



Not The Spoken Word

Bi-monthly newsletter of The Western Australian Historical Cycle Club Inc.

George Stotter's Race Diary

George Dexter Stotter was probably encouraged by friends to enter a cycle race in January 1896. His first race, a one miler, ended in a collision with other riders but he rode again later the same day in a ten mile race and won by a respectable margin.

Hi talent was quickly recognised and within months he was representing the WA Cycling Club in races in the Goldfields. By the mid 1897, having won the Austral Trophy in Perth, was bound for Victoria and the Austral Wheel Race.

One of his key opponents on the local track was M. Porta, "the Italian champion". By 1901 Porta was back on the continent being lauded as "Champion of Australia" and George's cycling career was all but over. On his last serious race day in Albany, having won two out of three races against local riders, he was declared winner, taking home £15.

In October 1898 George was invited to ride in a worldwide relay. It was in this ride that he set the North Fremantle to Perth record of 23m 15s. It was over 40 years before anyone came close to George's time; in 1940 Dave Stevenson bettered George's time by just 20 seconds. George objected, pointing out that road realignments in the interim meant that Stevenson had ridden a route that was 100m shorter than the one on which George's record had been set.

In his five years of racing George took home over £700 in winnings. It's difficult to make direct comparisons with today's values but in rough round terms it equates to \$100,000, a tidy sum.

George's family joked that his winnings paid for their house in Holland St, Fremantle. Jokes aside, they were probably on the money, so to speak; in 1895 land could be bought in Holland St for £125 and a house built for £150 and up. It's likely that George paid for the house and land and more besides.

George's race diary, a wonderful handwritten document, has no entries beyond 1901, however there are newspaper accounts of him competing up until 1904.

In 1902 he appeared in court as the defendant in a case for the action of payment of bicycles. Stotter had evidently undertaken to purchase 11 bikes from a W. Pearson for £155 - more than a block of land in Fremantle, and had allegedly defaulted. The case was referred for lack of evidence.

In the 1930's George served as the Vice President of the

Fremantle Trotting Club for a few years.

George's grand daughters Geraldine Cook and Lynnette Dyer recently donated photographs of George along with his world record certificate to the WAHCC. The club was also able to make a copy of George's race diary which is reproduced here;

The following are the performances of GD Stotter

January 26th 1896

I started in a Maiden bicycle race one mile I had seventy five yards start. Comeing around the corner in the last lap one of the riders collided with me we both fell and that spoiled my chance of wining.

I started in a ten Mile Handicap Bicycle race I had six hundred yards start a lap and fifty yards. The scratch man caught the fifty yards on me and I hung onto his wheel and after going Five miles he retired. He stated that it was no use of him trying to catch the lap on me as he could not shake me off his wheel. By this time I had caught the other riders instead of them catching me so I won by a lap to spare. This was the first Bicycle race I won and the second I started in. The prize money was £25.

March 21st 1896

I started in a road race from Perth to Pinjarrah the distance being 56 miles. I had five minutes start and won by forty five minutes.

April 15th 1896

I started in a two mile race off 195 yard mark. J Parsons of Victoria scratch man. I came second. Won by Donald Patterson 230 yards

I started in a two lap handicap race off 95 yards, J. Parsons Scratch man. Won by A cooper off 120 yards start. I ran into second place.

September 14th 1896

I started in a road race from Perth to Greenmount and back. I started on scratch giving away 20 minutes start the distance being 25 miles. I won by three minutes. After the finish of this race the Western Australian Cycling Club asked me if I would go to Coolgardie to represent them in the forthcoming carnival. I said I would so one hour later I was on the Coolgardie Express with M. Porta the Italian champion who had just arrived from the Eastern States bound for Coolgardie. When we arrived at Coolgardie we were met by the leading people including Warden Finity and J.J. Cook and a drag with six horses. They drove us to Kennedy's Hotel, the leading hotel at that time and they treated us like lords. After lunch they drove round to the hotel and drove us to the cycling track so as we could have a spin. After we had a ride they drove us back to the hotel. In the evening they gave us a banquet.

So you will see that it was at the Carnival that I first beat M. Porta. I might state that the Western Australian Cycling Club gave me my

expense before I left but when we got to Coolgardie we were told that we were guests of the Coolgardie Cycling Club and they were going to pay all expenses so that was better still. I might state that from the time we arrived and till the time we left they were continually showing us round. It is a time I will never forget.

The following are the races I won at the Carnaval;

September 17th 1896

I started in a one mile race in Coolgardie off 130 yard mark. I won after a great struggle. £25

September 17th 1896

I started in a two race off two hundred and thirty yards. I won by about 6 inches. Value £50 Stelwag ran second place off 230 yards.

I started in a five mile scratch race at Coolgardie. I might state that in this race sixteen riders started and we had to draw for places so I had the bad luck of drawing one of the places in the second row. When they started one of the riders in the front row fell off in front of me and knocked me off my machine so I jumped on again. The people shouted to the others but it was of no use they kept going. So I made up my mind to do my best to catch them. After about three miles I caught them so when it came to the last lap I made up my mind to try and beat Porta, but he beat me by about half a wheel. This gave me more confidence in myself and I said to myself that if I had not been knocked off my machine I would off beaten him. So you will see that it was not long after this that I beat him in all scratch races.

September 21st 1896 Sunday

I started in a one mile race off 50 yards. This race was run on a Sunday as we were leaving that evening for Perth to compete in races there. I won after a good race Value £25

September 23rd

I started in a two mile race off 150 yards. Won by Stevens 200 yards. I got second. Run at Perth. Value £25

I started in a two mile race off 150 yards. Won by J. Irvine.

I started in a five mile race scratch race at Perth. I might state that when I arrived back from Coolgardie I had a very bad cold and was not going to start in this race. Some off my friends persuaded me to start. While we were riding some of the riders were beginning to leave me behind so I shook myself up and went we were coming around the last lap I went to the front and rode for all I was worth and to my great surprise when the gun went off I had won and as soon as I stopped I fainted. Dr McWilliams attended me and said that he did not know how I won the race as I should off been home in bed. I could not walk home. So I had six weeks in bed with infammation on the lungs. When I got better Dr Birmingham told me to take a trip to the Eastern States which I did and stoped three months in Victoria.

January 1st 1897

I started in a two mile race off scratch. I won after a good race. W. Nichols ran second off 100 yards.

I started in a three mile race off scratch. I won after a good race. Cooper second. £15

January 26th

I started in the Australian Native Association Wheel Race run in Melbourne. Two cyclists feel and I went over the top off them so that spoiled my chance.

April 17th

I started in a mile and a half race at Bunbury in which I



Above; George Stotter, race ready

was not placed.

I started in a scratch race one mile which I won £10

May 22nd 1897

I started in scratch race one mile at Perth Association Cricket Ground which I won. Value £15

I started in five mile paced race at Perth. Ran third.

I started in half mile handicap race. Won by E. Morrison I got second.

May 24th 1897

I started in W.A. Wheel Race two miles run at Perth. I won after a close race. Start 90 yards Value £50 First.

I started in a mile scratch race which I won value £15

June 1st 1897

I started in Karrakatta Wheel Race two miles. £50 which I won off 50 yard mark.

June 1st 1897

I started in a mile scratch race which I won. Porta second and Running third.

June 22nd 1897

I started in mile handicap race at Perth. Won by Coultas 85 yards Irwin second 85 Stotter third scratch.

I started in ten mile scratch race. I won, Reynolds the Irish champion second and M. Porta Italian champion third. Value £30.

June 23rd 1897

I started in the one mile championship of WA. I won after an exciting race.

....

The entire text of George's diary can be found online at;

<https://goo.gl/EifE6r>

Club Auction Nov. 20th

MH Jones - mid eighties with Suntour Superbe Pro groupset, 52cm seat tube, 56cm top tube, picture below.

No name **custom built lightweight tourer / Audax bike**. late '70's to early '80's. Shimano Arabesque groupset, no seat or front wheel. 50cm seat tube, 52cm top tube.

No name **lightweight late 80's racer** with a wild flouro fade paint job. Shimano 105 group. 57cm seat tube, 57cm top tube. No seat.

Pair of new in box **Worthy cycling shoes** - UK size 8, complete with new cleats. Picture below.



Introducing a new member

Lachlan Steele

Lachlan is into old cars and riding old bikes. He rides regularly with the Back Alley Peddlers. His collection includes;

- 40-50's Mystery bike with cyclo rear dropouts
- 50-60s Ladies Swansea ridden in '16 Beverley Heroic
- 40's ish delivery bike, possibly a Pashley
- 80s Malvern Star Racer

He is keen to get a locally made 1920's or earlier bike to ride in next year's Heroic.

Displays and Rides

Vincent Swap Meet

The club supported members with a massive booking of 5 bays for the October swap meet. As usual it seems like there are more sellers than buyers. Alan Hind's son Ian joined us, assisted by Daniel Hockridge Trucking, and sold a few more of Alan's frames and a substantial amount of parts. He has donated what little is left to the club.



Beverley Heroic

Club members Collyn, Dennis, Richard, Rob, Viv, Ian, Lachlan and Cameron all showed up for this fabulous event this year. A couple of us are among the elite eight who've completed every one of the rides in the 4 years since the event's inception.

There were 130 riders in all doing either the 160km or 85km routes. Most of the 85km riders were on historic machines. It was a beautiful day in the country, warm enough to fill the air with the scent of new mown hay, breezy enough to keep us comfortable as we rode.

Next year WAHCC team jerseys are in order!



Ride2Work Day

A cool windy start to the day didn't deter ride to workers this year. Our feeling that it was the busiest one yet was confirmed by the organisers. This was the first official outing for the club's new pull up banners

Have A Go Day

A tonne of members turned out for Have A Go Day this year. The new pull up banners were in action again and inspired some very interesting conversations.

Club Calendar

Meeting - November 20th 7:30pm

Ardross Clubroom. Last meeting for 2017 - special general meeting to adopt new rules. Club auction

Christmas Lunch - November 26th 11:30am

Ardross Clubroom verandah

Meeting - November 27th 6:30pm

43 Alfred St, McKail, (Albany)

Ride - Christmas Pageant - December 2nd

St Georges Terrace, Perth

Meeting - January 15th 7:30pm

Ardross Clubroom. Speaker Hugh Richardson, grandson of famous early endurance rider Arthur Richardson.



For Sale

Nickel plating kit

Janekits nickel plating kit including hot bath (heater), transformer, thermometer, ingots and nickel wire, instructions etc plus concentrated solution for 3 litres of plating, Nimac (brightener) partswash and 2 trays. All you need to start plating. I have used this kit over the last few years but it is now surplus. Price \$120

Contact Malcolm Buckland 95279427

Wanted

Bottom bracket spindle

125mm cotted bottom bracket spindle

Contact Viv Cull 0424436261

Western Australian Historical Cycle Club Inc.
PO Box 224, Applecross, WA, 6153
email info.wahcc@gmail.com
President: Robert Frith
Vice President: William Riseborough
Treasurer: Malcolm Bell
Secretary: Robert Hunt
Committee Member: Malcolm Buckland

DISCLAIMER The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the WA Historical Cycle Club and the accuracy of information published herein is not guaranteed.

Trapped In The Shed With... Malcolm Bell

What are you currently working on?

I am working on the restoration of five Penny Farthing bikes.

How many rideable bikes do you have?

I think I have approximately fifteen rideable bikes, most of them are pre 1900.

What was your first bike?

Aged 5 my first bike was an 18 inch Malvern Star. My first collectable bike was a 54 inch Coventry Machinist Penny Farthing.

Pick a bike, any bike... in your dreams what are you riding?

What bike do I dream about riding? You guessed it again, a Penny Farthing.

If push comes to shove what is your favourite bike?

My favourite bike? You guessed it, a Penny Farthing. Yes, all of them!

Whistle while you work? Give us a tip on the sounds that fill your workspace.

Where did I put that?

Where did I leave that?

Have you seen this and that?

Did you take that?

Aren't you ready for your lunch yet? If you don't come soon it will go in the bin!

Aside from the spoken word the real sounds are lots of grinding, lots of cutting, lots of polishing and welding

