



Not The Spoken Word

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

Driver by name, rider by nature

A recent visit to the museum in Southern Cross revealed a once-loved "humble tool of the Twentieth Century" (to quote Jim Fitzpatrick's "The Bicycle and the Bush"). This humble tool had belonged to Fred Driver, long-time resident of nearby Moorine Rock. Fred was a pipe runner and did a daily bicycle patrol along the Goldfield's pipeline, checking for leaks. The Pipeline, that most remarkable and historically poignant engineering feat in our region, provided the pulsing artery which ultimately beat Australia's longest typhoid epidemic in the Goldfields and in many other ways brought progress. Enough progress in fact to quench an enduring thirst from mining and agriculture throughout the region.

Fred would ride alternately west to Garratt and east to Noongar, each a daily round trip of about 30 km. His bike, remote from archivist attention, battle weary and lacking care, hangs indelicately in the Southern Cross museum shed.

According to "The Bicycle and the Bush", this use was typical along much of the 557km pipeline for about 60 years, from its completion in the early 1900's. Another of Fred's humble tools was a hammer, for caulking cracked seam welds with lead shot.

The bike is unremarkable, except for its place in the history of the Goldfields. The generous sweep of the drop bars had been turned up for comfort. The 'Major Taylor' headstem is more often associated with racing cycles than utility bikes. Fixed or freewheel I wondered? Possibly fixed as the Philco rear calliper brake appeared to be an after-thought. It was poorly aligned on the rim and what was left of the brake lever had been mounted clumsily on the top tube.

It seems Fred was handy with a strand of wire; tidy wire reinforcements adorned the pedals and a fine figure of 8 loop secured the break link on the chain.

Fred Gordon Driver would have been around 18 when the pipeline was completed in the early

1900's. He was carting water to pioneer farmers in the early 1920's, a hint perhaps that by then he was working on the pipeline. A perk of working on the pipeline was unlimited water for the home garden and vegetable patch. Assuming he made his pipe runs for perhaps 25-40 years (a reasonable guess by the look of the bike), a conservative estimate puts the bike's working life at around 200,000-300,000 km.

Fred was still residing at Moorine Rock at his death aged 73, in 1957. No doubt he understood well what richness to life the pipeline provided, with his own dedicated contribution to it. *Robert Loughman*



Cleaning Tips

Colin's Swansea takes a bath

I would like to share little a success story of a product I recently trialled called Rust Bucket.

After researching the product I was keen to try it out on a 1934 Swansea recently acquired from a fellow club member.

The process of chelation which targets only iron oxide (rust) is common some of the other rust removal remedies and products out there. What really intrigued me was that Rustbucket is a pH 7 (neutral) product which is supposed to prevent flash rusting of the surface of the newly cleaned metal associated with other rust removal methods. So essentially there is a fairly large window to apply your sealers or paint without the fear of instantaneous re-rusting.

The manufacturer recommends a ratio of 1 litre of Rust Bucket powder to 5 litres of water. I built a frame shaped bath from scrap timber lined with plastic sheet which had a capacity of 20 litres. I halved the recommended dosage partly to assuage my fear of paint and patina loss and bought 2 litres of powder. At \$43 a bottle it also halved the budget!

After 12 hours in the solution the results were surprisingly good, simply hosing off with water and voila!; once dried the frame was ready for waxing. I noticed that the solution was really dirty, so it did a fantastic in removing any rust and flaky paint.

Photos at right.

Rust Bucket, by Action Corrosion
<http://www.actioncorrosion.com.au/product/rust-bucket-safe-rust-removal-bath/>

Colin Proctor

Beckett's Cleaner

You may be familiar with microcrystalline conservation wax as used by conservation technicians at the WA Museum.

It protects all types of surfaces including unpainted metal and, most importantly, protects an old bike's patina whilst being completely reversible.

Evan Thomas, the man behind Becketts conservation wax, has kindly shared his recipe for a wax and grime remover.

I have used this on numerous projects now and I have found it to be an effective cleaner, yet reassuringly gentle on old paint and decals.

Be aware that white spirits can make some plastic containers go soft so either test first or use a container previously used for turpentine, acetone, white spirits etc.

4 parts white spirits 400ml
2 parts methylated spirits 200ml
1 part vinegar 100ml
1/2 dish detergent 50ml

Shake before use and apply to surface, allow to dry and wipe down.

Frank West



ForSale

1933 Malvern Star 2 Star \$400

Cream & green Malvern Star Frame# 28036 that received a factory repaint in the 1950's.

The genuine factory stickers are in good condition for age and the frame has lovely painted arrows and pretty line work.

Features "Oppy" drop bars, sad Brooks saddle, 28" inch wheels, single speed with Philco brake (centre-pull brake currently fitted for rideability).

Pics can be seen under "Members Bikes" on the clubs web site, though to appreciate paint work must be seen in the flesh.

Reluctant sale, but I need it's space in the shed. I hope to see it stay in the club.

Frank West 0404060289 or fpwest@optusnet.com.au

1980's Cycles Gitane 12 speed racer converted to single speed fixed. Some original parts. and choice of pedals; either old Look or a newer pair of Welgos. Would clean up easily. Also has the original brakes and a set of old Australian V brakes (noisy but effective).

\$100 or a reasonable offer.

Gareth Buckland 95274650 or Malcolm Buckland 95279427

Wanted

Chain - suitable for a 1934 Swansea
BSA Crank - Non Drive Side (fluted)
Plastic stopper - suit ATP 'raygun' stem
Gear cable plastic stopper & clamp - suit
Oddball/Dragster rear chain stay.

Colin Proctor 0418378400

Stuck in the Shed with Collyn Gawned

What are you currently working on?

I have come to the realisation I am not really a restorer of bikes...I like to acquire them to ride, so usually they are in working condition when I get them.

That said I am acquiring parts (I have the frame with forks and handle bars and front wheel) to reconstruct a 1978 Peugeot Mixte; more parts to convert a 1970's Malvern Star 'Skidstar' frame to a hipster café rider (I want to ride to 'be seen' sometimes too!) but most importantly I have a '4R' bicycle (bike with 4 'R's brazed on the head tube), possibly from the 1930's, under restoration. It's in pieces but all the components are there. I have another '2R' (probably 1950's) in working order and two other frames. 'R' bikes are a bit of a mystery; there is a Runwell in the Collie Bicycle Museum (and that one was built in Collie by Geoff Pianta, there was a bicycle of that name made in the UK too) and there is speculation the 'R' could also stand for Rainbow.

How many rideable bikes do you have?

There are 23 bicycles that I could this minute take down from their hangers and ride: ranging from Ordinary (Penny Farthing) bicycle, 1995 GT mountain bike belonging to my son (who, unlike Mulga Bill, never really caught the cycling craze) to a BMX bike constructed with my second Grandson from parts retrieved – rear wheel, handle bars; donated – frame; and sundry other bits from the shed.

If push comes to shove what is your favourite bike?

After my Avanti carbon road bike, which doesn't really count here because its part of a different cycling life, it would have to be the red steel framed Shimano ten speed road bike from about 1980. What a dream to it is to ride, and I have yet to see another Shimano bike.

Oh, and then there is the crusty Carlton – about 1965 – which runs along nicely when you get it going... and I have a little Ricardo 'Elite' (too small for me really)...and the Dawes ladies (late 1970's) which is the most comfortable bike I have ever ridden... No, it's definitely the Shimano.

What was your first bike?

No idea, but it was a fixie, bought by my Dad for 10 shillings (I seem to recall...) in 1959. It had been repainted with enamel paint (blue with green lugs) and

it suffered further indignity at my hands as well: yellow with black lugs.

In 1962 my Dad gave me his bike when he decided he would give up riding to work at age 55 and take the new car. That was a single gear Malvern Star 2 Star and I had it until I left school in 1965. I don't know what happened to it after that but it was the first bike that I discovered I liked to ride, ride fast and climb hills...

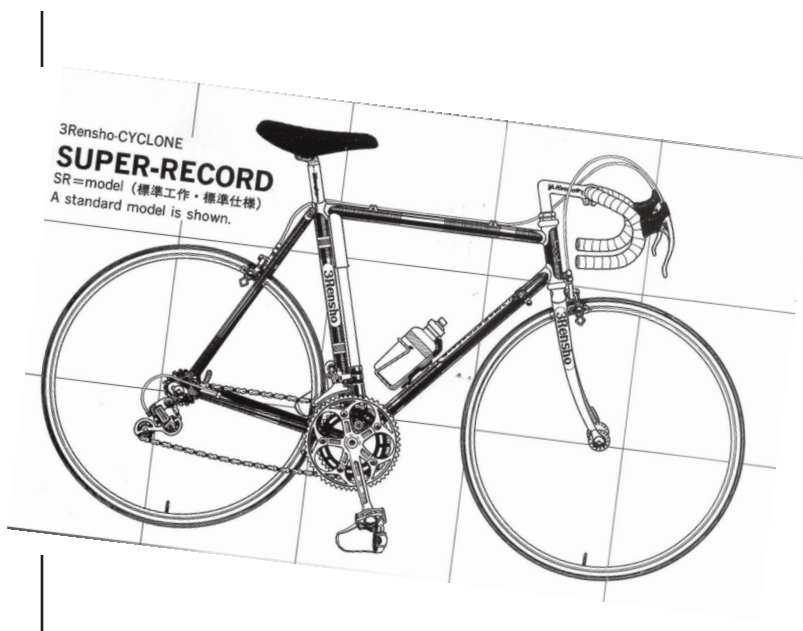


Pick a bike any bike.. in your dreams what are you riding?

Something minimalist, elegant, light and fast: a Hetchins "curly" perhaps, or a Yoshi Konno 3Rensho Super Record Export (about 1984, it has a beautiful frame design), or a 5 Swansea in lovely condition...

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

Muttering, a lot of muttering, grinding of teeth and the sound of the turning cogs in my head. Things happen quietly and slowly in my shed.



Club Calendar

Mon 16th Sept. 19:30

Monthly Meeting
6 Hickey St, Ardross

Sun 29th Sept. 10am

Whiteman Park ride and picnic
Meet at the carpark adjacent to Revolutions Transport Museum, Whiteman Park

Mon 21st Oct. 21st 19:30

Monthly Meeting
6 Hickey St, Ardross

Nov 9th Display - Bonjour Perth
Subiaco

Nov 13th Display - Have A Go Day
Burswood

Mon 18th Nov. 19:30

Monthly Meeting
6 Hickey St, Ardross

Sun 24th Nov. 11:30

Christmas Lunch
6 Hickey St, Ardross

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Ladies, £8; Junior, £6 10s; Juven-
ile, £6 10s; Tradesman's £7 10s;
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12s 6d extra); Racer, £11 10s; with
wood rims, £12; "Challenge" Racer
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FATAL BICYCLE ACCIDENT.

DANGER OF OLD MACHINES.

The city coroner, Mr. Candler, yesterday held an inquest regarding the death of Samuel G. Sinclair, a young man, who was killed on Wednesday morning, at Northcote, by a fall from his bicycle. The bicycle, which was an old one, broke in the steering tube, immediately above the crown. Deceased at the time was riding along the tram track, near the sheds in High-street, Northcote.

John Keane, gripman, said:—I came on the scene immediately after the fall. Deceased was lying unconscious on the tram track, grasping the handles of his bicycle. The front wheel of the bicycle had rolled away from the machine. There was no obstruction on the road to cause the fall.

Constable Coppethwaite said:—I was summoned to the tramshed, where I found Sinclair unconscious. A doctor had been telephoned for, but had not arrived, and I took Sinclair to the Melbourne Hospital, where he died. The bicycle was a very old one, and, in my opinion, it was not fit to be ridden.

John Sinclair, father of deceased, said:—My son was 19 years of age, and was an experienced bicycle rider. I bought this bicycle about eight years ago, and on one occasion the diagonal tube broke down, and I had it repaired. My son was very careful with the bicycle, and nearly every Wednesday he took it to pieces, and examined it. The machine was a New Rapid, made in Birmingham.

To the Coroner.—We never had the bicycle examined by an expert. I believe that my son was in the habit of riding fast.

The coroner recorded a verdict of accidental death.

BICYCLE ACCIDENT.

A serious accident happened to two cyclists named Joseph Scott and Claude Hall on Saturday morning, by which both were badly injured. The two wheelmen were training on the Brunswick Recreation-reserve, and while riding at a high speed round the track they collided with a calf that had been grazing in the reserve. The force of the collision threw both cyclists violently to the ground, and rendered them insensible. They were picked up by some other wheelmen who were on the track, and having been placed in a cab were conveyed to their homes. The calf's leg was broken.