

ChainLinks

The newsletter of the Cycling Advocates Network (NZ) Aug – Sep '05



Waterview Bridge: a CAN cycle-friendly award winner in 2004. Details for how to nominate this year are on page 25. (Photo: Cathy Sheehan)

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Christchurch mayor backs end of cycleway moratorium – page 6

Join CAN now for a cheaper NZ cycling conference – page 26

Inside the world of recumbent bicycles – page 38



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The views expressed in *ChainLinks* are not necessarily those of CAN.

EDITORIAL

How a shock has shown that cycling can work for many more

One of the big challenges in trying to promote cycling I'm sure many *ChainLinks* readers will be aware of, is the difficulty in making people change ingrained travel habits (usually a near total dependence on car use) and try alternatives such as cycling. Normally sensible and rational individuals will agree the need for everyone to cycle more, but then put huge convoluted explanations forward as to why they just have to continue using their a car to get around because there is no way they could live their life without it. Despite rising fuel costs, the effect on the environment, the threat to personal health – I'm sure you all know the arguments – it seems to take the dangling of enormous incentives, preferably coupled with a few disincentives as well, before many people will even begin to consider getting themselves around in a different way.

Of course, what often really works to push people into change is a shock of some kind. This last couple of months I've witnessed this happening. Travelling to work in London has been unusual to say the least since the horror of the bomb attacks of 7 July. The city has been nervous and tense: police have been highly visible everywhere, and security scares have been rife.

One consequence of the attacks on the public transport network has been that it has made thousands of people suddenly change their traveling habits out of fear of being caught up in more attacks. As a result, in the last few weeks, cycling has taken off in London: the city's transport authority, Transport for London, has reported a rise of 20% in the number of cyclists on the roads it monitors, while other reports have suggested up to an extra 50,000 cyclists on the streets of the capital. Business for bike shops has never been brisker. New cyclists can be seen wobbling across the city, understandably cautious given the more macho elements among the city's drivers, but preferring being in charge on the road to having little control when travelling in the tunnels of the Underground.

While it is still too early to say what the longer-term effect will be, inevitably many of these cyclists will continue to get about on two wheels and hopefully encourage more people to follow them. While no-one wanted the tragedy of a bombing to act as a catalyst for a leap in cycling, it is some comfort to know that positive change has come out of such awful events. And what is interesting and hopeful for more change in traveling habits, is that there are now more people who can demonstrate that it is not true that cycling can't work but instead show that it is practical and achievable – and that all it takes is a shift in thinking.

Matthew Ledbury, Editor

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MORE MONEY FOR ROADS IN LATEST TRANSPORT PROGRAMME

Land Transport New Zealand has announced a record \$1.7bn in spending for land transport infrastructure and services in this year's National Land Transport Programme (NLTP), a 20% (\$280m) increase from last year. The 2005/06 NLTP includes \$6m of funding allocated for dedicated walking and cycling projects and \$3.5 million for travel behaviour change initiatives such as school/business travel plans.

Transport Minister Pete Hodgson unveiled Land Transport New Zealand's 10-year plan, which will put total Government spending on roads and public transport at \$21bn by 2015, up from a forecast \$18.7bn last year. The 10-year forecast also envisages growing amounts to be spent on walking/cycling and travel behaviour, with up to \$19m annually programmed for these areas.

Not included in the total is the \$500m one-off "windfall" for roads announced by Finance Minister Michael Cullen, or special funding earmarked for Wellington's Western Corridor, the Bay of Plenty and Waikato. By far the bulk of the \$1.7bn allocated nationally for the financial year is being spent in Auckland and Waikato.

The programme is provisional, and depends on national priority decisions made by the Government.

For full details of the 2005/06 NLTP, see <http://www.landtransport.govt.nz/funding/nltp/>.

[Christchurch Press, 1 July]

CYCLING NEWS FROM AROUND NEW ZEALAND

June:

- Auckland City launches a cyclist awareness campaign, promoting cycling as an alternative travel option and encouraging road users to respect cyclists.
- Christchurch City Council halts tendering of all projects involving cycleways, pending the outcome of a seminar to review the cycle strategy and its implementation.
- The draft Auckland Region land transport strategy proposes spending \$420m (out of \$10.7bn) over the next decade on “travel demand management” to encourage more walking and cycling.
- Waimakariri District Council releases its draft walking and cycling strategy for consultation.
- Transit NZ indicates that a cycleway across Auckland’s Waitemata Harbour might have to wait until the next harbour crossing is constructed in at least 20 years time.

July:

- Land Transport NZ 2005/06 National Land Transport Programme includes \$6 million allocated for dedicated walking and cycling projects, out of \$1.7 billion.
- A Christchurch City Council survey shows popular support for improved bike-parking facilities at major bus destinations to allow for “cycle’n’ride”.
- Tasman District Council installs three vibrant billboards created by a local artist, aimed at getting the cycle safety message through to motorists.
- A Hamilton City Council cycle survey finds the number of cyclists entering the CBD increased by 30% over the previous year, and by 44% in the suburbs.
- A petition against Christchurch City’s cycleway moratorium, organised by Spokes Canterbury, attracts over 1400 responses.
- While the City Council stands still, Transit NZ in Christchurch complete a number of cycle facilities at major intersections and along State Highways in the city.
- A residents’ petition forces the Takapuna Community Board to rescind an earlier decision for a cycle lane route around Lake Pupuke, because of opposition to a large reduction in street parking.
- Palmerston North cyclists cry foul over the amount of broken glass and vegetation along the cycleway to Massey University.

Mayor urges end to Christchurch cycleways moratorium

The Christchurch City Council appears set to thaw its spending freeze on cycleways.

In June, a halt to the letting of tenders for cycleways was imposed until after a seminar on the council's cycle strategy. The move sparked a storm of protest from cyclists, with the council receiving more than 1400 submissions on the issue after a strong campaign by cycling group Spokes Canterbury. Mayor Garry Moore has now asked staff to prepare a report recommending an end to the moratorium.

Councillors were quick to emphasise their support for cycling and cyclists, but some reiterated fears about how safe it was to ride a bicycle in Christchurch - concerns that had prompted the imposition of the cycleway moratorium.

A presentation by city environment general manager Jane Parfitt showed the number of reported cyclist crash injuries in Christchurch had dropped in recent years. At the same time, cycle use and the number of vehicles on the roads had increased. The proportion of those injured while riding bicycles who were school age had also dropped, although Parfitt noted there had been a fall in the number of people cycling to school. An estimated 7 per cent of Christchurch people commute to work by bicycle.

Parfitt said the council had made a good start on building cycleways, as a way to encourage more people to ride, rather than drive. However, an estimated \$68m would be needed to complete the existing cycleway plan - work, which, at the current rate of expenditure, would take 40 years.

Moore said he was puzzled that money could always be found for roading projects while funding was scarce for cycling networks. He suggested capital expenditure budgets be looked at to see if funds could be diverted to cycling initiatives.

Cr Pat Harrow asked if overseas initiatives designed to promote safer cycling - such as a 30kmh slow zone similar to one in Stockholm - could be investigated.



Launch of 'Drive to the Conditions' Campaign

A more sophisticated version of the speed reduction message has been launched. The value to cyclists is the message incorporates the need for drivers to modify driving behaviour when conditions change.

The Accident Compensation Corporation funded campaign includes modified maximum speed limit signs saying 100 km/h: It's Not a Target - Drive to the Conditions, with accompanying commercial radio ads. There's

even a little jingle. Emphasis is placed on marrying driving habits to the road, not the speed limit.

This shifts emphasis away from just enforcing the speed limit, to educating drivers to recognise the need for appropriate speed. Land Transport NZ figures show that while the median vehicle speed has dropped over the past five years, driving too fast for the conditions still contributes to 39 per cent of all road deaths and 19 per cent of all reported injuries from road crashes.

There will be 20 billboards going up throughout the country. The first one has been erected at the base of the Rimutakas on the Wairarapa side, where a steep hill and tight bends requires more care. Apart from billboards and radio ads, other initiatives planned include relating speed zones more clearly to safety, and engineering methods to slow traffic down.

[Bike Advocate, July 2005]



Transit stalls on harbour bridge access

Cyclists keen to loosen Auckland's dependence on cars fear it may take them more than 20 years to gain permission to ride across the harbour bridge. Transit New Zealand intends giving priority to adding six power supply cables to the bridge. The agency says cyclists may have to wait for another harbour crossing to be built before being allowed to use the existing structure.

Although Transit came under pressure last year from Parliament's transport and industrial relations committee to study the feasibility of adding a cycle and walkway to the bridge, the roading agency is still waiting for a report from consultants about its load-carrying capacity.

The consultants have completed their investigation, but Transit regional manager Richard Hancy told the Auckland Regional Council's transport policy committee that they had yet to report back to his organisation.

Committee chairman Joel Cayford expressed concern to Mr Hancy that "inertia" might delay a cycleway for several decades if it depended on new capacity from another harbour crossing. He said there was a strong likelihood that the next crossing would be a tunnel under Waitemata Harbour, which would be off-limits to cyclists and pedestrians.

Transit, which is now required by law to provide for alternative transport modes when planning new roads, would then have to allow cycles and walkers across the existing bridge.

Mr Hancy indicated that if the bridge were found to have insufficient load-bearing capacity to carry a cycleway as well as new power cables to boost electricity supply to the North Shore, the cyclists would have to wait.

Once a new crossing was built, however, the agency could spread traffic loads across both structures to make room for cyclists on the bridge. This is likely to take at least 20 years, although Transit has appointed a director to start work next month to lead a crossing investigation team including regional council and Auckland and North Shore City representatives.

Northcote MP Ann Hartley says she was furious with Transit New Zealand's decision. "Transit was clearly told that a parliamentary select committee supported the idea of a feasibility study, and was told to carry one out," she said.

"For Transit to simply say that a cycle and walkway will have to wait for a second bridge to be built because power cables have to go on the existing bridge is not acceptable."

Ms Hartley, a long-time proponent of the bridge hike 'n bike plan, said it was not up to Transit to unilaterally decide that cables should take priority over people. She said she would take the matter up with Transport Minister Pete Hodgson.

[New Zealand Herald, 22 & 23 June]



Little River Rail Trail success rests on fundraising

A major sponsor is being sought for the proposed Christchurch-Little River Rail Trail. Fundraising trustee Alistair Campbell says the time taken to complete the rail trail will be determined mainly by the success of the trust's fundraising.

"The trust's finance committee is spending considerable time preparing funding applications," he said. "We would welcome any suggestions that will assist us in obtaining more funding and assistance in finding a major sponsor."

The 11 member trust, which includes local representatives, resource management planners, land surveyors and accountants are trying to establish a cycleway/ walkway between Hornby and Little River along the route of a disused railway line.

[Christchurch Press, 13 June]



Bike Week to be shifted

The Health Sponsorship Council is likely to announce in September that Bike Week will be shifted to 25 Feb – 5 March; previously the week has

been in mid-February. Furthermore, the event formerly known as Bike to Work Day will be possibly soon be known as Go by Bike Day or something similar. The details have yet to be confirmed, but this is the general intent.

There will be a phase-in period of a couple of years in recognition of event organisers having invested in promotional/event materials with the name Bike to Work Day on them.

Brent Skinnon, who manages the HSC walking and cycling programme, says the date shift was made in response to a lot of requests from schools for more time to plan. The change to Go by Bike Day allows other organisations to participate in events on this day e.g. universities.

He added that the HSC is keen to make it more inclusive to get more people out there cycling. The HSC will ask organisations to bring in the name change when budgets allow, which in effect will mean it will take a couple of years before there is national consistency.

[BikeNZ Bike Advocate Newsletter, issue 7]



Christmas-tree style a lifesaver

Wearing plenty of lights and reflectors won't save cyclists from the "pig ignorant" attitude of some motorists, according to the local Traffic Support police officer.

Senior Sergeant Nick Dobson, the Central District acting road policing manager and a cycling enthusiast, said a number of people think that it's their right to run cyclists off the road. "It wouldn't matter if we were hovering like an apparition, they (motorists) still wouldn't see us. Some people deliberately cut in after they pass you. It happens all the time and it really annoys me."

He commends one Palmerston North man who rides at night "lit up like a Christmas tree". Colin 'Wal' Anderson, 57, is training for a 1200km race from Boston to Montreal, and back, in August. The local postie has been spending many of his training hours on the road under the cover of darkness.

He has about \$1000 worth of lights on his bike, much more than what is legally required. Transport Safety require cyclists to have a rear red flashing light and a steady front white light on their bikes, which both have to be visible from 100 metres at night. "Colin is a magnificent example of a cyclist going well beyond the legal requirements to keep himself safe," said Mr Dobson.

Mr Anderson, who often gets up to go riding at 2am, said cyclists need the most visible clothing available to be safe. "With all the reflectors - there's

really no reason to get skittled. But then you never know, there's always clowns around. A lot of it is in the lap of the gods."

[Manawatu Standard, 24 July]



Cycle trail planned for Taupo

A 10-kilometre off-road cycling and walking trail alongside Taupo's planned eastern bypass is one of several proposals to be considered in a draft review of Taupo District Council's cycling strategy. The draft includes a "recreational corridor" from Taupo Airport to Centennial Drive, alongside the bypass. It goes to public consultation on September 27.

[Dominion Post, 4 August]



North Shore residents fight permanent cycleways

A plan to criss-cross the North Shore with cycleways has struck stiff resistance from some residents who refuse to give up parking spaces outside their homes to cyclists.

Residents have forced the Takapuna Community Board to rescind its May decision to support a cycling loop around Lake Pupuke that included the busy Kitchener and Hurstmere Roads. Instead, the board agreed to support a petition with 350 signatures which opposed a large reduction of street parking to create about 1.5km of cycleways on one or both sides of these roads.

Board chairman Wayne Tisdall said the board would drop its support for one of two options - a cycleway along only the western side of the roads, with a bus lane clearway for morning commuter cyclists to use.

[New Zealand Herald, 19 July]



Sumner cyclists want roads made safer

A close friend's near-fatal accident has spurred a group of Sumner cyclists to campaign for road safety. The group is calling for greater awareness of cyclists on Christchurch roads, and has backed its concerns with a survey of a notoriously hazardous Sumner intersection.

At the intersection of McCormacks Bay Road and the Causeway in February a Christchurch doctor was knocked off her bicycle by a turning motorist. She is still in hospital.

Safety project team member Dr Sharon English said the family of the injured cyclist did not want any public attention, but the accident had spurred others into action.

A 10-day survey of activity at the intersection during the morning rush-hour had some concerning outcomes. Forty-eight near misses were recorded at the busy intersection, and it was clear that many motorists turning from McCormacks Bay Road into the city could not see cyclists heading into town from Sumner.

Team member Valerie Meyer said it was frightening to see how close many cyclists came to colliding with vehicles. Meyer said a serious accident could happen to anyone, and it was only a matter of time before a cyclist was killed. "A lot of what we saw there was because people just are not aware of cyclists."

The survey has been presented to the Hagley Ferrymead Community Board and the group is calling on the Christchurch City Council to erect signs to alert motorists to cyclists. It wants the intersection altered, traffic islands erected at intersections along the Causeway, cycle lanes highlighted and rumble lines installed.

[Christchurch Press, 27 June]



Tasman council meets project shortfall

A funding shortfall for an underpass and cycleway for Salisbury Rd, Richmond has been picked up by the Tasman District Council. A special meeting of the full council on Friday approved an additional \$107,000 for the project, which has come in over estimate at just over \$909,500.

Three tenders were received, and despite a 59 percent Land Transport New Zealand subsidy, the project still required additional money. The council agreed to fund this equally from Richmond development impact levies and its non-subsidised roading budget.

Tasman Mayor John Hurley expressed reluctance in supporting the project. "I frankly believe a set of manually operated lights would be just as safe."

[Nelson Mail, 20 June]

Big rise forecast in Auckland car pollution

A swelling Auckland vehicle fleet is expected to be belching out at least one-fifth more carbon dioxide in 10 years' time.

The final draft of the region's land transport strategy, issued last week for public submissions before being adopted in December, forecasts a growth in Auckland car numbers from about 652,000 now to more than 830,000 in 2016. This does not count vehicles owned by the more than 150,000 Aucklanders living outside the area covered by regional council computer modelling.

Although cleaner fuel and more efficient engines are expected to reduce pollutants such as nitrous oxide and diesel particulates, the strategy document forecasts a 21 per cent rise in carbon dioxide emissions - about 1500 tonnes in each morning traffic peak - even under the preferred strategic option that involves spending billions on public transport. This outlook clashes with the Government's national strategic target of a 20 per cent improvement in transport energy efficiency by 2012, the same year by when the Kyoto Protocol requires greenhouse gas emissions to be cut to 1990 levels.

Auckland Regional Land Transport Committee chairman Joel Cayford acknowledges that without curbing vehicle numbers, efforts to improve emission standards are akin to "rearranging deckchairs". "New Zealand used to have the most washing machines per capita in the Western world - now it has the most cars," he says in his foreword to the transport strategy document. "This year, polluted air from vehicle exhausts in Auckland will be directly responsible for more than 200 premature deaths."

The document forecasts a rise in the number of cars for every thousand urban Aucklanders to 609 in 2012 from about 570 now, statistics which Dr Cayford says puts the region well ahead of Los Angeles.

Auckland Regional Council planners also draw a distinction between vehicle ownership and use, noting in the strategy document that although 646,000 private cars were registered in the region in 2001, only 334,000 were used each day to drive their owners to work.

The new strategy hopes to cut the proportion of commuters using cars to get to work to 73 per cent by 2016, while boosting public transport use from 7 to 11 per cent. But after spending \$420m on travel demand management to encourage non-vehicle transport, the number of people cycling or walking to work is expected to edge up just 0.4 of a percentage point, to 15.5 per cent.

The draft Regional Land Transport Strategy can be viewed at www.arc.govt.nz

[New Zealand Herald, 20 June]

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"There's one overwhelming reason why I do it. It doesn't cost me anything... Cars make a hell of a mess."

72-year old Robin Russell of Hamilton explains why he prefers to take his bike out for a spin instead of his car. (Waikato Times, 15/06/05)

“It is hard to see we are making a dent in it.”

An interesting turn of phrase by Takaka police sergeant Arthur Clarence, when asked by the Golden Bay Community Board about cyclists on footpaths. (Nelson Mail 16/06/05)

“For Transit to simply say that a cycle and walkway will have to wait for a second bridge to be built because power cables have to go on the existing bridge is not acceptable.”

Northcote MP Ann Hartley is furious that Transit NZ will delay a cycle/walkway on the Auckland Harbour Bridge for up to 20 years. (Press Release, 23/06/05)

“The idea that providing cycling lanes or promoting carpooling is going to solve the five kilometres of traffic congestion every morning is out in fairyland.”

For someone who regularly cycles, Nelson MP Nick Smith doesn't seem to see it as a panacea for the city's transport woes. (Nelson Mail, 7/07/05)

“It wouldn't matter if we were hovering like an apparition, they (motorists) still wouldn't see us.”

Senior Sgt Nick Dobson, Central District acting road policing manager and a cycling enthusiast, finds a number of people think that it's their right to run cyclists off the road. (Manawatu Standard 23/07/05)

“It seems to go in cycles . . .”

Well, yes . . . Kiwi Nathan Dahlberg, a former Tour de France rider, on the future of the cycling race now that seven-times winner Lance Armstrong is retiring. (Dominion Post, 30/07/05)

“People can't tell how old you are - they just think you're another mad biker.”

60-year-old Jenny Graham discovers an interesting benefit of wearing a helmet when riding her recently acquired Chopper bicycle. (Dominion Post 4/08/05)

“I’ve been stopped by several drivers who say ‘good on you’.”

Land Transport NZ media manager Andy Knackstedt finds that wearing a reflective vest with flashing lights helps on his daily bike to work. (Taranaki Daily News 11/08/05)

“The helmet law is a no-brainer really.”

Perhaps an unfortunate choice of words from Andy Knackstedt this time... (Taranaki Daily News 11/08/05)

“Whether it’s the weather or the price of petrol going up I don’t know, but there’s certainly been a lot of chat about it.”

Richmond’s Village Cycles owner Jim Matthews has found that his shop had one of its best winters ever for selling bicycles. (Nelson Mail 13/08/05)



Fuel-free cadillacs on the way?

Cadillac is following Porsche, Land Rover, Mercedes-Benz and others and is going into selling branded bicycles. This should reduce the average fuel consumption of the Cadillac range considerably.

[Christchurch Press, 10 August]

Want to know how to get in touch with someone?

Find contact details for CAN’s national executive, local groups, supporting organisations, Transit champions, etc on our website at:

<http://www.can.org.nz/contacts>

NEWS FROM CAN

Still Getting There

Progress is being made on the implementation plan for the National Walking & Cycling Strategy, with a structure now decided on and a tight timeline proposed for the development of a three year strategic plan and the first annual inter-agency action plan for 2006/2007. In brief, the structure is as follows:

- A joint Ministry of Transport/Land Transport NZ 'Getting There' steering group will co-ordinate and lead the process.
- A national 'Getting There' committee (which will have a CAN rep) will provide planning advice and recommendations to the steering group and act as a reference group to monitor strategy progress.
- Four focus area groups will provide advice related to a specific focus area and its associated priorities, with the four groups reflecting the four 'priority areas for action' that are in Getting There. These groups will have CAN/BikeNZ reps.
- In addition, project or issue working groups will be convened to address specific implementation issues, projects or tasks that arise from the planning process.

We'll give you more details on the implementation process in future newsletters, but if you have any queries in the meantime, please contact Jane on dawbell@actrix.co.nz or 04-972 2552. It might seem like there is more talk than action at the moment, but it is really important to get a strong and responsive structure in place now. In the long run, this should make a big difference to the level and consistency of action in your local community.

In the meantime, you can help us by lobbying your local electorate candidates to support Getting There and the budding implementation plan when/if they are elected. Cycling is inherently politically neutral: there are keen cyclists on all sides of the House, and the proponents of any political ideology can find a good reason to support cycling if they want to!

Support for raising of the driving age

CAN is strongly supporting the call of Transport Safety Minister Harry Duynhoven for a review of the driving age. CAN chairperson Robert Ibell says: "All the carnage around young drivers in high performance cars is only one of the reasons we need to change the driving culture in New Zealand. The justification given for NZ having one of the youngest driving age in the world, that our rural teenagers would be stranded with an older driving age, doesn't stack up."

According to the Ministry of the Environment, New Zealand has one of the more urbanised populations in the world. “We have a generation of kids growing up striving for the status of driving to school in their final years of secondary education,” adds Robert. “Yet we now have a school zoning system which means that most kids live within easy walking or cycling distance of school. If parents choose to have their children attend more distant schools, they will need to factor that into their housing and lifestyle choices. We can't continue to accommodate an increasingly car-dependent lifestyle in a world where oil supplies are shrinking.”

“As a minimum, CAN supports the raising of all stages of the graduated driving limit by one year. Driver training and testing need to be much more rigorous and there should also be compulsory third party insurance.”

CAN says that work is still required to improve the walking and cycling environment in our communities so that these modes are realistic choices for many people. Supportive central government policies are already in place, with a national walking and cycling strategy (2005) following the New Zealand Transport Strategy (2002) and Land Transport Management Act (2003), but local government and Transit NZ now need to work on a range of measures, including improved safety on our roads, to translate the policy into practice.

National Party pledges support for cycling initiatives

Stephen Knight, BikeNZ's Advocacy Manager, wrote to National Party transport spokesperson Maurice Williamson recently, asking to meet with him to discuss

- the National Party's support for the continuing funding of cycle facilities and programmes aimed at boosting cycling rates through travel behaviour change, and
- the role they see cycling playing in the evolution of an integrated transport system in New Zealand.

The response just received from Maurice Williamson's office was as follows: "Mr Williamson has asked me to let you know that National will continue with current Government policy and initiatives in regard to cycling and walking."



LTAA GIVES MORE POWER TO BIKES

The Land Transport Amendment Act 2005 has now been signed into law, and gives small-engined bikes the same status as human-powered ones. The following is an extract from the Ministry of Transport's 'Q&A' information sheet, 'Changing the Definition of "Motor Vehicle": Excluding Low Powered Motorised Vehicles'

What is being changed?

Any motorised vehicle, which the Director of Land Transport has declared to have a power output of less than 300 watts, will not be defined as a 'motor vehicle' under transport law. The Director will also have the discretion to determine if a motorised vehicle with a maximum power output of between 300 and 600 watts is a motor vehicle.

What is the purpose of this change?

Under current law, any vehicle powered by a motor, no matter how small, is a 'motor vehicle'. Bicycles with a small electric motor and novelty devices such as motorised skateboards are currently defined as 'motor vehicles'. The driver of a motor vehicle must be licensed and the motor vehicle must be registered and display a registration plate. An annual licence fee and ACC levy are also payable. This is an unnecessary and impractical requirement for motorised bicycles and skateboards. It places an unfair obstacle in the way of environmentally friendly transport modes such as electric bicycles.

These devices have, due to this restriction, been kept out of the New Zealand market for some years. The change will allow low powered devices to be used on roads without the need to comply with unnecessary and unsuitable requirements.

Why is the cut-off point 300 watts?

The benchmark used in Australia and a number of other jurisdictions is 200 watts but they are currently reviewing that cut off point as it is viewed as too low.

Is 300 watts high enough?

With increasing power comes increasing safety risk. A 500 watt power bicycle, as marketed in the United States, has performance characteristics (weight, power, handling) similar to a moped. A 500 watt powered skateboard could be dangerous and difficult to control. Taking into account safety concerns alongside the benefits to the owner of not having to comply with registration and licensing requirements, 300 watts appears to be a fair compromise.

When will this come into effect?

Immediately.

OVERSEAS NEWS

Why commuters won't get on their bikes



Workers carry a stencil used to mark a new cycle lane in Sydney as a cyclist looks on

Sydney councils are creating bicycle lanes that are more dangerous for cyclists than riding among the city's buses, taxis and trucks, bicycle groups are warning. And councils were spending thousands of dollars on badly designed cycleways that experienced riders chose to avoid, said the vice-president of the lobby group BIKEast, Adrian Ross.

The most dangerous type of bicycle lane was one shared with parked cars, he said. "When somebody opens a car door, you can't stay in the [cycle] lane and you have to move into the traffic ... where you can get into trouble and be hurt by a car." Shared lanes had been created in Surry Hills, Redfern and Liverpool, he said.

Forty per cent of all cyclist injuries in the CBD, and 17 per cent in Sydney as a whole, are caused by car doors being opened, Austroads figures show. The City of Sydney will spend \$14.1m on pedestrian and bicycle networks over the next four years and says it will provide dedicated cycle lanes where possible.

A spokeswoman for Randwick Council, Louisa Simeonidis, said shared zones were safe on residential streets, according to guidelines from the Roads and Traffic Authority. Unsafe lanes are not the only problem - last month the Roads and Traffic Authority cut its bike funding by about two-thirds to \$5.6m, only 0.17% of its roadbuilding budget.

The number of trips to work by cyclists in Sydney is also low. Only 0.5 per cent of commuter trips in Sydney are on bicycles, compared with 4.6 per cent in Perth and 3.2 per cent in Melbourne. Mr Ross said the number of bicycles commuters was low because the present lanes were unsafe or in the wrong places. "The Minister for Roads, Michael Costa, says there are 3000 kilometres of bike lanes in the state; but many of them are in regional NSW, and in Sydney many of them are in the western suburbs, where there's no strong cycling culture. They are very good recreational facilities but they're not doing much for commuters."

[Sydney Morning Herald, 7 July]

Bikes get Londoners home after bomb blasts

Following the terrorist attacks on London's transport network, IBDs and cycle hire shops reported brisk trade as Londoners attempted to get across a city all but closed to cars and with no tube trains running and a bus service not operating in zone 1 of central London. But there was no profiteering from bike shops. Some hotels, on the other hand, tripled their prices within hours of the bomb blasts.

"We've sold a hell of a lot of bikes today," the manager of one of the Evans Cycles stores in central London told a press agency reporter. "People are coming in and buying bikes because they can't get home today."

It was a similar story at Condor Cycles: "We're getting a lot of calls asking what are our cheapest bikes but we've sold out of them," the unnamed store manager told a reporter. Cycle rental businesses also ran out of hire bikes quickly.

[www.BikeBiz.com, 8 July]



Cycle scheme puts brakes on tax in UK

A little-known British tax clause is allowing firms to shift gears into greener business practices and bring incentives to their bottom line.

Under recently-revised UK government rules, businesses can now receive significant tax breaks by purchasing bicycles for their employees. Employees may buy bikes from their employer with no tax added if they pay full market value for the bicycle. For the employer, the purchase price of the bike and all necessary equipment, such as a safety helmet, lights and a lock, are tax-deductible expenditures.

Employers may claim tax breaks for any mileage rate they pay to staff. Up to 20p per mile can be paid to employees who cycle for a work-related purpose free of tax or National Insurance contributions. The plan also abolishes tax on the cost of providing parking spaces for bicycles.

"This scheme is an attractive proposal for small businesses keen to be at the forefront of new initiatives for their staff and to implement greener business practices," said Karl Sandall, chief executive of tax specialists TaxAssist Direct and business advisor to the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).

"Company car regulations currently discriminate against those who drive cars with large engines that have high CO2 emissions, so this scheme offers businesses a way to balance up their travel costs and have a clear conscience."

[http://www.businesseurope.com]

Forget government stats, more people are cycling in UK

New figures released on Friday by cycling charity Sustrans show that more people than ever are cycling and walking, despite government statistics to the contrary.

The results of the charity's route user monitoring survey for 2004 reveals that 201 million cycling and walking trips were made on the National Cycle Network, a growth of 11.6 percent on the previous year. Cycling trips increased by 11.1 percent and walking by 12 percent.

This directly contradicts the government's Transport Statistics Bulletin, released last week, which estimates a 14.4 percent drop in 'pedal cycle traffic' on between 2003 and 2004, although these figures did not include journeys made on traffic-free routes such as the National Cycle Network.

"Cycle routes are providing practical alternatives to cars at some of the most congested times of the day. And they are helping people without cars to get around – in 2004, 38 million trips were made by people who didn't have access to a car," said a statement from Sustrans.

58 percent of all car journeys made in the UK are less than 5 miles. The average cycle trip length using traffic-free paths is nearly 5 miles.

John Grimshaw, Sustrans' CEO, said: "The [usage] figures are not just an illustration of the huge success story that is the National Cycle Network but they show a vision of the future that is attainable; a future where people can choose to leave the car at home and cycle and walk for business and pleasure.

"We believe that this is the true picture of sustainable transport, a marked and positive contrast to that supplied by the Transport Statistics Bulletin. We urge the Department for Transport to include these in future to give a much fairer assessment of the true position of cycling and walking in Britain."

[www.BikeBiz.com, 15 July]



New Bike Paths Encourage Cycling In Santiago

Santiago is not a bike-loving town. Only the brave and fearless ride one on Santiago streets, which are filled with cars and those yellow monsters known as buses.

For years, bicycles were the main mode of transportation for the lower classes in Santiago. Construction workers and students were the only ones who took advantage of this cheap way to get to work or school, places which were often on the other side of the city.

Now, after considering all the health and environmental benefits associated with bicycle use, Chile's National Commission for Traffic Safety (CONASET) has begun a national campaign to promote bicycle use and the construction of bike paths (ciclovías). According to CONASET, "bicycles are environmentally-friendly, cheap and people do not spend money on fuel to make them work."

CONASET also outlines the health benefits. A 30-minute bike ride several times a week would have huge benefits for a population like Chile's, where 90 percent of the people lead sedentary lifestyles and heart disease is the country's number one killer.

A new transportation plan coordinated by the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation (MOP) called Transantiago includes the construction of bicycle paths, and the introduction of a new fleet of 1,000 buses in Santiago. The plan will take effect in late October. The first stage of the "ciclovías" plan has already created new bike paths and soon the city will see a network of paths covering 1,200 kilometres.

Using bicycles to travel around Santiago is a relatively new idea, but already, many people are promoting bicycle use. One group called "Furioso Ciclista" (Furious Cyclist) holds meetings and bicycle marathons in Santiago.

To find out who the new bicycle users are and why they changed their transportation habits, CONASET conducted an investigation financed by the World Bank.

The results were clear: the new users are housewives, students and regular office workers or professionals, who use bicycles to run errands or to get to school and work. They are between the ages of 15 and 60, and belong to the middle class. The investigation also showed that the use of bicycles among the upper classes is increasing.

CONASET is also conducting a second study, to find out why bicycle use has increased among the upper classes of society.

[Santiago Times, 28 July]



Five UK towns to get cycle-friendly makeovers

Five towns are to become "beacons of cycling" as one aspect of a Work Plan announced by Cycling England, the body set up by government to get "more people cycling, more safely, more often".

The Cycling England programme will also focus on schemes that help young people get on their bikes and that support wider aims of improving public health.

With an annual budget of £5m, Cycling England aims to obtain the maximum impact by creating 'beacons of excellence' – projects and places where effort and investment is concentrated, and initiatives are co-ordinated for maximum effect.

Their programme's main themes include: 'Youth' – to create the best circumstances to encourage more pupils to cycle to school; 'Place' – five 'cycling demonstration towns' will be selected for significant investment by Cycling England and matched funding from the local authority; and 'Public Health' – to ensure that major programmes designed to encourage physical activity, a healthy lifestyle and greater accessibility also include the promotion of cycling whether for transport or recreation.

[www.BikeBiz.com, 29 July]



New record set for underwater cycling

Italy's Vittorio Innocente set a new world record in underwater cycling on Wednesday, pedalling his specially-adapted bike to a depth of 60 metres in the sea near Genoa.

"It was tough because I ran into more mud than I expected," he said. "I had to click up a gear to make pedalling easier."

Apart from raising money for cancer research, Innocente is on a self-appointed mission to prove that mountain bikes can go anywhere. He has already cycled over glaciers, deserts and mountains from Alaska to Kenya.

To make sure he stays on the seabed his bike is weighed down with about 35 kilos of ballast and its tyres are pumped up with water instead of air. The 'Nautilus' also has fins and spoilers to help him drive it through the water.

[www.ansa.it, 13 July]



Bikes outstrip US car and truck sales

Americans purchased more bicycles than new cars and trucks combined in the past year -- and all without employee discounts or zero-percent financing. "Our sales have almost tripled in the last couple of years," said Bob Ippolito, executive vice president at Pacific Bicycle, the largest bicycle distributor in the United States.

The company, which is owned by Canadian Dorel, sold 5 million bicycles last year, ranging in price from \$50 to several thousand dollars. "Sales are the best we've had in five years," said Ron Lippner, vice president of

Cadillac Bicycle at Kent International, a private company that manufactures and sells more than 1 million bikes a year. "This exceptional year has a lot to do with Lance Armstrong's success from beating cancer and his cycling events -- a lot of people are trying cycling again," he added.

As a result of Armstrong's cancer-awareness efforts -- his foundation has raised more than \$51 million by selling his yellow LiveStrong wristbands -- and triumphs on the bike, more Americans are taking up cycling for leisure as well as for road racing.

Unlike high-end specialty bicycles, which represent a small portion of sales, it is the hybrid road bikes sold at Wal-Mart Stores, Kmart and Target Corp. that made up the majority of the 19 million bicycles sold last year, and are often the choice for leisure and non-competitive riding.

Last month, Congress passed a transportation bill that allocates more than \$3.5 billion in federal funds to create bicycle pathways through 2009.

[Planet Ark, 3 August]



Rentabike moves up a gear from curiosity to runaway success

The French are not short of groundbreaking cheap and efficient public transport. But now the Paris Metro and the high-speed TGV have a more humble, although no less hi-tech, equal - the Lyon rentabike. Less than three months after its launch, the city's Velo'v scheme, reportedly the largest of its kind in the world, is a runaway success. "Very quickly, we've moved from being a curiosity to a genuine new urban transport mode," said Gilles Vesco of the city council.

Some 15,000 Lyonnais are now registered users, and the 24-hour scheme's 1,500 sturdy silver-and-red bikes - which have three gears, a handlebar basket and a lock - are detached from their 100-odd computerised racks on average 6.5 times each a day. And this is just the beginning: by 2007, there should be 4,000 cycles and up to 400 racks in the city - which is one roughly every 300 metres.

The Lyon scheme adopts a system pioneered, on a much smaller scale, in Vienna and incorporates strong incentives not to abscond. Users must register in advance so that their personal details are on record, and they are then issued with a security code and a prepaid card, which they can top up at each rack's computer terminal. "Our success reflects a cultural shift that you could call collective individualism," Mr Vesco told the daily Liberation. "Everyone chooses their own destination, route and timetable, but they use a collective means of transport."

Velo'v is, apparently, a simple system to use, and is also cheap. With the prepaid card, which costs one euro for a week and five euros for a year, rental costs one euro an hour, with the first half-hour free.

In practice, that means borrowing a bike is as good as free, since 90% of all Velo'v journeys last less than 30 minutes. It is funded by JC Decaux, the billboard multinational, which agreed to launch and operate the bike scheme in part-exchange for the right to sell advertising space on the city's bus and tram shelters.

Each time a bike is returned to a rack the brakes, tyre pressure, gears and lights are digitally checked and the results sent to the control centre; any malfunction means the bike is not offered for rent.

[London Guardian, 12 August]



Philippines' senators propose bike lanes to save energy

In the wake of surging oil prices in the world market, senators yesterday sought the installation of bicycle lanes in all main roads and highways to encourage the use of bicycles aimed at conserving energy and, at the same time, address environmental problems.

Sen. Juan Flavier filed Senate Bill 42, which requires that no new main roads or highway shall be approved and constructed without the required bicycle lanes. "This will help ease traffic and transport problems as well as lessen air pollution in all major urban areas in the country," he stressed.

Stressing that the bill is urgent, Flavier said it is "the answer to the need to conserve energy, minimize air pollution, and provide commuters with an alternative mode of transport."

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile earlier supported the use of bicycles as a mode of transportation, saying it is not only good for health, but it also helps the country, which is 55 percent dependent on fossil fuel, out of its dependence from oil.

Under Enrile's proposal, "any public works official who fails or refuses to mark the exiting main roads and highways or approve the construction of main roads or highways without the required bicycle lanes in their designs shall be punished by a fine of not less than P10,000 nor more than P30,000 or suspension, if found guilty in an appropriate administrative investigation."

Sen. Pia Cayetano, a biking enthusiast, also backed the bill, but said there must be a comprehensive plan to ensure its effective implementation.

[The Manila Bulletin, 17 August]

Cycling pilgrimage of reconciliation

To mark his 40 years as a priest, Dominican friar [and CAN member] Peter Murnane is making a 40-day bike pilgrimage to Uluru. Six others will accompany him, including Aboriginal story-teller Phillip Yubbagurri Brown, who works for reconciliation between indigenous and white Australians.

The pilgrimage is a "Journey to the Heart", inviting Australians to reflect on how Aborigines were displaced from their land by European settlers; how generations or their children were "stolen"; and how still today they suffer inadequate health and housing and are jailed at grossly disproportionate rates.

The Pilgrimage began from the front entrance of Parliament House in Canberra on 15 August. Senator Bob McMullan and MPs Gary Humphries and Peter Garrett gave the cyclists messages for Aboriginal communities along their route. Bishops Pat Power and George Browning are riding with them for the first stage and they will meet with schools, churches and Aboriginal communities as they pass through. They expect to reach Uluru on 23 September. The Pilgrimage website is: <http://www.users.bigpond.com/lexicon/uluru.htm>

NEW ZEALAND CYCLING IN NUMBERS...

- Number of road fatalities in New Zealand last year: **436**
- Number of road fatalities in China as its 1.4 billion people move away from widespread use of the bicycle towards motor vehicles: **680 per day**
- Proportion of Auckland commuters who currently walk or cycle to work: **15.1%**
- Predicted proportion of commuters walking/cycling as a result of the planned transport investment over the next decade: **15.5%**
- Number of convictions for wheel-spinning or street racing under the *Land Transport (Street and Illegal Drag Racing) Amendment Act* in its first full year of being in force: **1440**
- Number of infringements issued against cyclists in the same period: **4200**

CAN CYCLE-FRIENDLY AWARDS 2004/05 – DEADLINE EXTENSION!

To ensure that everyone has a chance to nominate examples of good cycling practice, the deadline for nominations for the third CAN Cycle-Friendly Awards has been specially extended to 9 September!

The awards are designed to help acknowledge and celebrate some of the most notable achievements in the country that are helping to promote cycling and to create a cycle-friendly environment. This year, Sports and Recreation NZ (SPARC) has kindly agreed to sponsor them.

We ask members to think about what has happened in their district since last year's awards. Are there any new pathways? Do you know of any private business that has provided cycle parking and/or showers for their employees? Has your local council made an effort to allow casual attire, allow glide time for parents to cycle with their children to school, or provided cycle parking for its employees? Are there any other organisations in your area that have made a special effort?

The categories are:

- Best Cycle Facility Project
- Best Cycling Promotion
- Cycle-Friendly Commitment by Business
- Cycle-Friendly Commitment by Public Organisation

The finalists will be invited to attend the conference dinner & award ceremony at the NZ Cycling Conference in Hutt City on 14 October.

A nomination form should be enclosed with this edition of *ChainLinks*, or can also be downloaded from www.can.org.nz/awards.

Nominations with attachments should preferably be emailed to CAN at awards@can.org.nz by Friday 9 September 2005. Alternatively, material can be posted by the due date to:

CAN Cycle-Friendly Awards 2004/05, PO Box 6491, AUCKLAND.



Who is worthy this year?



SPARC is sponsoring the awards

NZ CYCLING CONFERENCE

HUTT CITY, 14-15 OCTOBER 2005

The programme for this year's national conference was included with the last mail-out of *ChainLinks*. Registrations are coming in thick and fast – get your form in soon! The conference programme and registration form are available at www.can.org.nz/conference05 or from Stephen Knight at Bike NZ, tel. 04-916 1873.

The conference will focus on cycling in the context of recreational, health, energy and economic trends and goals – in other words, as part of the sustainable transport mix. The emphasis is on how to taking advantage of a supportive political climate to boost cycling.

Become a CAN member and attend the conference cheaper (tell your friends!)

If you are not currently a member of CAN but join as a direct member or join a local affiliated group before 15 September 2005, you will be able to attend the two day conference for \$75. Furthermore, your membership will not expire until 31 December 2006.

This is what you have to do: Fill in the membership brochure enclosed with this newsletter or complete the form on the back of *ChainLinks* and send it with your cheque for membership and conference registration to CAN, PO Box 6491, Wellesley Street, Auckland to reach us before 15 September. You can also join CAN through our website: www.can.org.nz.

The offer is for a limited time only – so sign up right away!

Affiliated Member Groups: please help us get as many of your members to the conference and CAN Do Workshop as possible. In Nelson we had 30, let's try for even more! Please ask for more brochures and registration forms from kapiticycling@xtra.co.nz or ph 06-364-8187/fax 06-364-8185.

Financial assistance for CAN members to attend the conference

As in previous years, CAN will be providing financial assistance for one representative of each local cycling advocacy group to attend the 2005 Cycling Conference. Assistance is conditional on representatives also attending the 'CAN Do' (CAN get-together – see over page) on Sunday 16 October.

CAN will offer 50% subsidy on conference registration and dinner costs. We'll also offer subsidy on travel and accommodation costs, up to our total budget of \$1500. The amount we can offer each applicant will depend on how many applications we get.

If you're interested, let your local cycling advocacy group know that you're interested in being their representative and getting the assistance. (Assistance will also be available for members from areas with no local advocacy group.) Then send your claim, with full details of all costs, in to CAN (secretary@can.org.nz, PO Box 6491, Auckland) before 22 October at the latest.

Accommodation

Members of Cycle Aware Wellington will provide billets for CAN members attending from outside Wellington and the Hutt Valley. Some accommodation will be in Wellington City. The conference venue in Hutt City is readily accessible by bike or public transport from Wellington. Please indicate on the workshop registration form below if you would like to be billeted.

CAN AGM

CAN's Annual General Meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday 15 October in the Little Theatre, Lower Hutt. It will follow on immediately from the NZ Cycling Conference. The meeting will last about 30 minutes and will be followed by drinks and a meal at a nearby restaurant or pub.

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of 2004 AGM
3. Chair's report
4. Treasurer's report
5. Election of committee: chairperson; secretary; treasurer; 3-5 other members
6. Any other business

Please send any notices of motion to secretary@can.org.nz or PO Box 6491 Auckland by Sunday 4 September.

See you all at conference!

Liz Mikkelsen
Membership Secretary



CYCLING ADVOCATES NETWORK WORKSHOP – THE ‘CAN DO’

Sunday 16th October 2005, Little Theatre, Hutt City

You are invited to share a day with other CAN members discussing the cycling issues that we feel passionate about. We are looking forward to seeing friends again, but we want to especially encourage cyclists who have recently joined CAN to come and participate. We are always looking for new and fresh ideas! Comments from participants at previous workshops have been very positive, expressing how they felt recharged with new energy to continue their role as cycling advocates.

The provisional timetable is as follows (visit www.can.org.nz/workshop for final programme details):

Time	Session	Comments
8.00 am	Breakfast	Supplied by CAN
9.00 am	Tools for Effective Advocacy - presentation	
9.45 am	How to get more members more active more often - what CAN groups can do to recruit, involve and retain members. Presentation followed by discussion	
10.30 am	Morning tea	Supplied by CAN
10.50 am	Show & tell - problems & successes of local advocates	
12.15 am	Strategic plan – outline	
12.30 pm	Lunch	Supplied by CAN
1.15 pm	Strategic plan - discussion & ratification	
1.45 pm	Changing CAN - progress in the areas of activity identified in the draft strategic plan: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. marketing (media, fund-raising, membership)2. lobbying (submissions, partnerships, representation, policy advice)3. technical & legal (engineering, planning, legislation)	
2.30 pm	General discussion of conclusions from each group	
3.00 pm	Afternoon tea and wind-up	Supplied by CAN

"CAN DO" REGISTRATION FORM

This must be received by CAN by 15 September 2005

Name:		Position:
Organisation:		
Address:		
Phone:		Fax:
Email:		
Your address & phone during the Conference (if known)		I need a billet <input type="checkbox"/>
How did you hear about the conference/CAN Do?		

Send the completed form to: Cycling Advocates Network (CAN), PO Box 6491, Wellesley St., Auckland

NEW WEBLINKS

The **revamped BikeNZ website** is now up and running at <http://www.bikenz.org.nz> . It provides information on cycling advocacy, along with events calendars for mountain biking, road cycling, BMX and track competitions.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration has released a report that examines safety, design, and liability issues associated with the development of **shared use paths and other trails** – the report is at http://trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=4893

The New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Project offers a clearinghouse for information and resources on **pedestrian and bicycle transportation**: <http://policy.rutgers.edu:16080/njbikeped/>

LETTERS

Hamilton has continuing problem with cars in cycle lanes

We think it is great to see Taranaki Police getting proactive, running an education campaign on cycle lane rules, followed up by issuing \$150 tickets to continuing offending motorists who ignore the message (*ChainLinks*, June/July 2005).

Sadly, many Hamilton motorists regularly drive with one wheel in the cycle lane, blissfully unaware that they are holding up cyclists (midblock) when the traffic backs up at intersections, and creating a dangerous hazard to cyclists by travelling far too close.

Hamilton motorists frequently stop in the cyclist advance stop boxes at intersections, blocking cyclists from using them during the traffic light's red-light phase. Motorists stopping in the cycle lane close to the left side of the intersection also block cyclists travelling straight through.

Too many drivers are completely unaware of the change to the rules concerning stopping and driving in cycle lanes. This selfish behaviour by motorists will not change without education and enforcement.

As the new rules for cycle lanes apply to the whole country, how about a national education campaign to educate all motorists? Give NZ cyclists a fair go on the road.

Rob Davidson
Cycle Action Waikato



'Strike Two' by reckless driver?

Readers may recall the elderly cyclist who was nearly tail-ended by a van running the lights at Moorhouse Ave in Christchurch; this time it was the Colombo St/Moorhouse intersection.

A cop was ticketing the driver of a light coloured car as I approached the railway overbridge. There is no cycle lane for a right turn so I stopped up front just inside the turn lane. As the light changed from amber to red a car roared past accelerating downhill in an intermediate gear, across this six-lane intersection, then braked sharply. I couldn't do a damn thing but it missed me by a foot.

The moral? If this was the same driver – I didn't get a look the second time but the car & timing were right – enforcement didn't work; that annoying pause between red & green might save your bacon.

Rob Robins
Christchurch

Southern hemisphere has biggest bike ride

You claimed in your editorial (*ChainLinks* Jun-July) that the London-Brighton bike ride was the biggest in the world, at 27,000 participants.

We were involved, in March, though our daughter, in the Cape Argus cycle tour in South Africa which had upward of 40,000 riders. Maybe you meant for the UK, or even Europe, Tour de France notwithstanding?

We enjoy *ChainLinks*, and it gets better with every issue.

Charles and Jo Getterson
R.D.3 Kerikeri

Editor's note: *My apologies! The organisers of the London-Brighton ride like to claim that it is the biggest in the world, so I assumed they knew best. Obviously not!*



WATCH OUT FOR BIKES IN GOLDEN BAY!



In acknowledgement of their strong voice for cycle safety, Golden Bay's cycling advocacy group BLIP (Bike Lanes in Paradise) secured \$10,000 in funding from LTNZ, and has been using it to produce billboards and postcards with a 'share the road' message.

Golden Bay residents have been lobbying for years to improve the safety provision for vulnerable road users. While Tasman District Council has not yet made any meaningful moves to address this issue, LTNZ has responded with funding to be used for educational purposes. BLIP commissioned local artist Chris Finlayson to design a billboard that would get drivers to take heed of cyclists' safety.

To correct widespread misunderstandings of the rights of cyclists, BLIP has also put ads in local papers with a 'share the road' message, and would be very happy to see a similar campaign mounted nationwide.

END-TO-END IN THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

Roy Sinclair relates his experiences in his recent trip as the first known Kiwi to have pedalled Japan end to end

“Our roads are too busy. Our country has too many mountains,” friends told me. “Please be careful when you think about bike riding the length of Japan.”

Japan certainly presented unknowns. There was no Lonely Planet to flick through. That was part of the challenge. I was also on a mission, pedalling the length of Japan as part of a deal to have a World Peace Bell gifted to New Zealand.



Mamichari cyclist in Kinosaki, Honshu

partner spared language confusion – not that I was always rescued when in a fix. We planned a north to south route, from Japan’s northernmost point, Cape Soya in Hokkaido; to Cape Sata, the southernmost point of Kyushu. Estimated distance: 3500 km.

At Soya we nervously emptied components of our Giant mountain bikes from Ground Effect Tardis bags. Soya is a rare remote spot in Japan. It’s even desolate. Siberia is a mere 43 km across the Sea of Okhotsk.

Soya is the site of a World Peace Bell and various other memorials including one to a Korean 747 shot down by Russian fighters. Surprisingly our bike mechanics were sufficient to get everything together and moving.

Hokkaido, least populated of Japan’s four main islands, promised great bike riding. We were soon being welcomed as part of the motor cycling fraternity. Japanese, great motor bike enthusiasts, greeted anyone on two wheels, even those pedalling the slow lane.

The bike ride took us down the west coast of Hokkaido to Sapporo, then through a region of volcanoes, much like the central North Island, to Hakodate. A ferry ride landed us in Oma, Honshu, Japan’s largest island.

The World Peace Bell, weighing in at a hernia-wrenching 385kg, is a replica of the original bell, gifted by a Japanese individual to the United Nations in 1954. As with the original, the New Zealand World Peace Bell has been forged with coins of UN member countries. (Christchurch will be host city for the World Peace Bell.)

Pedalling with a Japanese

It was the summer of typhoons. Impossible to cycle in, we sat them out. But we were drenched – a lot! Road tunnels were something else to become accustomed to. Some had walking paths we could ride on. Many did not, so we shared the roadway.

Initially we plunged into tunnels with trepidation. We were mostly spared anticipated frights owing the courtesy of Japanese drivers. And on busy highways trucks and buses (and there's plenty of them) would patiently pull in behind and pass only when it was safe. And Japanese trucks are not the big rigs that are insanely permitted on New Zealand roads.

Tunnels and bridges have 50 km/hr restrictions. Imagine imposing such a speed limit on the long bridges (such as the Rakaia) here. Arguably, it would be one inexpensive way to enhance New Zealand bike touring.

We camped, furtively, in nice parks; slept in railway stations, YHA hostels, business Hotels, and used a network of upmarket backpacker-style facilities called The Cycling Terminal.



Windmills beside Japan Sea in Hokkaido

Eating was simple. Often we would be riding with no food, stopping at frequent convenience stores. Like mini supermarkets, they provided a dunny, breakfast, lunch, tea, hot canned coffee, beer and sake, mobile phone top up, and almost anything else. Breakfast was often enjoyed using the outdoor post box as a tabletop. In larger centres we sampled an abundance of Japanese cuisine.

Not so simple were bike repairs. Japan's bicycle industry is based on the simple *mamachari* or granny bike. Luckily I was able to find a small, specialist bike shop with appropriate Tour de France signage when desperate. A bottom bracket had to be tightened, and half-way through the ride rear wheel cones were replaced. Long descents of 40 km meant brake blocks were replaced more often than expected.

We had just one puncture and I suspect that had been arranged by some kids whose too-polite "Good morning" in English was accompanied by an uncanny smirk.

We took a route down the Japan Sea to Niigata, often detouring through delightful narrow village streets, then ventured inland through the Japan

Alps in the Nagano prefecture. From the huge Lake Biwa near Nagoya we headed back to the Japan Sea.

We would be invited into a stranger's home for green tea which was remarkably refreshing on a warm day. Green tea typically became lunch and the intended day's ride was thwarted.

Crossing between Honshu and the southern island, Kyushu, was through an undersea walking/cycling tunnel.

Northern Kyushu was industrial, chaotic, and noisy. We were restricted to cycling pavements. Urban cycling in Japan was frequently irksome. At such times I pined for wide open spaces in New Zealand.

We detoured through Nagasaki, home of the A-bomb museum and Madame Butterfly. A challenging central highland route took us to Kagoshima Bay. Southern Kyushu was superb pedalling.

Cape Sata was the planned finish. Having arrived on the intended 69th day, we opted to extend our bike ride 150 kilometres through Chiran (visiting the disturbing Kamikaze pilots' museum), to Kagoshima city.

By train we travelled to Oita and took a ferry to Shikoku. Train travel helped to perfect our bicycle dismantling and reassembly skills.

The plan was to cross the Seto Inland Sea on a series of beautifully-engineered island-hopping bridges. The 69 km road linking Shikoku with Honshu opened five years ago. The bridges were built with cycling/walking paths. Cyclists pay tolls at various sections. Total cost is about \$7 NZ. This must be one of the world's great recreation bike rides, crossing a sea busy with shipping.

Japanese are commuter cyclists – in their thousands. Recreational bike riding is catching on despite a misguided perception it is too dangerous to travel Japan by bicycle.

We continually heard people shouting “Gambatte”. It means “have courage, keep going”. They often added, “thank you for coming and doing this in our country.”

Trip data:

Started: 24 August 2004

Finished: 12 November 2004 in Osaka

Total distance: 4221 km.

For a fuller account of this trip, please take a look at:
www.japancycling.org/v2/inter/reader/roy/

OVERSEAS CONFERENCES

Want to find out more about the role of cycling overseas? How about trying these two upcoming conferences in Australia...

Bicycle Federation of Australia 'Connecting Cycling' conference – Brisbane, October 2005

Registrations are now open for the Bicycle Federation of Australia's 'Connecting Cycling Conference 2005- Planning for Healthy Communities'.

When: Wednesday 5th to Saturday 8th October 2005

Where: City Hall, Brisbane, Queensland

Conference topics will include:

- Health & environmental benefits of cycling and walking
- Innovative planning to create healthy environments
- Environmental benefits; is better planning the missing link?
- Better planning; who is responsible?
- Integrating national, state and local planning agendas for better cycling infrastructure
- Government & community actions to increase cycling & walking

For more information and to register for the conference please visit <http://www.bfa.asn.au/conference>.

'Thinking on two wheels' cycling conference – Adelaide 2006

The Second 'Thinking on Two Wheels' Cycling Conference (discussing the bicycle option for health, recreation, community, and sustainable transport) will be held in Adelaide, Australia on 16 January 2006, and will be hosted by the University of South Australia (UniSA).

The conference has the themes of health, recreation, community and sustainable transport elements of cycling as its core, but papers covering other aspects of cycling are welcome.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/nbe/news/twowheels/default.asp>

What's happening in the cycling world?

Check out on our website a comprehensive list of cycling-related events and conferences (past, present, and future) at:

<http://www.can.org.nz/events>

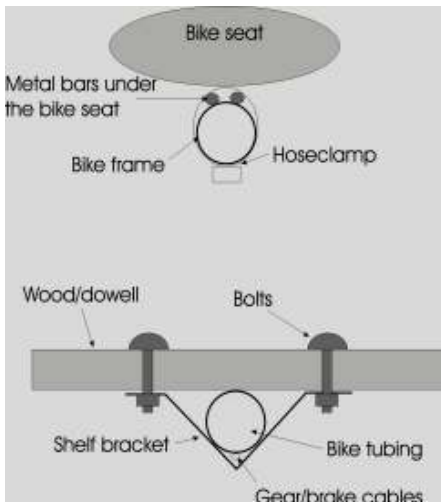
TWO WHEEL PEOPLE MOVERS

by Steven Muir

I am part of the Great Hamster Community in central Christchurch, which currently has five Adults and six children aged five and under. I have also written a book called PROSACC – Profound Revelations of Sunday Afternoon Cycling Church, which is a humorous look at religious traditions from a cycling perspective (see www.cyclingchurch.org.nz for details). We aim to reduce our need for cars by cycling as much as possible. This means we often need to carry the younger kids and associated gear on our bikes. Some of the methods we have employed are as follows:

1. Using a proper bike trailer to carry two children which costs around \$800. It is very good but the expense often puts people off using one and large items of gear are hard to fit in (e.g. my bass amplifier).

2. Using a plastic bike seat on the back for younger kids (\$4 from a garage sale). Works for younger kids. I have big feet so had to make a different mounting mechanism to allow room to pedal. Our kids are solid, so by three years old they are too heavy and the support bars tend to wobble so much the wheel is scraped. The bike trailer is supposedly safer as most accidents involve a sudden stop then falling over (e.g. car door opened in front of you), so if the child falls from the height of a bike seat it will hurt, whereas the trailer remains upright in most cases, and kids are unhurt.



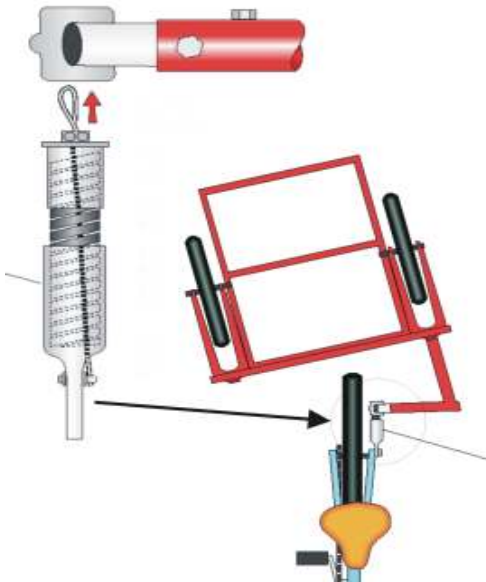
3. Using a bike seat attached to the main bar with a hose clamp, with a footrest underneath which is a piece of wood bolted to an old shelf bracket bent at the ends. This can carry much more weight than the seat at the rear, is easier to converse with the child, and doesn't disturb the pedalling unduly. The child is not strapped on so could be hurt in an accident. It cost me \$5 for a seat, \$2 for a hose clamp and the other bits I had lying around. It is quite portable so I took it with me on holiday and attached it to a borrowed bike in a couple of minutes, allowing us to sight

see by bike. My four year old also enjoys changing gears for me.

4. Build a recycled-bike-frame trailer. The plans for doing this are at

<http://www.recycle.org/trailer/Trailerbw.pdf>

I built one using two free frames from Kings bike shop to provide the forks, a \$7 Raleigh 20 for the wheels and 4 seat springs used in the hitch, and a \$2 office divider to provide the aluminium rectangular frame (from an op shop). It performs very well. Cats Protection League in Worchester St, Christchurch, is another good source of old bike bits.



There are not too many regulations to comply with when carrying children other than the obvious wearing of a helmet. The other restrictions in LTSA regulations are as follows:

11.7 Cyclists and moped drivers - Carrying restrictions: A person must not ride a cycle or moped on a road while it is carrying a passenger unless-(a) the passenger is carried on a pillion seat designed for that purpose and footrests are provided for and used by that passenger; and (b) in the case of an infant, the infant is carried in a container or seat that is designed to protect the legs of the infant from coming into contact with the wheels of the vehicle.

I'm working on a home-made tandem option that can hitch a child's bike to the back of an adult's bike, but having some design problems, so will keep you posted. I am also thinking of organising a make-your-own bike trailer workshop on the 15th October in Christchurch, so if you are interested email me at: thepope@cyclingchurch.org.nz

THE RECUMBENT: THE EVERYDAY HPV

by Michael Toohey (Editor, Kiwi HPV newsletter)

Say HPV to most people and they will probably reply “Huh?” Say it to enthusiasts and they might well say recumbent. In fact the world of Human Powered Vehicles (HPVs for short) encompasses astounding inventiveness in machinery as diverse as aircraft, boats and submersibles, but it is the recumbent, the bicycle you lie down on, which has become the most visible and commercially pursued face of HPVs. Many thousands of pages have been written on the subject, and it would be impossible for me to cover it all in just a few words. Instead I will try to answer a few questions for those seeking a practical form of urban transportation.

Why Ride A Recumbent?

I am not a zealot who claims that all cyclists should ride a recumbent and that those who do not are stuck in the Stone Age. Recumbents do, however, offer many advantages over the conventional bicycle (or “safety”) in many situations. They have the potential to offer greater comfort, to be safer, to protect the rider from the elements and even to be very, very fast; they also make particularly good commuters and tourers, in other words they make ideal alternatives to the motorcar. Not every recumbent offers all of these features at once, and that in itself is an advantage. Unlike the safety, which has remained more or less static in design (if one discounts the highly specialized racing machines such as pursuit bikes or downhill bikes) there is no single recumbent design. Since their reinvention in the mid 1970s recumbents have blossomed into a wide variety of different types designed to meet specific needs. Unfortunately, as so often happens, a complex array of jargon is now used to describe them; thus a strange sentence such as “she’s just bought a SWB FWD low-racer with USS and



A semi-faired long wheel base recumbent, currently undergoing development in NZ by Feet First HPVs

four oh sixes” actually means something to the recumbent initiate! Sorting all this jargon out can be a bit intimidating for the uninitiated, so here are some recumbent fundamentals.

Recumbents come in a number of basic designs: bicycles and tricycles being the most common. These break into further sub-groups: long wheelbase (LWB), short wheelbase (SWB) and medium wheelbase (MWB), delta trike (two wheels at the back) and tadpole trike (two wheels at the front). Generally short wheelbase bikes and tadpole trikes are the

fastest machines, while long wheel base bikes and delta trikes offer a more comfortable ride at the expense of some speed. There are exceptions though, and the real determiners of speed (other than the quality of the “engine”) are ergonomics and aerodynamics. Again the general rule is that a machine with a low seat and high bottom bracket (BB) is faster but more demanding while a high seat and low BB machine is slower but easier to ride.

This really is an important subject. Recumbents have often suffered from exaggerated claims from enthusiasts keen to further their popularity. Yes, fully faired record breakers (“Speed Bikes”, to use a newly coined phrase) are incredibly fast, with the best reaching speeds hovering around the 140Km/h mark, and well designed recumbents are very comfortable over long distances, but experienced cyclists might find that after their initial amazement at the sitting in an easy chair feeling of riding a very low recumbent, small niggles such as a numb posterior may start to show. In fact, adapting to a more extreme recumbent position is not usually an instant process, and time must be invested in it. Once the rider is “bedded in” to the machine its true potential for speed and comfort will be realized. Those wishing for an easier transition to recumbent riding would be best to choose a machine with a higher seat and a low bottom bracket. As a bonus, the higher ride of these machines combined with the ease with which the rider’s feet reach the ground makes them amongst the safest bicycles in city traffic.



The Giant Revive semi-recumbent

Semi-recumbents

The term semi-recumbent is usually reserved for medium wheelbase machines with very high, upright seating positions, usually placing the rider at about the same height as a regular “safety” does. These machines have found solid markets amongst seniors looking for more active alternatives to the mobility scooters. They are very pleasant,

undemanding machines for younger riders too. In recent years a couple of big manufacturers have been experimenting with the semi-recumbent concept. The Giant Revive is one such machine which has found its way onto the New Zealand market, and in recent years a locally designed model, the VeloCity has been custom built in small numbers. Cleanly designed and pleasant to ride but by no means fast, these bikes are best described as improvements on the traditional European roadster concept. They can be ridden in street clothes and have excellent weather protection and all-weather braking. For city riding they are safer than modern road bikes or MTBs, and their upright, unhurried position encourages a responsible, rational approach to city riding.

The Tricycle Advantage

Tadpole trikes are enjoying great popularity at the moment. The Australian Greenspeed is a worldwide hit and a number of local Kiwi designers have produced very practical trikes too. Trikes can carry a large load, are stable (when well designed) and fun to ride. Their road presence garners respect from motorists and the addition of a weatherproof body can more easily be added to a trike than it can to a bike. The trike's weight hinders speed on hill-climbs but the fact that the rider no longer needs to balance the machine means hill-climbing is not necessarily a chore. I remember climbing Evans Pass on a distinctly non-sporty tadpole with a very upright position and limited gearing. I simply winched the machine up at very low speeds (lower at times than balancing speed of a bicycle). The whole experience was quite restful and non-athletic, more akin to a nice walk than a bike ride up a hill! Going down hills on a good trike is likely to result in inane grins and loud cries of "wheeeeeee!" as G-forces build in corners.



A racing HPV, built more for speed than for comfort, designed and built by Nigel Farrell of Christchurch

Obtaining a Recumbent

As mentioned, Giant are selling their Revive on the New Zealand market, unfortunately, other than this single example, no major manufacturer is exporting recumbents to our fair shores. Those who wish to obtain something like a recumbent trike need a fair level of dedication and fiscal courage. The exotic machines coming of Europe and America are certainly not comparable to K-Mart cheapies in quality or price. The cost of self importing one of these

machines begins at about NZ\$ 5,000 and increases rapidly from there.

Another way is to take the Kiwi do-it-yourself approach. This can be a rewarding (and at times frustrating) exercise in realizing your own ultimate design, personalized to exactly suit your needs. Many such machines exist already in New Zealand, ranging from the aesthetically challenging but wonderfully green examples built up from old ten speeds and other scavenged material, to jaw-droppingly elegant vehicles built of the finest materials by very clever practical engineers. A handful of the latter have made it onto the commercial market, often being custom built on a one-off basis for customers willing to foot the bill for a hand-made special. The benefits of purchasing such a machine are obvious, with easy communication between customer and constructor both before and after purchase.

Commercial recumbents have had a small presence in New Zealand for almost twenty years now. That means that second hand machines do occasionally come up for sale through the usual electronic auctions. While not the most reliable way of obtaining a machine, keeping an eye out can result in a rare bargain.

Why So Few?

While becoming slightly less exotic than they once were, recumbents are still not a common sight on our city streets, which begs the question: if they are so good, why are there so few around? HPV enthusiasts will often point to the seventy year old ban of unconventional cycles from sanctioned bicycle racing as the villain here. Whilst the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) ban has probably had a negative influence, other, equally important factors also come into play. After all, the pioneer mountain bike came into existence at about the same time as the modern recumbent, with early MTB racing occurring well under the UCI's radar, and yet mountain-biking has grown into a hugely popular pastime and an Olympic sport while recumbent riding has grown to become a significant but still relatively obscure form of cycling.



A recumbent tadpole tricycle, based on an overseas design. Built by Bruce McDowell of Christchurch.

Commercial reality is one answer to this conundrum. Bicycle advertising has recently concentrated on 3 themes: fit young athletes in printed Lycra burning up the road with a steely Lance Armstrong-like glare, happy middle income couples enjoying their new bikes off road or in the park, and baggy clothed teens getting big air as they compete in their own personal X-Games. Commuting just is not seen as a sexy marketing ploy right now despite rising fuel costs and increasing urban road congestion. Some of the larger recumbent manufacturers have recognized this trend and advertised accordingly, concentrating on the recreational themes of speed and fun to sell their machines. Most companies, however, do not have the muscle to really push the recumbent in the market which it could make its own, the new or returning cyclist.

Most recumbent riders will tell you that it is non-cyclists or occasional cyclists who are the most curious about their unconventional machines. Comments of “cool bike” and “hey, that looks comfortable” usually come from the general public rather than other cyclists. The latter tend to be quite happy with their safeties can be quite vehement in their resistance to

change. Unfortunately, the higher cost of a recumbent often instantly puts off non-riders, whose only contact with bicycle prices comes from their weekend shopping trip to the Warehouse or K-Mart. They wonder why someone would spend \$5000 on a bike when a “good car” can be had for less. With the strong dollar and the advent of recumbent manufacturing in East Asia the gap is narrowing, and we are now at a stage where a semi-bent can be bought for less than the cost of its individual component parts. Correspondingly, we are beginning to see new or returning cyclists choosing these semi-recumbents as viable alternatives to similarly priced, medium-quality safeties.

Trying a Recumbent

Luckily the gap in large commercial interest in recumbents has been plugged by hugely enthusiastic amateur builders, recumbent owners, small manufacturers and professional engineers. There has been a massive amount written about recumbent design, much of it on the web, and even more on the printed page. Enthusiastic recumbent riders are usually keen to spread the word, and willingly give advice, point out pitfalls and let prospective owners “have a go” on their machines. Such trying out of new machinery often occurs at events organized by a formal club and joining such a club is a good first step towards obtaining a recumbent. Here in New Zealand, Kiwi Human Powered Vehicles organizes such events and helps HPV enthusiasts to make and maintain contact with other HPVers in their region. It also has a large library of specialist material and produces a bi-monthly newsletter in order to disseminate useful information to its members. Kiwi HPV also maintains a website which can be found at the end of this article. It is a good place to begin your quest towards a better, smarter way to ride.

Further Information:

- Kiwi Human Powered Vehicles: www.kiwhpv.org.nz
- The International Human Powered Vehicle Association: www.ihpva.org/index.php
- Very Eco (Quadracycle manufacturer): www.veryeco.com
- VeloCity (Christchurch based recumbent constructor): www.southern.co.nz/~velocity
- Greenspeed (Australian trike manufacturer): www.greenspeed.com.au
- Giant (manufacturers of the Revive): www.giant-bicycles.com/au

Thanks to the Kiwi HPV organisation for their help in writing this article. More details about them can be found at www.kiwhpv.org.nz.



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