

THE CHAIN LETTER

Newsletter of the CYCLE TOURING ASSOCIATION OF W.A. (INC.)

May / June 2006

Issue 188

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Looking back over the last couple of months it has been an exciting time for cycling. In early March a small group of CTA members (John, Maria, Connie, and myself) went and watched some of the best Australian and International cyclists in action at the Midvale Speed dome. We witnessed the awesome acceleration and sustained speed that allowed Ryan Bailey to go on and win at the Commonwealth Games. We also saw the Mears sisters in action, with Anna winning out over her younger sister Kerry.

BikeWeek kicked off with the Bike-to-Work breakfast. As in past years, thousands of riders turned up, and club members used this opportunity to great advantage to hand out flyers for coming rides and brochures of the 'On Your Bike' tour.

Sunday of BikeWeek saw over 80 riders heading to Whiteman Park. Once there, members and riders from the public enjoyed a sausage sizzle and a soft drink. Thanks must go to the volunteers and to the DPI cycling unit for making this event so successful. Special thanks to Colin, Deb, Janet and Grant.

Wednesday the 15th saw the Around-the-River evening ride and BBQ. Once again this was very well supported with close to 80 riders. I felt very proud that the club could foster cycling in this way. A big thank you to the volunteers, especially Connie, Janet, Maria and Simon, without whom these events would not be so well run.

As a result of the flyers and well organised rides, membership is growing, with 16 new members in March and 3 more

signing up at the start of the 100km!! This ride was held in perfect weather and attracted 24 starters. See the list of finishers elsewhere in this Chainletter.

For Easter the club headed to Bridgetown. There were 19 club members in Bridgetown. Sixteen of us at the Bridgetown Valley Lodge, while Grant stayed at his brothers place, and Tony and Lucia (who we met up with there) were staying with friends in town. It was a great weekend away with another 2 new members joining as a result of the trip. Keep your eye on future issues of the Chainletter for a story about the Bridgetown weekend.

Looking ahead there is Mothers Day which will see club members and their Mothers having the opportunity to see parts of the Swan Bells that the public does not normally get to see. Reese does not only ride a bike but is an accomplished bell ringer. This has led to this not-to-be-missed opportunity. We will be informed on the history of the Swan Bells and lots of interesting facts on this WA landmark.

In July the club has booked Ye Old Quindanning Hotel for Christmas in July. Although the accommodation is mainly for couples there are 4 single beds, so be early for those! It promises to be an enjoyable weekend at a place we have not yet stayed at. On Your Bike has been through Quindanning but not overnight. I stayed there in 1992 while researching the Ride and Discover map, so I know we will enjoy ourselves, and the roads around there are excellent for riding.

As the days get shorter and the temperature drops, keep warm, stay cycling and I will see you on your bike.

Noel Eddington

APOLOGIES

My sincere apologies for the late delivery of this newsletter. Colin and I have been travelling in the US since Mid-March, and only returned to Perth on May 3rd. I should have warned you in the last issue, but had so many articles to include that I ran out of space! Ride descriptions were published through mid May, so I hope you didn't miss out on any riding. The next issue (July/August) should be in your boxes by August 1st! ~Deb

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Next issue:

The Dunsborough & Easter Weekends, 5000 in 4 and My Ride to work

CTA COMMITTEE

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P.O. Box 174 Wembley 6913

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NEW MEMBERS

A hearty welcome is extended to new members who have joined since the last newsletter. I think our Bike Week flier was quite successful, along with Colin's efforts recruiting cyclists from HMAS Stirling!

Mark Ewing	Adam Sbrana
Ross Ewing	Yvonne Hofmann
Trevor Gor	Domenic Sabatino
Jennie Cumming	Denise Patterson

CYCLING TRIVIA

Last issue we asked:

What is this photo of?



Once again, John Faris was the first (and correct) reply. He wrote "Took a while, but eventually found at <http://www.dpi.wa.gov.au/cycling/1974.asp>. I had vaguely wondered but had no idea this was actually what they were for. Useful question!"

The answer: From the DPI website:

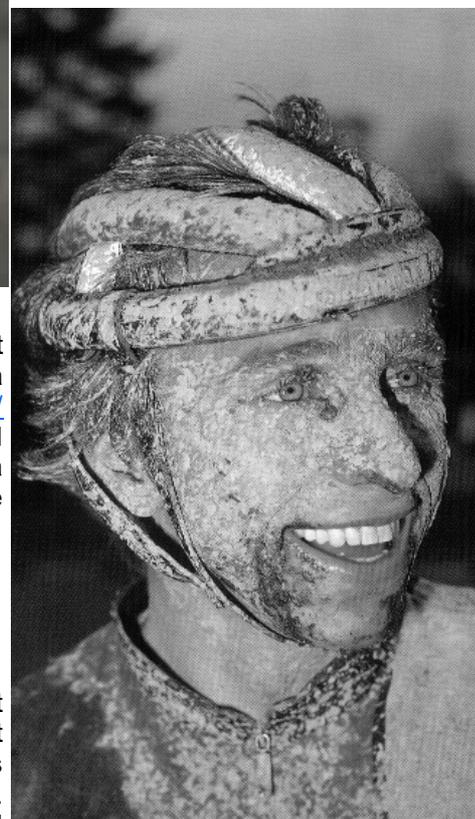
CONTROLLED INTERSECTIONS

There are a couple of special facilities at controlled intersections that can assist cyclists. All light-controlled intersections are fitted with vehicle detection sensors. They work on a magnetic principle and detect when a metal object is located directly above. Because bicycles have much less metal than other vehicles such as cars and motorcycles, they can

be difficult for the sensors to detect. To maximise detection (when no motorised vehicles are present) riders should approach in the centre of the traffic lane and ensure one pedal is kept low to the ground as they wait for a green light at the intersection. Some intersections have a row of diamonds painted on the road surface that indicate the best location for cyclists to wait and be detected.

Next Question:

Who is this photo of? And what was his most famous win?



Send your answers to the editor via info@ctawa.asn.au Any new questions will also be considered for publication. ~Colin

New members continued:

Sam Huf	Janet Jarvis
Hannelore Utting	Peter Utting
Linda Kerford	Alan Kerford
Robert Tognela	Eric Van Delft
Lindsey Moralee	John Moralee
Karl Hoffman	Amanda Nitschke
Anthony Hopping	Danny Burgess
Jeff Murray	Jude Comfort
Wendy Holmes	

DEADLINES: Contributions for the next issue (July/Aug) should be to the Editor no later than Thursday 20 July.

DISCLAIMER: Opinions or comments from contributors and members do not necessarily reflect those of the Club, its committee, the Editor, or its membership as a whole.

CTA RIDE OF THE YEAR 2005 SEPTEMBER LONG WEEKEND

Leader: Kleber Claux

It seems this ride was so popular that more than one person wanted to write about it. We published a story about it in the last issue of the Chainletter, and here's another!

September provided an opportunity to celebrate the Queens Birthday (for those monarchists amongst us), but

be expected from Andrew, who I normally see at the start of a ride and never again in the same day. He did manage to stop every so often to allow the rest of the group to catch up. Thanks Andrew. Our only casualty for the day was a flat tyre for Devo. Perfect timing on Devo's part, as we enjoyed a relaxing lunch break at Golden

Grove Citrus Orchard, on Chittering Valley Road, while repairs were carried out.

The second group took the railway maintenance access road to Toodyay, travelling alongside the Avon River and railway line. A shorter route (80 km's), over loose dirt and winding roads, but according to the participants, well worth the effort. Another casualty, this time Mike, who although mounted on his mountain bike, had a close encounter with the dirt. Some patching up was required for grazing, fortunately nothing worse, and the "dirty ones" continued on.

Lisa and Brad showed the benefits of their recent training, as they powered up the hills and away from the group on the dirt roads. A major effort in itself considering they were only on 28 mm tyres. I remember that feeling of strength, when Mark & I first returned from cycling New Zealand, but alas, the memory was all that remained for me, as I limped into the Pecan Hill Tearooms, just before Toodyay, where we met the off-riders. My mind remembers the strength I once had, but my legs gave



Weather compliments of Kleber, scenery compliments of WA

also the opportunity to take off for a few days and enjoy the life of cycle touring Western Australia. Thanks to the organisational skills of Kleber, and the wonderful weather he arranged, all 24 participants were in for a fun weekend of on-road and off-road cycling to Toodyay and Northam from Perth.

Mark & I arrived in Midland to cheers of delight (something to do with the fact that we were the last of the group to arrive), and knew immediately that we were in for a good weekend. We weren't disappointed.

24 eager people left Midland, destination Toodyay. 10 km's into the trip, and the roadsters followed Andrew, fully laden with panniers and tent, for the long route (95 km's) along the sealed road of the highway. The pace was fast, but then nothing else could



A few of the "Dirty Ones": Bruce, Grant, Nic, Louise, and Mark



Homeward bound. I see (from Left to Right) Bruce, Nic, Ann, several unknowns, Mark C, Andrew, Colin, Devo, Mark E, and who's that front Right?

out and turned to jelly 15 km's before Toodyay.

Roast beef for dinner and a good night's sleep prepared us for a new day, this time heading for Northam (62 km's). Brad & Lisa again powered off, leaving the rest of us to casually make our way under the close supervision of Kleber, who gathered his flock together for regular breaks, as only a truly dedicated ride leader can.

We arrived in Northam mid afternoon, allowing us time to enjoy the ales of the establishment, before settling down to another hearty meal, fit for any cyclist, and another good night's sleep.

Monday sadly saw the end of our trip. Heading back to Perth, we again split into two groups, some opting for the bitumen (87 km's), and the rest for more off-road adventures. Casualty free, we returned to Midland joyous and delighted to be back, but appreciative of the good company, beautiful scenery and the memories of another wonderful weekend away with the CTA. Life on a bike sure is great.

Hope to see you on the next adventure.
~Teresa

INTERESTED IN JOINING US?

You like the newsletter, you've been on a couple of rides and had fun...so what's next? Join us! Fill out a membership form first. If you don't see one in your newsletter you can call the editor for a snail-mail copy, or download and print one off our website (www.ctawa.asn.au). See the article on the back page (Fees Please) for membership fees and where to send your form.

CTA LOSS RIP Cherie Sowden

CTA is sad to inform you that one of our members, Cherie Sowden from Albany, passed away mid March after a brief illness. Cherie had been an active volunteer on our On Your Bike tours for many years and she will be greatly missed by all her cycling friends. We will remember the happy smiley face that Cherie always carried with her, as she lived life to the fullest.

On Your Bike 2006 26 August —3 September 'Toast of Batavia Tour'



This year, the tour will start in Midland, with participants and bikes being transported to Geraldton. From there we will ride to Northampton, and then continue north to a farm stay. We will then ride to Kalbarri for a rest day, where numerous "tourist" trips have been arranged for you to go on. After Kalbarri we cycle south along the scenic coast road to Port Gregory, and then back to Northampton for our last evening and the concert night. If you haven't seen a brochure yet, call the
Tour Leader: Basia 9330 3615 (H)



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THORN-PRODUCING WEED INVADES PERTH'S BIKE PATHS

Last issue we reported Mike Norman's success with Telstra's bike storage facility. It seems this CTA member is active on other fronts as well, this time tackling a prickly issue affecting all cyclists!

Four years ago, Mike was riding home in the dark (with of course, his lights on) when he punctured both front and back tyres in Gribble Rd, Carine. He carries only one spare tube, so a call home was required on the mobile phone to organise a rescue mission. The next day, he rode back the same way to find the cause and found thorns from a flat plant growing near the edge of the road. This plant was actually covered in hundreds of thorns. Mike got it identi-



Caltrop, the Puncture Vine, with water bottle for scale

fied as "Caltrop" (*Tribulus terrestris*), also known as "Puncture Vine". Mike knew he had come across a nasty customer as it had got through his Kevlar-lined tyres, and he knew it would not be good for walkers with dogs either.

Since then, Mike has taken on the task of attempting to



Leaves of a small plant with an immature thorn (top center), next to mature puncture-vine thorns (right).



Here's Mike, spraying a Caltrop infestation

stop and/or slow Caltrop infestations in the Perth area. This has involved calling local councils, filing Hazards Reports with Main Roads, personally spraying infestations with herbicides and/or pulling Caltrop plants up and bagging them anywhere he sees them while cycling. With outbreaks at about 17 different locations between Sorrento and Perth (the worst being in Carine and Osborne Park) we can imagine this has been a daunting task.

It seems public authorities and private land developers aren't taking this issue seriously yet, and with major outbreaks continuing to surface, the problem is going to get worse rather than better. The weeds are not confined to the northern Principal Shared Path (PSP) route either—they have also recently been reported in Cottesloe and West



Cottesloe Council staff removing an infestation of Caltrop along the PSP by Grant St Train Station on 7/3/06.

Perth as well. (Thumbs up to Cottesloe Council for prompt action, removing the infestation by Grant St Train Station).

Mike believes cyclists and walkers need to learn to recognise and pull up the weeds themselves (if only a few) and report any larger infestations. The following description is

from the Department of Agriculture's *four weeks*.
website:

"Caltrop (Tribulus terrestris) is a summer-growing weed found widely throughout Western Australia. It is most common in areas of frequent spring and summer rain.

Under the Local Government Act (1995) it is a prescribed pest plant in a number of southwest and wheatbelt Shires of the State.

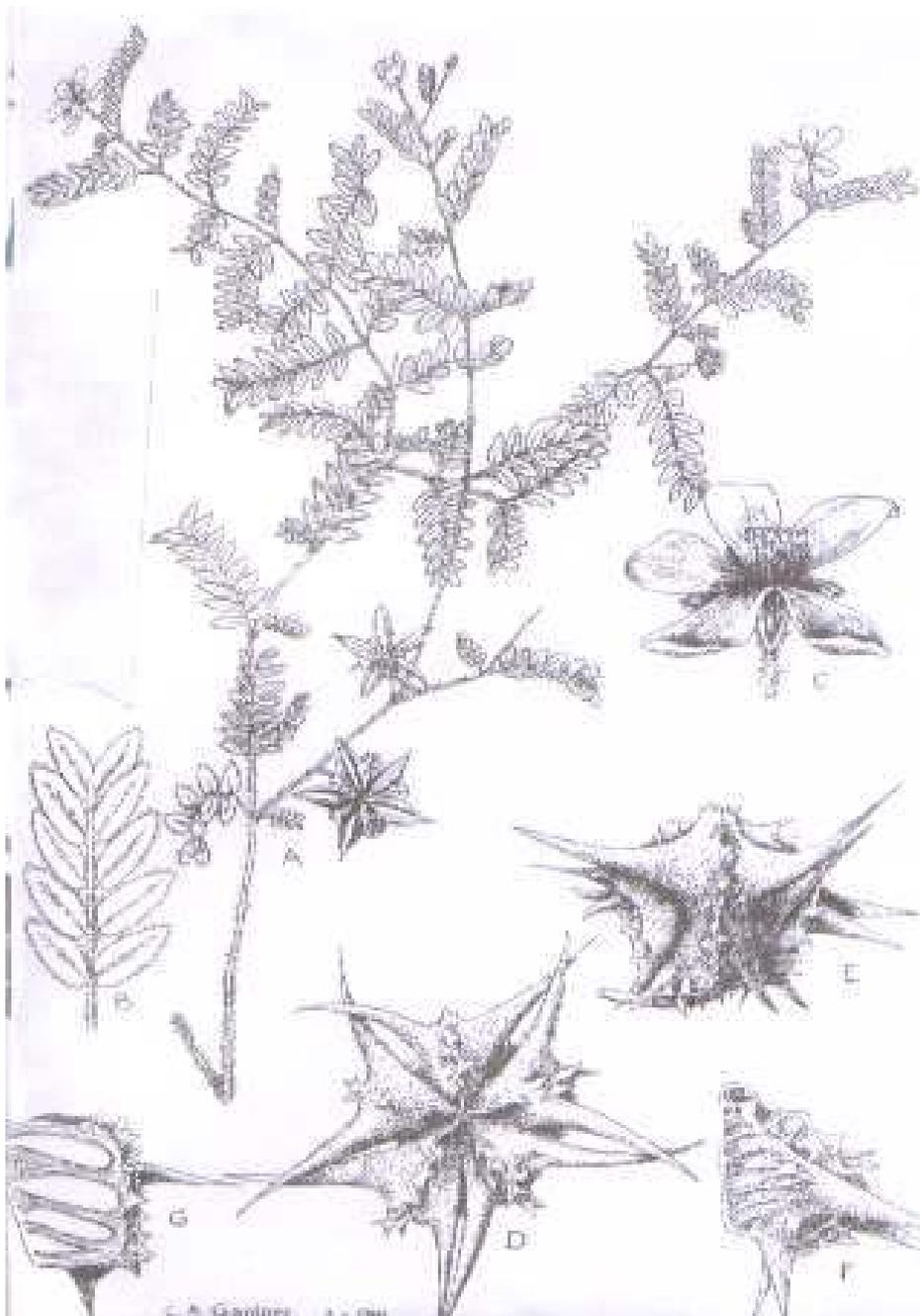
Caltrop has seeds that remain dormant in the soil for probably four to five years. They germinate after summer rain. Plants grow rapidly, flowering and forming new burrs within three to

The trailing stems of caltrop are long and wiry. They are covered with fine hairs. The stems lie prostrate on the ground, radiating from a central tap-root. The leaves consist of several leaflets arranged opposite each other on the stems. The leaves are fern-like and greyish-green. Caltrop is often confused with doublegee, however, the latter has a green leaf similar to English spinach.

The flowers are small, less than 1 cm in diameter, and yellow with five petals. Wedge-shaped burrs are formed in clusters of five, each with four or more long sharp spines."

Small numbers of plants can be eliminated by pulling up the plant at its central tap root. If it is still small and no thorns have formed, it can be turned up side down and left on the ground. If it has already formed its thorns, the plant and seeds may be placed in a bag and disposed of in a bin. Carefully pick up any of the spiny seeds that fall from the plant. Bigger infestations need to be reported through the MRD Hazard Report line, the DPI web site, or by contacting your local Council. Ken Suttie, the Manager of Cycling Transport Programs for DPI, told us "...the Cycling Unit has contacted all metropolitan local government authorities to urge them to be on the look out for Caltrop and to eradicate it when they find it. I would ask anyone who sees plants to report it via the Hazard Reporting System on the Cycling Unit website (www.dpi.wa.gov.au/cycling) and we'll get onto the appropriate local authority to have it removed."

However you choose to report it, we recommend you follow up, to ensure the appropriate authority has in fact responded to, and acted upon your report.
~Bruce & Mike



REPORTING CYCLING HAZARDS

All riders are encouraged to make a note of hazards observed during their rides (especially on new roads or paths), and to submit a hazard report to Bikewest. The aim is to get these fixed, and more importantly, to stop new hazards being installed. Reports can be submitted via

1. Email, to cycling@dpi.wa.gov.au, with 'HAZARD REPORT' in the subject line, and a good description of the location and the hazard. Please copy the BTA at BTA_WA@hotmail.com.
2. Electronic Hazard Report Form found on the bikewest website at www.dpi.wa.gov.au/cycling/hazard.html.
3. Postcard. Free postcards provided by Bikewest are available from the editor.

Lift out Rides Calendar Page for May/June 2006

RIDES CLASSIFICATIONS:

All riders are responsible for showing up with a well-maintained bicycle. You will need to wear a helmet and we recommend you bring a spare tube, puncture repair kit, tyre levers, pump and a spanner (to fit the axle nuts if your bike is not fitted with quick release hubs). Most importantly, bring water.

Rides are described according to the

guidelines below. *If you are unsure of your suitability for a particular ride, or if you feel it may be too long for you, don't be put off. Please contact the ride leader before the day, to discuss your suitability, or to see if you can do part of the route.*

Terrain refers to the hilliness of the ride, and can be Mostly flat, Rolling, Some hills, Hilly, or Unsealed road.

Pace refers to the average range of speeds

on level ground without breaks. Down-hills may be faster, uphill slower. For rides described as HILLY, consider choosing a pace one step down from your usual comfort level.

Social:	Under 15 km/h
Leisurely:	15 – 20 km/h
Moderate:	20 – 25 km/h
Brisk:	25 – 30 km/h
Strenuous:	30 – 35 km/h
Super Strenuous:	35+ km/h

LIABILITY DISCLAIMER:

While every effort is made by CTA ride leaders to ensure the safety of all participants on our rides, individual cyclists (whether they are members or not) are **not** covered by the club for injuries if an accident occurs. We recommend that you obtain personal accident insurance before taking part.

Saturday May 6

200 Km Achievement Ride 1

200km, Hard, 6:30am for a 7:00am sharp start. Meet at the car park off Morrison Rd (adjacent to the Midland Police Station) for registration and map/ride description. This is a challenging ride that takes in Toodyay, Dewar's Pool, Bindoon and the Chittering Valley. The time limit is 13hours 20mins (average 15km/h). Note there is a \$10 fee for non-members.

Organiser: Tom 9444 4107 (H)

Sunday May 7

Mooching Around in May

About 30 km, Leisurely, Some hills. Meet at 8:30am for an 8:45am sharp start from under the big tree near Fraser's Restaurant in Kings Park. This ride will follow the river around the leafy western suburbs then on to Reabold Hill and Perry Lakes prior to returning to the start of the ride for refreshments.

Leader: Karen 9228 3838 (H)

Sunday May 14

The Swan Bells Ride

The CTA has been invited to experience the Swan Bells from St Martins In The Fields. The tour will be lead by an old CTA member and internationally experienced bell ringer Rhys Greenhalgh. We will have the unique opportunity to a more detailed demonstration/tour of the bells and tower than experienced by the general public. Rhys and his fellow campanologists will demonstrate and give a detailed explanation of English change ringing. This will be followed with an explanatory tour of the

inner workings of the tower. There will also be an opportunity to chime a bell.

It is recommended that you bring a pair of ear muffs if you can. This one off experience will be well worth the \$6 entry fee. 30-40km, Leisurely. Meet at the Swan Bells Belltower, Barrack Square Perth at 8:45am for a 9:00am start. We will experience some of the excellent cycle paths and parks Perth has to offer, before heading back to the Belltower for lunch at one of the eateries at Barrack Square. The tour of the Belltower will run from 12:30 to 1:30pm.

Leader: Kleber 9354 7877 (H)

Saturday May 20

300 km Achievement Ride 1

300km, Hard. This is the CTA's most challenging ride, having to complete 300km in 20 hours. Although the average is 15km/h—imagine doing this for 20 hours straight! The 300km is a requirement in order to complete the Super Achiever Series. Participants MUST BOOK at least one week prior to the ride to arrange details and there is a \$10 fee for non-members (and subject to approval).

Organiser: Tom 9444 4107 (H)

Sunday May 21

Northern Highlights (Ann Said So)

40-50km, Moderate, mostly flat with a few gentle undulations. Meet at Warwick Railway Station at 8:30 for an 8:45am start. Join me for a scenic ride, heading to the coast for some fresh salty air. Stopping for refreshments near the end of the ride.

Leader: Deb 9418 1571 (H)

Sunday May 28

Kalamunda Hill Climb

50-55km, Moderate. Meet at Charles Patterson Park, Burswood (near playground) at 8.45 for 9 am departure. The plan is to meander through Belmont, Redcliffe, Maida Vale etc. pausing for refreshments at the crest of the Kalamunda Hill. We will then follow the scarp to Carmel before descending via Welshpool Road to the start point.

Leader: Connie 9355 2745 (H)

Sat-Mon June 3-5

Foundation Day Long Weekend

Suggestions and leaders/organisers welcome.

Sunday June 4

Swanning through the Valley

45-50 km. Moderate. Meet at Guildford railway station at 8.30am for an 8:45am start. We will head North travelling mainly on quiet back roads as we zig-zag through Caversham, Henley Brook and Brigadoon to visit Bells Rapids. Heading South we will pass through Herne Hill to have morning tea at one of the many cafes offering excellent coffee and cakes. Then back through Caversham to the end of the ride at Guildford.

Leader: Kleber 9354 7877 (H)

Saturday June 10

10,000 in 8 Achievement Ride 1

110km Hard, 8:00am for an 8:30am sharp start. Meet at the Kelmscott Railway Station for registration and map/ride description. This is the club's hilliest ride requiring you to climb up and down

10,000 feet of hills within 8 hours. Required for both the Super Achiever and Challenge Series. Note there is a \$10 fee for non-members.

Organiser: Tom 9444 4107 (H)

Sunday June 11

Perth Perimeter (or thereabouts)

Start at Perth railway station, 8:30 am for 8:45 start. A leisurely ride of about 35km. We'll navigate our way around Perth, along the river and through adjacent suburbs. On the way we'll stop to take in the views and have some refreshments at a coffee shop.

Leader: Tom 9444 4107 (H)

Sunday June 18

Southward Ho

60-70km, Brisk, mostly flat. Meet at South Beach Café (on bike trail south of Freo Train Station) at 8:30 for an 8:45 start. Head on south with Colin towards Rockingham and other exotic places. There will be plenty of opportunities to "stretch the legs" (ie "go fast"). Will stop for coffee and a break at either Rockingham or Kwinana (maybe both) depending on how we feel.

Leader: Colin 9418 1571 (H)

Sunday June 25

50km Achievement Ride Take 2

50km Moderate, 9:00am for a 9:30am sharp start. Meet at the corner of Soldiers Road and Mead Street in Byford for registration and map/ride description. This is your second chance at achieving the 50km. The time limit of 3 hours 20mins (average 15km/h) should ensure that everyone has a chance of completing the distance. Participants MUST BOOK at least one week prior to the ride and there is a \$10 fee for non-members.

Organiser: Tom 9444 4107 (H)

Sunday July 2

Jane Brook Road/Trail Combination

30-40 km, Leisurely/moderate. Meet at Midland Railway Station at 8:45 for a 9am departure. The ride will follow the old railway track through John Forrest National Park past the falls and tavern to Stoneville for a coffee stop. The return is via the same path although others may wish to return to Midland by an alternate route. Wider tyres recommended.

Leader: Chris 9471 8346 (H)

Sunday July 9

5,000 in 4 Achievement Ride Take 2

55km Moderately Hard, 8:30am for a 9:00am sharp start. Meet behind the BP Service Station at the corner of Albany Highway and Gilwell Avenue, Kelmscott for registration and map/ride description. This course promises 5,000 feet of up-hills and downhills around Armadale and Roleystone. The time limit is 4 hours (average 14km/h). Participants MUST BOOK at least one week prior to the ride and there is a \$10 fee for non-members.

Organiser: Tom 9444 4107 (H)

Wed July 12

Social Night

7:30pm, Loftus Community Centre. Tim from Kalamunda Cycle Shop is giving a talk on general bike maintenance and what to bring on longer rides. (Perfect timing for those of you coming on On Your Bike 2006) Bring your wallets because he will also have related goods for sale.

Organiser: Maria 9444 3951 (H)

Sunday July 16

Meet Your Fellow On Your Bikers

50km Moderate. Meet at 8:45am for a 9:00am start at Point Walter. This is an

opportunity to ride with some of your fellow tourers on this year's 'On Your Bike' tour. You are warmly invited to join the group for a mystery ride stopping along the way at a secret eatery for some delicious treats.

Leader: Basia 9330 3615 (H)

COMING EVENTS

**Sat/Sun/Mon July 22-24
Christmas in July**

Join us for a traditional Roast Christmas at 'Ye Quindanning Inn' about 150km south of Perth. Drive down Friday night to allow for a full day's riding on Saturday and a healthy appetite. Bed and breakfast from \$58.00 single or \$77.00 double per night. Non-cycling partners welcome to come with a member. This is a lovely old hotel with 4 poster beds so come and enjoy a winter break.

Leader: Noel & Connie 9355 2745 (H)

**Sunday August 16
Rail Trail Ride**

Noel received an email from the Shire of Mundaring about our joining them for this ride. Details in the next issue.



Looking for a good ride? This photo was from Easter Weekend, story to follow in the next issue of the Chainletter. Email the editor if you can identify any of these very lost looking riders—are the two on the right the Duffs?

50KM Achievement Ride: Sunday 26/2/06

GETTING HIGH IN NEPAL

Participants: Mark Elliot, Patricia & Lance Whiteford, Ken Black, The Phantom, Dennis French, Gerry Tenbokkel, Trevor Gore, Teresa Liddiard & Mark Corbett, Chris Hargreaves, Devo, Ann Wilson, Bruce Robinson, Phil Giddins, Chris (Jugs) Rowley, Mark & Ross Ewing, Liz & Richard Marshall, Yvonne Hofmann, Deb Palacios & Colin Prior, Mike Holland, Grant Gregory and Tom Hallam. Lisa & Brad Cleary brevet carded the ride earlier.

Twenty six riders all completed the 50km Achievement Ride in the required 3 hours. The conditions were somewhat testing; 33 degree heat, and a blustery hot easterly (or as Ann put it, "That effing wind"). The course started and ended at Great Northern Hwy, with a 16.6km stretch up Chittering Valley Rd, a loop around the hills, and then back down Chittering Valley Road.

Apart from the lovely rolling hills and beautiful countryside, the road also meandered through bridgeworks. There were dozens of motorcyclists out to test themselves and their machines on the winding roads, at speeds that concerned some of our riders.

A hand cycle race had just finished when the first riders turned off Chittering Valley Road. There were many comments on what impressive machines they had.

I have never seen Bruce even break into a sweat, but on this ride he deployed his back-up ventilation system: unzipping his cycling jersey and undoing his shirt. Bruce advised "flabbergasted is a description of me patting my paunchy stomach". Maybe when Tom pats **his** paunch, but not with **your** flat tummy Bruce, (Yes, I peeked).

It was great to see 5 or 6 new members signing up at the ride.

I appreciate the thanks many riders gave me for supporting the ride. I'm not a member of CTA, and while I enjoy helping out occasionally, I feel the support should be done by members. Tom has only had a couple of volunteers to support rides this year, so either the rides won't go ahead, or won't be supported. Please ring Tom on 9444 4107 if you can support a ride.

~Leonie

I have noticed that there are quite a few cyclists in the CTA that dabble in other outdoor activities, such as bush walking or canoeing. I also enjoy a few other outdoor activities - bushwalking/ trekking, swimming and yachting (I crew on a yacht sailing from Hillarys Yacht Club). I also do some rather physical work as a volunteer in my local area through the winter removing mounds of weeds and replanting one coastal and two bushland reserves. Needless to say, together with some CTA rides, I think I do more than the recommended 30 minutes of physical activity per day!

My oldest daughter Lisa also enjoys walking and cycling. She has been to Nepal a few times now, and on one "challenging" trek in the Everest region she was the only female in a group of 31 trekkers and Nepali support staff. While there for three months rewriting the books for a small English school, she taught herself the Nepalese language. She always says she doesn't speak it well, but still manages to have long conversations with Nepalese we meet!

Somewhere in early 2005 Lisa, Jedrek (a mountaineering friend from Tasmania, and I, hatched the idea of doing a mountaineering expedition to Nepal, planning our own itinerary and dealing directly with a trekking company in Nepal to secure the services of an experienced guide. The planned duration was 5 weeks, some-

thing I could manage with some long service leave up my sleeve. By chance, at a function I attended in Adelaide, I happened to meet person married to a Nepali, and through her husband, we got the details of a company that proved to be excellent hosts for our trip - "Adventure Thamserku Treks" (see their web site at www.adventurethamserku.com). We booked with them over the internet.

So we got to work planning our trip, and Jedrek scoured web sites to map out a very interesting route that would include an ascent of Mera Peak (6461m) and a crossing of the remote and spectacular Mingbo La pass (at 5900m), which included a 200m abseil down a fluted ice wall. To spread the cost of mountaineering and national park passes, we decided to invite another three into our group to make a party of six. They all willingly accepted, until it came time to make a real commitment and part with some cash, at which point the extras dropped out one by one. So in the end, our group consisted of just the three of us. I was the "old man" of the group, but I knew I would be OK, as I was travelling with a nurse and a doctor! And both had put together impressive medical kits (which it turned out were not really necessary, as our hosts were already well equipped for any misfortune).

So in early October 2005, we flew off to Kathmandu and met Dawa, the



Mike (2nd from Right), with guides

owner of the company, in Kathmandu. Accompanied by Dawa, we scouted around Kathmandu to hire some specialist gear for the high altitudes - big plastic boots with crampons, and since Dawa was definitely not impressed with my plastic yachting pants for use at high altitude, I purchased some "Nepali" gautex which was a fraction of the price here, and they seemed to work quite well. We learnt we would have 14 support staff for just the three of us - a guide called Lhakpa (who was very experienced, being an Everest summiteer), a cook and two kitchen boys, and ten porters.

A few days later, after an early start and a six hour wait at the domestic airport in Kathmandu, we caught our "Yeti Airlines" flight to Lukla for the start of our expedition. The flight was pretty exciting, with a small airfield on the side of the mountain (a hill in Nepali terms) suddenly appearing through the clouds. At Lukla, the whole town was full of mountaineers and trekkers, and porters rigging up with their loads. There were plenty of Yaks being used to carry gear for some of the big expeditions; we kept out of the way of their big horns! We camped alongside Dawa's mother's home, and met our Nepali support staff there. We also met another small group of five Aussie tourists and one guy from the UK who we would travel with as far as Mera Peak, where they would then return to Dawa the way they had come.

The next few days, we walked along narrow tracks, gaining altitude, going through pretty little villages, and getting glimpses of enormous Himalayan peaks beyond the 3,500m "foot hills". We were forever ascending then descending into valleys, often walking along fast-flowing rivers. Most days were about five or six hours of walking, but still somewhat of a challenge given the rough terrain. There were no shortages of rocks in Nepal! Everywhere it was the greeting "Namaste" to those going the other way. We were being fed three good meals per day - it was amazing what the cook could knock up using his pressurised kerosene stove.

We all got Nepali names for the duration of the expedition. Mine was "Buddha" which apart from the religious meaning, also can be used to

call someone an "old man". On the fourth day we saw Mera Peak from a distance for the first time - it looked very daunting from the south side. We started to do some serious gains in altitude each day to acclimatise, dropping back to a lower altitude to sleep at night. The peak of Kyashar (nearly 7000m) dominated the view for a couple of days.

At the village of Tangnag, we finally came across the Maoists--only a few lads, no guns in sight. They were demanding AU\$100 per head to let us

heavy snow storm for October - one of the sherpas was up all night banging the build up of snow off the tents. As we lay in our tents in the dark, we could hear avalanches roaring in the surrounding mountains, but we were camped in a safe spot. So the next morning, the whole landscape was blanketed in snow, and we had another enforced rest day trying to keep warm. We later found out the snow storm caused an avalanche to the east of us that killed a party of seven French mountaineers and all their porters and guides.



Mera Peak base camp after snowfall

through - much more than we were expecting. Our group of three tried to negotiate a "family discount". In fact, the whole village came out to hear the light-hearted debate in Nepali between my daughter and the Maoists. They openly admitted they were using it to buy guns to fight the king, but they looked pretty well dressed and fed as well. In the end, we still had to hand over AU\$300 between us, which is quite a lot of money for them. There was also a big group of French and another of Italians, so we figured they made about AU\$8000 that evening. A modern form of highway robbery!

A day later we got up to Khare at 5000m, regarded as the base camp for Mera Peak. A rest day at last. But we played cricket - porters vs. the tourists. The two ladies in the Aussie group of six announced they could go no further - one of them had been a heavy smoker and the thin air was taking its toll. But overnight, was an unusually

The next day we climbed to Mera La to practice the use of the crampons, moving along roped together, and arresting one of the group that had fallen (I thought of jumping down the crevasse in the practice area to really test the group out, but decided they may not all be quite ready for the real thing!). We again descended to base camp.

An early start the next day saw us advance 800 vertical metres through heavy snow (in places) to high camp at 5800m. I arrived with a splitting headache, and decided I might be done. The camp was on quite a steep narrow ledge - hardly a flat piece of ground to put up a tent. In fact, it was a slippery ice slide into the tent door! Nurse Lisa administered a couple of Diamox tablets and I went to sleep, woken at 2am to get ready to leave at 3am for the summit attempt. It was a chilly -15 degrees C as I got out of my down sleeping bag. But wow, my headache had gone and I was ready to "get high" on

Mera Peak. After some hot tea and food, I struggled to get all the climbing gear on - those damn plastic boots did not want to go on my feet, and that damn harness with leg straps got twisted every time! Eventually we emerged from our tents and started the long walk up. Headlamps flashed up the mountain some distance from us. A slight wind blew and my face was going numb. So I held the down hood together so only my nose and one eye were left open to the elements.

At 6000m, it was a beautiful still dawn over the Himalayas. What a view! But from 6000m on, the lack of oxygen made the walking very hard - not helped by thick snow in places (like walking up a steep sand dune all day). Two steps forward, slide back a bit, then stop to catch your breathe. Eventually I got a rhythm going. But when at 11am we reached the final sharp rise to the central summit, I felt completely drained of energy. I sat down in the snow and got out my final energy weapon - a Snickers bar! Unfortunately it was like chewing on an iron rod, and even the chewing required was wearing me out. But with a final burst of mind over matter, I jumped up the steep icy slope to the summit at 6461m.

and the enormous south face of Lhotse stood timelessly in front of us. We could see slow moving black dots on the slopes of Mera Peak below us - those who were still making their ascent. Everyone hugged each other and cameras clicked around us. After an hour or so at the top, it was time to descend. Sounds easy, but was still a challenge as you can slip all over the

The next few days we spent mainly above 5000m traversing the remote Honggu valley wilderness, dominated by the massive bulk of Chamlang at 7321m. To get out of this valley we had to go over Mingbo La (pass), but our guide Lhakpa said the heavy snow would have put lids over the crevasse, making this route dangerous. So we headed for Amphulapcha La (5845m)



Porters at Amphulapcha La

When I got there, I felt the exhilaration of mountaineers who have made it to the top! Hundreds of white glistening peaks could be seen puncturing the clouds for miles around us. Mt Everest

place, and you have to break the pace of descent. The day from start to finish was 14 hours of hard walking - but a very memorable one.

instead. To get over this, we started at 4am in the morning, working our way up steep scree slopes. As we got near the top, we entered a huge wonderland of layered ice and enormous (10m long) icicles. Many sections were just solid blue white ice, and had been roped by the Sherpas the night before. The ridge at the top was razor sharp, and we carefully made our way to a point we could abseil down the other side. The French and Italians were with us again, they had to borrow our ropes, but they didn't tie up their luggage well enough, so some of the bundles split apart and food tins, tables and chairs went cart wheeling down the mountain, never to be retrieved again.



Buddha at high camp 5800m

After a couple more days of trekking, we came back to villages starting with Chhukung at 4730m. It felt we were back to sea level again! This town was overshadowed by one of the most beautiful mountains in the Himalayas, Ama Dablam. From there we went through a series of villages, the most



Leaving Chhukung

interesting of which were the monastery town of Tengboche (where we sat with the chanting monks and got blessed by the Lama) and the steep horse shoe shaped town of Namche Bazar. A couple more days of trekking saw us back at Lukla for the flight back to Kathmandu.

Jedrek had to return to Australia before the hospital forgot who he was, but Lisa and I were still in the mood for walking and booked a flight to Pokhara to walk up to Annapurna Base Camp (called "ABC") unguided, staying in tea houses on the way. Again we were treated to the site of some of the Nepal's most spectacular mountains, and the simple hospitality of the Nepalese on the way. As Lisa and I were travel-

(which is an experience in itself) we stayed with a local family outside the ring road in Kathmandu. We visited the English school, who were very pleased to see us, and video taped a lengthy interview about our travels and our opinions to use as an English lesson for their students. We also visited the "Light for Nepal's Children" orphanage, where we promised to send them



Buddha with girls at orphanage

ling together, I had to often explain "Yomerra chorrie ho" (that's how it sounds anyway) which means "this is my daughter" otherwise everyone assumed I was a rich old man with a young wife!

On the return to Kathmandu by bus

my redundant Windows 98 computer! In mid November, we returned back to Perth. After the crowds and dust of Kathmandu, it was like coming back to another planet. I felt I had been away for a long time, but maybe that is the mark of a good holiday. ~Mike Norman

Radio & TV:

Keep up with the latest breaking cycle related news, whether your interest is in MTB's, Touring, Time Trails, Road Racing, or gizmos and gear. Let the experts keep you up to date on what is happening in WA and the world.

Curtin Radio 100.1FM
Saturdays 7:45—8:00am

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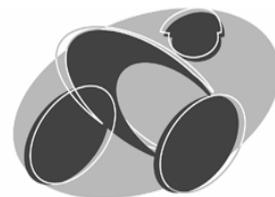
HOUSEKEEPING

Contact a Committee member, or send us an email, if:

1. **Your contact information changes** (so we can keep our data base up to date.)
2. **You wish to hire equipment.** We have Rear Panniers, a small Rack Bag and a Trangia (camp stove). By hiring, you can sample cycling touring without investing in lots of equipment. If you do decide to invest, you'll have a better idea of what you want for yourself. Cost is \$5 per 2 weeks, \$10 per month, plus a bond.
3. **You wish to contribute to, or borrow from, our library** of cycling related books and magazines. Items may be borrowed for 4 weeks, and the library is available for viewing during social evenings.
4. **You have stories, pictures, or ideas for the newsletter.**

Email to info@ctawa.asn.au

Bikewest



cycle instead

Department for Planning and Infrastructure
Government of Western Australia

www.dpi.wa.gov.au/cycling

The CTA Achievement Ride Series

Achievers

The CTA conducts a series of Achievement Rides each year that will allow you to qualify for an award. A cloth badge is also available for each of the individual rides at a cost of \$5 each.

The three series available are: the Super Achiever, the Challenge Series and the Merit Series. Each ride of the series must be completed within the set time limit, but is otherwise non-competitive in nature. A member can only nominate for one award per year.

Super Achiever Series

To become a Super Achiever you must complete the following five rides in the specified time limits:

50km	3 hrs
100km	6 hrs
200km	13.5 hrs
300km	20 hrs
10,000 in 8 (10,000 feet of hills in)	8 hrs

Challenge Series

To receive the Challenge Award you must complete the following five rides in the specified time limits:

50km	3 hrs
100km	6 hrs
Century (100 miles/160kms)	10 hrs

200km	13.5 hrs
10,000 in 8 (10,000 feet of hills in)	8 hrs

Merit Series

To receive a Merit Award you must complete the following three rides in the specified time limits:

50km	3 hrs
100km	6 hrs
5,000 in 4 (5,000 feet of hills in)	4 hrs

Using Brevets

Each Achievement Ride will be held twice during the year to provide the maximum opportunity for members to complete one of the series. However, if you are unable to attend one of the official CTA rides, then a CTA brevet card can be used to complete the ride. To obtain your brevet card and route description, contact the Achievement Rides Administrator, Tom Hallam, on 9444 4107. After completing the brevet, it must be returned to the Achievement Rides Administrator to record the ride and ensure that it is officially notarized by the CTA Committee.

To qualify for an award, all brevets for that series must be completed and notarized by the CTA Committee two weeks before the AGM. If you require further details, please contact Tom Hallam on the number shown above.

Congratulations to the following CTA members who have completed the Achievement Rides shown:

50km, Sun Feb 26

Mark Elliot	Ken Black
Patricia Whiteford	Lance Whiteford
The Phantom	Dennis French
Gerry Tenbokkel	Trevor Gore
Teresa Liddiard	Mark Corbett
Chris Hargreaves	Devo
Ann Wilson	Bruce Robinson
Phil Giddins	Chris (Jugs) Rowley
Mark Ewing	Ross Ewing
Liz Marshall	Richard Marshall
Yvonne Hofmann	Mike Holland
Deb Palacios	Colin Prior
Grant Gregory	Tom Hallam
Lisa & Brad Cleary (by brevet card)	

100km, Sun Apr 2

Danny Burges	Mark Elliott
Allan Duff	Christine Duff
John Faris	Denis French
Trevor Gore	Grant Gregory
Yvonne Hofmann	Karl Hoffmann
Mike Holland	Anthony Hopping
Stuart Keeling	Colin Pearce
Liz Marshall	Richard Marshall
Michelle McGowan	Rob McGowan
Bruce Robinson	Chris (Jugs) Rowley
Ann Wilson	Mollois Emmanuel
The Phantom	

HELP STILL NEEDED FOR ACHIEVEMENT RIDES

Tom is still looking for supporters for Achievement Rides on the following dates. If he can't get help, rides may have to be cancelled, so please check your calendars and help if you can. Duties include recording participants and completions, providing support in the form of water stations and possibly rescue. Expenses reimbursed.

- Saturday 20 May, 300km
 - Saturday 10 June, 10000 in 8
 - Sunday, 9 July, 5000 in 4
 - Saturday, 12 August 200km
 - Saturday, 19 August 10000 in 8
 - Saturday, 9 September 300km
- Contact: Tom Hallam 9444 4107(H)

WANTED

Complete pannier bag set (ie 2 rear and 2 front bags) and front "low rider" pannier rack.

Call Mike Norman on 9448 1978 or email mike.norman@bigpond.com



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EDITOR'S CORRECTION:

Let it be said: "Never let the truth get in the way of a good story." Evidence has now come to light that Kleber's new bike is actually (shock, horror) **9 speed** (not 8, as we reported in the previous issue). Said bike is also newer than we thought—evidently it was part of the stock left from Colin Pearce's bike shop. Colin had originally planned to keep it for himself, but was convinced to part with it instead.

Fees Please:

CTA membership is from January 1 to Dec 31 each year.

1. Adult membership \$40.00
2. New members \$35.00
3. Full-time Students/Pensioners \$23.00
4. Dependents under 18 no charge

Membership forms can be downloaded from our website. Please send your cheque and form to the Cycle Touring Association, PO Box 174, Wembley WA 6913. **If you are a non-member that rode your first 'On Your Bike' in 2005, your complimentary membership will expire as of June 30, 2006.** After June 30, part-year memberships apply and the above fees should be halved. **Don't miss any issues—send in your renewal now!**

The CTA is a non-Government organization relying on membership fees, donations and volunteer labour to achieve our aims and objectives. These monies help provide each member with six newsletters per year, a number of social evenings with suppers, weekend trips and tours at cost, and a library, to name a few of the material benefits.

CTA CLOTHING—NEW!!!



The CTA has logo clothing available for sale.

Short sleeved Coolmax tops in yellow with red stripes (XS-M) are \$85 each. We have reordered the larger sizes and expect them sometime in May.

LONG sleeved Coolmax tops in yellow with red stripes (XS-M) are \$100 each. We expect delivery sometime in May.

Black lycra knicks (XS-M only) with 1 red & 1 yellow side panel are \$80 each. The Committee has decided **not** to reorder knicks going forward, so if you wear one of these smaller sizes and don't have a matching set yet, or need to replace your existing knicks, best get them soon!

Cycling socks in red and yellow, with the CTA logo at the ankle. These are a real bargain at \$10 a pair. 1 size fits 8-11.

"Take A Look" Mirrors—compact size. Attach to your specs for rear view vision. \$15 each, comes with optional helmet adaptor.

More clothing coming: The committee is also in the process of sampling some looser-fit, high-visibility cycling shirts. The material will be neon orange sports fabric (cool to ride in, quick to dry). The styling will be a looser fit (than the jerseys) polo shirt with a longer tail and cycling pockets in the back. We plan to offer both long and short sleeve shirts, with the CTA logo either embroidered or printed. The vision is to offer club members a casual shirt that is functional both on and off the bike, at a lower price than the cycling jerseys. We're even looking at the option of having your name embroidered on! Stay tuned to the newsletter for more updates on clothing—the new shirts probably won't be in production until June or July.

Please contact Deb on ☎ 9418 1571 (H) if you'd like to try anything on. Cheques should be made payable to "CTA Clothing".

**If undelivered please return to
PO Box 174 Wembley 6913
Western Australia**

