

ExtraOrdinary Reflections, the newsletter of the Bombay Bicycle Club of Madison, Inc., is published five times per year. Comments, articles, photographs, and letters are welcome. You may send them by e-mail (preferably) to the editor (FGOODING@AOL.COM) or to: Editor, ExtraOrdinary Reflections, 321 South Midvale Boulevard, Madison, WI 53705-5030.

Membership Renewals:

Please check the expiration date on your mailing label. Your timely renewal is the only sure way to continue receiving ExtraOrdinary reflections and the various other membership benefits. Please see the renewal coupon on page 10 for renewal instructions.

Acknowledgments: This newsletter is published through the efforts of the Board and of many volunteers. Costs of the newsletter are covered through advertisements placed by area bike shops and businesses. Please patronize our advertisers.

Advertisers	The Officers and Board			
	Position	Name	Phone	E-mail
Budget Bicycle Center Community Hope Orange Tree Imports REI Trek Bicycle Store Williamson Bike Works	President	Sarah Grimes	(920)648-8024	se.grimes@hosp.wisc.edu
	Vice-President	Judy VandenBrook	437-4192	jvb@mhmc.net
	Secretary	Dean Schroeder	256-8813	appelsin@aol.com
	Treasurer	Howard Teal	836-1277	tealh@itis.com
	Touring	Bob Steinberg	848-3461	cmestein@chorus.net
	Membership	Don Michalski	274-1886	dem@sal.wisc.edu
	Newsletter	Fred Gooding	218-9101	fgooding@aol.com
	Public Relations	Deb Larson	231-2733	deb_larson@mcfarland.k12.wi.us
	Century Ride	John Stockham	233-1827	jstockham@md.smithgroup.com

The Bombay Bicycle Club of Madison, Inc.
P.O. Box 45685
Madison, WI 53744-5685



Address Service Requested

Bulk Rate
US POSTAGE
Paid
Madison, WI
Permit 361

ExtraOrdinary Reflections

The Newsletter of the Bombay Bicycle Club, Inc.

May/June 1999

Madison, Wisconsin

Volume 25 Issue 2

Connie Barnes

The Bombay Bicycle Club regrets deeply the passing of Connie Barnes at the young age of 50 on 15 April 1999.

She was a deeply spiritual person and an outstanding athlete who was president of the BBC in 1992 and 1993. Seven years ago she married John Barnes; together they organized the Capitol City Classic races of 1992-1994. On several occasions they hosted club members and other bicyclists at their home, Prairie Spirit Farm. She was a vibrant, exuberant competitor. In 1995 she rode 403 miles in 24 hours in the Michigan Ultra Marathon Event and was the overall women's winner.

In 1997 she was the first woman to complete in less than 24 hours the Ride to the Midnight Sun bike race from Anchorage to Fairbanks, Alaska. She completed the 375 miles in 22 hours, 49 minutes, 30 seconds.

The Bombay Bicycle Club offers its condolences to her husband John and her other family members and hopes that her achievements will serve as model and goal for other athletes—women and men alike.

The President's May Message

The first Bombay rides of the year have had uncooperative weather on the weekends, but have had riders nonetheless. By the time this issue is in the hands of our readers, the weather



will, I hope, be vastly improved. I have a mere 25 miles to my record this year so far, being unable to face the winds and the rain as yet; and my only rideable bike is on its way to Florida at the moment and is greatly missed. My seat and legs will be aching and my pride will be deflated as I get passed by the bulk of the riders on the Florida Bike Safari; I don't believe I have ever been as ill prepared for a bike ride (and yet still looking forward to it.)

The new BBC jerseys are in and we have a few still available for those of you who didn't pre-order one. Check this issue for an order blank and more information. We owe our thanks to Dory Blobner, Jay Martin, Dean Schroeder and Dave and Margaret Peterson for their work on this project. I plan on wearing mine in Florida.

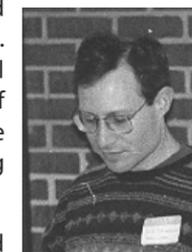
See you on Bombay Rides in May!

—Sarah Grimes

From the Touring Chairman

Welcome to another year of great cycling with Bombay through the hills and valleys of Dane and surrounding counties. In addition to the traditional annual rides you're familiar with, there are several new ones that should quench your thirst as well.

Dean Schroeder leads us on a Mothers' Day excursion entitled "Indian Lake Cruise & Brews" which starts and finishes at the Capital Brewery in Middleton. At the conclusion of this trek sit back in Capital Brewery's beer garden and enjoy samples of their finest along with snacks provided by the club. Thanks to Capital Brewery for allowing us to use their facility.



June 13 brings us Parfrey's Pretty Pedal led by Jerry Klotz which will lead you north from Tenney Park to Merrimac. You'll continue on by crossing the Wisconsin river by ferry en route to Parfrey's Glen. To anyone who has not been there before, take the time to walk a couple miles into Parfrey's Glen and enjoy the natural splendor this wonderful geologic form has to offer. You won't be disappointed.

This year Karl Gutknecht is back as a ride leader to take you on the "Tour de Towns" on October 24. You'll discover 10 towns on

Please turn to Page 5

Upcoming Regional and National Rides

May
Saturday May 8 Trempealeau Hip Breaker Annual Spring Bicycle Tour, 10, 23 and 43 hilly mile loops. Cost \$16 adults, \$11 children under 10 before April 26. After April 26, \$20/\$15. For information call (608) 534-6780. Trempealeau is 20 miles north of La Crosse on Hwy. 35
June
Saturday June 19 Ride for Nature, Bicycle Door County's Scenic Backroads; start in Bailey's Harbor, 25 km, 50 km and 100 km

Please turn to Page 5

Elsewhere in this issue...

Elsewhere in this issue	Page 1
Where to Ride on the Road	Page 2
Spring BBC Meeting	Page 3
New Bombay Jerseys Available.....	Page 4
Ride news from the LAB	Page 5
Touring the Gaspé Peninsula.....	Page 6
BBC Membership Benefits	Page 11
From the Editor's Uneasy Chair	Page 11

by David Peterson

Basic principles. When riding on a roadway, the safest way to ride is to be part of the traffic and go with the normal traffic flow. Riding this way will get you to your destination quicker, and your ride will be safer. Studies have shown that bicyclists who ride by their own rules are involved in five times as many accidents as those who obey traffic rules. The keys to safe riding are predictability and communication. Motorists expect bicyclists to maintain a predictable course and, when deviating from a straight course, to communicate their intentions to other drivers. The same principles apply to bicyclists riding together in a group. There are certain basic principles that apply to all vehicles (including bicycles). Collisions usually result when drivers or bicyclists deviate from these principles.

•First come, first served. Each vehicle is entitled to the space they occupy including reasonable clearance on all sides.

•Ride right. Except on designated one-way roads, vehicles should be on the right side of the roadway.

•Yield to crossing traffic. Vehicles on less important roads, including driveways, yield to those on more important roads.

•Yield when changing lanes. Vehicles changing lanes must yield to traffic in the destination lane.

•Speed positioning. Generally, slower vehicles travel to the right of faster vehicles.

•Intersection positioning. Intersections are entered in the proper position, depending on the intended destination (more on this in Part 2).

Communication. You can communicate your intentions to change lanes or make a turn by using the standard arm signals. In Wisconsin, these are the same signals for bicycles as for motorists. However, this is not the only means of communication, and perhaps not even the most important way. Eye and head movement can also communicate the intention to deviate from a straight course. For example, if you want to move from the right to the left lane of a two-lane roadway before making a left turn, scan back over your left shoulder and look directly at any motorist behind you in the left lane. That will clearly signal that you want to move into that lane. If it is safe to remove one hand from the handlebar, this can be done in combination with an arm signal. Proper lane positioning is another method of communication. Usually, drivers can determine where you intend to go by your position in the roadway. For example, a bicyclist in the left side of the lane clearly is intending to make a left turn, whereas a bicyclist in the right side of the lane intends to go straight ahead or turn right.

Narrow lanes. A narrow lane is one where there is not enough room for a bicycle and a car to travel parallel to each

other. When you ride in a narrow lane, maintain a position far enough from the right edge of the roadway that vehicles must move into the opposing lane to pass. This is especially important when there is oncoming traffic. If you ride too close to the right edge, motorists may attempt to pass you while meeting oncoming traffic, and as a result, squeeze you off the roadway. On a roadway with two narrow lanes in each direction, your safest riding position is generally in the center of the right-hand lane.

Wide lanes. A wide lane has room for a car and a bicycle to travel parallel to each other. In this case, you should ride in a position about three feet to the right of the moving cars. If you ride too close to the right edge of the roadway, you will be less visible to traffic. Also, if a motorist turns right in front of you, you will have more room to maneuver if you are not immediately adjacent to the curb.

Parked cars. When riding in a lane adjacent to parked cars, you should maintain a safe distance from the cars, about three feet, to avoid being "doored." At normal riding speed, either you can't react quickly enough to avoid hitting a suddenly opened door, or your immediate reaction may be to swerve left, perhaps into the path of an approaching car. When there are spaces between parked cars, don't weave in and out between cars; maintain a straight course three feet to the left of the parked cars. Motorists may not see you if you weave in and out. Your safest position is a predictable straight line.



In Part 2 in the next issue I will discuss proper lane positioning at intersections. This is an extremely important skill that all bicyclists should know. For more information, the following references are suggested:

Allen, John S. Street Smarts, Rodale Press, Inc., Emmaus, PA. 1988.

Forester, John. Effective Cycling, 6th Ed. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA. 1994.

Glowacz, Dave. Bicyclist Survival, CABDA Midwest, Homewood, IL. 1995.

Pavelka, Ed. Complete Book of Road Cycling Skills, Rodale Press, Inc., Emmaus, PA. 1998.

Bombay Bicycle Club Membership Benefits

•Joining the BBC is about the fastest way you can get to meet fellow cycling enthusiasts and participate in a wide variety of group rides, especially rides where a moderate pace and group sociability are values. There's almost always someone going somewhere near your own speed so you never have to ride by yourself. Well—hardly ever.

•Use the Club's hard shell bike travel case. The airlines' baggage gorillas will have to go to a lot of trouble to damage it or your bike. Call Dean at 256-8813 to check on its availability.

•There are rebates available to BBC members who join either the League of American Bicyclists or the Wisconsin Bike Federation.

•There is a rebate on Effective Cycling class tuition.

•Dues include a subscription to ExtraOrdinary Reflections, published every other month from March until November.

•Members may place free classified ads. These ads may be approximately 30 words or less, and should be mailed or e-mailed to the editor. (Please see the back page for addresses.) They will run once, but may be renewed.

•Club events for which a fee is charged have discounts for club members who apply early enough.

From the Editor's Uneasy Chair

First of all, an apology to Judy Karofsky, who was misidentified in the last issue as "Madame X." She really isn't.

Don't forget the new Thursday evening series of rides, which will start on May 6, about the time you get this issue. Organized by Dave Peterson and Dean Schroeder, they promise good riding and civilized convivability afterwards. Check the ride schedule mailed earlier for details.

Alice Honeywell's article on the tour of the Gaspé Peninsula she organized last summer is, in my unbiased opinion, one of the finest ever. You can learn much about an area that's well off of any beaten path. The riders were kind enough and daring enough to loan all their negatives to make possible the illustrations here. Let her article serve as model and inspiration for you the next time you come back from a memorable bike adventure: let your fellow BBCers read about it! Photographs (prints, negatives or slides) and any other relevant graphics are especially welcome. Please consult the editor for prodding, suggestions, handholding ... whatever.

Many thanks again to Dave Peterson for his latest article on riding safely and intelligently. Next month's column will deal with how to get through intersections and live to tell about them.

—Fred Gooding

REI Madison
7483 W. Towne Way
Madison, WI 53719
(608) 833-6680

From the beltline: Take the Mineral Point Road exit east, go right on D'Onofrio, then left on West Towne Way

Shop www.rei.com



Cycling Specialists

Basic Bike Maintenance Clinic

Tuesday, May 25 at 7 pm

Free

This clinic will demonstrate the basics of bike maintenance and roadside repair. Learn how to change a flat, make routine adjustments and more.

Bike Touring Basics

Tuesday, June 1 at 7 pm

Free

Join us as we discuss how to pack, pick a destination, stay safe and much more. If you've ever thought about bike touring, don't miss this clinic.

♥ Ride For A Reason ♥

A Celebration of Hope!

An Annual Event Held The Fourth Saturday of July
July 24, 1999

Join us for a day long family festival in the beautiful and historic Village of Cambridge and surrounding area

7, 26 & 50 Mile Bike Routes

5 & 10K Walk and Running Events
(competitive runners will be timed & placed)

Raffles ♥ BBQ Picnic ♥ Live Music
Children's Activities ♥ Bake Sale ♥ Shopping
Swimming

For more information and entry forms contact:
Community Hope, P.O. Box 283, Cambridge, WI 53523
(608) 423-4751 E-mail: commhope@smallbytes.net

Community Hope is a non-profit organization providing emotional and financial assistance to individuals and families in crisis.

Bombay Bicycle Club of Madison, Inc.
Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ E-mail address: _____

____ New Member ____ Renewing Member

Are you a member of the L.A.B.? Y N M DK

Please tell us how you heard about the Bombay Bicycle Club:

Please make a check for \$15.00 payable to the Bombay Bicycle Club of Madison, Inc., and mail it with the form above to:

Bombay Bicycle Club of Madison, Inc.
P.O. Box 45685
Madison, WI 53744-5685

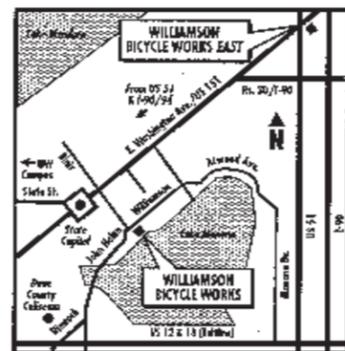
Ninety-plus BBC Members Attend Spring Meeting;
Phil Van Valkenberg Gives Slide Talk on Paris-Roubaix Race and Touring in Belgium



sales
service
parts
rentals



Road • Mountain • Hybrid BMX • Tandem • Triathlon



Williamson Bicycle Works
608.255.5292
601 Williamson St.
Madison, WI 53703

Williamson Bicycle Works EAST
608.240.0808
3729 E. Washington Ave.
Madison, WI 53704

Summer hours: M-F 10-8 Sat 9-6 Sun 12-6

90 Days Same as Cash



www.willybikes.com
stop@willybikes.com

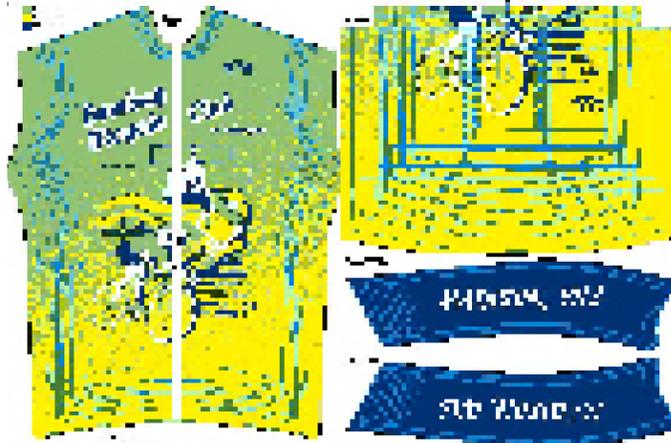
Authorized
dealer for:

- Bianchi
- Cannondale
- Serotta
- KHS
- Specialized
- Terry for women
- Haro
- GT
- Lemond
- Litespeed
- Kestrel
- Univega
- Diamondback
- Softride
- Kona
- Marin
- GT/Dynco
- Mongoose
- Ibis
- Croll
- Quintana Roo
- Schwinn
- Trek

Get The Right Bike
Right Accessory &
Service from



New Bombay Jerseys now Available



You can order the all-new 1999 jersey by filling out the coupon below, or by calling Dave Peterson at 271-6931. Limited numbers are available in Womens Euro L and XL, Mens EURO L and XL, Club M, XL, and XXL. The cost is \$42 and it's first come, first served.

Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Address: _____
 Size and style requested: _____
 Please mail to BBC, P.O. Box 45685, Madison, WI 53744-5685

Letter to the Editor

To the editor:

I always enjoy reading the newsletter, ExtraOrdinary Reflections. It's a delightful part of my life. Thanks to everyone who works on it.

Please pass along my thanks to Dave Peterson for his article entitled, "Wisconsin Bike Laws—What Every Bicyclist Should Know," in the March/April 1999 issue. It was well-stated and informative. I appreciate his efforts and I wouldn't mind more Wisconsin Bicycle Law information in future issues.

Mary Jo Esenther, Marshfield

Thank you, Mary Jo. You can find another one of Dave's articles on page 2. —Ed.

**Madison's Best
Specialty Shop**



Cookware
Glassware
Gadgets
Toys
Jewelry
Soaps
Cards
Candles

*Plus many other items
from around the world!*

ORANGE TREE IMPORTS
1721 Monroe Street
255-8211



Budget Bicycle Center

New Bicycles
1230 Regent St.
251-8413

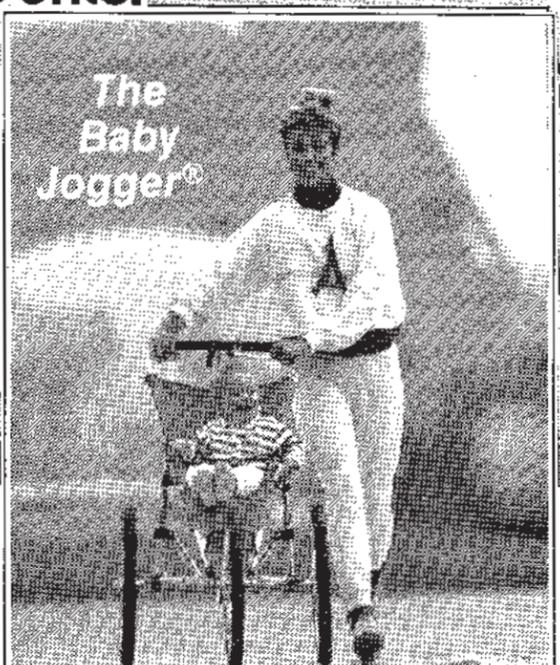
Parts & Service
1202 Regent St.
251-8413

Clothing & Helmets
1124 Regent St.
251-8413

Tandems, Recumbents
& Road Bikes
1201 Regent St.
286-9111

Used Bicycles
930 Regent St.
251-1663

The Baby Jogger®



*Combine fitness,
family and fun!*

Go anywhere with the ultimate all-terrain weather stroller. Walk, jog or hike on the trail, at the mall or even at the beach. The three-wheel design beats the bumps and lets mom and dad stay in shape while baby rides in style!

Around the Gaspé Peninsula, continued from Page 7 parks. Mountain biking would probably be great in the Parc de las Gaspésie, a provincial park in the interior, or in Forillon National Park just outside the town of Gaspé. Why didn't we see more cyclists? I suppose it's the combination of distance from home, language difficulties, the hills, and maybe the insects.



Surprise #5: Black flies love us. Not being a North Woods canoeist or backpacker, I had never experienced black flies. As we set up camp the first night out of Gaspé on the coast at the little town of Grande-Vallée, we noticed the tiny, gnat-sized bugs. They looked harmless, but before long they were drawing blood and leaving huge welts all around our necks and along our hairlines. The itching was horrid. Andrea, our French hostess at a B&B later told us, "This part of the world would be Paradise, but God wouldn't allow Paradise on earth, so He sent the black mosquitoes." "How long did they stay?" we asked. The answer: from June through September. That first night, to avoid the pesky little things (and because we were too exhausted to cook), we went to eat at a little local restaurant across from the campground. After more bugs at breakfast, we decided not to camp or cook the rest of the trip. It was at the restaurant that first night, though, that we experienced another surprise.

Surprise #6: The cuisine is French. Why had I not thought of that? Why had we dragged pots and pans, stoves and fuel, recipes and cans and boxes all the way from Wisconsin? The language was French, the culture was French, the food was French. Duh. Even in towns too small for a gas station or a hardware store, we often found fresh bread, fabulous soups, seafood, and pastries to die for. For the first time on a bike trip, I did not lose a single ounce. Every evening's meal was more delectable than the last, and this trip will always stand out in my memory for the culinary heights to which our tastebuds rose. After we had returned to the town of Gaspé at the end of the week, Fred's scouting led us to the best place ever—the Café des Artistes on the edge of town. With a favorable exchange rate, for under \$30 (U.S.) each we reveled in a six-course table d'hôte that ended in individual chocolate tortes baked fresh as we ordered them. It was among the finest dining experiences any of us had ever had.

Surprise #7: The weather was the best ever. After being drenched on bike tours in the "arid" West for the past two summers, we decided to try the humid eastern end of the continent. As the Midwest sweltered, we enjoyed 70-degree sunshine and tailwinds in Québec. On the two days when we expected serious headwinds, the wind came from the East. It rained as we cut south into the

interior, but it was nothing more than an annoyance. Since I truly rested on the rest day this time, I didn't mind the intermittent rain on that day. On Day 5, as we rode down through the interior to the south shore of the peninsula, it also rained lightly, but by the time we headed east along the coast, we picked up the tailwinds, and it was dry and sunny and 70 again. Never hot, we loved the perfect cycling weather.



Am I glad I did this bike trip, difficult as it was in some respects? Yes, because the positive surprises far outweighed the negative ones, and besides, it was a true adventure. Anyone who has not been to this part of the world should go, Francophile or not. I would, however, recommend a few changes to the way we did it:

- Allow at least two more days than we did for the circle. Taking an extra day to get from Gaspé to Grand-Vallée would allow time to tour Forillon Park by bike (It's a must-see. We drove there in the rental van before the trip began and hiked to the end where we watched whales spouting and seals frolicking). At least two days are also needed to ride from the Parc de la Gaspésie to Percé—168 miles. Deb rode the whole thing in the one day we had; the rest of us rode some part of that distance before being picked up by the van.

- Don't take cooking or camping equipment. Unless you eat only low-fat meals in bike trips, the restaurants are too wonderful to pass up. Indoor accommodations are easy to get. Reservations in advance wouldn't hurt, however, since just our group of nine could fill up an entire B&B. The free guidebooks that are available in some of the larger towns or through the mail are great.

- Take and use insect repellent at all times. The flies are so small they aren't noticeable. They don't buzz around annoyingly, like mosquitoes, or make any noise at all, so their presence isn't bothersome—only their bite is.

With the changes outlined here, this is, in my opinion, a marvelous bike route. The traffic along the southern shore is heavy and the shoulder is too small, but if you don't mind the traffic in that section and make the modifications suggested above, you would love this trip. The scenery is lovely every single day, the cuisine is fabulous, and the culture is delightfully different from that of south central Wisconsin.

On the facing page, left to right, top to bottom: For about 20 miles on the north coast, the highway is built over the water because of those cliffs; no, Deb hadn't just washed her socks, it was her chain; Bobbi Montgomery and friend in Paspébiac, where the hydrants represented all manner of breeds; Madame Andréa Neu, gracious hostess of her B&B, who used skills straight from Heaven to make her breakfast crêpes; the tour's one campsite; mandatory stretchercises; a maritime village, dominated—as in all of Québec—by l'Église; it seems that they're ready to ride over the edge; the climb out of Percé was a walker for everyone—its famous Rock is at the left. The motel that night was named the Roche Motel, for reasons which became clear—it became a.k.a. Le Motel Ne Pas Parlable. Île Bonaventure—home of all the free world's gannets—is in the background. Photo credits in the same order: Alice Honeywell, F.G., A.H., Dory Blobner, A.H., Joyce Collins, D.B., D.B., A.H.

From the Touring Chairman, continued from Page 1

this ride which travels through Windsor, Deforest, Morrisonville, Arlington, Poynette and Keyeser as well as a stop at the Mackenzie environmental center.

A special thanks to all of the people who made this year's ride schedule possible. Dale Heiking for organizing the leisure rides, Bob McGrath and Stan Kanter for assisting with phone calls, Dave Peterson, Dean Schroeder and Jim Mondel for their Thursday and Tuesday evening ride efforts, Tim Gloeckler for his wonderful job of typesetting, Ann Pollock who did the bulk mailing and to all of you who have graciously volunteered your time to be a ride leader in 1999.

I'll look forward to seeing you out on the road!

—Bob Steinberg

Upcoming National and Regional Rides, from Page 1

routes. \$20 for adults, \$10 for 17 and under prior to June 10; after June 10, \$25 adults, \$12 for 17 and under. Food, sag wagons. Proceeds benefit The Ridges Sanctuary, information: 920-839-2802 or Ridges Sanctuary, P.O. Box 152, Bailey's Harbor, WI 54202

Saturday June 20: LaCrosse Killer Hill 64 miles. \$15 until June 19 then \$18. SCHEITZA@MAILUWLAXEDU LaCrosse Wheelmen, James R. Asfoor, 922 Caledonia, LaCrosse, WI 54603; (608) 782-4630.

July

24 Celebration of Hope, 7, 26 and 50 miles rides; Cambridge, WI. 5K and 10K walk and running events; other community events. Community Hope, P.O. Box 283, Cambridge, WI 53523; (608) 423-4751; commhope@smallbytes.net.

Ride News from the LAB

A Glimpse at the Rallies, compiled by Ernesto Yermoli

"Bourbon, Barns & Bluegrass" Louisville, Kentucky June 4-7, 1999.

What do Muhammad Ali, Tom Cruise and Thomas Edison have in common? All three are from Louisville, which is also home to more parklands per capita than any other U.S. city. Located on the banks of the Ohio River, Louisville offers a wealth of fabulous biking terrain to suit all cycling tastes. But don't take our word for it—ask the folks who rode it themselves, at the League's "Bourbon, Barns, and The planned rides for this rally are as diverse as the city's landscape. One such ride is the Lockport Century, which will pass through the hamlets of local farm country before sloping down into the Kentucky River Valley, only to sweep back up again. If all the riding leaves you with a hankering for some down-home grub, be sure to check out the 60-mile Ride to Eminence. A favorite of the Louisville Bicycle Club, this ride will lead you to the charming town of Eminence and will include a stop at the Chat n' Nibble Cafe, where you should make sure to stock up on the famously delicious home fries.

There are a ton of other rides, too, each offering at least a glimpse at Louisville's proud history, from the Falls of the Ohio fossil beds to the legendary Churchill Downs (home of the Kentucky Derby). And don't miss the myriad of workshops, which will include such intriguing presentations as The Nuts & Bolts of Club Management, Cycling for Women and a special look back at the League of American Wheelmen's 1897 Rally in Louisville.

"Springs, Spokes, & Saddles" Saratoga Springs, New York, June 18-21, 1999

Though it is perhaps best known for thoroughbred racing, Revolutionary War battle sites and restorative mineral baths, Saratoga Springs will no doubt soon add "flawless cycling conditions" to its list of tourist attractions. Whether you dream of gliding along the Hudson River Valley at a horse's trot, battling the steep foothills of the Adirondacks or simply basking in the serenity of the idyllic environs, Saratoga Springs is an ideal place for pedaling.

Highlights of the rally include a 46-mile flat ride to the world-renowned Serotta bicycle factory for an open house and a unique opportunity to meet the minds behind bicycle fit. Equally exciting for history buffs are the three rides through the battlefields of Saratoga National Historical Park, complete with Revolutionary War-era military reenactments.

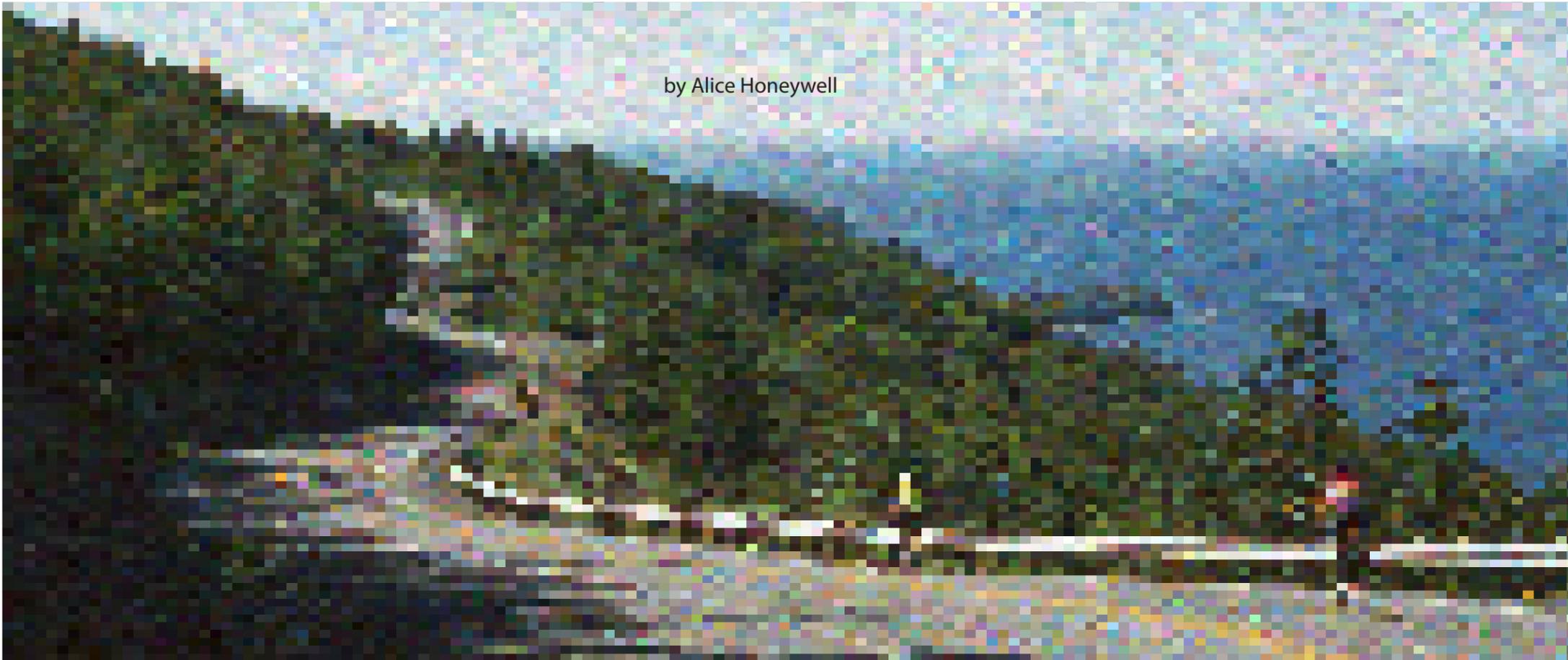
Other rides include a 52-mile trip to the Sacandaga River for whitewater rafting and a fascinating "Petrified Sea Gardens" ride, which will bring you face to face with an ancient sea floor. Riders on the Tomhannock Reservoir and Mighty Mohawk Meander rides, meanwhile, may witness the dedication of a trail under the Route 9 Crescent Bridge that will enable bicyclists to safely cross this four-lane highway.

Among the many workshops at the rally will be a presentation by Saratoga Springs native Jeff Olson, program director for the national Millennium Trails Project, which hopes to develop 2,000 trails throughout the country in the next few years.

So what are you waiting for? Whether you want to race through 1776 in Saratoga or float like a butterfly in Louisville, you can make it happen. For more information, be sure to call 202-822-1333, email bikeleague@bikeleague.org or write 1612 K St., Suite 401, Washington, D.C. 20006. You can also check out our web page at www.bikeleague.org.



by Alice Honeywell



Alice Honeywell has been a member of the BBC for longer than she's probably willing to admit, although her first multi-day bike tour was a Sierra Club trip across the Wisconsin Bikeway in 1982. Since then, she has organized a large number of extraordinarily successful trips to such places as the eastern shore of Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, Nova Scotia, Glacier-Waterton National Parks in Montana and Canada, and the Cascade mountains in Washington. This article recounts her tour of last summer.



If you leave the "é" sound off when you say "Gaspé", you'll have one pretty accurate description of our bike tour there. Situated at land's end on the easternmost tip of Québec, between the mouth of the St. Lawrence River and the Atlantic Ocean, the peninsula is actually a series of gasps, for reasons you can imagine. We had planned a six-day tour—five days of cycling with a "rest" day after Day 3. If you've ever traveled with Dory Blobner, though, you know that a rest day is meant for hiking or climbing or some other form of muscle-building entertainment. To get to the roadhead (the town of Gaspé at the tip of the peninsula), Fred Gooding drove all the way from Madison, hauling several bikes and much of our gear; Bobbi Montgomery, our cycling friend from Cincinnati, drove from there; Deb Larson and Kay Barrett flew to Montréal and drove a rental car from there (about 15 hours each way); Max Austin, Dory, and I flew to Boston along with our non-bicycling friends, Joyce Collins and Jeanette Schreier, who had agreed to drive the support van. We took turns driving the rental van from Logan Airport (18 hours each

way) to the town of Gaspé.

We had heard that it was a lovely corner of the world before we left, but we hadn't spoken to anyone who had actually pedaled there. Instead, we had gathered a few National Geographic articles, surfed the Internet, and made a few phone calls—not enough, it turned out, to give us a true picture of what we were to face. Not all my friends were as taken by surprise as I was about the Gaspé peninsula, but for me, this trip was a series of surprises:

Surprise #1: French is virtually the only language. I knew the Québécois preferred French, and I knew of the debates over nationalism they were having there, but I just assumed that the people were at least bilingual. Nope. This wasn't like France, where the French pretend not to know English. The culture of the Gaspé is a rural, seafaring one, primarily, and there are just not enough Anglophiles to keep English intact this far east of Montréal. Most of the people who live there simply do not know English. We first realized this as we drove to the roadhead. For a break, we stopped at a busy ice cream shop in a small town on the southern coast. When I asked for a strawberry ice cream cone the waitress just stared at me. The other patrons all stopped talking and turned to look at us. We took turns pointing to the kind of cone and ice cream we wanted.

Traveling through New Brunswick we had noticed a lot of French speaking, but by the time we reached Québec, the local merchants were no longer bilingual. Menus in restaurants usually had a semblance of an English translation of the French dishes offered, but they were literal and often didn't sound very tasty—"browned seafood casserole," for example. Some hotel desk people and a few waitresses

—Dory Blobner

could speak English, but we had many more frustrating encounters than we did easy ones. Bobbi had had six years of French in middle and high school, and with her dictionary in hand, she often could communicate our wishes. When we weren't near Bobbi, we had to figure it out on our own. Deb and Fred each had a little French, but the rest of us had to rely completely on pantomime. Joyce won the prize, I think, in her rendition of how to buy ice when the shopkeeper thought she wanted ice cream.

Surprise #2: The hills punish. We had heard it was hilly, and that the scenery was breathtaking. Both were understatements. I was not surprised by the scenery, but the hills. . . . I have never seen such climbs. This was my eighteenth long-distance tour, and my previous trips have included ascents in the Washington and Oregon Cascades, Glacier Park in Montana (Going to the Sun Highway), the Colorado Rockies, Nova Scotia, the Appalachian foothills of Kentucky and Tennessee, and city riding in San Francisco and Seattle. Nothing has ever compared to the hills of the Gaspé Peninsula. The roads built all around the peninsula hug the coast and, for about eighty miles in both directions from the town of Gaspé, then follow its every undulation. They don't have tunnels, they don't have switchbacks, and they often don't have shoulders. We decided to travel in a counter-clockwise direction (after many consultations and much consideration). The hills are most serious closest to the end of the peninsula, so the first day we faced 57 miles of them. The road that day was virtually never flat. We were always either scaling the hills or shrieking down them. Every cove had a quaint little fishing village, often with a lighthouse,

and the road snaked down into it, wound through, and climbed out of it—up, down, through, up, down, through—over and over again about every five or ten miles. We learned to delight in the road signs for truckers telling what percent the grade was so they could gear down on their descent. At the top of each hill we looked back at the sign and then congratulated ourselves on having made it to the top—17%, 14%, 16%, 19%. Many of the downhill were glorious rewards, but a few were terrifying. Fred remarked about the 19 percent downhill one day, "That was the first downhill I was ever glad to see the end of." It didn't help that he descended playing leapfrog with a mammoth logging truck that seemed to be having engine and/or brake trouble.

Surprise #3: Americans tend not to go to the Gaspé. On our way to the roadhead in our rental van we met an American woman. We were in a bike shop in Bonaventure, and when she heard us talking she introduced herself. She asked about our adventure and invited us to stop at her summer home in Barachois when we passed through on bikes. We thought she was a bit outgoing until as the trip went on we met no other Americans anywhere. We realized that she was clearly an anomaly, and she must have seen us the same way. I still wonder why Americans don't go there. Is it because of the language difficulties? Is it just too far and too hard to get to? Perhaps Nova Scotia for the distance, with its somewhat similar scenery, is more welcoming to Americans. Some communities in Nova Scotia hang stubbornly onto their Gaelic language and culture, but the area on Cape Breton Island where Gaelic is spoken is very small and judged by tourists to be more exotic than offputting.

Surprise #4. Bicyclists don't go there either. We saw fewer than ten



The Route

Sunday, 26 July: Gaspé – Grande-Vallée.....57 miles
 Monday, 27 July: Grande-Vallée – La Martre57 miles
 Tuesday, 28 July: La Martre–Parc de la Gaspésie..42 miles
 Wednesday, 29 July: Layover Day at Gîte du Mont Albert
 Thursday, 30 July: Parc de la Gaspésie – Percé.....168 miles
 Friday, 31 July: Percé – Gaspé.....42 miles

bicycle tourists all week. I had found a Gaspé bicycling club on the Internet before we left home, but with very few exceptions, we saw no evidence of cyclists touring as we were. We did see a couple of helmetless couples carrying their own gear on their bikes or in backpacks. We saw some bikes on car roof racks but figured they were brought on vacation by families and were used for riding around in

Please turn to Page 8