

CHATTIN' CHAINS

JUNE 2025



SEE THE BRIDGES OF PERTH AT NIGHT - PAGE 16

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Things that didn't work. In the previous issue, there was an attempt to start a marketplace (called 'Recycling') where bikes and bike paraphernalia were up for sale. Not the best media: issues of immediacy and privacy emerged. Social media would be a better place for recycling your gear. I had been told.

We tried a quiz over a couple of issues and I can report that no answers landed in my inbox and therefore no laurels were awarded. So we won't repeat that either.

All of which brings me to the question: what more would you like to see in the newsletter? My view is that it should cover these broad areas: our Club, cycling, and our life and times. Please tell me what else.

I'd really like to hear your views. I'm happy to have a dialogue on or off these pages. Also, if you know of members who don't read the newsletter, I'd like to know why they don't.

Meanwhile, comments by President Nev point out that the Club is not a forum for political advocacy and we are limited in our actions by the constitution. Secretary Brian provides a summary of what the committee is dealing with, and Ride Captain Sandra covers a lot of ground, both on and off her bike.

Dashcams on bikes aren't as common as in cars and on motorbikes, but when they are running during an incident, they can be persuasive in an argument with the law. See Joe Falzon's story.



The Ottaways ventured onto the city bike paths one night and took some spectacular bridge photos. The suggestion is: should we include night rides in the ride programme? Many of the bike paths are lit.

Meanwhile, what do we most discuss at coffee? How about articles on health matters written by a well-qualified member? Let's call him Dr John.

Graham Baws

Newsletter Editor

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Over 55 Cycling Club (the Club) continues to exist because of the willingness of a team of people, the Committee, to run it under its rule book, the Constitution. Our Club is registered under an act of law, the Associations Incorporation Act 2015 (the Act). It needs to be registered and have a constitution, that's in part what brings it into existence because it's not a 'natural person'.

The 'Committee' is the Management Committee required by the Act and responsible for running the Club (Part 4).

At the Club's 2025 AGM there was an example of *not* following the procedure for raising issues at that meeting. Around 8 pm on the evening prior, the Secretary received a member's proposal for inclusion under General Business. It called on the Club to actively support a local Council in opposing a development proposal at Burswood put forward by the WA Government.

The proposal was allowed to be put at the AGM and opposing views were also aired. When a motion from the floor was put forward to approve the proposal, the chair of the meeting dismissed the motion because it was not in accordance with the Constitution. Section 23.2(b) requires a minimum of twenty-eight days' notice to be given for motions to be presented at the AGM.

This allows the Secretary time to forward an agenda to members in accordance with Section 17.3 together with any motions so that members have sufficient time to research the motions and make informed decisions.

The proposal was presented at the next following Committee meeting. The Committee decided unanimously to deny the proposal as it didn't meet the requirements of Section 1.2, Objects of Association.

Finally, a comment on the difference between an Ordinary Resolution and a Special Resolution. An Ordinary Resolution generally applies to amendments to the By-Laws and requires a simple majority to pass. A Special Resolution applies to any amendments to the Constitution and requires a three-fourths majority to pass and must be registered with the relevant Government Authority within one month of the date of the AGM or SGM.

These rules are not there to frustrate members but to establish order and inform members how they can interact with, and make changes to, the running of the Club.

Nev Taylor

President



FROM THE SECRETARY

Committee Snippets

Members who have not worked in the Club committee may be unaware of the work that goes on behind the scenes. The purpose of this article is to provide information on some of the issues addressed by the committee over recent meetings:

Club Trailer

It's been given a deep clean, all stock and equipment has been checked and replaced as necessary. Safety equipment, including fire extinguishers and first aid kits, have been refreshed and the trailer professionally serviced to ensure that it remains functional and roadworthy.

Club Christmas Function

Planning has already commenced and the venue, Willetton Sports Stadium, has been booked, together with the entertainment.

Club Website

Changes have been made to improve its appearance and functionality.

Mandurah Ride

Considerable planning was necessary for the recently completed ride and evening meal at the Peninsular Hotel.



Busselton Camp Dinner Dance 2026

A venue has been booked for the dinner dance during the first week of the 2026 camp and we are awaiting confirmation from the preferred musician for the event.

Club Promotion

The committee has approved proposals to promote the Club via a Community Newspaper advertisement and a weekly radio announcement on Capital Community Radio 101.7 FM.

Burswood Park Racetrack

A proposal for the Club to actively support the Victoria Park Council in opposing the racetrack was not approved by the committee. Activities of this nature are not supported by Section 1.2 of the Constitution dealing with the Objects and Purposes of our Club.

Brian Smith
Secretary



FROM THE RIDE CAPTAIN

Again, the past three months have been quite busy for everyone. The Ride Team, with Steve Napier, Graham Baker and Peter Davis, has been focused on Ride Safety whilst managing the ride programme.

We have maintained awareness in keeping ourselves and others riding safely, so we appreciate receiving incident reports from members. These are used to see if we can prevent them from becoming actual accidents.

The reasons why we collect statistics from rides was explained by me in the March 2025 Newsletter. Also, why we use the data in graphs, which are shown on the Website and Facebook page and are best explained by Cameron, our Statistician, as follows:

“For me, the overall purpose is to create a greater sense of cohesion amongst the members. Most only know what their group is doing. The weekly summary provides a snapshot of all the Club rides. No other reporting gives so much information at such frequency. Additionally, the occasional tables I publish in the Newsletter and on Facebook are designed to provide highlights.”

Ebikes are slowly being taken up by current and new members with around 70 at present.

Albany Camp week was enjoyable, in spite of the first day being a washout! Some rides had their coffee stop close, a couple of new rides were introduced and awards were made:



Albany Heritage Park





Winner Corn Hole comp Richard & Bernadette Brooks Smith



Corn Hole comp runners-up Gary Thomas and George Small



Ride destination was Barrel Farm

The Achievement Day Rides numbers were 19, (for third year now) so options will be considered for the event next year.

For the May Overnight Ride, some 25 members chose to ride, train, or drive from Burswood to Mandurah. Some explored Mandurah in the afternoon. We enjoyed an evening meal together and returned the next day. It was successful and something to be considered for inclusion in next year's schedule of rides.

We still have a problem with group numbers, often being over the Club's guideline number of 10 (see By-Laws 2.5). It is a 'good' problem to have, but it is a problem, nonetheless!

Here are some comments:

Last year, I rode with all the groups and have to say that the Ride Leaders are all doing excellent work in their role for managing group rides and managing riders. I asked some, but feel that they would all agree, to being a Mentor for someone who would like to 'shadow' the Ride Leader for practice, to gain experience and to become more comfortable with leading.

It would be up to current Ride Leaders to ask their group members to 'step up, to learn from them, from the Club riding guidelines and from their own riding experience of Club rides. Think about it as 'succession' planning.

Strategies 1-3 below, are about the group sizes and reducing their numbers to 10 by having more Ride Leaders available.

Strategy 1

If groups are communicating with their members (say through Facebook, Messenger or WhatsApp), then there is time for everyone to know about the next ride. To either transfer that information by digital means (downloaded to bike computer or mobile phone), or to simply write out the turns, would have a number of people aware of the planned route. This would allow the group to split in two with another Ride Leader and Tail Ender.

Strategy 2

If two Ride Leaders worked as a team and both knew the route, then making separate riding groups would become less difficult on the day.

Strategy 3

Or, simply for everyone to bring a route that they could follow, so if problems arise with leadership and numbers on the day, they could take the leader's role.

Of course, when saying Ride Leaders, we are including Tail Enders in these conversations. As with most things in life, these issues are a 'work in progress' so we will keep considering plans to maintain and hopefully improve rides and riding practices.

Sandra Patullo

Ride Captain



FROM THE STATISTICIAN

Three charts are attached - two on ride leader achievements, and one on safety.

Here we highlight the achievements of our leaders from the camps. Plus those from the Monday rides which generally go unnoticed.

Be wary of Road Surface and Cornering as you ride. They are the main causes of accidents after the general category of Rider Error.

Cameron Blyth
Statistician



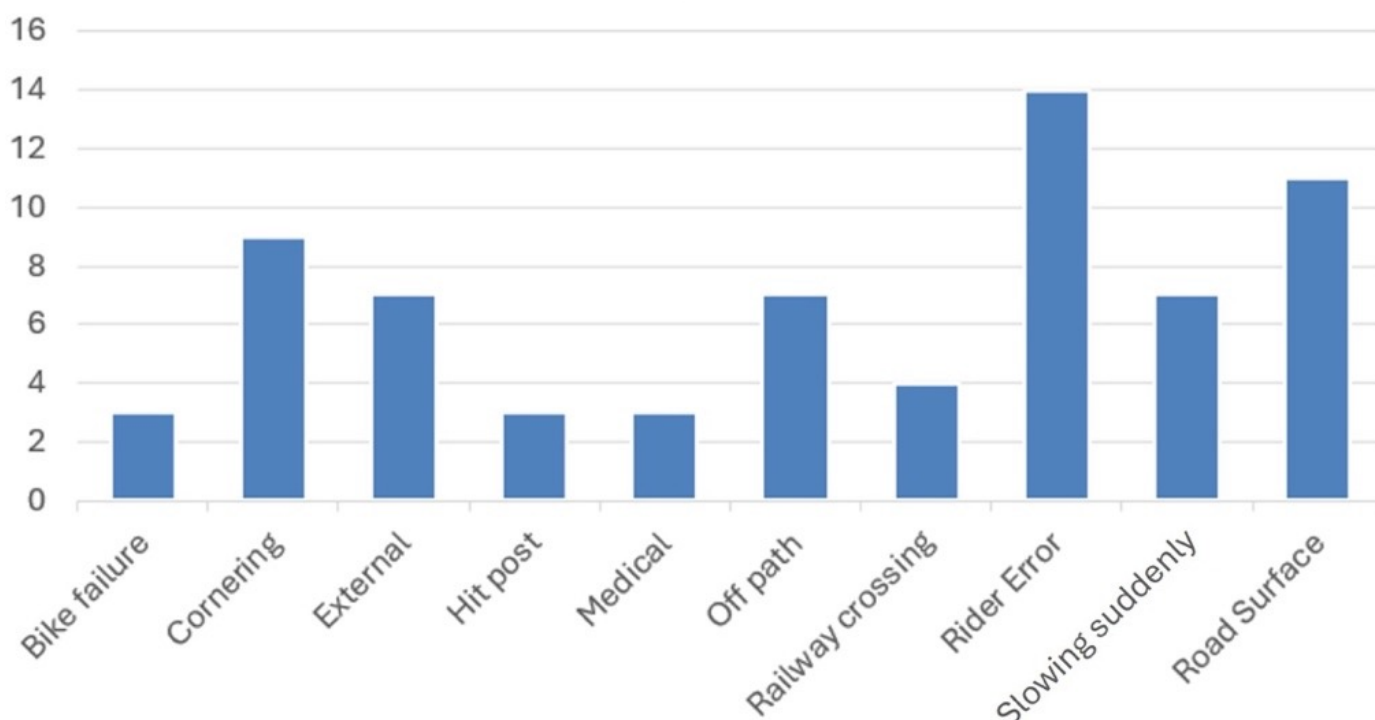
Monday Leaders - all 2024 and 2025 to date

| Burswood | | Leederville | |
|--------------|----|--------------|----|
| Ian Johnson | 16 | Ian Johnson | 15 |
| Peter Mayall | 13 | Peter Mayall | 15 |

Camp Leaders - Rides 2024 and 2025

| Busselton | | | Albany | |
|------------------|------|------|----------------------|---------|
| | 2024 | 2025 | | 2024-25 |
| Marilyn D'Angelo | 8 | 8 | Kay Taylor | 6 |
| Gus Barnet | 8 | 5 | Michael Le Page | 5 |
| Steve Ottaway | 1 | 11 | John Bailey | 5 |
| Nev Taylor | 4 | 6 | Australind | |
| Daphne Small | 4 | 5 | | 2025 |
| Rob Wallace | 6 | 2 | Richard Brooke-Smith | 5 |
| Kay Taylor | 4 | 4 | Shirlene Scanlen | 5 |

Accidents by Type- 2021 to 2025



RIDE LEADERS & TAIL ENDERS MEETING

Sandra Patullo, our Ride Captain, hosted an open-air meeting at Burswood Park. It was directed at Ride Leaders, Tail Enders and anyone else who was interested. The notes below are a brief record of the meeting in the form of discussion points. Many of the issues covered have already been discussed, but are also still evolving.

RIDE TEAM MEETING 7 MAY 2025

Welcome

The feedback I've noted from prospective members has been positive and described using words such as camaraderie, comfort, supportive, courteous, friendly, and helpful. Prospective members have referred to Club members as "great people".

Ride Team comments are: Ride Leaders and Tail Enders are the central focus for all Club rides and we need to support their time and efforts that go to make every ride a success. Without these members stepping up, we don't really have a functioning Club.

Our safety focus is on incident awareness and enhancing people's thinking to prevent accidents; these points are always to be included in announcements at the start of rides. And we'll repeat and revisit these issues as needed.

The Ride Team's mantra is
'PLAN SAFETY, RIDE SAFELY'.

Group sizes

The limit of ten has become a focus for managing safe rides. Several larger groups are working to reduce their numbers by creating two smaller groups. This is ideal. This also requires planning which increases riding safety for everyone.

Prospective members

Prospective members should always contact the Ride Captain prior to their first ride, attend with a New Member Waiver form plus the Pedelec Notification form (if applicable). Prospective members should not just roll up and expect to ride!

Don't assume what you cannot see

Think really well about positioning yourselves down the left-hand side of vehicles. Be it at the front, the side or behind, all have risks.

MEMBERS QUERIES, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

eBikes

Riding an eBike is the same as a standard pedal bike using the gears to enable varying speeds.

Calling hazards

A Tail-Enders call MUST be passed along to the Ride Leader.

Calls from the front to the back must also be passed along.

Calls need to be SHOUTED, not just spoken.

Calls are everyone's responsibility, to both look after themselves and their fellow riders.

Riding single file

Some DRIFT to the right-hand side, over the midline of the path. Everyone needs to call it if they see it happening.

Training for group rides

Read all the riding instruction documents that are on the Club's website, and incorporate them into your riding practices.

Puncture repair training

Attend bike maintenance workshops when they are provided by the Club. Learn techniques from others.



Gino demonstrating puncture repair techniques to an interested audience

New Ride Leaders

See the Ride Captain's article in this Newsletter.



FINAL FACTS:

Summary of the causes of accidents over the last four years

| SUMMARY OF THE CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS | | |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Cause | Number over 4 years | Average per year (RoundUp) |
| Rider errors | 14 | 4 |
| Road surface | 11 | 3 |
| Cornering | 9 | 3 |
| External | 7 | 2 |
| Off path | 7 | 2 |
| Slowing suddenly | 7 | 2 |
| Railway crossing | 4 | 1 |
| Bike failure | 3 | 1 |
| Hit post | 3 | 1 |
| Medical | 3 | 1 |

Sandra Patullo
Ride Captain



RIDING SAFETY

So how did that happen? It's the question we ask of ourselves after an accident, which mars our cycling activity, and can dent our confidence in the enjoyable, sometimes challenging activity which we may have been doing for many years.

Most accidents have a clear cause, from the range of circumstances we confront on every ride and our Ride Captain highlights the importance of Safety in cycling which can be influenced by the weather, time of year or recent mishaps.

Yes, cycling like most adventurous activities, has a level of risk, but which after settling into a comfortable pace and group suits our preferences. However, with an average Club membership age in the low 70s, which has been steadily increasing, those of us who have been in the Club for many years are sometimes facing an ability limit which can be confirmed by accidents or near misses.

The great benefit of our diverse groups in distance and speed means switching between groups may be an option after long non-cycling holidays or as we feel more comfortable riding at a slower pace. If you feel the need to "shift into a lower gear" why not check out the comprehensive ride data which is uploaded by Cameron Blyth to the Over 55 Facebook page (Members of Over 55 Cycling Club in Perth Western Australia) and see if there is a group which might suit your new needs?

Cameron details the Saturday, Monday and Wednesday data in each entry where the distance, average speed, leader and start time is shown. You'll meet a new group of cyclists and possibly use new routes on the journey.

Steve Napier
Deputy Ride Captain



ACHIEVEMENT DAY RIDES

Despite initial enthusiasm from 26 members, this year the event had just 19 participants with:

**4 RIDING 75 KM,
8 RIDING 100 KM AND
7 RIDING 150 KM.**

Rides were supported by experienced riders within these groups which encouraged others to achieve personal bests for their first time, or indeed, to see if they could still manage their chosen distances!

Thanks to Bernadette Brooke-Smith for the refreshments upon return.

Here is a list of the intrepid achievers:

75 KM TEAM

Kerry Cowie (Leader)
Chris Whitehead
Jerry Goodey
Michelle Ottaway

100 KM TEAM 1

Michael Le Page (Leader)
Maria Le Page
Neville Taylor
Steve Napier

100 KM TEAM 2

Patrick Kelly (Leader)
Kevin Davis
John Forde
Dave Gibson

150 KM TEAM

Steve Ottaway (Leader)
George Olney
Peter Patullo
Keith McBurnie
Paul Harvey
Dean Brown
Joe Falzon

Some options for the future. These will be considered in time for next year's Achievement Ride.

*Cancel until interest is regained

*Run the event biannually

*Offer new routes – tentatively looking at north of Perth to Muchea and/or Yanchep. If you have any further ideas, please let me know.

Sandra Patullo
Ride Captain



RAFFLE FOR MND

Following the Achievement Ride awards. There was a raffle organised by Liz for MND. Here are some of the winners.



Humanity drinks around 2bn cups of coffee every day. The good news is that moderate consumption appears to be harmless. It may even be beneficial! (The Economist)

A BRUSH WITH THE LAW

Joe Falzon recounted an incident that happened recently. He makes points that have been made before, but are seriously worth repeating.

While dashcams are becoming ubiquitous in new motor cars and motorbikes, their use on bicycles hasn't yet reached a significant level. Think about it, you are more exposed and less protected on a bicycle. When there's an incident, you'll even up the argument if you've got video evidence. Plus, if other road users become aware that their actions may likely be caught on video, they should take more care around you on your bike.

Joe writes:

During our recent Saturday morning group ride, our riders experienced a sobering reminder of the challenges cyclists can face on the road. While riding single file, as is our usual practice, a car approached from behind and passed us at an alarmingly close distance. The driver leaned on the horn and behaved aggressively, startling several of our riders. It was a frightening moment that could easily have led to a serious accident.

Fortunately, I had my bike camera running, and it captured the entire incident-including a clear shot of the car's number plate. The following morning I visited the local police station to report what had happened. The officers confirmed that I had a valid case and advised me to submit an online report, which I did the next day.

The online reporting process asked whether there were witnesses, if I'd be willing to appear in court, and whether I had video evidence. While I wasn't able to upload the footage at that stage, I did receive confirmation that my report was successfully lodged and that someone would be in touch. As of now, I'm still waiting for further updates from the authorities.

This incident is a timely reminder of the importance of staying vigilant on the road and the value of having cameras to document our rides. Let's continue to look out for one another and ride safely.

Joe Falzon



Editor

While I was driving my car quite recently, I was followed closely by another vehicle who made his anger apparent for reasons unknown to me. A few hundred metres on, he pulled out of the single lane behind my car and overtook on a right-hand slip road for right-turning vehicles. Then swung in front of my car, braking heavily. I had to brake heavily too.

The single lane road broadened to two lanes as we approached traffic lights and he again pulled in front of me to block me from drawing level and identifying him (I'm sure it was a him). At that point I used my phone's camera to record the car and number plate.

Like Joe, I made a report on the Police website that doesn't allow photos. However, a police officer called me the next day, gave me a link to upload the two photos (and didn't scold me for using my phone to take them, I was stationary).

He called me AGAIN to thank me for the report, said that he had checked on the other driver and vehicle. Since there was no video of the dangerous driving segment, they couldn't charge him but the report is filed in their database and will pop up in the event he is involved with the law again. Also, I should consider getting a dashcam, especially after I told him I have one on my bike! I was impressed by the police's responsiveness and satisfied by their level of attention.

So, it's well worth reporting such incidents, especially if you've got a video to back up your complaint.

There are other units available on the market, but Joe, I, and several members of the Club use **Cycliq** camera/lights front and rear. Cycliq is headquartered in Perth and they presently have a '5-year' promotion with a fair discount. So, if you've been considering such units, check them out. You just don't know when you might need a record of a ride.



cycliq.com



OUTSIDE BROADCAST



When the Tuesday evening forecast from the BOM is 41 degrees for the following day, there are limited riding options available. But on a Wednesday back in January, a novel alternative presented itself to the denizens of the north.

Mark “Gibbo” Gibson and the whole ABC breakfast gang were broadcasting live from Lake Joondalup starting from sometime around 6 am.

Michelle realised the possibilities of combining an early morning ride and gaining publicity for our Club. A quick note on Tuesday on our Facebook page let people know of the plan.

Leaving home at 6 am, we rode and met up with others at Neil Hawkins Park at Lake Joondalup. When a photo opportunity arose we were ready, and the evidence is here!

Our Club jerseys drew a number of queries from other cyclists and “Gibbo” made mention of the Club during his broadcast. He admitted that after his next birthday he’ll qualify for membership and we made sure that when he left us, he was holding a Club contact card.

Steve & Michelle Ottoway



NEW STAFF MEMBER



Canola field

These photos are by Ray Scanlan, the official newsletter photographer. We thought you'd like to see a selection from his portfolio at the same time that we officially announce his role to the readers (and also to him).

With limited editorial capacity, we invited ChatGPT to introduce Ray's work to you. This is their (its?) words:

'Among these captivating images, landscapes seem to hold a special place in Ray's portfolio. From expansive canola fields shimmering in golden hues to tranquil reflections that blur the lines between earth and water, his artistry captures moments that resonate with the viewer. Each photograph tells a story—be it a fleeting adventure, a quiet pause, or the thrill of movement—that invites the observer into the vivid tales of nature and life. Ray's work not only complements the gallery but also enriches the narrative we aim to share with our members.'

Reflection





Flinders Ranges SA



Going somewhere

Ray Scanlan
Newsletter Photographer



Hangin' out



Hangin' 5



THE YELLOW REVOLUTION

This is from Delys Howlett in 2015. Our history is always worth recounting, especially if it's in verse.
How about some new verse about our old Club?

THE YELLOW REVOLUTION

A revolution they said!!!
Unstoppable as an ocean tide.
The health industry saved.
Rocking chair industry gone bust
What will they do to earn a crust?

It started in '84 ye know.
Get the seniors fit; a must.
Rusty bikes wobbled and squeaked
Old muscles stretched and joints creaked.
Wheels began turning, and turn they certainly did.
The birth of an army
A yellow lycra army what's more.

The ride was on:
Perth to Bunbury, Busselton to Kalgoorlie,
Kalbarri, Geraldton and Albany too.
Fremantle to Kiama, Bike n Barge through Europe
The tracks of the Cape to Cape conquered with skill.
The Birdsville Track; as well as the ups n downs of Tasmania.
Lands' End to John O' Groats; the ancient roads of China.
Even the hills of New Zealand , all tackled with a thrill.
No road was safe
No city or town exempt

You'll see Yellow here and you'll see Yellow there
Happy cyclists with wind blowing through grey hair
Bodies rejuvenated, tanned and fine tuned
Those dam cyclists in Yellow lycra are every where.

Congratulations Perth Over 55ers
Happy 30th Birthday

Delys Howlett 2015

BIKE PLAN MAKES DANES GREAT

This was an article that appeared in the Post in April, spotted by Robin Garbutt. Copenhagen has a population of some 1.4 million (Perth 2.3 million) and, based on the figures below, has some 300,000 commuting daily cyclists. If you have any comments on the development of Perth's bike paths and bike access, we can include them in the newsletter. (newsletter@o55perth.bike)



A Perth sustainability expert has found that a Danish move to reduce car use in the capital, Copenhagen, has boosted business activity. Arup senior sustainability consultant Hannah Sutton, who moved from Perth to Copenhagen last year, explained the plan to concentrate development on five main corridors, or fingers.

"This plan structured regional access to the city centre and encouraged bus and bike use within the city itself, laying the groundwork for today's extensive bike network," she said.

The finger plan involved five designated corridors along rail lines, all directed towards the city's central business district. The rationale behind the five fingers was to allow for controlled urban growth as well as recreation, green space and agriculture. Ms Sutton explained that the city had expanded on this foundation with "super biking roads" and pedestrian-only zones, including Strøget in the city centre.

At 1.1 km, this area is one of the longest pedestrian shopping streets in Europe. Ms Sutton said the introduction of car-free areas had boosted local businesses by increasing foot traffic. About 40% of the city's daily commutes were by bicycle, she said, with more than 745,000 bikes in the city.

This compares to about 5% of people using active transportation in Perth, according to a recent study by urban strategy and design firm Gehl. Copenhagen has 546 km of bike paths and more than 24 dedicated bicycle and pedestrian bridges which serve to connect key areas.

Perth's \$13 billion Metronet project is almost complete, but critics say there needs to be more mid-tier transport to fill in the gaps between the 72 km of new passenger rail.

Claire Tyrrell



BIKES IN FREO

Rusty Christensen was a Freo identity, a bush poet and active in the Fremantle History Society. Keith Wilson attended performances by Rusty and had the following story. It was included for several obvious reasons! There are other stories by Mr Christensen, one about his father returning from work on his bike, and calling into a couple of pubs on George Street, Freo on the way home. But that's for another time.

Thanks to Fremantle History Society for permission to reprint this piece.

With all the hype building for the forthcoming Olympic Games and trials for the contenders to compete for their country in the various sports I am always intrigued by the cycling. I feel I am influenced by the fact that my old home town was once the hub of hack cycling in Western Australia and produced many fine exponents of the sport, both pre-war and in the years following the cessation of hostilities in that fruitless exercise.

You may ask "Where did they race?" with the answer being "On Fremantle Oval", not on the Oval itself but on an asphalt track around the circumference of the now solely football ground. The track was put down in 1898 and was removed in the early 1960s having survived two wars and produced many champion riders including the Smith brothers who held many Australian titles. Unfortunately the records and the names have not survived the passage of time.

In the 1960s the sport was in decline and the powers that be thought it would be a wise move to have constructed a purpose built velodrome. The east and south Fremantle footballers who trained and played on the oval were not sorry to see the asphalt track go. A full blooded bump from Alby 'Nails' Weston, 'Bulldozer' Stevens or George Prince could see the recipient land unceremoniously on the track, often with the loss of a fair amount of skin and a damaged ego.

Friday night was 'bikes night' in Fremantle in the summer, the trams were packed with supporters of the popular sport who would crowd in to 'the oval' in anticipation of some keen racing, the still standing wooden grandstand would be filled by the early comers and the older generation while the more active gathered on the sloping asphalt concourse in front of the stand. The thrill seekers would gather behind the fence at the top of the straight where the track was steeply banked at the rear of the town end goals and under a huge Morton Bay Fig tree which had a habit of shedding its small, round fruit onto the track. They caused many a prang just where the riders had wound up for the sprint to the finishing line, leaving a tangle of bikes and riders spread across the track, often with the rider still strapped to his machine with arms and legs covered with abrasions of varying degrees. As one prominent sporting character was reputed to have said after one

nasty spill 'The magpies will clean up the blood, skin and hair in the morning' (unquote).

The sport was hugely successful pre-war, not only in Fremantle but in the various large towns - Kalgoorlie, Collie, Bunbury to mention just a few - as well as many smaller centres in between, all of whom sponsored road racing. The Collie to Donnybrook springs to mind as one of the classics, now long forgotten as many others are along with the competitors. One old, former rider from Kalgoorlie, Charlie Nalty turned up in Fremantle during the war when nothing much was going on and claimed he had won the Westral Wheelrace in Kalgoorlie in the golden years of the sport in that city. He was a familiar sight around town with his bandaged legs (protecting his varicose veins) propelling his old style racing bike, handing out nuts and dried fruit to the kids and telling anyone who would listen about his exploits of bike racing in the Goldfields, including of course the prestigious Westral Wheelrace.

In pre-war days (including the Depression years), sport took a back seat to securing a job and keeping it. There was not the wide range of varying sports and facilities that people enjoy today; football, cricket and swimming also boxing, cycling and foot running (where you might earn a quid) was about the limit of the participating competitive sports. There were others, tennis, golf, sailing (yachting) et al, but they didn't have the pulling appeal for the punters as the aforementioned.

Most kids had their favourite bike rider, Horry Marshall who had won the Melbourne Cup of cycling, the Warrnambool to Melbourne in 1929 had about the biggest following when he raced on the Fremantle track. Jack Casserly, Dave Stevenson, Harold Willie, (who claimed he rode off scratch in a road race with the great Hubert Opperman), Frank (Splinter) Holland, Tom McBride, Ted Powell, Harold Durrant and Tom Norris are names that spring to mind.

In the immediate post war years a new generation of pedal pushers emerged including Alf Norris, Ernie and Tom Townson, the enigmatic Waveney Ford, the brilliant but erratic Tommy Grant (who ended his short career when he wrapped himself around a post on the Midland track), track and road champion Norm Burdus, Emie Togg (Tognolini), Jack Cassidy (who later built the 16 foot skiff

Evelin which he skippered to state and national titles as well as founding the very successful Cassidy sails), Phil Kidd a tall bloke who built his own bikes; Joe Casserly, Clarrie and Joe Minculla, Maurie Powell, Bill Gilbride, champion rider Geoff Baker. The list goes on as many of the young blokes in the area were attracted to the bikes.

The League of WA Wheelmen, in an endeavour to promote the sport, brought over from Victoria a champion of the time, Billy Guyat. It was reported that he was the only rider in Australia to fill in his taxation return as 'professional bike rider'. I remember him riding on the Fremantle track in his all-black racing gear; he was a true professional. Syd Patterson, still considered the greatest sprint cyclist in Australia and possibly the world, also competed on the Fremantle track.

Later, as the sport began to wane, the League brought over from South Australia two top-line riders in Jack Kohlenburg and Dean Whitehorn in an attempt to stimulate interest. It seemed it was a case of too little, too late. Whitehorn, with his good looks and blonde hair was an added attraction for some of the female followers but soon followed his mate Kohlenburg back to Adelaide.

Just about everybody in Fremantle rode a Swansea cycle including the competitors on the track. Swansea was a household name. It was owned by the Baldwin brothers, Howard, Les and Roily who managed their factory in Newman Street. Howard (the eldest) managed the shop in William Street. It was a narrow shop jammed between a saddler's shop and Wrightson's men's hairdressers (still there) while Les was an executive type go-between the riders and the family business. Among the riders they were universally referred to as 'Shags' as their logo (a swan) was moulded on to the front of every bike they built. The brothers all had a characteristic drawl when they spoke, must have been a family trait.

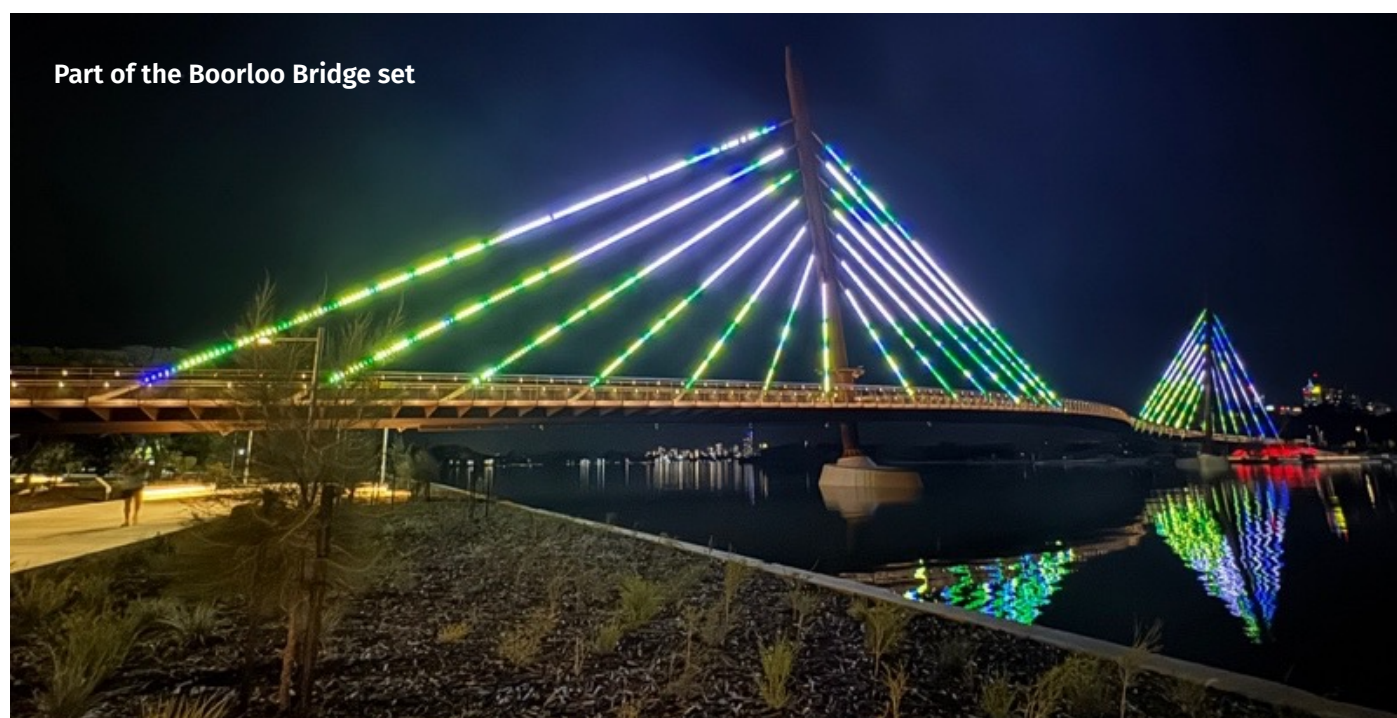
Not everybody rode a Swansea on the track. There were the ones that 'Oppy' rode, the Malvern Star, Gordonson, the Aussie and several other makes, but the Fremantle-manufactured Swansea would have the majority among the bike-riding fraternity. Freo may have lost something when the old asphalt track was pulled up and replaced by grass but the wheels of progress move on with a new purpose-built velodrome for the next generation of wheel men (and women) who are making their mark in the sport which can trace its roots in WA to the 'Bikes in Freo'.

Rusty Christensen



THE BRIDGES OF PERTH AT NIGHT

Are you a cyclist who ventures out at night? Many of the urban bike paths are lit, we may not notice that fact during the day so it might be an opportunity to see familiar routes during the dark hours. Perhaps we should include some in the ride programme? Michelle and Steve Ottaway did just that, taking in some stunning views of Perth's bridges en route.



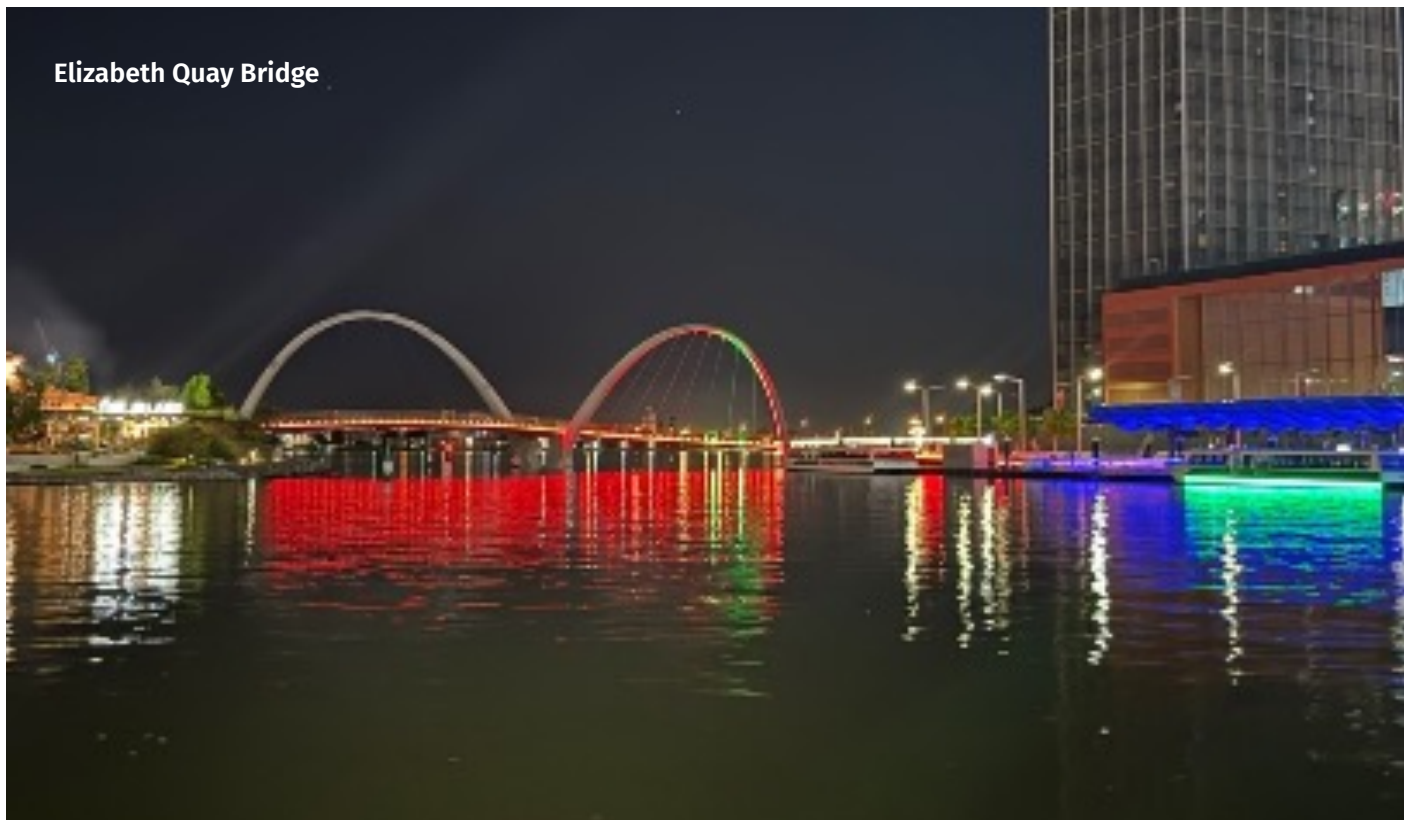
Part of the Boorloo Bridge set

On a clear night in March we made sure our bike lights were fully charged, had an early dinner and headed into the city for a Gelato and to enjoy the lights on the bridges of Perth.

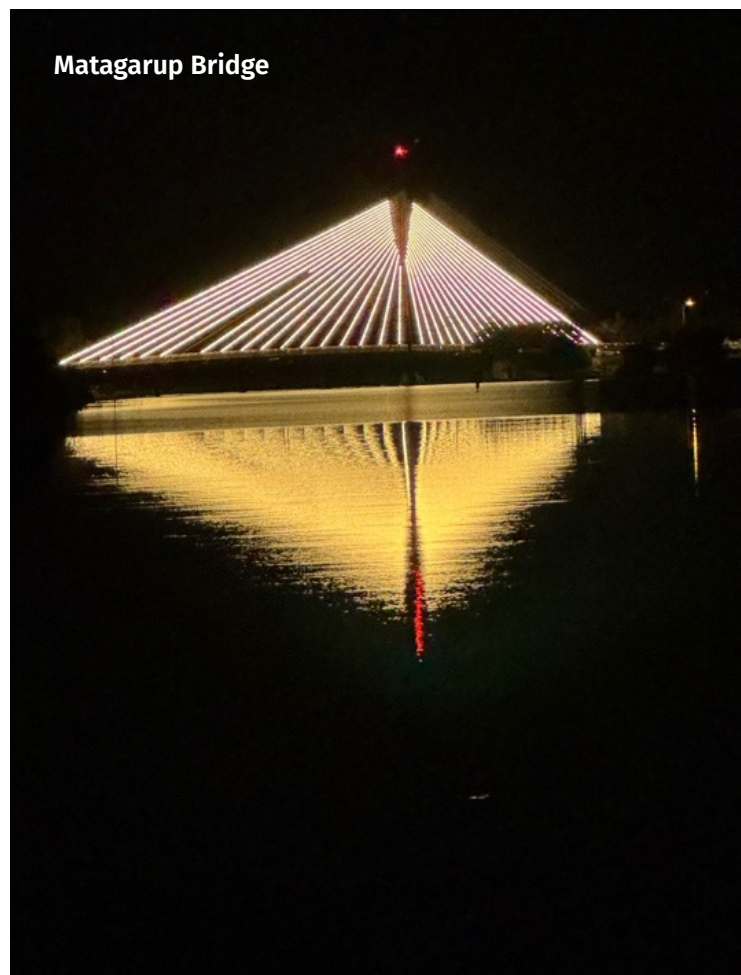
Michelle & Steve Ottaway



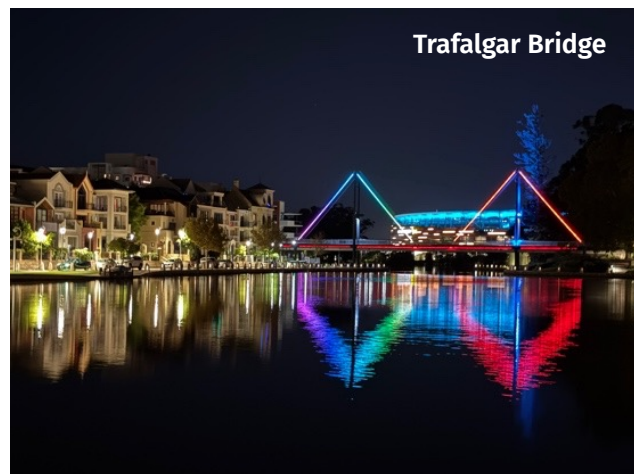
Elizabeth Quay Bridge



Matagarup Bridge



Matagarup Bridge



Trafalgar Bridge

LINCOLN TO BOSTON ROWING MARATHON

The Boston Rowing Marathon was first raced in 1946. It's a rowing head race (time trial) and it takes place on the third Sunday in September in Lincolnshire, England. The race is conducted over the exceptionally long distance of 30.6 miles (49.2 km) and is the longest rowing race in the UK. The course is along the River Witham and the race is from Lincoln to Boston.



The event started as a one-off in 1946 as a result of a pub bet, and was big news for the town. A single coxed four of seniors rowed from central Boston to the Brayford Pool in central Lincoln - against the flow of the river - and took around six hours for the then 34 miles.

On 26 October 1947, a teenage coxed-four from the Boston Rowing Club took on the challenge of beating the 1946 time. Aubrey Fox, Deg Borman, Bill Gale and Bill Lockwood completed the course in 4 hours 11 minutes and were each awarded an inscribed tankard by the mayor of Boston.

The original tankard with the mayor's name inscribed, but not the winner's.

In 1948 TM Moffatt rowed the course on his own. In 1949, Crowland Rowing Club became involved and the course was reversed to finish at Boston, and for two pretty good reasons. It was easier to row with the flow and preferable to finish at the boathouse since the pub was just next door.

In 1950 the event was opened

to all competitors and has remained so to this day. Boston Rowing Club now organises the marathon.

The long distance of the event makes it unique in British rowing and it attracts many entries; some competing for a recorded time, others only wanting to complete the distance. The event is also unusual in that it accepts entries from all crews and categories.

The current record for the 30.6 mile course is 2 hours 59 minutes 45 seconds, set in 1991 by a University of

London Boat Club men's eight. The race was cancelled in 2000, due to the fuel crisis, in 2011 due to an unusually prolific growth of water weed, and again in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021 the event was again cancelled due to COVID-19, but a solo Club rower completed the course on the scheduled day.

The start is a set of landing stages at Lincoln Rowing Centre, Stamp End Lock, Waterside South, Lincoln. The centre was founded in 2006 in response to the marathon being the only rowing event hosted in Lincoln. The race follows the straightened Witham River downstream to the finish line at Boston Rowing Club boathouse,





The start at Lincoln

660 metres north of the first bridges in Boston. There is one lock on the course.

Now you've read a brief history of the Boston Rowing Marathon, you might ask: why am I sharing this story with you? Well, I only learned about its rich history more recently, even though I rowed in the marathon in 1979 while studying at Cranfield School of Management, a business school in Bedford, UK.

Cranfield hosts a range of students in its one-year programme and there was certainly a wide variety in my year; academically, geographically and socially. Among the students was a cohort who were recently demobilised from the military in Northern Ireland and who were making the transition to civvy street. They were smart and disciplined and out to make the most of their year at Cranfield.

I shared some classes with them and learned that they proposed entering the Boston Rowing Marathon, had I ever rowed? I had never heard of the race, nor had ever been in a rowboat other than on a lake in the park. It was once a popular and sedate family summer weekend pastime.

The group had seven rowers and needed an eighth. Was I interested? They would teach me to row, we still had time. They were skilled at planning and instructing. Rowing has its similarities with cycling, I was to find out. An eight racing shell has its centre of gravity above the waterline so has to be balanced like

a bike; but one with eight riders (rowers) and a cox. You kayakers would know.

I started in a 'tub', a row-boat that was stable in the water. After I learned the correct techniques and got a feel for the balance, I moved on to a regular shell and, with the team, the real training began. The marathon was held during our final month at Cranfield, so it was a challenge to combine the training and final studies.

An American lecturer in human resources at Cranfield ran a sports equipment shop on the side and offered to organise our team vests. Something got lost in translation when the order was made and the vests were printed 'Boston-Lincoln' rather than the other way around. There was no time to correct the printing so they were the vests we wore.

This story grew out of rediscovering my vest, folded at the bottom of a drawer.

Race day was a blur. There were eight eights in the race and halfway through we had to lift the boat out of the water and carry it to the other side of the lock. During the race, one of the rowers' slides broke. After what seemed an eternity, we arrived in Boston to the cheers of: my brother. Howie had driven the 130 miles from London to be at the finish. He had come alone. We weren't last, we came seventh. I have to say, it was pretty satisfying to have participated in the longest boat race in the UK, one with a rich history if I only had a sketchy idea of it at the time.

Back in Perth I would drive by the Swan River, see eights practising on the water, recall my marathon experience and think, should I join them? I never did.

Graham Baws



THE BIG BIKE FILM NIGHT

It's on again. In a few months, Kiwi Brett Cotter is bringing his eclectic film night back, several of us attended last year. It comprises 10-12 short films, screened over a few hours, all with the common theme, cycling. It's been interesting and fun!

He'll issue more details later, but I thought I'd give you the dates so that you could pencil them in your diary.

Here they are:

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Geraldton • Tues 9 September
Dunsborough • Wed 10 September
Busselton • Thurs 11 September
Fremantle • Mon 15 September
Perth • Tues 16 September
Albany • Thurs 9 October

CYCLING QUOTES TO INSPIRE AND ENCOURAGE

John F. Kennedy (35th U.S. President):
"Nothing compares to the simple pleasure of a bike ride."

Robin Williams (actor and comedian):
"Riding a bike is the closest you can get to flying."

H.G. Wells (author of The Time Machine, The War of the Worlds):
"Whenever I see an adult on a bicycle, I do not despair for the human race."

David Byrne (musician, Talking Heads):
"Cycling can be lonely, but in a good way. It gives you a moment to breathe and think."

Bill Nye (science communicator, "The Science Guy"):
"Bicycling is a big part of the future. It has to be. There's something wrong with a society that drives a car to work out in a gym."

CTA FORESTS AND MURALS TOUR 2025

Saturday 18 October – Sunday 26 October

Coolup - Harvey - Bunbury - Donnybrook - Collie - Harvey - Waroona - Dwellingup – Coolup

Starting from the small township of Coolup, south of Perth, our circular tour visits charming and historic timber and mining towns with quirky art and stunning murals. Ride through wildflowers in the Jarrah forests.

Highlights of the tour will be to cycle past the largest Dam Mural in the World at Wellington Dam and have morning tea at the eccentric Gnomesville where thousands of gnomes inhabit the forest. Along the way you can visit museums, enjoy cultural experiences, meet locals and savour a coffee and cake with your cycling friends at the many cafés.

The roads we've selected are sealed and less travelled. Enjoy vistas of green fields, cows, citrus groves, vineyards, beaches, orchards and forests. Bus together from Kwinana train station or meet us in Coolup where parking is available. The cycle tour is fully supported and your luggage will be transported between each town campsite.

For further details and entry form go to:

ctawa.asn.au/event/2025-on-your-bike

