooler than the previous, and dew had settled on the fabrics of the camp. The denizens fixed a lazy breakfast, packed up, grabbed Trip Sheet #3 from Ron, and filled their water bottles with the excellent Rosthern water.

By 0800 hrs. all were on Hwy. 11 prepared for either an 82 km run into P.A., or a mad 20 K.

dash for sustenance in Dork, ... I mean *Duck*, Lake. The campers presumed that the hotelling triumvirate - Carol, Delee and Ted - would quickly overtake them, but were fooled: the speedy 3 had already streaked away against the slight 11 o'clock airs and were seen not again until McDowell.



*Therese Stecyk and Isy Azzopardi at 405 km*

Under breaking light overcast, the breakfast seekers cruised past the still-closed Scrimshaw gallery at the south entrance to Duck Lake, and rolled along main to the only café in town for coffee and a bite of jammed bannock. The restaurant imports its water.

The sun came out as we passed the interpretative centre at the north end of Duck Lake. We were heading back into bush country, and it was pretty, the occasional bright yellow canola field accentuating the greens of forest and glade. On the far side of the flower-choked eastern ditch, Saskatchewan's longest hubcap collection presented itself fence post by fence post. I'm pretty sure I spotted one that I needed for a '61 Strato Chief in the Long Ago.

On we rode, the pavement's gaping expansion cracks rhythmically pounding the argument for front suspension into our rotator cuffs. Ron, his water and fuel-food supplies replenished, met us at the McDowell turn-off. Most ventured down into picturesque McDowell, while others ground it on, abandoning one member who had been enticed from the Hwy and ensnared by the Antique Power collection a few miles from the Hwy 11's intersection with Hwy. 2. Much digital camera battery power had to be there expended before the

truant traveller could ransom his soul and escape into PA, the last one in, at a quarter to three.

After setting up camp or checking into their rooms, the riders dispersed on various errands throughout the town. Isy and Therese still maintain that they were NOT thrown out of the laundromat with sopping wet clothes for rowdy behaviour. Uh-huh. Whatever. Morning revealed their car looking like a Napolese tenement alley on washday. Pressed, Therese will admit that they did track down the red wine that they had missed with the meal of campground pasta that they had made themselves the evening before.

### Wednesday, July 26th

The camp is astir about 0600 on a calm, cool, mercifully overcast morning. Did I mention that periodically over the course of the previous 3 days, heavy-duty sunscreen would actually reach the point of spontaneous combustion on the arms and noses of The Participants? It was HOT and Sol stared, seemingly amazed, or perhaps just bemused, by the temerity of our adventurous spirits, out under the blaring sky when even mad dogs have found shelter.

Gord really doesn't look so good this morning.



*Isy Azzopardi with bikes at Waskesiu Lake*

He's feeling ugly, too, after two nights of no sleep and congestion a-building in his chest. He croaks like a terminal three-packs-a-dayer when he speaks. He and Brenda had only signed up for the five-day tour as they were booked on a flight out of Saskatoon on Friday to attend a favoured nephew's nuptials on The Coast. Anticipating the exertions of the upcoming weekend, Brenda and Gord regretfully

decide to put away their bikes and accompany us by truck as far as Waskesiu, before heading to ToonTown for 36 hours of recuperation before their flight.

Away from the Mary Nisbet, Hwy. 2 is one long garbage dump decorated with busted bottles and road debris. The expansion cracks are beginning to really irritate some riders, but avoiding them by riding on the driving surface is out of the question. Traffic is heavy. A Ron-stop at Spruce Home and the good wishes for a swell trip from Gord and Brenda fortify us for the sprint to North End and its roadside diner. Trip Sheet #4 advises that it is the only place to eat between PA and "The Junction" of highways 2 and 264 just 15 K. from Waskesiu. It suffices, and provides a telephone connection to the Lakeview Motel in Waskesiu to enable Therese and Isy to book a room. (oh how I wish I could work "bear-icade" into the previous sentence.)

Under increasingly dark skies the Ride rendez-vous'd at The Junction. The quicker are fed and gone to set up tents on Beaver Glen or occupy their hotel rooms. The last of us, Isy, Therese, and Don, linger until the clouds have fully concentrated their umbrage over the 264. Soaked thru they arrived at Waskesiu; Isy and Therese to their room; Don to wander in damp glumness, unwilling to set up camp in the wet, until, with kind assistance, he secures the last room in Waskesiu. And for under \$50, too!

There was no general gathering of the clan this evening with some eating in camp, others savouring the Village's vintages in warmly-lit restaurants, others smashing trinkets in the souvenir shops. Pete's pizza was great, with the cold ones easing the 87 kms of fatigue beaten into our bones today.

### Thursday, July 27th

Periodically and heavily it rained overnight, and I'm sure that those hotellers that heard the racket spared a supportive thought for those toughing it out in tents. The mid-morning sun, picketing the pavement with the shadows of road-side conifers, oversees the progress of the Ride, strung out for miles along old Hwy. 2 by 1000 hrs. The varying length and substance of individual breakfasts accounted for much of this length, as well as

*(Continued on page 12)*



*Don Wilson, in front of art gallery*

*(Continued from page 11)*

some minor mechanical problems which Ron summarily dealt with. Thanx, guy.

Somewhere south of Sandy Lake, Ron established the first refreshment stop of the day, enabling most of us to power past the roadside art shops and up the hills to lunch in the Lake Country Trading Post at Emma Lake corners. In a land littered with bears and sundry wild mammalia, we saw nothing but chipmunks, one or two birds each, and a few dumb elk that Tourism Waskesiu people pay to hang around the Village and pose for pix for the folks back home in Seoul and Switzerland.

Away from Emma Lake, 50 K. covered and 47 to go, we were back in agricultural lands, and a bit of the ol' up 'n' down past Christopher Lake got us to new Highway 2 and a straight, mostly joint jolting ride down to PA. Galleries are visited and the campers arrive at the Mary Nisbet later in the afternoon to find hundreds of pilgrims from St. Anne's in northern Alberta encamped on the green and taxing the facilities to the max.

Isy and Therese do not have to erect their barn dance-sized tent, having decided that a working Monday after a weekend of continued exertion would not be possible. They are heading home, as is Jim.

That evening at 8:00, Ron conducted another Participants' Meeting at the campground cookhouse to welcome those 10 folks - Carla from Regina, Chris from Meadow Lake, Phyllis and Mirian, Wayne and Brenda, Sally and Ian, Glen and Cale, all from Saskatoon - who have

arrived to join Amund, Carol, Delee, Ted, and Don for the final 3 days. Bob, the chair of SCA's Recreation & Transportation committee, has arrived in his Grande Marquis to aid Ron as a second "sag waggon." If Thursday's ride is indicative of Friday's, there will be folks ranged out along Highway 55 for *townships*. Just at dark Marion and Murray arrived to camp with us on their way north to paddle away an extended weekend.

### **Friday, July 28th**

Friday dawns pleasingly overcast and calm in the campground. The last rider is on the road by 0830 facing a 142 km ride to Nipawin against a whimsical zepher that never really did make up its mind what it was going to do that day. Cousins of the same old expansion cracks that punished our shoulders all week are on the Hwy. 55 occasionally obliterated by patches of fresh pavement. Out by Meath Park, Mirian collected a 3 cm-long spike the bad way. Went thru both sides of the tube. Double puncture: very rare. What luck, huh? Ron rescued the tube and restored it to utility. Carla announced that she had never before ridden so far all at once, and she was some pleased about that, and we were all tickled.

Under the impression that there was not a resto open between PA and Choiceland, 98 K. away, we Ron and Bob-stopped past Wierdale and Foxford and Shipman and on to the outskirts of Smeaton when it was discovered that Crystal had opened her Café. We rewarded Crystal and her Québécoise helper well for their industry, enjoyed a bit of shady relief from the horseflies, and pushed on. Snowden, Choiceland with its big grain elevator indicating the end of the CP rail line reaching up from Tisdale and Nipawin, Garrick, Love (see the video at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GS\\_td5mlOyg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GS_td5mlOyg)), White Fox, and the final 12 K. down into the Saskatchewan River valley and up into Nipawin. Glen and Cale smoked out 10 K. to the Dam Vista Viewpoint and back for their 'centuries' - 100 miles. Good goin', guys.

With water every bit as good as Rosthern's famous elixir, the Nipawin Regional Park boasts a truly excellent camp ground. The keyed shower house doors protect a new, well maintained and supplied facility; the shaded tenting grounds appear fairly level and debris-



*The hotel people, Ted Quade, Carol Chester, Delee Cameron wave before setting out.*

free to the almost-Centurions grateful for any horizontal piece of real estate upon which they could lay down and unlap. A wide belt of natural evergreens stifled the noise of traffic on 55. Most campers went uptown with Ron in the Van for pasta and wild boar. T'was good, and everyone passed a restful night, the rumble of thunder and the patter of rain muted by tired ears, the white flash of the lightening through the tent's roof unseen by well-sanded eyes.

### **Saturday, July 29th**

A bit wet this morning are the tent flies, and campers are looking for sunbeams in which to spread them. While some breakfast on carried provisions, others strike for town or drift with Ron down to the Marina on the River for a classic country spread.

With only a 64 klix down Hwy. 35 to Tisdale and west another 36 on Hwy. 3 to Melfort, people seemed reluctant to start, straggling out of town like refugees. An 11 o'clock breeze threatened to freshen and the sun skirmished with a malevolent-looking bank of clouds gathering in the west. At Nicklen, now but a deserted gas station on the highway near Armley, the CN line from Melfort crosses our path.

We Ron-and-Bob-hopped across rolling green countryside down to Tisdale and fell upon the first open restaurant *en route*; the stragglers arriving around 1:30. Repast'd, we flung ourselves out onto Hwy. 3 and, back to the frisky wind, beat it 20 K. down to the Star City

access road where Ron surrendered the sag duties to Bob and went on the last 20 K. into Melfort to drop off the baggage and scope the burg.

Heading on into Melfort, who do we meet pedalling bravely against the wind to make the Star City turn-around? Velda, prez of the Freewheelers, come up especially to help Bob and Ron prepare the riders' final breakfast on the morrow and to ride into PA with us to celebrate the end of the ordeal.

(Ordeal?)

(Well. Yeah. Talk to the butt, Bill. I coulda used a rest day half way thru, U know, take a break from having my tail kicked by about 174 mean expansion cracks for every one of those 800 K. we rode, eh? Not that I wouldn't do it again in a heart-beat, mind. It was *fun*, U know? Never mind the, ah, corporal insults. I'm gonna get me one of those fancy split saddles and maybe a sprung seat-post.)

Again Chris was among the first to be waiting for her camping gear when she arrived in the Melfort Campground. Our gypsy tent camp began setting up around 1530 with fly sheets draped over sunny bushes and laundry lines appearing. The doors on the nearby showerhouse were electronically locked and the place was somewhat spartan, but neat. When everything was snugged to satisfaction, many of us piled in the van and hied ourselves to the resto in the Travelodge where we scarfed good, some finishing the evening with a DQ.

### **Sunday, July 30th**

For the campers, the night was spectacular. Chris was wrong when she postulated that the looming banks of black clouds would pass to the north. About 0200 the heavens went like Armageddon and the siege of Moscow rolled into one. Spiteful Æolus loosed his charges into the treetops setting weakened cottonwood limbs to creaking ominously overhead. Rain and more rain sought out every unsealed stitch in camp, re-rinsing the laundry and soaking towels forgotten in the dark. Before the crack of dawn Velda, Bob and Ron were gone, only a dry patch of grass attested to V's erstwhile presence.

*(Continued on page 14)*

Over at the electrified cooking shelter in the Tourist Office civic park, coffee was soon perking and ham spitting in the pan. Juice had been opened, utensils laid out and the eggs lined up ready to hit the hot pan at 0630. The cooks waited, and waited more, turned off the gas on the Coleman and waited some more for the first riders to roll up to the log walls and proclaim the advanced state of their starvation.

Again, as individuals or in small groups, the Riders head out on the last leg of their journey, 98 kilometres to the PA city limits and then up to the Mary Nisbet to reclaim our baggage from The Van.

Though overcast, u.v. rays find unscreened skin and begin to burn. A brisk 5 o'clock wind boosts our speeds with a corresponding reduction in effort. Cruisin'.

Kinistino, 28 K. along, is essentially closed this Sunday morning, as is Birch Hills. A rest stop has been arranged near Birch Hills and a local has assured us that the resto on the Muskoday First Nation is a good place. The road heads across the wind for a few K. and then down and out of the shallow South Saskatchewan River's valley. At the top of the grade is the Muskoday Resto, closed for the pow-wow that is taking place under huge tents to the south of the highway.

We brace ourselves to the best of our abilities for the final 15 or so K. into PA. The overcast has blown off as we pedal thru the city's pleasant eastern 'burbs' and across the North Saskatchewan for the last time this trip. Ron has arrived at the Mary Nesbit and is distributing bag and baggage as the riders arrive. We snap a few farewell pix, drink a toast or two with cold Kokanees courtesy Carol, and head our separate ways wondering where we'll congregate next year.

Bob took Velda back to her car in Melfort and they returned to Regina via highway 6. With the same passengers he had brought up eight days earlier, Ron retraced his route so Don could foto the St. Louis bridge and lose a bet on where the miles and miles of grain cars had been parked on the CN line north of (? Wakaw? Nope, Watrous. No way. Bet? Ye-ah.)

The Van arrived back in Regina at about 8:30. Except for wrapping up organizational details GASP 2006, the Shamrock Tour, was history.

#### **Editor's Note**

*Thanks to Don for keeping and sharing his GASP Journal, and to Isy Azzopardi for the GASP photos in this newsletter.*

## **Bicycle Touring Haiku**

Most of you are familiar with Neil Gunton's crazyguyonabike.com website, host to hundreds of cycling journals. One of the CGOB Forums has been running bike touring haiku for a couple of months. Below are samples:

Rolling down the road  
Pedals turning round and round  
Absorbing beauty

*By Denise Goldberg on Wed 21 Jun '06*

Follow the white line  
Sympathize with the road kill  
Rumble strips, begone

*By Neil Gunton (admin) on Wed 21 Jun '06*

Big sky, prairie song  
Lonely road, deserted towns  
Tell of times gone by

*By Neil Gunton (admin) on Wed 21*

Ambrosiac meals -  
Found not under Michelin stars  
But under real ones.

*By Brian Huntley on Wed 21 Jun '06*

Brakes bite alloy rims  
Slowly so slowly I fall  
S.P.D.s still clipped

*By iain cullen on Thu 22 Jun '06*

Age creeps upon me  
Leg not going over bar  
New approach--lean bike

*By Laura Roberts on Sun 25 Jun '06*

No noisy engine  
I am part of the landscape  
A cycle tourist

*By Iain Cullen on Tue 27 Jun '06*

Goin' to the Sun  
Rocky Mountains, K.V.R....  
Quick, years fly. Cycle.

*By Marion Perry on Mon 7 Aug '06*

## Toy Talk—Bike Computers

by Marion Perry

Most of us have a bike computer that will keep track of time, trip distance, total distance, and speed. Beyond these features, you can get bike computers that are altimeters, g.p.s. units, heart rate monitors, heck, maybe there's even one that will make your coffee.

This is not Consumer Reports; no model comparisons here. Most basic computers do what they're supposed to and are fun to have. I will add, that I do not like my wireless computer, because it has a funny mount, rattles around too much, and sometimes works.

The computer I do like and one that changed my cycling is a cycle computer with cadence. What kind? I dunno, it's on my Trek and it's at Ron's. It's the cadence feature, not the brand that I'm high on.

Here's the theory:

Cadence is the speed at which you turn the cranks, measured in revolutions per minute (rpm). Inexperienced cyclists tend to ride in higher gears than they should, pedaling at a slower cadence. Most experienced cyclists pedal at cadences in the range of 70-90 RPM. This puts less strain on the joints, particularly the knees.

Now, I knew this, but before I got my computer with cadence, erratic and slow would describe my pedaling. Especially when I'm on the road by myself, I mentally write articles, plan, and woolgather. Once I got my computer with cadence, I decided to try to spin (pedal in circles) steadily and try to go at least 70 rpm. To my surprise, I found I was cycling faster, with less perceived effort, and my knees loved it.

Now, if you're younger and more athletic than I am, you can aim for the 80 to 90 rpm range. Try spinning as opposed to pushing the pedals. It makes a difference and a computer with cadence helps.

### Great photos of Freewheelers at Bikeapalooza 2006

<http://www.darrellnoakes.com/photography/Bikeapalooza2006/index.htm>

### Tidbits from the Mystery Ride

- Catherine Sheldon Williams, 1868-1949, was known as "The Lady on the Bicycle" because, in the pursuit of her duties, she always rode her bike, which she named "Eustache". Catherine came to Regina in 1920; served on the Regina Collegiate Board for 20 years; pioneered the development of the Correspondence School.
- "The bicycle has done more for the emancipation of woman than anything else." Susan B. Anthony

### "Always Into the Wind, Pedaling Across the Prairies" Exhibit



is now showing at the Sports Hall of Fame. If you didn't visit it on the Mystery Ride, take the time to drop in next time you're downtown.

### Pictures from Saskatoon Cycling Club's Dirt Road Tour, July 7-9, 2006



Freewheelers Brenda Ziolkowski, Gord Kerfoot (in photo left) and Don Wilson had a great time on this tour. Thanks to Don for the pictures.

Yes, that is a rattlesnake.



**Wascana Freewheelers Ride Schedule** *Brief version*

**For more details watch for e-group messages or phone contact person.**

**August 12, 9:30-11:30—Cycling in the City Clinic , Pt 1**  
**Place:** Fieldhouse Parking Lot (emphasis will be on bike handling skills)  
**Contact:** Velda Back, 569-1322

**August 13, 2:00—? - Progressive Dinner**  
**Hosts:** Appetizers: Brenda & Gord, Entrée: Marion, Dessert & Hot Tub: Lorraine  
**Contact:** Marion Perry, 586-0691

**August 19, 9:30-11:30—Cycling in the City Clinic , Pt 2**  
**Place:** Fieldhouse Parking Lot (Emphasis on skills for riding in traffic)  
**Contact:** Velda Back, 569-1322 (You may do only 1 part.)

**August 25—27—Searching for Robin Hood** Tour—Regina to Sherwood Forest. Leave Friday after work. Return by noon Sunday.  
**Contact:** Velda Back, 569-1322, asap, she needs to reserve campsites

**September 1,2,3 (Labour Day Weekend)**  
 t.b.a.

**September 10, 1:00 p.m. White Butte Trail Ride**  
**Place:** White Butte  
**Contact:** Ron Keall, 545-1494

**September 17—Fall Leaves Qu'Appelle Lakes Ride**  
**Contact:** Ron Keall, 545-1494

**September 24, SCA AGM in Waskesiu**  
 Velda may take an extra day to cycle the area. Anyone else interested?

**October—usually the first weekend Pilot Butte Fowl Supper**  
 Meet early in the afternoon for a ride at White Butte followed by supper.  
**Contact:** Velda Back, 569-1322

**October 21—Lakeview United Fowl Supper.**  
 Ride and then eat. Tickets must be obtained in advance.  
**Contact:** Velda Back, 569-1322