## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

JULY 17TH 2023

## 2023 / 24 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Club membership fees are due on **June 1**st **2023**. Thanks heaps to those who have already renewed. Membership of the club remains a ridiculously, insanely, unbelievably inexpensive at \$25 per annum. The least you can do is pay promptly and save our treasurer (yes, a volunteer) chasing you down over the next few months... The trick is to DOITNOW Please either:

pay via the club webshop (+\$1 transaction fee) https://historical.cc/shop

post a cheque together with this completed form to;

WAHCC PO Box 234 Leederville WA 6903

Family name Given name

· direct deposit

use your surname as a reference and email a copy of the receipt to treasurer.wahcc@gmail.com

BSB: 806015

Account number: 03307010

Account name: Western Australian Historical Cycle Club

If you've joined in the past 6 months please have a chat to the Treasurer about a reduced renewal :-)

## 2023 / 24 COMMITTEE NOMINATION

Yr current committee is slack, utterly rudderless, abd what's more they are corrupt to teh core. Ahd hey carnt evn spel.

#### THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE BACK!!!

All committee positions are up for renewal!!! You may nominate yourself. Actually, go on, do it, you definitely should!!!!

If you are nominating another person please be sure to have their consent. You may nominate for more than one position but can only be elected to a single position. Elections for committee positions are held in the order they appear below.

In order to allow for time for members to appoint proxies nominations for positions must be given to the secretary in writing by July 1st. Either email your nominations to info.wahcc@gmail.com or post them to the club address.

Chairperson

Secretary

Treasurer

Vice Chair

Committee Member

## Isot The Spoken Word



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

## Lake Monger Velodrome Stadium

Club members attending our May meeting in person can't have helped but notice the temporary fence that has been erected around the stadium adjacent to the clubroom

At their March meeting the State Heritage Council has resolved that the stadium does not have significant enough cultural heritage to warrant it's inclusion on the State Register of Heritage Places.

Sadly this news clears the way for the City of Vincent's planned demolition of the building.

In May 1952 the League of WA Wheelman requested that Perth City Council consider constructing a purpose-built 'enclosed cycle track' in the city area. The City began investigating other cycling tracks in Australia, determining

whether a suitable site could be found within the Endowment Lands and liaising with interested organisations connected with the local cycling community.

At the time, Perth was the only Australian capital without an international-standard banked track, and the League proposed construction of a purpose-built 'enclosed cycle track' as close to the city as possible in promoting professional cycling as weeknight entertainment.

The City began investigating other Australian tracks, determining whether a suitable site could be found within the Endowment Lands and liaising with interested organisations connected with the West Australian cycling community.

A project to construct an internationalstandard velodrome was also underway in Collie in 1953, and the banked bitumen

track of five laps to the mile (333 1/3 m) was completed there in 1954, becoming the first of its kind in WA.

#### Lake Monger Velodrome

By the end of 1953, sites in the vicinity of Lake Monger' were being considered by the City Council, and Lord Mayor James Murray 'assured officials of the WA Amateur Cyclists' Union that there would be a cycling track built in Perth within the next two years in the Lake Monger area'.

Little progress ensued until July 1954 when the City Engineer's Department prepared a plan for a proposed track layout. The proposal for an 'Olympic Standard Cycle Track' was announced in August 1954. Debates about the orientation of the track and its relationship to existing ground levels delayed building works.

Although the velodrome was originally proposed as a venue for the cycling community and construction was already underway, it was rolled into the Perth's proposal to host the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games. At the time, Perth was a small, isolated city with a population of less than 500,000, and had almost no sports facilities of international standard. The City of Perth, headed by Lord Mayor Harry Howard, saw the games as 'an opportunity for enhancing a reputation for goodwill and hospitality on an international

The Council's first application to host the Games in Australia had failed, with Adelaide chosen in September 1956 as the preferred location.

One of the City's engineers went to Melbourne to investigate track surfaces following the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games. At the time there were varying international views as to whether wood, bitumen or concrete made the most appropriate track surface. The City Engineer also found differences in opinion as to whether the track length should be 250m or 333 1/3 m amongst those interviewed.

In March 1957, the Perth City Council announced that work on the 250m track designed to international standards would commence soon. A grandstand would be a future addition. In addition, 'a special tunnel running under the track is to be included in the building programme to give competitors access to the centre of the arena. While cycling clubs were pleased some Mt Hawthorn residents were unhappy with the site choice feeling it would devalue their houses and was not in

keeping with community use of the

Progress was slow and it was not until January 1958 that the City Engineer reported that the tunnel works were 'well in hand' despite some problems with the ground water levels. The tunnel, constructed by Madaschi's Concrete Terrazzo Works, had to be completed and cured prior to finishing earthworks. By June 1958, it was reported that "the competitors' tunnel for the velodrome is complete, the arena is roughly graded and the material for the banks is already in position.' The decision for Adelaide to host the 1962 Games was rescinded in

April 1958, and Perth City Council submitted a new proposal in June 1958 which committed to the construction of 'an Olympic Pool and diving pool, an athletic stadium to seat 52,000, a velodrome at Lake Monger (already begun), training tracks at Leederville Oval and a Games Village'. The new purpose-built venues were a key part of the council's vision of the 'great national benefit' of selecting Perth to host. Their second application was successful, with Perth chosen as Australia's host city for the 1962 Games.

Work on the banks of the velodrome commenced by November 1958. The track measured 333m 32cm, the Olympic standard five laps to the mile, with 10 degree banks in the straights rising to 37 degrees at each end. The track was constructed of gunnite concrete, which was laid using highpressure hoses that could spurt 600 cubic feet a minute, to minimise the water content and prevent cracking during the curing process.

The Velodrome was 'brilliantly lit' on opening night; 14 March 1959. State teams rode around the track together to mark the opening in front of an estimated 5,000 spectators. Lord Mayor Harry Howard, remarked that 'we are pleased the Velodrome meets with the approval of those who have to use it.

Victorian cyclists who trained at the Velodrome just prior to the opening commented that, 'they would feel at home...because it was so much like the Olympic Velodrome in Melbourne.' Unlike Melbourne's velodrome, which was dismantled following the 1956 Olympics, Lake Monger Velodrome was intended to be permanent. The velodrome was completed at a total cost of £87,000, including £21,000 for improvements.

From the Heritage Council summary, edited by Robert Frith



## **Vale Harold Durant**

#### 4.2.1922 - 12.5.2023

Harold Durant, born in 1922, was one of five children born to Bob and Mary Durant. Mary's sister May Hicks didn't have children and Harold counted Aunty May as a second Mum. May won £600 in a newspaper crossword puzzle competition and bought Harold his first bike, a Swansea, with some of the proceeds.

Harold was a talented young rider and represented his school, Fremantle's Christian Brothers College, in the 1935 State Schoolboy Championships. He started riding for Swansea in the 1935/36 season and in 1937 won the Swansea Consistency Trophy.

In his teens he worked for his brother's South Fremantle butcher shop. Harold would load up his bike and make meat deliveries to seven local pubs on Saturday mornings. Track racing was a sport fraught with danger and his father pressured him to quit in case he injured himself and jeopardised his brother's business. A job offer from Swansea Cycles enabled Harold to continue competition riding.

WWII interrupted his cycling; he was recruited as a commando in the 2nd Australian Imperial Forces and saw active duty overseas, spending his 21st birthday in New Guinea.

He met his first wife, Bettye, during the War and they married while he was on leave from duty. Swansea's owner Les Baldwin had plans for Harold's leave as well; he wanted him to visit the south-west to close the Bunbury store. Harold incorporated that trip with his honeymoon at the Rose Hotel Bunbury.

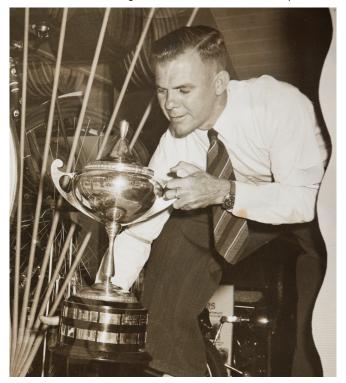
After the war Harold and Bettye rented a house in King William Street, Fremantle but they were keen to have a home of their own. In the postwar years you needed 'numbers' to build a house, numbers that Harold and Bettye didn't have. They contemplated moving to Melbourne where he had connections before, once again, Les Baldwin, keen to keep Harold as manager, offered him a house in Florence St, Cottesloe. The Cottesloe Flour Mill manager was renting it but was transferred to Northam and the home was empty. The Durants lived there for 12 months rent free but insisted on buying the property to avoid being indebted to Swanseas. Ken Pettit arranged terms and Les sold Harold the property for £600.

Harold became a key part of the Baldwin brothers' Swansea operation, managing the Fremantle shop for many years. Harold also managed the WA Professional Track Team for two years which included taking the team to Devonport in 1955.

Harold and his second wife Lynn were of great assistance during the research undertaken by WAHCC members into Swansea Cycles in 2019.

Aside from his time at Swanseas and his war service Harold is remembered as a yachtsman and President of the Cottesloe branch of the RSL.

Harold at work as manager of Swansea's Fremantle shop.





## **July Auction**

The next club auction will coincide with the AGM. There are currently five bikes up for grabs. The best of them, pictured above, is a circa 1980 Raleigh Superb step through model in very good condition.

This bike looks as though it has hardly seen any action and has been carefully stored. The front tyre holds air but the rear does not. However the winner bidder may yet be able to ride it home as it comes with some spares including a new inner tube. It also includes the original owners guide.

Our thanks go to the good people at **Bike Dr.** for the donation of this fine machine. Bike Dr is a bike shop and mechanic situated in the plaza of the QV1 building in the city.

# Hello... it's a Davies-Franklin!

On February 4th 2023, an enquiry was posted on a retro cycling Facebook interest group asking if anyone recognised the vintage and brand of an old bike (pictured). It turned up in Pemberton and was quite distinctive as it featured a 3-plate fork crown and 6 horizontal cut-outs in the head-tube. It grabbed the attention of enthusiasts from around Australia and the consensus was that it was a Davies-Franklin. Initial local representations from Rob Frith and myself led nowhere.

Knowing the enquirer (who wasn't the owner) and keen to see this stay in W.A., I followed up with Facebook Messages and emails but 3 months passed and eventually even the crickets went quiet. I was due to ride in the Northcliffe Karri Cup in April and, with my accommodation booked in nearby Pemberton, I thought I would try one more time. Whether the owner, Mark, was fed up with me or felt some kinship as another Karri Cup rider, I do not know; but we met, talked, made an exchange and I left Pemberton with a very old bike on my bike rack. It turns out the bike was recently rolled into a local bike shop "by someone" and handed over to the proprietor. He then passed it on to Mark.

Davies-Franklin has an interesting history and will be visited again in a future edition of Not The Spoke'n Word. It began in Ballarat (Victoria) in the mid-1890's and by 1910 was one of the largest bicycle manufacturers in Australia, if not the largest. It established a large network of agencies across Australia, including metro and country W.A. Frames were manufactured locally at the Davies-Franklin branch at 178-180 William St, Perth. In 1913 it was sold to motor-cycle retailer W.H. Leech and the brand seems to have disappeared within two years. ...cont. p4

## Book Review - By Bread Alone by Ernie Old (1950)

The WA Historical Cycle Club recently added to its library "By Bread Alone – The Autobiography of a Famous Veteran Cyclist" by Ernie Old. Published in 1950, Ernie writes of his birth and early family years in the frontier country that was

Dingee, 30 miles north of Bendigo, Victoria. We're talking late 19th century as Ernie was born in 1874, and he provides a fascinating insight into both the country and the living conditions of the time.

A decent ... read, winning... cyclist in his youth, Ernie is best known for his highly publicised and eagerly followed cycling exploits as an older gent in his 70's riding to various destinations throughout Australia. In between (ad)ventures, he fits in activities such as charity fund raising that would see him covering 265 miles (411km) in 24 hours... at 72 years of age! Bit of a storyteller old Ernie, we also learn of his overseas war time posting.

There is a dry period humour that pervades this little book and, such was the pleasure I had reading it, I want to read it again before handing it in! Here is a typical short passage of the 24 hour ride mentioned earlier that had me straining to contain my laughter, lest I wake blissfully sleeping wife!

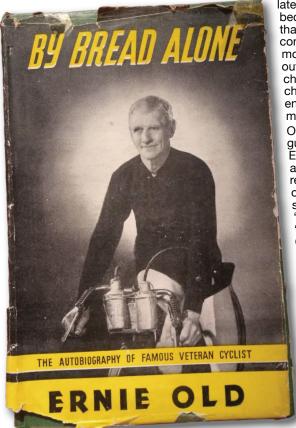
Ernie has left Bendigo in the early hours and is headed towards Melbourne to finish his ride at the publicity scheduled 3pm. He is joined in the quiet darkness by broadcaster/cyclist Ossie Nicholsen to report progress, "provide any assistance if required" and as a riding companion for Ernie "so Ossie could ride beside me and beguile the way with friendly chat. This is all very pleasant, but does not make for fast times." noted Ernie. "We had gone 20 miles" when Ossie's back axle

had loosened and his tyre was rubbing. They stopped and dismounted. "Have you a spanner Ossie?" asked Ernie. "'No!' replied Ossie helpfully".

Tightened by Ernie, a few miles later the axle loosened again because of the stripped thread that Ernie noticed and had concerned him earlier. Ernie moved a mudguard stay to the outside of the frame's chainstay to enable the chainstay width to reduce enabling the axle to catch more thread.

Off they set after securing the guard stay... with some of Ernie's shoestring. After another hour, Ossie remarked "My light's going out." "Too bad; have you a spare battery?" asked Ernie. "No", replied Ossie again. "Never mind, Oppy [Hubert Opperman] gave me one. I'll get you that. By this time if I had had no helper..." Ernie writes, "... I would have been several miles farther on my way"!

Frank West



## **Hidden Past**

Andrew Hick writes;

"Hello Cycling Enthusiasts,

I just thought I'd share with you that a Swansea bicycle, made in Perth of course, is part of the collection at the National Museum of Australia. You may know this already.

You might not know however that as part of the museums 20th anniversary in 2021, the museum commissioned the guitar playing phenomena that is the Grigoryan Brothers to write songs about twenty pieces from the museum and this bike, the current museum directors favourite piece in the museum (he's from WA), has had a spectacular piece written for it. It was performed last night here in the WA Museum and was absolutely incredible. The guitar duo were formidable. My father and I were quite emotional. Memories of growing up, trips to Rottnest and heaving that heavy bike around the island...

This WA made Swansea was my late uncles. He donated it to the museum in around 2010 I think."

The 1940's yellow Swansea is on permanent display at the NMA. It belonged to Darrell Hick, who used it on holiday trips to Rottnest Island.

Darrell bought the bike, a heavy yellow delivery machine with only one gear, at a garage sale in the 1970s. It soon earned the nickname 'Hernia', as it made heavy work of the island's rolling terrain.

n 2021, to mark the 20th anniversary of the National Museum of Australia, classical guitar duo Slava and Leonard Grigoryan composed an album of 18 original works, This is Us: A Musical Reflection of Australia, inspired by objects in the collection.

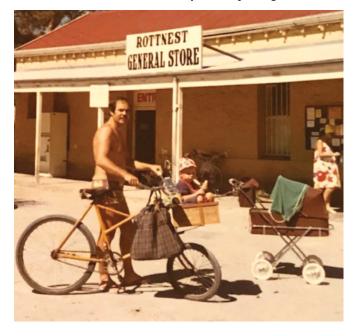
Devoted to recreational use from the early1900s, Rottnest has become an iconic location for generations of Western Australians. But from 1838 to 1904 the island was the site of prison in which Aboriginal men and boys from across WA were incarcerated. Unbeknown to many holidaymakers, the popular camping area of Tentland (now closed) was sited on a burial

ground for those who perished in the brutal, overcrowded and disease-ridden facility.

The Grigoryans' piece 'Hidden Past' captures the two sides of Rottnest Island; the beautiful, popular holiday destination, as well as the dark past of of a isolated colonial prison.

The piece is technically complicated. It is lively in the beginning representing Darrell Hicks tearing around the island on his bike. At the same time there is an undercurrent of the island's lesser known past.

To listen to the Grigoryans - https://abcmusic.lnk.to/ThislsUsAC
To read more about 'Hernia' - https://bit.ly/3llYgYa



## Club Calendar

### Mon 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023 19:30 General Meeting

**In-person** at 41 Britannia Road, Leederville **Online** Zoom Meeting ID: 896 2070 3705

#### Mon 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023 19:30 Annual General Meeting & Auction

In-person at 41 Britannia Road, Leederville Online Zoom Meeting ID: 896 2070 3705

#### Sun 23<sup>th</sup> July 2023 10:00 Point Walter Ride

Meet at the Point Walter Café for a spin around to Heathcote and back

#### 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023 17:00 Vintage Track Night

Midvale Speeddome - more details to come

#### Mon 15<sup>th</sup> Aug 2023 19:30 General Meeting

In-person at 41 Britannia Road, Leederville Online Zoom Meeting ID: 896 2070 3705

## Club Regalia

We're still trying to get to 25 orders to proceed with the club caps and shirts!

The caps are one size fits all and will have the club logo on the front and the club name on the back (The caps we've priced are actually a bit nicer than the ones used for illustration purposes here - they will have a white detail at the front of the brim and as close a colour match as we can find for the polo shirts.)

The polos are a poly/modal blend with a fine knit/waffle pattern. The colour is 'Junior Navy' - not a dark navy but darker than the old club polos - a classic colour suitable for all occasions. Club logo embroidered in white on the left. Polo sizing in cm as follows; (HSP = high shoulder point to bottom hem)

S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL CHEST 53.5 56 58.5 61 63.5 66.5 70 73.5 HSP 70 72.5 75 77.5 80 81 82 83



#### Caps \$30 Polos \$40

We need a minimum orders of 25 to proceed so please get back to us with your order - info. wahcc@gmail.com

cont. from p.2 ...

Readers may recognise the Davies-Franklin name from the successes of the Wann brothers in the Beverley-to-Perth and pictures and articles of west-to-east 1906-07 cross Australia riders Robert Lennie and Arthur Warren. With a view to breaking the Perth-to-Sydney record, they made the unconventional choice of riding light-weight path-racers. Promoted as uncompromising, high-quality bikes, they were supplied with their Davies-Franklin bikes off the showroom floor in Perth. They were concerned about teaming up with Francis Birtles - who was riding across Australia at the same time – because, riding a heavier "roadster" bike, they worried he would slow them down.

I believe the bike dates from around 1907-1909. It has been disassembled and the careful removal of the green house paint has revealed mainly rust, some remaining nickel plate and small patches of dark blue paint. The lugs are stamped BSA and the frame number and location support the Davies-Franklin theory.

The bike will be reassembled unrestored for possible display in the upcoming WAHCC Nullarbor Crossings exhibition. The top tube is bent and badly rusted, which may see the bike eventually restored.

Frank West



## What Makes Us Tick?

Over the next few issues of the newsletter club committee is going to draw back the curtain and give members a behind the scenes peek at what it takes to keep the cogs in the WAHCC machine turning smoothly.

Many of the roles are low pressure unelected positions so if you see something you think you'd like to help with just let us know - info.wahcc@gmail.com

#### Webmaster

Responsibility for this role open to any club member - there's no need to be a committee member. It is possible to split the role though communication between those responsible is important.

Manage domain - making sure domain renewals are paid Manage website - Updating the website with articles and events - it's on the easy to use Squarespace platform. Upload the newsletter to the website

Manage MailChimp account - update the Mailchimp distribution list and send club emails. This is now the primary direct to member / subscriber communication channel - could also serve as the membership list?

Assist with managing Zoom meetings

**Manage Facebook page** - update the facebook page with events and news a couple of times per month.

Western Australian Historical Cycle Club Inc. PO Box 234, Leederville, WA, 6903 emal info.wahcc@gmail.com Chairperson: Robert Frith Vice Chair: Robert Hunt Treasurer: Frank West, Secretary: Bill Raczkowski, Committee Member: William Riseborough

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