

Chain Mail



No. 44 January 2006

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The views expressed in Chain Mail articles are those of the authors only and do not necessarily represent either the common views shared by a majority of Bike North members or Bike North policy as formulated by the Bike North Executive Committee.

Cycling the Coat Hanger – in danger!

RTA downgrades – Bike North demands fix and extend to North Sydney!

Bike North calls on the RTA, the Roads Minister and the Transport Minister to extend the Harbour Bridge Cycleway to North Sydney. Imminent narrowing of the Harbour Bridge Cycleway underscores the inadequacy of this iconic and vital link between the City and North Sydney.

Local North Sydney cyclist, Mark Pountley has thrown down the challenge to the RTA. "Demonstrate to me that your narrowing of this cycleway does not place people at risk of collision and I'll donate 0.5% of my salary to the MS Society. If you fail, then you fix it and you commit \$13 million to extending this dedicated cycleway to North Sydney!"

Can you imagine the Copenhagen Government even entertaining the idea that a cycleway should include steps!! Visitors to our city are always totally bemused when they must face these steps. Yet, every day, up to 1000 times, people must dismount and carry their bikes up and down those steps, then dice with the busy traffic and parked cars to finally negotiate a roundabout fed by traffic straight off the Harbour Bridge. Up to a 1,000 journeys a day – how many more if this cycleway extended to North Sydney?

Support our call for the RTA to start working on a fix and extension to this cycleway now. Write to a minister, your local member or the press today! (see next page for sample letters)



photo: Scott Ratcliff

Sample letter 1:

Minister for Roads
Joe Tripodi
Lvl 31 Governor Macquarie Tower
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Minister Tripodi,

We at Bike North are shocked to learn that your authority, the Roads and Traffic Authority, has underhandedly decided to narrow the Sydney Harbour Bridge Cycleway. As the local bicycle user group working with the local councils and the RTA on improving the environment for cycling in Northern Sydney we could have offered advice on the impact of these proposals and made alternative suggestions. We would have expected that at the very least our parent body, Bicycle New South Wales, would be consulted about any proposal impacting use of this iconic and vital link.

This cycleway is already inadequate at peak hour. It can barely cater now for the increasing number of people using this path to commute to work. Sections of the cycleway are already severely constrained and at best it is only just suitable for two-way cycling. It is far below the RTA standard for regional routes and no route could be more regional than this. And yet it is to be further narrowed?

Despite the inadequacy of cycling facilities in North Sydney the demand for this cycleway is already strong and growing, with 119 percent increase in cycling to work between 1996 and 2001. Using a bicycle for transport addresses so many of our community's sustainability needs: health, transport, environment, social and financial. Surveys show that most people cycling this route to work do so because of the health and fitness benefits they gain. Many people also see cycling as a faster and more convenient way to get to work.

Unbelievably, this cycleway terminates at a flight of steps in Milsons Point. People must then travel along a busy, heavily parked street before negotiating a roundabout fed by traffic exiting the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Any alternative to the road route involves heavy concentrations of pedestrian traffic. This is not satisfactory access to North Sydney. This cycleway must be extended above the roads and above the milling pedestrians through to the Blue St Car Park. This is the only sensible and safe solution.

Minister Tripodi, we call on you to instruct the RTA to immediately initiate an investigation, to design and build a cycleway of a more suitable width which extends through to North Sydney.

Yours sincerely

Bike North

You can also e-mail minister Tripodi at: joe@tripodi.ministers.nsw.gov.au

Sample letter 2:

Minister for Transport,
Parliament House,
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Dear Minister Watkins,

We at Bike North are stunned to learn that your authority, RailCorp is complicit in an underhand decision to narrow the Sydney Harbour Bridge Cycleway. As the local bicycle user group working with the local councils and the RTA on improving the environment for cycling in Northern Sydney we could have offered advice on the impact of these proposals. We would have expected that at the very least our parent body, Bicycle New South Wales, would be consulted about any proposal impacting use of this iconic and vital link.

This cycleway is already inadequate at peak hour. It can barely cater for the increasing number of people using this path to commute to work. Sections of the cycleway are already severely constrained and at best it is only just suitable for two-way cycling. It is far below the RTA standard for regional routes and no route could be more regional than this. And yet it is to be further narrowed?

Despite the inadequacy of cycling facilities in North Sydney the demand for this cycleway is already strong and growing, with 119 percent increase in cycling to work between 1996 and 2001. Using a bicycle for transport addresses so many of our community's key sustainability issues: health, environment, social and financial. Surveys show that most people cycling this route to work do so because of the health and fitness benefits they gain. Many people also see cycling as a faster and more convenient way to get to work.

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Minister Watkins, six years ago you presented our Rail Trail petition to parliament. You have been a supporter of cycling. We call on you to use your influence to ensure that the RTA immediately initiate an investigation, to design and build a cycleway of a more suitable width which extends through to North Sydney.

Yours sincerely

Bike North

“Xin Chao” Vietnam

Mixing it with the chaotic traffic of central Hanoi... rolling amidst electric green paddies of young rice against an incredible backdrop of karst peaks... sweating up enormous hills... slurping noodles and bargaining for bread... saying Xin Chao (hello) to what felt like half the population! Just some of the memories of an incredible cycling adventure in northern Vietnam in March 2005.

Last year, after a few wines consumed post-cycling during our annual Easter weekend mountain biking fest, we brainstormed some of the places in the world we'd like to cycle. One thing led to another, and six of us proceeded to plan our Vietnam cycling adventure. We based our ride on the “North by North-West” route described in the Lonely Planet Guide: “Cycling Vietnam, Laos & Cambodia”. The attraction was not the masochistic pleasure of attempting what was by far the hardest ride in the book (although we like a challenge!), but rather

and research indicated it would be difficult (at least) to hire suitable bikes over there (note: for the purists, yes of course you can obtain bikes over there – and cheaply too – but for the areas we were planning to go relatively unsupported, we wanted to be familiar, comfortable, and confident about our equipment). We took mountain bikes and tried as much as possible to ensure parts were interchangeable, as we needed to carry basic spares with us. So the first hurdle was packing to minimize weight and survive the check-in counter without having to fork out for excess baggage (the bike is included in the 20kg baggage allowance when flying with Malaysian Airlines).

After an overnight stay in Hanoi and reassembling our bikes, we were ready to begin our journey. The official ride itinerary began in Hoa Binh, approx 70km from Hanoi, which we reached by bus. This required first cycling 9km through Hanoi



it sounded like the most spectacular and scenic. It is hard for us to summarize such an amazing adventure in this brief article, so for anyone contemplating a similar adventure, feel free to contact us directly.

An incredible amount of planning and preparation goes into a journey like this one, so by the time we were at Sydney Airport ready to depart we were filled with not only anticipation, but also relief! We chose to take our own bikes, because our inquiries

to the bus station. It was an exciting ride, rather like being in some kind of PlayStation game where nothing hits you, but nearly everything almost does! Traffic is chaos: traffic lights are largely ignored, people fly out of side streets without even looking. It would seem that making eye contact is agreeing to give way, therefore people just launch in on the basis that someone will swerve and avoid them. Thankfully given that most of the traffic is on two wheels (albeit motorized), it is not as life-threatening as it

by Jo & Gene Clendon & Graeme Woodward
may sound, but it does take a great deal of bravery and assertiveness. The reward: an adrenaline rush like none you've had before! Lesson one: whatever you do: don't hesitate and don't stop.

Once out of Hanoi, the traffic settled down to almost nothing, and the cycling was fantastic. The roads, many newly sealed, were in pretty good condition. All around there is much development underway – the country is growing and changing before your very eyes.

One of the highlights was the friendliness of the local people, and in fact for much of the time we felt like celebrities! The first two thirds of the ride were the least touristy – we hardly saw any other foreigners at all – a definite advantage of cycle touring. As we rode along people would call out “Xin Chao”. Sometimes we could hear an almost hysterical chorus of “hello, hello, hello” as the students of the various village schools abandoned their classrooms and came running out to see us. In fields people would stop working and wave; truck and bus drivers would beep their hellos and the passengers would wave and yell greetings. On one of the long climbs during the trip, a particularly persistent van of Japanese tourists stopped multiple times to take our photos through some of the longest lenses known to mankind. We have lovely memories of school children practicing their English on us whilst herding their buffalo along the road! We got so used to waving and saying hello that it was a bit of a shock when we hit the touristy region around the popular mountain resort town of Sapa, and found locals only wanting to sell us things or beg for money. Thankfully, over the course of our journey, this was the exception not the rule.

Food and accommodation were inexpensive. We mostly stayed in guesthouses listed in the guidebook. We ate at noodle shops and became connoisseurs of Pho Ba (beef noodle soup) for lunch (sometimes breakfast too), and Com (Rice) and accompaniments for dinner. Vietnamese food is great for cyclists with plenty of carbs and protein, and the clear broth soups help with re-hydration also. For snacks we foraged at the markets for excellent baguettes (a legacy

of the French), lovely sweet bananas, and an assortment of local cakes, biscuits and candies. Bottled water was widely available, and the local beer was a very enjoyable brew – surprisingly drinkable at room temperature (refrigerators were rare).

The weather was great for cycling. Not too hot or cold, with one notable exception. Once over Tram Ton Pass, the highest road in Vietnam, the conditions changed dramatically for our descent into Sapa. The climb to the summit had been warm and clear with blue skies. Once over the summit we rode into drizzle, and then descended further into a



thick fog with visibility down to just a few metres. It was a disconcerting contrast!

Our whole trip was almost 800kms over 10 days (+1 rest day), with daily distances and hills increasing over the course of the journey. Day 8 was our longest – 106km with an 800m climb. We reached the peak of the ride – literally – on Day 9: 73km with 3 significant climbs. The real doozie starting after 35km, lasting 25km and rising 1200m to Tram Ton Pass, at more than 1900m elevation. One of the great things about cycle touring is that your fitness improves as you go, so despite this being a very challenging day we all coped very well and were ecstatic when we got to the summit.

Our ride finished in Lao Cai, located on the Chinese border, with a very wet and steep 37km descent from Sapa. From here we caught an overnight train back to Hanoi.

We were lucky to score a complete row at the exit aisle on our homebound flight – a relief to stretch our weary legs and to drink a toast with complimentary cognacs. However most of us were sad that our adventure had come to an end, and were dreaming of other far-flung corners of the globe to which we could peddle our trusty steeds. Two of our party would realize this dream sooner than anyone realized, precipitated by the “misfortune” of a corporate lay-off. However, that is another completely different story.

Cycle touring – simply a superb way to explore the world.

Some useful links:

<http://www.mrpumpy.net/index.html>
Good practical information about cycling in Vietnam and other countries

<http://www.bikeaccess.net/BikeAccess/airlines.cfm>

Good info about taking bikes on planes – reviews by airline.

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/destinations/asia/vietnam>
Lonely Planet information covering Vietnam

http://shop.lonelyplanet.com/series_products.cfm?seriesID=7&seriesname=Cycling%20Guides&
Lonely Planet cycling guides

City of Cyclists Video

This is a terrific short video about the cycling scene in Copenhagen where one third of all trips are made by bike. No wonder our Aussie Crown Princess Mary loves living there so much!

Some of us have enjoyed this video by painstakingly downloading and viewing it on our PC screens. For those that can't do this, Bike North members can now obtain this video on CD. It can be viewed on your TV using your DVD player. Most DVD's will play this CD, especially if it has the magic symbol 'MP3' written on it somewhere.

If you'd like a copy, just ring Gil Webster on 9451 9669 or email membership@bikenorth.org.au. A copy will be posted out to you pronto.

Tour de Hills

SUNDAY 5 MARCH 2006.

Next year's T de H event is now only a couple of months away. The popular 70km loop has had to be modified to avoid some costly red tape and no longer visits Pitt Town Bottoms. The new distances offered will be 25km, 35km, 50km and 100km (2x50km loops). The organizers will mail out entry forms to last year's riders, however, as in previous years, Pam Kendrick as Team Captain will be collecting entry details and money during rides from mid January. Further details to come.

Pam Kendrick ph 9872 2583.

The Bike North “Five Speed Challenge”

New Year 2006 brings new obstacles to creating a better future for cycling in Sydney.

After seven years under the stewardship of Minister Carl Scully, the profile of cycling as active, sustainable transport reached new heights. With a high level management position responsible for cycling within the RTA, funding for cycleways at unprecedented levels, many projects in BikePlan 2010 actually being built, publications issued setting high standards for bicycle facilities and training programs in place to help our councils lift their game, the foundations were being laid to move gradually to a more cycle-friendly Sydney. While we may not have always agreed with Minister Scully's approach, we knew we were all working toward the same goal: more people being able to choose to cycle in Sydney for transport and recreation.

Now, with the removal of this important RTA management position for bicycles and cuts in funding by Minister Costa and no prospect for their replacement under Minister Tripodi we can no longer look to the state government and the RTA for leadership in cycling matters. We must work in other ways:

- Work with Councils to improve our local areas
- Continue to build the profile of cycling, leveraging off the foundation of the last few years.

We need to work smarter and harder to make this difference. It depends on lots of people cycling and making their presence felt. It depends on YOU.

ARE YOU UP FOR THE BIKE NORTH “FIVE SPEED CHALLENGE”?

You decide how you will meet the challenge. You can take on as little as one or as many as the full five. Whatever you decide, you set your goals and let us know that you have taken on the challenge. Over the coming year we will track the actions of Bike North members, culminating in a review of at the end of the year against your goals. Total self assessment, no audits, but everyone who meets their personal goals (and lets us know about it) will be recognized. GO FOR IT!

THE 5 CHALLENGES

Ride more often

We challenge you to replace one trip you usually make by car and go by bike each month.

If you ride for recreation, have you considered using your bike occasionally instead of your car? It could be just a short journey to the local shops or library, that's where the bike is the most efficient. Alternatively, could you ride your bike to work, even if it's just once a week, fortnight or month? If that's too far, can you ride to the station and take the train the rest of the way? If you already ride to work or other places, is it possible to do it more often?

This challenge could be more difficult for our dedicated cyclists who already ride just about everywhere. Your challenge is to maintain your cycling this year and concentrate on one of the other challenges.

Encourage other people to ride (more often)

We challenge you to encourage at least two other people to either start riding a bike this year or if they already ride recreationally, to start riding for transport.

There are people who are keen to cycle, they just don't know how to get started, and they think it's too hard. Invite people along to a Bike North ride, help them find a bike, give them a bike map, be an ambassador for cycling among your family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances. If you are cycling to work, is there someone who just needs a little advice or a buddy to cycle with?

Support Bicycle NSW and your local BUG

We challenge you to join Bicycle NSW and Bike North, or if you are already a member of both to introduce two other people to these groups this year.

As a member of Bike North you are probably already supporting your local bicycle community organization. BUT are you a member of Bicycle NSW? There are good reasons to belong directly for your own benefit, but your membership also helps their financial viability and increases their strength in dealing with the state government, which is good for cycling in general, which all comes back to YOU. Bring in more members. Keep a few Bike North and Bicycle NSW brochures on hand and encourage other cyclists you know or meet to join.

Support your local workgroup

We challenge you to do one thing every second month that contributes to your local workgroup or BUG.

There are many ways you can support your local workgroup, from joining in email workgroup discussion, reporting hazards, making suggestions for improvements in your local area, coming along to meetings, helping out on promotional events on stalls or joining in a parade. You chose what works for you. Just do something. Running rides for your local area counts too! Talk to your workgroup convenor and the Publicity Officer about publicizing your ride more widely. If you don't live or work in any of Bike North workgroup areas, make contact with and support your local BUG.

Make a stand for cycling – write, email or ring

We challenge you to write at least four letters this year, to the media or to a government body or other organization in support of cycling or a cycling issue.

Write to your local or daily newspaper about cycling. Our new Publicity Officer will make sure there are more hooks out there for you to pick up on. See an anti-bicycle letter or article? Put your positive point of view in response. See a positive story? Lend your support. Write to a government body or other organization in support of cycling or a related issue.

It's up to YOU. What will be your goals in 2006?

Register for the Five Speed Challenge with Bike North, either on-line or by posting a copy of the enclosed form to Bike North Five Speed Challenge.

OUR CHALLENGE is to help you achieve these goals. Everyone who registers for the Five Speed Challenge by 31 January will be invited to a Five Speed workshop. Workshop sessions will include: Cycling to Work, Working with your Workgroup and Writing Letters.

Registration Form online or on Page 12

M2 Cycle Issues Meeting with TransUrban, 30 Sep 2005

BikeNorth met with representatives of the new owners of the M2 Motorway – Transurban. Transurban also has an interest in the M7 motorway, the CityLink motorway in Melbourne and is seeking similar investments in Europe and the USA. Most of their operational experience is with the Melbourne CityLink road. Their Asset and Maintenance Manager, visiting from Melbourne, expressed surprise that the breakdown lane is used for cycling on the M2 – in Melbourne cycle facilities are separate, and are not operated by Transurban.

This was a Ryde Working Group initiative and, as such, most of the issues raised apply to the M2 between Beecroft Rd and Delhi Rd.

In this report, upright typeface indicates material prepared by BikeNorth and tabled at the meeting. Comments in italics are interspersed.

Present: Glenn A Sanders (Asset & Maintenance Manager, Transurban), Tanya Bains (Corporate & Community Relations Adviser, Transurban), Graeme Woodward (Bike North Inc.), Doug Stewart (Bike North Inc.). Also one maintenance engineer, Sydney based.

Importance of the M2 to cyclists

The M2 is a vital resource for cyclists in north-western Sydney, because it serves a similar role for cyclists as it does for motor vehicles. It is arguably as important for cyclists as for motorists because the gentle grades and directness significantly reduce the physical effort required. This makes impossible journeys possible. The M2 is an important component of increasing cycling transport into and through the Macquarie Park corridor.

Issues that we discussed include:

1) Toll plaza speed limit of 5km/hour request to be reviewed

As previously documented on 7 June 2005. Why is there a cyclist limit? Bicycle stability is an issue at 5km/h. Tollbooth operators have signs warning about cyclists. Cycle speedometers are neither universal nor compulsory. Westbound – lift limit completely? Eastbound – raise to 25km/hr?

Transurban confirmed that the installation of 5km/h speed limits was triggered by an

accident where a cyclist and a toll operator collided, causing personal injury. This incident resulted in Transurban compensating the cyclist. They have also included cycle awareness in their employee induction process. They identified a gateway on the far side of the westbound carriageway, hence the speed restriction in both directions.

Transurban agreed that 5km/h was unnecessarily slow, and would look at increasing the speed. During our time on site, various cyclists rode through the toll plaza. A few of these, in the opinion of the Transurban representatives, were excessively quick for the conditions (estimated 30-40km/h). Transurban also agreed to look at options for removing the need for operators to walk across the lane with the redesign of the plaza (note that there is a pedestrian tunnel under the toll plaza).

2) Expansion joints deteriorating and creating bumps

Expansion joints were forming large bumps which cause a hazard to cyclists. Could these be fixed? We note some roadworks but are not sure if the whole problem will be resolved.

The roadworks, at the time, near Terrys Ck were associated with repairing the major expansion joints (metal interlocked teeth). We also raised the issue of the much smaller bumps (approx 4-5cm across and 1cm proud of the surface) spaced by 2-3m, in the same vicinity. In addition, the major bumps just East of Pennant Hills Rd were brought to their attention. Transurban agreed to take a look at these issues.

3) Maintenance removal of debris and sweeping of glass

Can the patrols remove debris which are cyclists hazards? Can sweeping (for glass) be more often?

Some astounding figures were given describing the amount of debris removed from motorway shoulders each year. Transurban described their commitment to maintaining the M2, as part of their goal to create a motorway nirvana attracting people from far and wide due to the sheer aesthetic delight of the facility. No commitment to more regular sweeping (and, as someone who has suffered a puncture a week for the

last month, I can testify that sweeping remains irregular!)

4) Cars pulling into the breakdown/cycle lane to answer/make mobile phone calls

This causes cyclists to overtake in the traffic lane. Hazards are door opening, pulling out, travelling cars

5) Use of breakdown/cycle lane by travelling motorcycles and cars

Vehicles often use the breakdown/cycle lane to travel, often at fairly high speeds often with poor visibility creating an obvious risk.

In relation to points 4 & 5, Transurban considers these to be issues of law enforcement – the role of the police. They recognize these issues as hazards for other motorists also.

6) Drainage grates at North Epping Tunnel are below road level

A bike may be thrown off balance if it hits these grates. Can they be lifted to the road surface level?

Transurban needed some convincing to take a look at this issue – stating that grates needed to be below road surface for water to drain. There are many examples where this is not the case – for example, in the concrete drain at the eastern exit from the tunnels.

7) Christie Road Exit problems, with e-tag express

Accelerating traffic exits left from every toll booth lane, soon after the booth. Due to the angles of approach this causes some difficulties for cyclists and even for cars. New express e-TAG lanes may increase the difficulty for cars and bicycles by raising the speed of the exiting vehicles. Any change?

The design of the new toll plaza will permit cars to exit to Christie Rd from only the left most lanes. There will be physical barriers preventing other traffic movements. We supported this design.

8) E-tag express lanes implementation

Will this new implementation affect cycle travel in any way?

Cycle (breakdown) lanes will remain around the outside of the redesigned toll plaza, much as they exist today. Artist impressions distributed earlier that suggested otherwise were in error.

9) Roadwork information signs in the breakdown/cycle lane (as reported)

Warning signs leading to roadwork can obstruct the breakdown/cycle lane. Cars are still travelling quickly creating possible conflict.

This issue had been reported to Transurban a week or two prior to the meeting due to problems with night roadwork near Terry's Creek. We were informed that road crews had been briefed on proper placement of signage, etc, to permit safe cycle passage.

Evidence since suggests that this message hasn't been taken on board by all concerned, as this very hazardous situation persists.

10) Roadwork designed to minimize impact on cyclists

During roadwork when lanes are closed consideration should be given to cyclist safety past the obstructions. Policing lowered speed limits is important.

11) What is the detail of the design of the link with the M7

How will cyclists link between the M7 and the M2 in both directions?

It was revealed that a 300m gap will exist between the M2 (shoulder) cycle facility and the separated M7 cycleway. Transurban stated that cyclists will be required to exit at Abbott Rd (current end of M2), and use the new cycle facility being built as part of the NW T-Way along Old Windsor Rd to join with the M7 separated cycleway. The intersection designs are unknown. Subsequent contradictory advice from the RTA indicates that cycle access to the M7 shoulder may be permitted – either to travel along the M7 or to connect with the dedicated cycleway. However – Transurban will operate the M7. Who do we believe?

12) Link with the Lane Cove Tunnel Cycleway at Delhi Road

Will there be any change in the way cyclists link between the two in both directions?

No changes – cyclists will be required to exit at Delhi Rd. (As part of the Lane Cove Tunnel a short link along Delhi Rd will join the Epping Rd regional route).

13) Installation of vibra-line along the entire length of the M2

Will help to avoid a common occurrence of vehicles swerving left into the breakdown/cycle lane. All benefit.

Transurban did not favour this treatment, insisting upon the RTA guidelines which suggest an 'L3' continuous line.

14) Construction of east facing ramps at Lane Cove Road

We have heard that new east facing ramps may be built. If new on/off-ramps are constructed they should be designed with grade separation for cyclists by incorporating a cycle tunnel under the ramps during construction.

This project has been shelved. A reason cited related to traffic studies in other parts of the road network, and in particular, capacity on the Harbour Bridge+Tunnel. (A similar comment applies to the possibility of increasing the number of traffic lanes on the M2 in the future)

15) Further consultation

We would also be happy to discuss any suggestions or proposals on safety issues or for any changes, repairs or upgrades to the breakdown/cycle facility to ensure that continues to meet with cyclist's needs. We are available to respond to documents, attend meetings or site inspections.

Eat, drink and talk cycling

All Ku-ring-gai cyclists are invited to a social evening in February. This is an opportunity to meet your cycling neighbours and your local convenors, eat a little, drink a little and chat about anything that concerns you re Ku-ring-gai cycling. Please contact John Watts for details, Phone: 91447656.

LOCAL WORKGROUPS

Council	Email Address	Contact name	Phone No
Ryde	ryde@bikenorth.org.au	Doug Stewart	9887 1478
		Graeme Woodward	9617 0772
Ku-ring-gai	kuringgai@bikenorth.org.au	John Watts	9144 7656
Hornsby	hornsby@bikenorth.org.au	Steve Hillier	9899 5432
Hunters Hill	hhill@bikenorth.org.au	Alister Sharp	9879 3664
Willoughby	willoughby@bikenorth.org.au	Carolyn New	9438 1903
North Sydney	north_sydney@bikenorth.org.au	Carolyn New	9438 1903
Mosman	mosman@bikenorth.org.au	Alan Phillips	9969-4209
		Carolyn New	9438 1903
Lane Cove	lane_cove@bikenorth.org.au	Suzy Jackson	0407 122 262

Contact the convenor for the workgroup in your area to find out when the next meeting is. You can also subscribe to your local workgroup email list. Do this by sending an email to membership@bikenorth.org.au. The email should include your full name as shown on your membership, your current email address, the workgroup list eg the Hornsby list, Hunters Hill list etc. For enquiries about working groups for other areas in Northern Sydney contact Carolyn New 9438 1903 or email carolynn@inet.net.au

Bike North Tour de Young 2006

Easter, April 14 – 17

Experience cycle touring without the worry of packing your life into panniers. Expand your cycling and challenge yourself riding day after day. Enjoy cycling scenic routes without the frustrations of dealing with traffic. And for Bike North members, this is a great way to train for the Bike North Century Challenge!

REGISTER NOW!

PRIOR CYCLING EXPERIENCE

As all the rides are at least "medium" grade you would need to do some of the regular Bike North medium rides first to make sure you feel comfortable with the distances. (minimum distance 60km)

REGISTRATION INFORMATION !

You **MUST** register to ride in Tour de Young. Registration costs \$5 per person. Once you have registered you will be sent your TdY passport which contains route maps and other important information to make your tour fantastic!

ACCOMMODATION...

is your responsibility. Young has many motels, hotels, B&Bs and a four star caravan park. Easter is a busy time and accommodation of all types will fill up fast. Book early!

Many Bike Northerners will be staying at the Young Tourist Park, ph: 6382 2190

FURTHER INFORMATION

Phone Keith or Fran, evenings between 8 and 10 pm (9614 0777), or visit the web site. www.bikenorth.org.au/cgi-bin/rides.pl?ride=145



Registration Form

Register online at www.bikenorth.org.au/cycling/rides/tdy or complete this form and return it with payment to the address below before March 14, 2006 Please use one form per person. Photocopy this form if necessary.

Name _____ Phone(s) _____

Send my passport by email (PDF file) email address: _____

post postal address: _____

Registration fee \$5 (Please make cheques payable to Bike North Inc. Please do not post cash.)

Tour de Young
Bike North
PO Box 719
Gladesville NSW 1675

Bike North Tour de Young 2006



Bicycle NSW News

At the last BNSW AGM, members voted to accept a new constitution for Bicycle NSW which now explicitly includes affiliates such as Bike North BUG. Since taking on the responsibility of CEO, Alex Unwin has focussed primarily on the financial issues and activities that improve the bottom line, as this is vital to their continuing existence. Within financial constraints BNSW is now looking at ways to build more effective partnerships with BUGs.

We urge all our members who are not already members of BNSW to take out membership. The personal liability package alone that comes with membership is worth the investment – no more worries if you accidentally scratch Michael Duffy's car.

Note – without the umbrella liability insurance that Bicycle NSW provides, Bike North would be unable to run its successful and extensive rides program. You can join online at www.bicyclensw.org.au or ring 9218 5400.

Your Dreams for Ku-ring-gai

Ku-ring-gai Council is reviewing its Bike Plan very early next year with a view to budgeting and seeking RTA funding for more appropriate bicycle projects. This decision is a direct result of the negative feedback they received from us about the heart stopping Gordon to St Ives bike route. It's this simple – if it's not in the Bike Plan, the RTA won't help fund it and Council is not interested in projects without RTA contributory funding.

The review will be in-house and Bike North will be providing major input in terms of preferred routes. Here's your opportunity. Tell us about every little or big idea you have ever had to improve cycling in Ku-ring-gai. You can post your ideas to the Ku-ring-gai workgroup list or alternatively contact John Watts directly (Phone 91 447656). The Workgroup will meet 5:30pm Tuesday 31st Jan, 2006 at 19 Marlborough Place, St Ives 2075 to receive last minute suggestions, review and prioritise ready for discussing with Council. All are welcome.

Diary Dates

Bike North Executive Meetings:

No meeting in January

7 February 2006 (Tuesday)

7 March 2006 (Tuesday)

Executive meetings are held at St. John's Church Library, Cox's Rd, North Ryde and start at 7:30pm. All members are welcome.

Working Group Meetings:

10 January 2006 (Tuesday) – Ryde WG

14 February 2006 (Tuesday) – Ryde WG

February 13 (Monday) – Hornsby WG

14 March 2006 (Tuesday) – Ryde WG

April 10 (Monday) – Hornsby WG

Other working groups will be meeting in Feb or March please contact the Convenor for dates.

Cycling in Bristol

By Fran Griffin

In Bristol I wasn't riding, I was there for work, but I observed the local roads. Bristol has hills, heavy traffic, narrow roads in appalling condition, very few cycling facilities and lousy weather. Despite this, it has large numbers of commuting cyclists. Sydney has hills, heavy traffic, rather better roads than Bristol, probably more cycling facilities and infinitely better weather. Despite this, it has comparatively few commuting cyclists.

So what's the difference?

In Sydney, the average stink-mobile driver expects to drive at the speed limit as a minimum, and will not tolerate any other road user's need for space on his/her road.

In Bristol, drivers cannot go fast as the road conditions don't allow it, there is too much traffic and city and suburban speed limits are low. Hence there is no expectation that one can go as fast in city streets as on the open road.

Not many of the cyclists I saw wore lycra, some wore helmets, there were just as many women as men cycling, and all ages were represented. The riders all looked as if they were trying hard, but not straining. This gave the impression that they were out to get where they were going, riding assertively and considerately in the traffic, and that it was an acceptable thing to do. In return, drivers gave them equal status on the road, rather than

Bike North Business Cards

Are you often get asked who you cycle with? Do you meet other cyclists out there on the roads and paths? If you do and feel that you could help people by introducing them to the Bike North rides programme then maybe you would like some Bike North business cards to hand out. Cards are available, upon request, for member who can make a case for using them to promote cycling and Bike North. Simply send an email to info@bikenorth.org.au requesting some cards, tell us how you will use them, and give us an idea of how many you think you will use.

pest, inferior citizen or target status as often happens in Sydney.

As an example, I was impressed to see a girl dressed in jeans and on a mountain bike, making a right hand turn uphill across three lanes of heavy traffic moving significantly faster than she was. She looked back and signalled, the cars next to her slowed down and let her cross to the turning lane as if it were perfectly normal. Try that in Sydney!

Looking at Bristol, I would not expect cycling to be popular – there is nowhere to ride except on roads full of holes and cars, in the rain. So it is not the availability of fancy cycle infrastructure that gets riders out there. It must be that they are accepted as part of the traffic and part of life. Cycling is clearly seen as a good way to get around.

So my point is that we need a critical mass of riders out on the roads regularly, being part of the traffic, following the rules, becoming part of the traffic culture, gradually changing the traffic culture, until it is perfectly normal and expected that drivers will share the road with cyclists (or anyone else, for that matter!). It might also help to narrow some of Sydney's roads, don't widen anything, don't build any more motorways, lower the speed limits, oh yes, and reduce the availability of parking. A few more (low cost or even free!) trains and buses might be nice too (as long as bikes are allowed on board).

Cycle Queensland 2005: Goondiwindi to the Gold Coast

by Liz Quine

Cycle Queensland was promoted as “9 days in paradise” – and it was! (except for one day that was... um.... challenging)

I blame Bike North for fuelling my cycling addiction with their enthusiasm and encouragement to try my first ‘Big Ride’. I was given volumes of advice on cycling preparation, what camping gear to take and how to pack light. The term I heard most frequently was “you’ll love it”. How did they know I would love it? I hadn’t slept in a tent since I was a teenager. I hadn’t ridden 9 days consecutively ever! I hadn’t travelled with 1000 strangers ever! Why were they so sure I would love it?

Training complete and bags packed, the first challenge was how to disembowel my trusty bike and shove it (I mean meticulously pack it) into the bike-box for the flight to Queensland. I wish I had taken a photo of Joan, my bike and myself lying on the lounge room floor trying unsuccessfully to detach the pedals. In desperation, Joan produced a hammer from her handbag (as you do) and we belted, wrenched, twisted and cursed all to no avail. Finally I resorted to female techno-savvy and stomped with my foot on the spanner. Voila! That loosened the pedal.

And so began the adventure.

The Bike North contingent had arranged (via [bn_chat](#)) to meet for dinner at Goondiwindi on the first night. Many of us had never met before but we soon became a great support group for each other throughout the ride. There was always someone to exchange ride experiences with, to share a beer at the pub or a coffee at the cafe.

The ride began down the main street of Goondiwindi. We cycled 7+64+56+109+0+86+72+73+44 kms, a total of 561 kms (not counting extra trips to and from the pub) arriving at the Gold Coast 9 days later. Rest day was at Stanthorpe which just happened to be surrounded by vineyards and wineries. Many of us joined wine tasting tours to rest our weary cycling legs and replenish fluid supplies.

Our arrival at the Gold Coast was to the applause and cheers from a large welcoming

crowd. We felt like we had just completed the Tour de France!

The organisation of the event was above reproach. The overnight stops were well located, the back-up services were extremely efficient and the meals and nightly entertainment were excellent.

Some of the highlights included:

- cycling the country roads of southern Queensland
- friendliness of all the cyclists
- daily massage ;-)
- yummy meals
- friendly pubs at each country town (and the number of thirsty cyclists)
- downhill runs YEHA!
- scrumptious morning/afternoon teas provided by the local community groups
- camaraderie of fellow cyclists who, without hesitation offered assistance in changing flat tyres
- sitting cross-legged in my tent while Joan instructed me on how to locate and patch a puncture in my tyre tube
- on the gravel section, flying past the slow ‘roadies’ screaming PASSING with an evil glint in my eye
- CQ Ball where we dressed up as a ‘C’ or a ‘Q’. We had chocolates, coasters, questions, queens and queers. The winner was a group of corkscrews.

My only fault with CQ is the bout of “post-paradise blues” that I suffered on my return to earth. On my first day back at work in Sydney as I stood in the bus queue I started to chat to the person next to me only to be greeted with a stony silence... oops, I’m not in the breaky queue at CQ... I’m back in Sydney now.

If CQ 2005 was 9 days in paradise then CQ 2006 will be 9 days in tropical heaven. So mark September 2006 in your calendars now. The ride goes from Port Douglas to Mission Beach – you’ll love it!

Recipe for Puncture Repairs

Ingredients:

- A 1 repair kit containing:
 - 1 tube of glue (no hardened stuff!)
 - 1 piece of chalk wrapped in gladwrap
 - 1 piece of rough sandpaper
 - small patches
- B 1 spare tube that fits your tyres
- C A pump that works and you can use
- D Tyre levers

Method:

- 1 Swear... (silently)
- 2 Change gears to little ring at front and rear (if rear wheel)
- 3 Undo brakes
- 4 (a) take out repair kit / close teat on water bottle
(b) turn bike upside down
- 5 Check for invader in tyre: if found, circle with chalk and remove invader if possible
- 6 Undo quick release to take wheel off
- 7 Let all air out of tube if necessary
- 8 Use tyre levers to get one side of tyre off the wheel
- 9 Check location of chalk mark on tyre to similar location on tube
- 10 Take tube out and inflate to locate hole
- 11 Either repair hole or use spare tube
- 12 Run finger around inside tyre (beware lashed finger effect)
- 13 Remove invader from tyre
- 14 Put small amount of air in tube
- 15 Find valve hole – insert valve stem (make sure it is straight) and push tube into tyre
- 16 Using thumbs / heel of hand to push tyre bead into rim (NB using levers may pinch tube)
- 17 Pump up tyre – secure wheel on bike
- 18 Ensure wheel rotates freely
- 19 Reconnect and adjust brakes

Note: All ride participants are asked to arrive ten minutes before the designated ride start time to get ready (bikes out of cars, get dressed, check tyres etc, etc.) and to allow time to sign on.

FEBRUARY 2006

Date: Sun 05/02/2006
Ride: Hills and Surfside
Grade: Hard, BNSW Grade: FTH Distance: 80
Contact: Doug Stewart, 9887 1478
Starts at: 07:00. Eastwood Stn east. Hard ride to Pymble, St Ives, Oxford Falls & Narrabeen. Return via Warriewood, Church Point, Terrey Hills & Turramurra. Fit & experienced riders only.

Date: Tue 07/02/2006
Ride: Exec Meeting
Grade: none, BNSW Grade:
Contact: Bike North Special event, ALL WELCOME
Starts at: 19:30. St Johns Anglican Church Hall, Coxs Road, Ryde

Date: Sat 11/02/2006
Ride: Pie in the Sky
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OTW Distance: 40
Contact: Graeme Edwards, 9436 0969
Starts at: 08:00. Hornsby Station west. Medium ride along Old Pacific Hwy to café overlooking Brooklyn with great views. Back track to Hornsby. Moderate hills.

Date: Sun 12/02/2006
Ride: Western Wander
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OPW Distance: 70
Contact: Eric Middleton, 9958 2546
Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank wharf. Medium but relaxed paced ride via M4 c/p & Rail Trail to explore Prospect's canal routes. Coffee at Abbotsbury.

Date: Sun 12/02/2006
Ride: Concord for Cake
Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 25
Contact: Debbie Edwards, 9436 0969
Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank wharf. Easy ride along the PVC over Silverwater bridge to Olympic Park, then on to Concord for coffee. Return a different way.

Date: Tue 14/02/2006
Ride: Ryde Area Meeting
Grade: none, BNSW Grade:
Contact: Bike North Special event,
Starts at: 19:30. Ryde Working Group meeting.
Venue : Eastwood Women's Rest Centre, Hillview Rd Eastwood. (Near the station and just behind the Library.)
Contact: ryde@bikenorth.org.au

Date: Sat 18/02/2006
Ride: Olympic Park Ride
Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25
Contact: Doug Stewart, 9887 1478
Starts at: 08:30. Meadowbank Wharf. Easy loop around Homebush Bay with a coffee stop. Suitable for beginners and children OVER 12 accompanied by an adult carer.

Date: Sun 19/02/2006
Ride: Big Loop to Lane Cove Park
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OT Distance: 32
Contact: Keith Griffin, 0414 187 427
Starts at: 07:15. Eastwood Stn west side. Medium ride to corner M2 & Pennant Hills Rd on quiet back streets, along M2 to Lane Cove River Park & return via Macquarie Uni.

Date: Sat 25/02/2006
Ride: Western Explorer Max
Grade: Medium Hard, BNSW Grade: FP Distance: 85
Contact: Steve Hillier, 9899 5432
Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank wharf. Med/hard ride at brisk pace via M4 c/p and railtrail to Mirambeena Res, to Prospect Res canal routes with coffee at Abbotsbury.

Date: Sat 25/02/2006
Ride: Parramatta Park Parade
Grade: Easy Medium, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 35
Contact: Col Lambert, 9637 0746
Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank Wharf. Easy/med ride along the PVC to Parramatta Park. Do a lap or two of the park before coffee, then return via M4 c/p.

Date: Sun 26/02/2006
Ride: North Shore Olympic Grand Tour
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OTW Distance: 70
Contact: Carolyn New, 9438 1903
Starts at: 07:30. Chatswood stn west (in park). Med ride at easy pace via Lane Cove NP & M2 to Eastwood, Meadowbank then across to Olympic Pk. After coffee, return via ANZAC & Harbour bridges.

MARCH 2006

Date: Sat 04/03/2006
Ride: Meadowbank to Bobbo
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OHT Distance: 50
Contact: Doug Stewart, 9887 1478
Starts at: 07:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Medium, hilly ride via Eastwood, Browns Waterhole, Turramurra, & Bobbin Head. Coffee and return. Long climbs and descents.

Date: Sun 05/03/2006
Ride: Tour de Hills
Grade: Easy to Hard, BNSW Grade: TH Distance: 20/35/50/100
Contact: Pam Kendrick, 9872 2583
Starts at: Starts and finishes at Dural Country Club. Annual ride supporting local charity. Join the Bike North team for this great rural ride. See BN News and Chain Mail for details.

WHAT TO BRING ON RIDES:

- your bike should be in good working order
- SAA approved cycle helmet
- water – 1 litre per hour
- snacks, money
- puncture repair kit, spare tube, and pump
- for night rides have lights fitted and batteries charged

Date: Tue 07/03/2006
Ride: Exec Meeting
Grade: none, BNSW Grade:
Contact: Bike North Special event, ALL WELCOME
Starts at: 19:30. St Johns Anglican Church Hall, Coxs Road, Ryde

Date: Sat 11/03/2006
Ride: Akuna Bay and Church Point
Grade: Hard, BNSW Grade: FHX Distance: 80
Contact: Doug Stewart, 9887 1478
Starts at: 07:00. Eastwood Stn east. Hard, hilly ride via de Burghs Br, Pymble, Terrey Hills, Akuna Bay, Church Pt (coffee). Return via Turramurra. Brisk pace.

Date: Sun 12/03/2006
Ride: Newtonton Ride for Women
Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25
Contact: Debbie Edwards, 9436 0969
Starts at: 08:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Easy loop around Homebush Bay with a coffee stop. Suitable for women who want to get back in to cycling.

Date: Sun 12/03/2006
Ride: Botany Bay Bacon
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 65
Contact: Eric Middleton, 9958 2546
Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank wharf. Medium ride via Cooks River c/w to Botany Bay. Refuel at our favourite café at Brighton, then return.

Date: Tue 14/03/2006
Ride: Ryde Area Meeting
Grade: none, BNSW Grade:
Contact: Bike North Special event,
Starts at: 19:30. Ryde Working Group meeting.
Venue : Eastwood Women's Rest Centre, Hillview Rd Eastwood. (Near the station and just behind the Library.)
Contact: ryde@bikenorth.org.au

Date: Sat 18/03/2006
Ride: Concord for Cake
Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 25
Contact: Debbie Edwards, 9436 0969
Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank wharf. Easy ride along the PVC over Silverwater bridge to Olympic Park, then on to Concord for coffee. Return a different way.

Date: Sun 19/03/2006
Ride: Pie in the Sky
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OTW Distance: 40
Contact: Graeme Edwards, 9436 0969
Starts at: 08:00. Hornsby Station west. Medium ride along Old Pacific Hwy to café overlooking Brooklyn with great views. Back track to Hornsby. Moderate hills.

Date: Sat 25/03/2006
Ride: Olympic Park Ride
Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25
Contact: Col Lambert, 9637 0746
Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank Wharf. Easy loop around Homebush Bay with a coffee stop. Suitable for beginners and children OVER 12 accompanied by an adult carer.

Date: Sat 25/03/2006
Ride: Western Explorer
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 70
Contact: Steve Hillier, 9899 5432
Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank wharf. Medium ride via Parramatta & Canley Vale to Abbotsbury for coffee. Return via Prospect & canal routes. Brisk pace.

Date: Sun 26/03/2006
Ride: Footloose in the Foothills
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: XOT Distance: 60
Contact: Fran Griffin, 9614 0777
Starts at: 08:00. McQuade Park, Windsor. Medium, very scenic ride through Grose Valley, Kurrajong and Freemans Reach

Date: Sun 26/03/2006
Ride: Akuna Bay Tortoise
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OTH Distance: 40
Contact: Carolyn New, 9438 1903
Starts at: 07:30. Car park, Mona Vale Rd opp Stanley St St Ives. Med loop to Akuna Bay for coffee, then tackle the two big hills to work off morning tea.

RISK WARNING

As a participant in this recreational activity, you may be exposing yourself to a risk of harm. Bike North, the ride organisers and leaders wish to warn you that there are risks and hazards inherent in cycling activities. You are responsible to take care to prevent putting yourself, your fellow participants and/or others into danger. By signing the registration, you accept the warning as to risk, you agree to ride in a safe and responsible manner and to obey all Australian Road Rules.

RIDE CONDITIONS

Riders under 16 should be accompanied by a cycling adult. A Standards Association of Australia approved helmet is legally required by all participants on all rides. Essential equipment also includes a bicycle in good working order, water bottle, snacks, tyre pump, tube repair kit and appropriate tool kit. For night rides you must also have a headlight and tail light that will work for at least 4 hours. The rides are graded Easy, Medium or Hard depending on the terrain and speed. Please choose a ride that is suitable to your own fitness and experience. If in doubt please check with the ride leader.

Bike North 5-Speed Challenge, 2006

Registration Form

I
(name, please print clearly)

challenge myself to meet the following goals during 2006

1 Ride more often
 My goal is:

2 Encourage more people to ride (more often)
 My goal is:

3 Support Bicycle NSW and your local BUG
 My goal is:

4 Support your local workgroup
 My goal is:

5 Make a stand for cycling – write, email or phone
 My goal is:

Register your goals with Bike North and you will be notified about future workshops and advised on tips to help you meet your goals.

Send this completed form to:

Bike North 5-speed challenge
 PO Box 719
 Gladesville NSW 1675

or register online at:

www.bikenorth.au/members/fivespeedchallenge.html

I agree to my name being listed on the Bike North website as a Five Speed Challenger.
 (No details of your personal goals will be made public.)